Nora Heer

Cofounder, Leadership and Human Resources Strategist

Nora Heer: "From Feedback to Profit"

Nora Heer, Cofounder of the 2014 launched startup, Loopline Systems, has seen first-hand how leadership fueled by effective feedback engages teams and leads to measurable organization profit. Loopline Systems enables exactly this with an agile and simple cloud software, helping managers adapt to proven effective leadership models.

Nora has over 10 years of Human Resource Management experience, most recently as Head of HR with Project A Ventures in Berlin (Treatwell, Wine in Black, Lost My Name). Prior to this, she led the rapid internal expansion of 5 to 940 employees with Meltwater Group in Germany.

Nora has a degree in Media Business and is trained in systematic coaching, leadership development and strategic human resource management. She has created a Master Studies concept for coaching at FU Berlin based on her expertise.

Nora is a regular columnist on Bilanz.de.

1. What drew you to the technology scene?

Actually, I wasn't initially drawn to the tech scene specifically. I was interested in building organizations from scratch, in developing high performing teams, and more generally I had this interest in where the workplace is developing. This "new work" discussion is really interesting to me- I feel like we can see a fast paced evolution unfolding right in front of us. Management challenges, workplace diversity, hanging on to Generation Y; It was later I realized technology was essential to tackling a lot of the associated issues and achieving these goals.

2. Did you always know that entrepreneurship was for you?

I suppose in some way I did- Just because I've always had the spirit to create and change things. When I encounter a problem, I seek a solution or I create one that fits for me. I love to look at the status quo and figure out how it can be done better. This is really how loopline came to be- out of obstacles I was facing during my time as Head of HR at Project A Ventures.

3. What kind of obstacles are you referring to?

Really, that everything feedback related was still paper based. This was incredibly limiting and I think it does nothing to address common managerial issues- particularly in regards to retaining and engaging employees, and doing so as efficiently and unbiased as possible. I've repeatedly seen how important it is to have a good feedback process in place because once you do, it becomes a major driver in your success and enables people to perform better. So I searched the market for a digital solution that met our needs and when I didn't find one, we built loopline.

4. Can you recall a motivating turning point in your career?

My coaching apprenticeship was really the turning point of my career. It changed where I work, how I work, how I handle people- everything. I began to build organizations from a systematic approach- I realized what really lies behind motivating people and that employee engagement ultimately pays off. I also noticed that investors likewise saw how essential the right teams are. I was compelled by the potential there and I wanted managers to understand these insights, too.

5. What was the biggest obstacle in your path, and how did you overcome it?

I suppose one obstacle for me was finding where my entrepreneurial spirit and my desire to work with people would intersect. It wasn't initially clear for me- I'm very much business and results focused, but I also have a passion for empowering people. I feel that currently; HR is not really set in the right context to bring the results to organizations that it could. My obstacle has been and continues to be showing people that HR is a core business need. It's about connecting the gap between empowering people and improving organizations. I've realized that being results focused and wanting to work with people aren't contradicting passions- they're actually directly related.

6. What was the biggest misconception you had about your industry when you first started your career?

With all of the rumors regarding an upcoming "workplace crisis," the misconception I once had was that more innovation would be available to support HR teams and organizations. I was surprised to see how limited the solution options were during my time as Head of HR at Project A. I really believe that we need to be preparing now for the changes of tomorrow and that HR must be regarded as more than administrative work. Digitalization is key here.

7. What is it about working in a startup that you like?

In a startup, it really depends on you. Whatever effort you exert; you see a direct result. Seeing how your own capabilities drive success inspires you to grow. I also love the sense of team ownership you find in a startup and feeling united by the desire to achieve the impossible.

8. Which topics do you like to speak about the most?

I speak about the future of the work place, and preparations we need to make now. This is really about digitalization and taking a look at how employee analytics can address unique problems we'll soon be facing, if we aren't already. I want to speak about how we can make our processes leaner and innovative and ultimately, what big companies and startups can learn from each other in this regard. There are mistakes that almost everyone makes in management, and it's really just a small step to optimize. I want to help managers take that step and ultimately build great organizations with high performing teams. Bottom line, I speak to inform that our old models of recruiting, engaging and retaining talent are costing us a lot of money and there are solutions to address this.

9. What are you frequently asked as Cofounder? What are you never asked?

I'm never really asked about my vision for Loopline Systems on a global scale. I'm always asked from a very local, German focus. People aren't thinking big enough and I feel like we as German or European entrepreneurs need to trust ourselves and not leave it to American companies to achieve global relevance.