

Is everybody bonkers?!

There are certain things that make me ask this question. Four examples:

Example one: A seventeen year old offers to explain generation Y to managers – and is booked. Reportedly he charges several thousand Euros per speech.

How on earth does he qualify for speaking about a generation? His sheer belonging to that generation? Does he know that one could read much of what he is saying before he was able to write? Would I run to my neighbour with an acute rupture of the appendix, just because he has had one, too?

And there sit several hundred people smiling to the stage in ecstasy („Isn't he cute? And he speaks like a pro...“) – don't these people have sons and daughters of this age they could ask? That would be the bigger sample. And what about forced retirement? After all, he is twenty now, and a thirteen year old is ready and is making technology predictions, and he is even cuter. The casting show mentality has reached the consulting business – god help us.

Example two: In the US consumers sue Red Bull because they didn't sprout wings – and they win. No joke. Thirteen million dollars are paid to the „victims“.

As a layman in law – I'll admit that – I have to assume that the court judged the expectation of the consumers that they would in fact sprout wings as legitimate and adequate. Will companies seriously have to watch such risks in the future? In Germany Kellogg's promises to wake the tiger in you? Kia the car that cares? I'm speechless.

Example three: In the „Tagesanzeiger“ a newspaper supplement with the title „Business Woman“ is published. I open the supplement, and in the right lower section I find a half page advertisement: „tight tissue and tight skin comes from the inside“, and it is about a cosmetic anti-aging product. Again, no joke.

If this is where we are, I advocate to be honest and include it in the list of requirements in job advertisements: „Teamplayer qualities, flexibility, ability to work under pressure, tight tissue.“ Then it would be all in the open, everybody would know where one stands, and the career of Oswald Gröbel would have taken a completely different course...boys: there is much left to do.

Example four: A colleague says to me: „Just don't think that anybody will ever book you because of your qualifications.“ The market – any market – is determined by communication, and as the focus currently is on wrapping and entertainment, wrapping rules over substance. Whoever attracts attention, wins. And the claim that the market will sort out the bad apples, remains a promise for now – and it doesn't change the fact that a lot of brilliant guys don't even get a ticket. To be honest, I judge my customers to be much more intelligent. But maybe I just deceive myself and I am totally incompetent and just have a nice blue website...oh my god.

More and more often and in more and more fields we reach a degree of absurdity that is just extraordinary. Is everybody bonkers? I suppose that many more people than we think ask this question much more often than we think.

And because predictions are so en vogue today, although it's common knowledge that predictions are futile, here is mine, and why not: A time of clarity without frills is approaching fast, a time of authenticity, and of the directly evident. I am convinced that not only generation Y is fed up being seduced by wrapping. They just dare say out loud what everybody else has already been thinking all the time.

And therefore these qualities will become – thank god – a market factor and consequently not ignorable. If you are already on your starting blocks for this, you will have an advantage in the future. And there are fine examples that it can be fun: www.thefuntheory.com (I like the staircase best).