

Excellence in dialogue

Around 86 billion nerve cells are in constant communication with one another so as to ensure that humans can feel, think and act. Experience improves this transmission capacity. Experience also lends wings to the quest for excellence. Four employees of the LLB Group invited four masters in their fields for a discussion. All dialogues confirm: excellence comes from inside. Excellence is something that is constantly evolving. Excellence is unique.

JÜRIG HUNKELER

Head of Corporate Clients,
Bank Linth

JEFFREY TOMLINSON

Head Coach, Rapperswil-Jona
Lakers Ice Hockey Club

BIRGITTA GASSNER

Lawyer and estate
planner, LLB

HANNY BÜCHEL

Remedial and
Montessori teacher
LERNBAR Association, Balzers

THOMAS MÄHR

Head of Fund Risk
Management & Reporting,
LLB Fund Services

HORST BÖHLER


Entrepreneur,
böhler+sohn,
Feldkirch

MARC SPIRIG

Project Manager
at Group Corporate
Development, LLB Group

MARTIN RISCH

Doctor and co-CEO
Dr Risch Medical Laboratory,
Vaduz

A man in a dark blue suit, light blue shirt, and red patterned tie is sitting at a dark bar. He is wearing glasses and looking to the right. A wine glass is on the bar in front of him. The background is a blurred stadium with blue seats and red structural elements.

“Things are bound to go well if expertise and gut feeling are combined.”

JÜRIG HUNKELER

“Improvisation also
plays an important role
in ice hockey.”

JEFFREY TOMLINSON





Jeff, what do you think:

can one plan to win?

In order to give a top-class performance, a team must also always have a goal in mind.

It's therefore good to know what the players need. Or, in my case, what the employees need to approach the goal with vigour and energy.

It's the same for me. If someone wants to buy a company, I usually first try to find out what kind of person the owner is. Then I choose the specialists who suit him. We call this cross working.

At the bank – as with ice hockey – success depends on the game plan and the players.

And what I think is also needed: the team members not only have to be technically good, but must also believe in themselves.

Technique is just the tool. And you have to taste success, as this gives you the self-confidence to spread your own wings.

As head coach you also have to be able to improvise.

JÜRIG HUNKELER took over responsibility for Bank Linth's corporate client business in 2018. Hunkeler, who hails from Berne and has been living in the Rapperswil region since 2011, is a banker with all his heart. He went on the ice as right winger at the age of 14, and still plays in the Rapperswil-Jona stadium every Monday. There is much that links him to the Lake Zurich region, and when the Lakers play, he is in seat 52.

Yes, I think so. We can influence success. We can give the guys a good game plan and prepare them in such a way that they feel comfortable facing exactly these opponents on the ice.

Much is a matter of instinct. Plus background knowledge.

I know my team very well. Everybody is different. Some need tender loving care, others need a kick.

I've experienced many situations during my career, good as well as less good. I've made mistakes and have learned from them. I wrote down many experiences and saved them on my computer, so that I can look them up again.


But only if the team consists of players with a good character who fight for one another, with respect and joy. Then you can also win.

This is part of ice hockey. If Plan A doesn't work, we have to switch to Plan B in a flash.

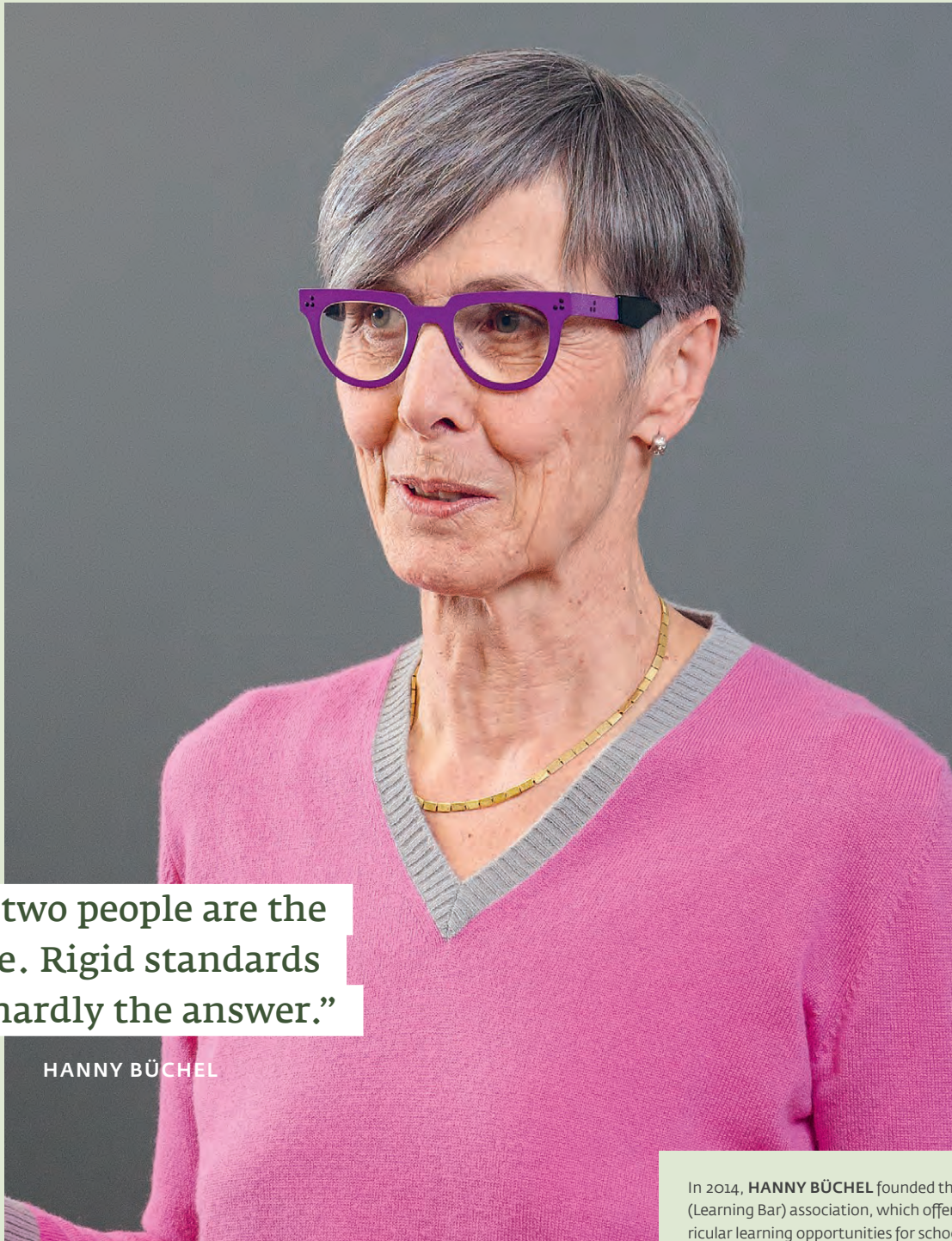
My experience helps me make the players believe that there had never been anything else but Plan B.

JEFFREY TOMLINSON has been head coach of the Rapperswil-Jona Lakers Ice Hockey Club and Swiss vice champion since 2015. The German-Canadian already attracted attention as a centre at the age of 17. Among others, the left-handed shooter played in the British Ice Hockey Superleague and as right winger for Eisbären Berlin. He has been a coach since 2004. His friends call him "Tomma".



A professional portrait of Dr. Birgitta Gassner, a woman with dark hair, wearing a light grey blazer over a red top. She is smiling and holding a pair of glasses with both hands. The background is a plain, dark grey color.

DR BIRGITTA GASSNER is a lawyer and has been working as estate planner for Liechtensteinische Landesbank since 2004. Previously she worked as a junior lawyer in Austria and as a lawyer in Liechtenstein. The birth of her sons Dominik and David turned her into a passionate mother. Education and the future prospects of her children take centre stage in her life. She and Hanny Büchel have been friends for many years.



“No two people are the same. Rigid standards are hardly the answer.”

HANNY BÜCHEL

In 2014, **HANNY BÜCHEL** founded the LERNBAR (Learning Bar) association, which offers extra-curricular learning opportunities for school children from Liechtenstein. As a remedial teacher, long-standing pre-school teacher and qualified Montessori teacher, she is very familiar with the woes of children who need more help and support to thrive in the regular school system. Particularly if the family is financially unable to buy the expensive support that is available on the free market.

BIRGITTA GASSNER:

Hanny, why do you think it so important

to be open to others?

HANNY BÜCHEL:

Why should we be open to others?
We're not all born the same.

At school already the focus should therefore fall on advancement rather than on forcing everybody to be the same.

Teachers should look really carefully to identify gifts, talents and skills. And all of us should understand: children can't all bring the same performance at the same time. We have to accept this, and be open to it.

I can see how important disparity is with my two sons. As an extrovert, life is easier for the younger one. The older boy is more reserved. It's a challenge for us as parents to make him understand **that everybody has their own special potential, the silent ones as well as those who are loud.**

So competition is a motivating force?

Every day at the Learning Bar I see the astounding results of an approach where the children can do what they want, and aren't forced to compare themselves to others.

For example, many children try to avoid practising their reading skills. But we sat down with a newspaper and read the headlines out loud. And suddenly, reading the newspaper was fun for everybody.






Healthy ambition is what drives us forward. Trying to squeeze young people into a straitjacket with academic quotas and standardisation takes away their room for manoeuvre.

Digitisation will change the professional world, and we will need young people who pick holes in arguments, who network and structure, and who are creative.

The digital world is providing us with wonderful tools. But if we don't manage to identify the advantages and risks, our children are destined to drown in a world of digital relationships.

I agree. Every child - every person - can be a spotless and perfect hero in a computer game. This can be either an interesting experience, or fatal escapism.

The question is: those who always see this "perfect" image - to what extent are they still willing to accept anything else?



“Exchanging experiences makes sense, and saves on time and mistakes.”

HORST BÖHLER

“We want to help people,
and we don’t do it for
the accolades.”

THOMAS MÄHR



THOMAS MÄHR:

What do you give people in Tanzania as

a gift to become independent?



HORST BÖHLER:

Since 2010 we have been teaching women at the Macipi Agricultural School in Ifakara how to lay sewage pipes or to build a reed bed water treatment plant. We are currently training 726 women, who will disseminate their knowledge throughout Tanzania. We want to help people in Africa to better conduct their lives.

I had the same kind of ideas in my head when I used my “hands and feet” to teach English to children in a town close to Phnom Penh. The history of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge, a lost generation – simply incomprehensible.

My gut feeling told me: I want to do something.

Those who can speak English can find a job in the tourism industry, for example – a pillar of economic growth in Cambodia.

And when you see that you can really achieve something, like we've been doing in Tanzania the past seven years, then you're somehow proud and also happy. The best is that we could even convince the government, which has since renovated the school building.

THOMAS MÄHR Thomas Mähr is a member of the Board of Management of LLB Fund Services AG and has been heading the Fund Risk Management & Reporting department since the end of 2014. He has been working in various positions in the securities and funds business in Liechtenstein since 2000. His passion is travelling and getting to know different cultures. During a trip around the world he stopped over in Cambodia to work for a non-government organisation helping children from poor families.

It's really true:
helping others makes us happy,

and connects us to other people.
What you get in return can't be measured
in monetary terms. The feeling of
wanting to help is dormant within us.
Often without our awareness.



But then you open your eyes when you start a project. In Africa, watches run on a different time from Europe. Our first act was to create order. It doesn't help much to try and explain something. So we collected the plastic bottles that were lying around everywhere. Quite pointedly.

The only way is to show by example how something works.

Experience has shown, however, you have no chance on your own. As in the business world, you need partners.

It seems to me that networking, exchanging ideas, learning from the experiences of others is just as important when it comes to social engagement as it is in the business world.

We don't have to reinvent the wheel the whole time.

HORST BÖHLER is a partner at böhler+sohn GmbH in Feldkirch. After finishing his studies and obtaining his master craftsman's diploma, he joined his father's company in 1965. In 2010 he passed the operational reins to his two sons, but remained active in the company. He and his friend Dr Manfred Fiel hatched the idea of establishing the "Ifakara" project at Dr Fiel's 60th birthday. When Dr Fiel died, Horst Böhler continued their social project.



“Innovation is the driver of growth, and trust is the foundation of everything.”

MARC SPIRIG

MARC SPIRIG has been working as project manager for Group Corporate Development at the LLB Group since the beginning of 2016. He did an MSc degree in mechanical engineering with a major in robotics and innovation at ETH Zurich. This led to a position with Hamilton Bonaduz AG, which is involved in developing laboratory automation. At the LLB Group, Marc Spirig often deals with Group-wide change processes. He lives with his family in Balzers.



DR MED. MARTIN RISCH and his brother Lorenz are the second-generation managers of Dr Risch Medical Laboratory. In 2017, the two brothers were recognised for their outstanding performance with the Entrepreneur of the Year in Liechtenstein award. The family company is among the biggest laboratory groups in Switzerland. Martin Risch is a practising doctor and a specialist in clinical laboratory analytics and medical microbiology. After spending some years in Berne, St. Gallen, Zurich and Lucerne, he and his family now live in Vaduz.

“If a company wants to be innovative, the way it interacts with people is key.”

MARTIN RISCH

MARC SPIRIG:

Mr Risch,

identity is something we are given,

how did you grow into your family company?

MARTIN RISCH:

My brother Lorenz and I saw as children what it means to build up a medical laboratory. I learned about everything, from the cellar to the attic. We laid cables, archived files, and later even ran our own tests. We accompanied our father to the laboratory on Saturdays, and developed in tandem with the different technologies.

Today, we realise that we have to separate family and laboratory. Family may not be just another container for business decisions.

I can imagine

that such a family identity is based on very specific values.

Treating one another with respect, having integrity - these are also two values embodied by the LLB Group, this is how clients become partners and colleagues become allies. This is the foundation for trust, which is also important when it comes to financial services.

Exactly. For Lorenz and me, the most important value is mindfulness.

This is closely linked to esteem, goodwill and tolerance. In a family company it is also important to listen to people, to be their point of contact, to create a working climate that motivates the employees to work together in a spirit of confidence.





Respectful coexistence also leads to innovation.

Only those who feel accepted will reveal their ideas. To summarise: no respect, no ideas, no innovation. And those who believe that robots are innovative are making a mistake. Robots only do what they've been programmed to do. Only people can think innovatively.

What's also important is the experience needed to assess situations and risks and to judge whether a decision was correct, to identify weaknesses and strengths.

But experience is not gained by snapping your fingers, experience grows in you.

And if you don't accept any risks, nothing will happen. We abide by the motto: the road that we travel with 500 employees is the goal.

For me, change is the normal condition.

The road that we travel together is constantly changing. The openness to always adjust to new client needs, regulations or to digitisation – change is constant. The pace is determined by the competition.

Those who manage to survive in the market have understood their customers.

Excellence in dialogue Online



Video statements by dialogue partners at ar2017.llb.li/excellence