

Leadership Development Through Live Cases The Challenges of 10Pines

This case will be used to reflect and motivate action on a topic that is gaining relevance in recent years: the creation of organizations that join people's motivations with business objectives, and that allow them to develop and harmonize the potential of all members of the organization.

The goal of the case is to reflect and decide on the following topics:

- Paradigms and criteria in the process of undertaking and creating collaborative and self-organized organizations.

- Identification of challenges during the creation of the business until the moment of the live case, and proposals for a sustainable alignment that allow to resolve the tension between business growth objectives on one hand, and to maintain the collaborative model and the organizational culture on the other.

- Analysis of the viability of this model in other organizations and what would be the process of transformation in them.

- Discussion of the impact that collaborative organizations can have on the rest of society.

For the scope of the proposed goals, the following is a brief description of 10Pines, the key challenges and milestones during its development up to the moment of the presentation of the live case, with links to sources of information where you can deepen the topic. Appendix I has the link to the seven questions and criteria for developing sustainable ecosystems and communities.

The Company

10Pines is a company that offers custom software development services for the local and international market. Its three pillars are: building sustainable and long-term relationships with its customers; the technical excellence reflected through the



technology, methodology and the results of the projects carried out; human quality based on the opening of internal management, equality of possibilities and strong focus on group unity.

The company was founded 12 years ago by Emilio Gutter, Hernán Wilkinson, Alejandra Alfonso, and Jorge Silva. It specializes in the creative and agile development of high-quality software with cutting-edge technologies, as well as offering training and consulting services related to the development and management of software projects. In its history it has more than 100 projects carried out all over the world, including countries such as Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, the United States, England, France, Germany, Romania, Bulgaria and Singapore. Some of the most recognized companies who trusted them are Meetup (a WeWork subsidiary), Turner, Claro, Supervielle, Ualá and Alsea (group that manages the franchises of Burger King, Starbucks and P.F. Changs, among others).

The Origin of 10Pines Collaborative Model Explained by One of its Founders (Emilio Gutter)

The four founders were always interested by the same topics. When we got to think together about the possibility of starting our own business, in our previous experiences we noticed that the inferior quality of the software was a constant in the industry. We felt that, for most companies, the design and code of the programs was a mean to achieve a business, but not a goal. This was intimately related to the importance given to the people who were responsible for developing software. All the companies had the same speech: “The most important thing is the people,” but in fact reality showed quite different things. A very visible indicator of this reality is the high turnover rate of the industry and the constant feeling that people are unmotivated and change their jobs several times a year, most of the time looking for new challenges or for just one small salary difference. How to break with this vicious circle and achieve that “people are most important” at the same time as “quality comes first” are not just phrases posted on the wall of the office, but how it really feels every day, was the first challenge that motivated us to start.

Two of the founders were involved with a new project management trend named “Agile Methodology”. An interesting point of this methodology compared to traditional methods like those proposed by PMI¹ is that its main contribution was not a set of rules, practices or processes, but that their roots are based on a set of values and principles that guide every project. This radical philosophy was summarized as “Agile Manifesto”². Within these values and principles stood out: collaboration and trust in people; sustainable work; self-organization of work teams; transparency of information; and the constant search for excellence.

¹ <https://www.pmi.org/>

² <http://agilemanifesto.org/>



Inspired by this methodology we asked ourselves: If the best way to manage a project is guided by these principles and values, could they not be extrapolated to organize an entire company? When we started with this venture, despite having other models from similar companies, we were not very sure of how things would evolve, but step by step the different practices that consolidated the current model emerged: horizontal structure without hierarchies; collaborative decision-making process; transparent information and open numbers.

Today, although we consider that we have matured and gained experience, there are still many things ahead to learn and improve. Context and reality are constantly changing, as is our organization that tries to grow and face new challenges. We are convinced that complex problems can only be solved by adaptive models, so that learning and continuous experimentation must be part of the DNA of any organization of the future.

Key Milestones

- **AUGUST 2009 - Beginning:** 10Pines starts with one clear goal in mind: a company with a high focus on software quality and the people who builds it. In this knowledge-based industry the big challenge is to retain and motivate the people. There is a tough competition for talent in a market with low supply of qualified engineers and global demand growing constantly.
- **NOVEMBER 2014 & JULY 2015 - ISO appraisal and inclusion in the Argentinean software promotion law.** The ISO 9001-2008 certification is approved for all internal processes, required to access on the following year to the benefits of the Argentinean software promotion law N° 26692.
- **JULY 2016 - New partners.** Two new partners are included in the company board. Federico Zuppa and Darío García are the oldest collaborators in the company; given their contribution through all these years they are included as minority partners, opening the possibility of new partners to be added in the future.
- **AUGUST 2016 & APRIL 2017 - Growth stage:** The company moves to a new office of 415 square meters with an investment of 600,000 Argentinian pesos and the number of employees grows beyond 50.
- **APRIL & AUGUST 2017 - More local awareness:** Starbucks Rewards is launched in Argentina. 10Pines developed the back-end software, being this a high-profile project for the local market. In August an article is published in *La Nación* newspaper explaining 10Pines collaborative management model.
- **NOVEMBER 2017 - Special mention in a local B Corp contest** “Protagonists of the new economy” in the medium company category. Link <https://sistemab.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Negocios-Sistema-B-Casos-1.pdf>.
- **MAY 2018 - Horizontal organizations Meetup:** Start of a new local Meetup around the community interested in horizontal organizations.
- **AUGUST 2018 - B Corp certification:** 10Pines is certified as a B-Corp by “Sistema B” <https://sistemab.org/>.



- **SEPTEMBER 2018 - First 10Pines conf:** 10Pines celebrates the programmer's day with an in-house conference https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Dtr_5rjbP4
- **AUGUST 2019 - Tenth anniversary:** 10Pines turns 10 years old.
- **MAY 2021 - BBC article and interview:** The BBC publishes an article about 10Pines and does a live interview to one of its founders.
- **JUNE 2021 - Semco Stories:** 10Pines story is featured in the Semco Institute Style stories episode.
- **JULY 2021 - Bloomberg video:** 10Pines participates in a Bloomberg video special about Radical Transparency.
- **JUNE 2022 - Partnership with Semco:** 10Pines and Semco Style Institute sign a partnership agreement to create Semco Style Argentina.
- **AUGUST 2022 - HSBC SME award:** 10Pines receives the HSBC SME award in the category Innovation. Link: <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/economia/negocios/premio-a-la-pequena-y-mediana-empresa-en-fotos-nid09082022/>

Links of Interest

About the Company and its Management Model

- <https://www.10pines.com/>
- <https://cultura.10pines.com/?lng=en>
- <https://www.agilealliance.org/resources/experience-reports/growing-an-open-participative-horizontal-and-based-on-trust-company/>

Videos and Articles in the Foreign Media

- <https://www.bbc.com/news/business-56915767>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AxGLG5yeHI0>
- <https://semcostyle.com/semco-style-stories-10pines-argentina/>

Articles in the Local Media

- <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/sociedad/un-futuro-sin-jefes-los-modelos-que-apuntan-a-la-autonomia-de-los-empleados-y-redefinen-el-rol-de-nid28012023/>
- <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/2051208-un-mundo-sin-ceo-como-funciona-la-empresa-argentina-libre-de-jefes>
- <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/2142879-asi-trabaja-la-empresa-argentina-que-no-tiene-jefes>



- <https://www.apertura.com/emprendedores/Como-trabaja-la-empresa-de-software-que-inspiro-su-filosofia-en-una-cancion-de-Manal-20180206-0008.html>
- <https://www.lanacion.com.ar/2176703-por-que-nos-enfurece-saber-cuanto-gana>
- https://www.clarin.com/economia/pros-contras-saber-salario-companeros-trabajo_0_HyrGfDtOQ.html

Radio Interviews

- <https://radiocut.fm/audiocut/entrevista-a-emilio-gutter-sobre-10pines-la-empresa-sin-jefes/>
- <https://www.pulxo.com.ar/asi-funciona-una-empresa-argentina-libre-de-jefes>
- <https://radiocut.fm/audiocut/entrevista-a-jorge-silva-y-hernan-wilkinson-de-10pines-programa-proyecto-mendoza-de-radio-nihuil/>

Articles and Books from 10Pines Blog

- <https://10pines.gitbook.io/desarrollo-de-software-agil-en-10pines/>
- <https://www.cutter.com/article/increasing-transparency-existing-organizations-504606>
- <https://blog.10pines.com/2012/06/11/10-pines-una-empresa-diferente/>
- <https://blog.10pines.com/2017/08/11/que-significa-sin-jefes/>
- <https://blog.10pines.com/2017/02/20/our-recruiting-process/>

Books Related to the Topic

- <https://www.amazon.com/Maverick-Success-Behind-Unusual-Workplace/dp/0446670553>
- <https://www.amazon.com/Seven-Day-Weekend-Ricardo-Semler/dp/0099425238/>
- <http://www.reinventingorganizations.com/>
- <https://www.amazon.com/Delivering-Happiness-Profits-Passion-Purpose/dp/0446576220/>
- <https://www.amazon.com/We-People-Consenting-Deeper-Democracy/dp/0979282705/>
- <https://www.amazon.com/Peopleware-Productive-Projects-Teams-3rd/dp/0321934113/>

10Pines Challenges to Discuss During the Session



- Challenges during the start-up and development process.
- How to grow with a collaborative model maintaining values and culture while facing the challenge of successfully scaling the decision-making process.
- How to make the company more visible to new talents and potential clients, so they can see the same benefits of the company's model that the current employees perceived.
- Encourage and motivate other companies to transform their organizations, especially clients which might have a cultural mismatch with 10Pines.
- Find a sustainable growth of the most senior collaborators both at the professional and economical levels.
- Expand geographically opening new development centers in other places of Argentina or other regions.

APPENDIX 1

Sustainable Integral Development of Ecosystems and Communities through cooperation

[LINK](#)

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LINKS

A Blueprint for Better Business [Blueprint for better business](#)

[Beyond Self Interest 2006](#)

[Business as a Force for Good](#)

[Business with Purpose and the Purpose of Business Schools](#)

[Collaborative Entrepreneurship for a More Humanistic Management](#)

Cooperación <https://www.austral.edu.ar/derecho/programas/programa-gestion-publica-local/>

[Desarrollo Integral Sustentable](#)

[Desarrollo integral local de regiones y ciudades](#)

Desarrollo Integral Local <https://www.iae.edu.ar/es/LaEscuela/IAEHoy/Paginas/De-la-RSE-al-Desarrollo-integral-local.aspx>

[Distritos productivos o clusters](#)

[Entrepreneurship Safari](#)

[Modelos de transformación colaborativos centrados en la persona distritos productivos o clusters.](#)

Mechanism Design: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mechanism_design

[Niños y Medios en Cuarentena: una alianza posible](#)



Sustainable Integral Development <https://sustainableintegraldevelopment.com/>

[ODS y Tecnología](#)

[ODS y Ciudades](#)

What is the purpose of business and business education in a post-pandemic scenario?

[LINK](#)

[When Cooperation is the Norm](#)

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