



## **‘A career is nothing without a personal life’: On the social machine in the call for authentic employees<sup>\*</sup>**

Michael Pedersen

### **abstract**

In this paper, the Danish company Danfoss’ recruitment campaign ‘a career is nothing without a personal life’ is read in light of the current call for authentic, self-expressive employees. The Danfoss campaign provides an example of the contradictory logic at work in the contemporary call for authenticity. On the one hand, it shows how the desire for authenticity of employees is expected to converge with the drive for organizational productivity: employees are invited to be whole persons at work, and the good employee is the employee who willingly takes responsibility for both personal and organizational interests. On the other hand, however, this ‘whole person’ is always construed as a subject to come. Authentic employees must, as the very sign of their future productivity, also express the fact that they have more desire than the current convergence between their own and the organization’s interests. In the case of Danfoss, this is exemplified by the focus on life outside of work as the prerequisite for a good career. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s notion of ‘social machines’, the article outlines this contradiction and argues that it in fact acts as the very driving force in the call for authenticity.

### **Introduction**

Original brands. Authentic managers. Employees that express themselves at work. Authenticity seems to be an increasingly central marker for an efficient and flexible organization. According to bestsellers such as *Authenticity: What Consumers Really Want* ‘business today... is all about being real’ (Gilmore and Pine, 2007: 1). The leadership-literature raves about how people in turbulent times ‘want to be led by someone “real”’, constantly underlining how efficiency is measured by the ability of managers to energize and retain loyal followers by expressing and managing their authentic selves (Goffee and Jones, 2005: 87). Likewise, employees in more and more knowledge intensive industries are invited ‘to just be themselves’ (Fleming, 2009).

The argument for authenticity seems to hinge upon the notion that being authentic unleashes creativity into the production process and ensures that employees proactively anticipate the needs of the organization (Costea et al., 2007). It is thereby argued that

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authenticity, in the sense of being one's self, expressing one's inner core, being sincere and faithful to spontaneous feelings, gut instinct and inner ideas, is becoming a response to the question of what it means to be a value-adding, innovative and flexible resource today. Nevertheless, as Fleming (2009) has recently shown, this 'authentic response' also becomes a demand put upon employees. Inviting employees to 'just be themselves' becomes part of a form of (neo)-normative control designed to 'evoke the private sphere' (ibid.: 37) as something productive for the working sphere. We are, so to speak, *called* to express and conduct ourselves as authentic individuals at work. With this in mind, I will apply the concept of *social machines*, as taken from the works of Deleuze and Guattari (1983, 1994, 1999), in order to describe how this call for authentic employees is crystallized in the Danfoss recruitment ad and to outline a contradictory logic at work within it.

The Danish industrial company Danfoss Group is a leader in the development and production of mechanical and electronics products and controls, employing over 23,000 people in 25 different countries. In 2007-2008 Danfoss ran a recruitment campaign in a variety of Danish newspapers and magazines. The theme of Danfoss' full-page vacancy ads consisted of two aspects: the headline 'A career is nothing without a personal life' and the following paragraph:

At Danfoss we have known for a long time that the experiences you have gained in your lifetime are a benefit to our company and your career. The whole person is at the top of the agenda. The life you lead while not at work can help provide you with the strength needed to create results. (Danfoss, 2007)

In fact, most often the paragraph came before descriptions of the vacant job itself. Even though the nation-wide campaign ended with the coming of the financial crisis in 2008, the construction of the employee as authentic did not seem to disappear from the corporate communication of Danfoss. In fact, the Danfoss homepage (2010) still talks about the responsible employee as a unique person with a full life.

This homepage and the recruitment ad will provide an illustration of an interesting contradiction in the call for authenticity. I will not, however, try to uncover the inner workings of the authentic response in Danfoss (that is, do they really mean what they say or is it just branding?) but instead use it as an example that exhibits terms of a contradiction in stark ways. This contradiction in the call for authenticity consists, on the one hand, of a logic whereby employees are called on to be themselves but only in so far as there are still 'many kinds of authentic expression that remain impermissible' (Fleming, 2009: 39). This logic works to make the subjectivity of the employee converge with the interest of profit-making, productivity increase and cost efficiency. What is called for is what Lazzarato (2004) calls a worker-monad: employees who express the stakes of the organization through their individual substance.

On the other hand, the call for authenticity also seems to express a logic that does not focus on the kinds of expressions which are permissible but rather tries to tap into and mobilize an 'excess' for the further subjectification of the employee. There is an appeal to the life of the employee outside of work as a kind of reservoir of new forms of self-expression that might become organizationally valuable. This logic, in short, operates with the employee as a subject in becoming. The call goes out for what Boltanski and

Chiapello term 'a nomad' (2005: 122). This worker-nomad is always moving away from how it currently expresses the stakes of the organization. The calls for both a worker-monad and worker-nomad imply both a convergence and a divergence between the employee's desire and the stakes of the organization.

In this paper this double logic is described as what Deleuze and Guattari (1983) in *Anti-Oedipus* call a social machine, a social machine that *produces, mobilizes and regulates* our subjectivity at work. In such a framework the call for authenticity is not a matter of the individuals' own authentic personal desire and their potential repression by the social. Having said that, however, the desire we usually ascribe to this subject should not be understood as a product of a social infrastructure such as ideology or economy. On the contrary, both the desire of the subject *and* the social infrastructure within which it manifests must be understood on the level of a multiplicity of machinic interactions that both constitute and dissolve this subject.

The overall question is therefore not, what does authenticity in the call for authenticity *mean* (that is, is it real authenticity or only institutionalized authenticity?) but how does the call for authenticity *work*? What kind of subject emerges in the call? What kind of relation between the employee's desire and the stakes of the organization does this call produce? And, finally, how does this call form the very way in which problems of authenticity are raised? The ontological mobility that the concept of machine allows also pushes how we normally understand ontology. Indeed, as an ontological concept, the social machine presents a notion of reality as dynamic, multiple and in a state of becoming. Nevertheless, by postulating such a reality, it also makes any insight into the structure of reality a context-dependent test that demands an experimental and perpetual effort by thought. It is such an experiment that this rather speculative paper attempts to set-up.

The paper is structured as follows. First, the call for authenticity is briefly introduced, followed by an introduction into the concept of machine as used by Deleuze and Guattari. With the Danfoss ad and webpage as points of reference the last and largest part of the paper then outlines the social machine in the call for authenticity. Especially its double logic of production is highlighted: how the employee subject is both produced as a 'worker-monad' and a 'worker-nomad'. At the very end of the paper the implications of this double logic are outlined.

## **The call for authenticity**

The call for authenticity can be seen in light of a general interest in making human subjectivity an inherent organizational resource. As Whittle points out, the interest in the realm of 'thoughts, feelings, beliefs and desires that comprise our self-understanding or self-identity' has, over the last thirty years increasingly been placed at 'the heart of the debates within management and organization studies' (2005: 1301-2). According to Whittle, 'The appeal of subjectivity, for managers at least, lies in the goal of controlling human behaviour (what workers do) by colonizing employee subjectivity (who workers are)' (ibid.: 1301).

Moreover, in new management strategies, concepts and programs the equation between corporate performance and the total involvement of the whole person in work has come to be regarded as one of the underlying principles of a successful form of organization (Costea et al., 2007). In short, new managerial technologies such as performance management, coaching, culture management, etc. have to a larger and larger degree focused on subjectivity 'as a preferred site for intervention' (ibid.: 153). Such technologies are designed to ensure that the employees actualize their 'own interest – for well-being, career, self-actualization – at the same time as they embody "the organization's desire for productivity, performance, cost and risk minimization"' (Kelly et al., 2007: 269). The call for authenticity continues this interest; the overall assumption in the invitation to be authentic is that 'when workers bring their whole selves to the work-place ("warts and all"), firms are able to exploit a hitherto untapped reservoir of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial ingenuity' (Fleming, 2009: 2).

Authenticity, then, is a matter of bringing the spontaneous and private core into the workplace as it is this very spontaneity – the employee's true interests, desires and gut instincts, untainted by instrumental ends and rules on how to conduct work – that paradoxically come into the service of the interests of business. As Boltanski and Chiapello argue: when the 'exploitation of inventiveness, imagination and innovation' is of growing interest the demand for authenticity becomes a key factor in being a responsible and innovative employee (2005: 326). This interest in the employees' self-identity and self-expression at work is therefore not only managerial mumbo-jumbo around branding strategies and fashion fads (Costea et al., 2007). Instead, it is, as Costea et al. (2007) continue, part of a 'new logic' that 'underpins management today: *to govern work through subjectivity*'. This logic is becoming more and more visible today, especially within discourses on 'play and fun, as well as wellness, well-being and happiness at work' (ibid.: 250) which all orient themselves towards manifesting the whole person as the human resource.

The notion of the whole person as a resource is essential in Danfoss' recruitment campaign (2007). Whole persons at work are employees who bring their desires and beliefs, their private, non-working selves into the workplace by engaging passionately in the task at hand and by putting a personal touch on the work process (Danfoss, 2007). But there is also an interesting contradiction in the Danfoss ad that puts a twist on this logic. This is because there is an appeal for a convergence between the employee's inner self and the quest for organizational profit. However, there is also an appeal for the destabilisation of this convergence through the mobilisation of a notion of a life outside of the career, which is inherently advantageous to that career (Danfoss, 2007). You have to be a whole person at work. Nevertheless, in order to be so, you have to be *more than* the authentic person you are at work. This contradiction can be said to form the very dynamics of the call for authenticity. It is towards the logic of this contradiction that we will now turn with special reference to the concept of social machines.

## Desire and social machines?

Very crudely, the concept of social machines is employed by Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* to account for the ways in which the social is related to desire and how we become subjects in this very process. The critical aim of *Anti-Oedipus* can be understood as starting with the assumption that 'nothing ever starts in an individual subject' (Due, 2007: 87). In *Anti-Oedipus* this discussion of social machines is raised through a theoretical linkage between psychoanalysis and its interest in desire and Marxism and its interest in the effects of social infrastructure (Buchanan, 2008). In fact the inaugural thesis in *Anti-Oedipus* is that desire directly invests the social field and that the social reproduces investments of desire.

Such a thesis, as Buchanan (39) points out, demands two accomplishments. First of all, it accomplishes the introduction of the concept of desire into our understanding of what constitutes and reproduces social order. As Deleuze and Guattari maintain:

There is no such thing as the social production of reality on the one hand, and a desiring-production that is mere fantasy on the other... . The social field is immediately invested by desire, that is the historically determined product of desire... . Even the most repressive and the most deadly forms of social reproduction are produced by desire within the organization that is the consequence of such production under various conditions that we must analyze. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 28-29)

Desire, in other words, is not reducible to a human need nor can it be solely subjective. It is a world-historical production-force that penetrates every aspect of the social without ends or aims. It is what connects and creates all aspects of the social, but also what breaks down and upsets the social. It is, as Surin puts it: 'desire, which is always collective and social, that makes the gun into a weapon of war, or sport, or hunting' (2005: 26).

This brings us to the second accomplishment: to introduce the concept of production into desire and thus remove the boundary between the natural and cultural. This latter point implies that desire might be the 'untranscendable force, which renders everything else immanent to it' (Buchanan, 2000: 15), but it is not a state of nature clearly marked off from the social and cultural. The investment of desire is not an authentic unbound force or 'an undifferentiated instinctual energy but itself results from a highly developed, engineered setup rich in interactions' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999: 215). This implies that the social is interwoven with our innermost desire to such a degree that we must understand the social infrastructure as something that intervenes directly in the ontological fabric of our life. Whatever we think is most personal or indeed authentic about us, namely our desire, is always, for Deleuze and Guattari, something already assembled within the social. We always invest our desire in the social, but in this investment desire becomes inscribed with different signs and regulated along different paths that code and categorize it. As Smith (1997) points out, desire is therefore always arranged and assembled in a social manner and can only be conceived and grasped as such.

This means, finally, that desire and the social are best understood as abstract elements that enter into different assemblages resulting in the production of concrete subjects.

What the concept of *social machine* designates is a certain repetition in such a production. If we are to understand all this in terms of power we must say that the main achievement of the social machine is therefore not that it represses desire but, rather, that it reproduces certain investments of desire.

Posing the question of social machines in terms of size is to misunderstand the way in which such machines work. We have to understand the social machine as a certain kind of system reference. Understood as a system reference, the term social machine is primarily interesting as a term, which designates social life as a series of interlocking, overlapping, discrete systems of reproduction. By constituting a surface of presuppositions of what it means to act, feel and think, a social machine is what, in a particular context, assembles desire (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999). That is to say, the machine produces a condition of possibility for discussing the relationship between the employee's and the stakes of the organization: it forms what it means to be an employee subject. It makes the desire that flows through the subject into a question of whether or not this desire is authentic, of whether they converge with the quest for profit. But, perhaps even more importantly, it always poses the question of whether the employee and the organization converges too much, thus standing in the way of new forms of investment of desire that can bring about new forms of convergence between the desire of the individual and the stakes of the organization.

Two features of social machines are of particular interest in this case:

*What kind of subject emerges in this social machine?* What is an authentic subject supposed to be like and act like in order to be an authentic employee? In the social machine of authenticity, the authentic subject is paradoxically a split subject as the employee is both expected to be a worker-monad and a worker-nomad.

*How is the relation between the employee's desire and the stakes of the organization constituted when authenticity is the organizing principle?* Here, as we will see, the very contradiction or split between a worker-monad and a worker-nomad is related together in their very contradiction. It is important to understand that the social machine is not solely what performs the role of controlling and internalizing certain demands on the employee. It is rather what sets up and tries to mediate the conflict between the demands of internalization of a certain ideal of authenticity (*being a worker-monad*) and the demands of the employee's being something more than the self that it currently expresses (*being a worker-nomad*). The very assumption that the employee can be authentic at work in this way acts as an organizing principle by posing itself as the very problem that has to be responded to. When a machine is said to work at the level of problems, then this is exactly because it outlines the problems at hand and feeds off the different solutions to a particular problem.

The social machine's ultimate power truly does not consist in dictating an answer but, rather, in posing both the question and the possible answer. In fact, it is this power to pose the problem that guarantees its dynamic character: when one horizon of solutions breaks down, it poses the problem anew. 'In order to function' social machines

*must... not function well...* . The death of a social machine has never been heralded by a disharmony or a dysfunction; on the contrary, social machines make a habit of feeding on the

contradictions they give rise to, on the crises they provoke, on the anxieties they engender. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 151)

As we will see, the call for authenticity works through two contradictory machinic processes – one producing a worker-monad and the other a worker-nomad. These two processes are related through the very presupposition that authenticity is what has to be dealt with throughout: either as a question of the authentic self-expression converging or folding together with the organizational stakes *or* else as a question of how new forms of self-expression might look in the future.

The more critical aim of outlining such a social machine of authenticity is not to provide instructions or directives on how to overcome it but rather to invite experiments with it and openings into it. Indeed, a critique of the social machine of the call for authenticity can only be achieved by understanding and enhancing the processes we are immersed in when part of this call. Criticism, then, is not performed by construing machines as entities which we then critique. Critique is rather a matter of intensifying certain aspects of the machines, not in an attempt to escape them, but rather in an attempt to make their effects take flight. It is never a matter of finding a way out of the machine but rather always a matter of unfolding the machines that are already at work. Exposing and dealing with these machines always takes place through an act of creation that intensifies and magnifies their fits and starts. We do not know in advance what we are and are not capable of as authentic employees and we do not know where the different assemblages of desire that animate the machine of authenticity might bring us. Precisely because of this, we must first of all enter into the machine in order to find out. With this in mind let us now turn to the social machine as it grinds away. With the Danfoss ad as the point of reference we will first look into the machine as it produces the employee as a 'worker-monad' – an employee who's individual substance converges with the interests of the organization. Then we will see how it at the very same time also produces the employee as a worker-nomad – an employee who is always something more than this convergence.

## The first process of the social machine of authenticity

Danfoss's slogan is 'making modern living possible', a slogan that also seems important for the way Danfoss sees its employees, at least when it comes to the recruitment campaign: 'A career is nothing without a personal life' (2007). We find this statement wherever we find Danfoss (2007) looking for people they might hire. Likewise, on Danfoss' homepage, we hear the following:

Life consists of much more than a job. We want it all. To have a career. To live a meaningful life where we can make a difference. To feel whole as individuals and pursue our ambitions to create our own unique lifestyle. The possibility to live a full life, in balance with the demands of work, is something you will meet no matter where you look in our company. This is because we believe that our success is made possible by employees who take personal responsibility to reach both their own and the company's targets. (Danfoss, 2010)

The importance of a personal and authentic touch to the organization, career and life as such, is clearly indicated in the Danfoss statements. Personal responsibility is, according to Danfoss, important as a means of achieving organizational targets. Personal

responsibility is also crucial as a means of employees feeling whole and pursuing their ambitions and just being themselves. What this implies is what Lazzarato (2004) calls a 'folding' together of the stakes of the organization and the desire of the individual within the individual itself. This creates a situation where the employee's individuality must be affirmed while the employee must simultaneously adhere to the interests of the organization (ibid.). As Lazzarato has suggested, such a relationship is perhaps best described as monadic because

the relationship of the individual with his/her activity tends to become a monad, a totality in itself... this relationship is no longer seen, at first sight, as a fraction, functionally determined, of the organic division of labor. It becomes global on its own account. (193)

The organizations' stakes (profit-hunting, minimizing cost, finding new and more efficient ways of producing) are here no longer applied through rules as in the case of Taylorism and Fordism. The organization itself becomes an abstraction, which must be reconstituted through the employees themselves. The authentic employee is a worker-monad, then, as it must internalize the different stakes of the organization but express them in an individual way so that they might have concrete meaning and result in an impact.

### *The authentic employee as a worker monad*

For the employee to become this monad a certain folding must take place between the individual and his or her working activity. As Lazzarato puts it, one of the truisms in many liberal workplaces today is that the employee must have autonomy to conduct its work, that is, 'having his/her own autonomy, responsibility, power of initiative and decision towards a client' (2004: 194). However, from a managerial perspective, in order for autonomy and the personal touch to manifest, the employee must do his or her work with respect to the overall organizational stakes. As Danfoss (2010) also indicates when claiming that their success relies on 'employees who take personal responsibility to reach both their own and the company's target'. Such targets are most often assigned from above through different mission statements, corporate core values or performance goals (Costea et al., 2007) but their impact is said to rely on the way the individual employees themselves condense, express, and reform such statements, values and goals within their daily work (Lazzarato, 2004).

This first machinic process in the call for authenticity reaffirms what we already know from the works of authors such as Kunda (1992), Costea et al. (2007) and Fleming (2009): if more and more work in the organization depends on the subjectivity of the employee then employees must *internalize* organizational stakes within them and do so willingly. As a manager from Kunda's study of the 'Tech' engineering firm states:

'Power plays don't work. You can't make'em do anything. They have to want to. So you have to work through the culture. The idea is to educate people without them knowing it. Have the religion and not know how they ever got it!' (Kunda, 1992: 5)

Be it through various ceremonies and manuals on corporate culture (Kunda, 1992) or through any other such therapeutic procedures such as coaching and performance management (Costea et al., 2007), the goal is the same: to tap into the thoughts, feelings, mindsets and gut reactions of employees (Kunda, 1992: 7) in the effort to



assure that employees 'take personal responsibility to reach both their own and the company's targets' (Danfoss, 2010).

### *Folding the desire of the organization into the desire of the employee*

This machinic process, in short, works by creating and recreating what Costea et al. (2007: 250) call a context that distributes an 'opportunity and an obligation to self-express and self-explore' but also a 'platform for continuous (self)-monitoring'. Or, to put it in the terms of Deleuze and Guattari (1999: 129), this kind of machinic process works on the basis of a split between a subject of enunciation and a subject of statement. A subject, in other words, which expresses its inner mental reality on the one hand, and a subject which becomes conscious of itself and its choices through a social reality on the other.

The important thing in understanding the call for authenticity is that this machine produces the employee as a self that could be authentic before it tries to colonize this self through different internalization efforts. In short, the machine not only taps into the authentic subject – it also produces the authentic subject as that which is to be tapped into. So before it imposes something like the call for authenticity, first of all it produces authenticity as a problem that has to do with employees expressing themselves at work. The machinic process installs the employee as *a subject of enunciation*, a subject, which is capable of expressing its inner core. But this authentic subject is only the endpoint of a process in so far as the expressions are folded over by statements and modes of expression through which the subjects are expected to evaluate their self-expression (see also Lazzarato, 2006). They are, in short, also a *subject of statement*, a subject which monitors itself rather than just expresses itself.

The drive for employees' personal expressions, their authentic feelings, dreams and thoughts, their mental reality so to speak, is always folded over by a reality of social meaning, which regulates the various ways in which the employee relates to his or her own self-expression. We might describe this process as a machine of subjectification (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999, Lazzarato, 2006) that works by assigning recognizable predicates to the employees: these are your dreams, aspirations, passions and thoughts as they are categorized, measured and made permissible in terms of the corporate culture or performance goals. The machine does not determine how the subject of enunciation should become a subject of statement. It rather defines a grid that delimits the range of choices that can be made. It outlines which kinds of relations are plausible when the subject of enunciation, as Goodchild explains it, 'forms its consciousness of itself out of the statements which it is able to make as a subject of a statement' (1996: 148).

So for the employee to become a worker-monad the employee must first of all be constituted as what Lazzarato calls 'the absolute and individual cause and origin of its expressions, its words, its affects' (2006: 2). As the Danfoss (2010) webpage makes clear, taking personal responsibility for company targets requires that the employees 'feel whole as individuals' and 'pursue' their 'ambitions to create' their 'own unique lifestyle'.

The worker-monad is, in other words, only truly productive for the organization if the employee is first of all the subject of its own enunciations. Only if this authentic self, this unique individual, is in place can the machine set up a series of codified statements that outline and categorize the organizational stakes. Here the employee is confronted with various statements and signs from a corporate reality through cultural manuals, performance goals or the recruitment ad that are imposed upon the employee. This is done so as to make the employee as subject of enunciation into a subject that is bound to these statements in such a way that 'The subject of enunciation recoils into the subject of the statement, to the point that the subject of the statement resupplies a subject of enunciation for another proceeding' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1999: 129).

In this way the worker-monad is exactly what emerges in this folding together of the employee as a subject of enunciation and the employee as a subject of statement. All of this, as Lazzarato explains, makes the worker-monad the effect of both:

On the one hand, the individual brings the subjectivation process to its pinnacle, because in all these activities s/he involves the 'immaterial' and 'cognitive' resources of her/his 'self', while on the other, s/he inclines towards identification, subjectivation and exploitation, given that s/he is both her/his own master and slave, a capitalist and a proletarian, the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement. (Lazzarato, 2006)

The effect of this seems to be that the more you invest of yourself as an employee in the world of the organization the better the result. Or, in the language of the Danfoss webpage (2010), if you find your unique lifestyle in the organization you also become empowered to take responsibility for the company's targets. But what we also see in the Danfoss (2007) ad is an indication of the fact that this process of overlaying the employee's so-called authentic self with a social reality must keep its dynamic nature if the authentic self is to keep retreating into the world of the organization. A life not lived in conformity with what the organization demands in its current situation is needed in order for new resources and inspirations to enter into the organization and thereby help to meet the challenges of the future organization (what is profitable, productive and cost-reducing in the world of tomorrow). What we have, then, is not only a division but a dynamic tension between the two subjects. This tension is necessary if the subject of enunciation and the subject of statement are to retreat and fold themselves into one another again and again. There must be something in the authentic self (the subject of enunciation) that is not yet actualized and categorised in fixed terms and statements in order for it to remain authentic. There must be a potential that can guarantee that the authentic self recoils once again into the reality of the organization and transforms this reality to make it more suitable for the economic challenges ahead.

## **The second process of the social machine of authenticity**

The Danfoss ad makes clear that being true to oneself and creating results in the long run demands a personal life outside of one's working identity. To bring passion and a personal touch to work requires having a life outside of work. In fact, the ad's headline suggests that this life is not just a resource for your success at work – it is a requirement (Danfoss, 2007). What the ad suggests, then, is that Danfoss's employees must be true to themselves to add value and create results, i.e. they must be and express themselves

as whole persons to reach their potential as good employees. But expressing yourself at work also demands that you are more than what you are currently expressing in the organizational setting. Good employees 'have a life' and are 'more' than their working selves; it is this life outside of work that makes the employee a good employee in the first place. This 'life' can be something that revitalizes the employee; it can also be something that develops him or her in ways that might at some point in time become productive for the organization. A career at Danfoss is only a career if it is built on a personal life. What you do outside of work, what you have done in the past and what you might do in the future: the experiences you accumulated and will accumulate, the interests you have and will have, the developments you have undergone and will undergo – this is the stuff which makes you a better *worker*. Everything that makes you a specific human being with your own singular biography and potentiality, this is the material out of which the Danfoss employee draws its strength (Danfoss, 2007). To be a whole person or authentic self at work is not just about bringing your personal touch to work but also about having a life outside work.

This appeal to more than what you are here and now at work, this call for making room for an uncategorized sphere of existence from where the 'life you lead while not at the work can help provide you with the strength needed to create results' (Danfoss, 2007) brings us to the second process in the call for authenticity. This process does not work by assigning the categories through which the employee-subject should express itself. Rather, it mobilizes an uncategorized sphere from which the employee-subject can emerge in new forms.

*A 'zone of neighbourhood' between the desire of the organization and the employee*

With its focus on social subjectification that objectifies the expressions of the authentic employee into a certain dominant world of meaning or corporate ideology, the first machine's logic is a variant of what Kunda (1992) calls normative control or perhaps even what Fleming (2009) calls neo-normative control. But with this second machine something else permeates the social subjectification. For social subjectification can only gain from tapping into the life of the employee if its production of subjectivity does not close in on either a particular employee's self-expression (mental reality of the subject of enunciation) or else a fully fleshed out and categorized corporate world (dominant reality of the subject of statement). Instead, these two realities are folded together.

This second process of the social machine of authenticity does not work by enfolding and enclosing the production of subjectivity within a certain individualized subjectivity as the first machinic process did. Rather it tries to pry open the individuated dimension of the employee's authentic subjectivity to access the surplus from which subjectivity springs, all the while regulating and directing it towards what might be productive for the corporation. The social stratification of the employees' self-expression no longer works in an effort to inscribe the employee's subjectivity into the dominant reality of the organization. Instead, it works by activating and putting into motion new forms of self-expression. In other words, an organizational stake is formulated through an utterance such as 'a career is nothing without a personal life' and this stake no longer directs itself towards folding the authentic self with the dominant corporate reality in

the effort to produce a particular self-image or self-expression. It works through the possibility of a future subjectivation of the employee by invoking a non-working self as a not yet actualized surplus for further folds. Where the first process of the machinery *assigns* the subjectivity with fixed predicates, this part of the machine *accelerates* the further production of subjectivity; new ways of being a subject of enunciation.

An indication of this acceleration is exactly what we see when employees at Danfoss (2007) are asked to separate the spheres of life and work *only in so far as* this discernment will potentially contribute to the enhancement of their career. This is rather paradoxical. The individual career includes the whole life of the employees; however, this career should also be set off from some parts of the employees' lives, at least for the time being. The employees should have a life outside of their career. The career is then only of value if it can be recognized as something authentic and personal. Indeed, it is the person's individual biography and experience that are recognized as beneficial for both the organization and the employee. What is 'outside' or 'more than work' is therefore exactly the personal or individual resource for good performance, i.e. what makes this particular employee unique and authentic.

Instead of an enfolding of the organizational stakes into the self-expressive authentic self, what we have with this appeal for an outside is what Deleuze and Guattari call a 'zone of neighbourhood' (1994: 18) between an employee-subject still in becoming (the experiences made and not yet made outside of work) and the abstract stakes of the organization (turning a profit, cost minimization etc.). This notion of zone refers to a domain where two aspects, A and B, enter into a relationship where they remain distinct but there is something undecided between them that forms a zone of AB, that neither belong to A or B. This zone makes A and B exchange features in ways that make it hard to discern where one ends and another begins, not because they lose their distinction and become blurred but rather because the distinction between them keeps changing. Rather than a convergence or fold between the pursuit of profit and the authentic desire of the employee, what is of interest in the call for authenticity in this second machinic process is the potential surplus, the not yet fully decided and determined exchange of features between an employee-subject still in becoming (new ways of expressing oneself) and the abstract stakes of the organization (new ways of turning a profit).

This function of this machine, then, is best described as that which connects the fragile and fragmented elements that mobilize the subject of enunciation and the subject of the statement. Therefore, we might describe this process as what Lazzarato (following Deleuze and Guattari) calls 'machinic enslavement', which is not 'the same thing as social subjection. If the latter appeals to the molar, individuated dimension of a subjectivity [the subject of enunciation as it is folded into a social reality], the former activates its molecular, pre-individual, pre-verbal, pre-social dimension' (Lazzarato, 2006).

In our case what the second machinic process, with its emphasis on the molecular zone, tells us is that the alignment of the organizational stakes and the authentic self that the first machinic process, with its social subjection, brings about must *never* dissolve the molecular zone from where the subject of enunciation emerges. Activating the molecular zone of exchange between the 'subject in becoming' and the abstract stakes

of the organization is what guarantees that the subject of the statement and the subject of enunciation keep recoiling into one another in new ways.

### *The authentic employee as a worker-nomad*

In the very call for authenticity, the first machinic process's constitution of the worker-monad is thus countered by a process that does not control the reactions and self-understandings of individuals by outlining the corporate world wherein they express themselves but rather focuses upon conditioning the development of employee subjectivity indirectly. As in the case of Danfoss, what is mobilized and tapped into is that which is not yet in the service of the company's overall vision of 'making modern living possible'. What is incited is a nomadic trait. That is, the authentic employee is not just a monad expressing the world of the organization in a singular way – it is also a nomad always looking for new ways of expressing these convergences between the employee and the organization.

The employee, like the nomad, must first of all change with the seasons. Employees must be on the move, change themselves over time with the challenges they meet. When one way of doing things no longer provides passion and profit, new expressions must be explored. The employee must be able to move the level of commitment and involvement from one task or project to the next. In fact, for the employee to be him- or herself in this process, it must always be able not only to perform, but indeed enjoy this act of transgression (see also Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005: 122). To be authentic is consequently not just a matter of looking inwards, but a question of testing and expanding the current borders of the self. As the Danfoss (2010) ad puts it, the aim is 'to feel whole as an individual and to pursue our ambitions to create our own unique lifestyle'. The employee must broaden his or her potential human capacity to make a difference in his or her job.

Secondly, the employee, like the nomad, inhabits many different spheres. Being an efficient employee demands that you are more than an employee. Having a life outside work becomes a resource when doing work, not only because of the revitalizing function of having a family, a hobby, or doing sports but because having these non-work activities develops competences and experiences that might help create organizational results. It is the lived life of the employee, including its different spheres, that is of importance for meeting the stakes of the organization. As Boltanski and Chiapello (2005: 112) also argue, the employee of today should not only commit his or her blood, heart, and soul to one kind of activity, but also possess and express the ability to move on to new activities:

He is mobile. Nothing must hamper his movements. He is a 'nomad'. In this sense, all the sacrifices that are made have the effect of enhancing the streamlined character of entities – of persons, but also of things – in order to favour their reorganization when the next project comes along. (ibid.: 122)

The employee must be nomadic because this is what ensures a lasting way for employees to incite and manage the coordination at work via the use of their own capacities. So the machine outlined here works by making room for these not yet organized desires, thoughts and actions while also outlining the components for the

authentic employee-subject. This machinic system does not work directly by blurring the work/non-work distinction but rather indirectly by mobilizing the subject the employee might become by constantly reorganizing the distinction. It demands that the distinction is dislocated and displaced anew. The social machine in the call for authenticity is therefore not just a call for being yourself at work in the sense of finding that immobile part which can constitute a core in your self-expression. It is also a call for constantly modifying what this immobile part is. Being yourself at work is never attained but must be expressed again and again for it to add value to the organization.

## Implications

The social machine works by realigning these two machinic processes. Either there is too little authenticity when the first machinic process takes control or too much authenticity when the second machinic process takes control. By combining and levelling out these two machinic processes the call for authenticity makes authenticity the presupposition of what it means to be a productive employee, a presupposition that posits itself as the condition (being authentic at work and outside work) of the set of interests (working and making a profit) we in fact should desire.

The social machine of authenticity, in other words, determines whatever interests are at play. It forms the very problematic that surrounds the investment of desire into a question concerning the employees' desire to self-express and the organization's desire to outline the social categories wherein these self-expressions are understood and made conscious. So the social machine not only performs a repressive role (how is self-expression to be understood and which forms are permissible) it also distributes what is to be considered repressed (the authentic, self-expressing self). It is, therefore, in the very dialectic between two such instances of repression and repressed that a social machine operates. Stated otherwise, the seeming contradiction between being a worker-momad and a worker-nomad is part of a process where the social machine of authenticity outlines both what is restricted (self-expressions – the subject of enunciation), the restriction (the organizational stakes determining how self-expressions are understood – the subject of statement) and the transgression of this restriction (the mobilization of a zone of neighborhood that ceaselessly demands a re-articulation of the fold between the subject of enunciation and the subject of statement).

The real power of this social machine, in short, consists in making something as trivial as everyday decisions about work-tasks, and something as abstract as what turns a profit now and in the future, into a question of whether or not employees are authentic. It construes, first of all, the very presupposition of what it means to think about, act upon and feel about work: 'does work allow me to just be myself?'. Secondly, it construes what gets in the way of these thoughts, actions and feelings: 'what are the different kinds of organizational demands that get in the way of me being fully authentic at work?'. And finally it outlines how to solve this problem: being someone more than who and what you are at work becomes a condition for being yourself at work. In this way the machine converts problems at work (such as 'is this the best way to do the task?', 'which task is most important?' and 'is this task adding value to the organization?') into matters of an existential nature that have to be solved by the

employee-subject by looking deeper into itself and its life (such as 'is this because I am not good enough at my job?', 'Is this really what I want?', 'Should I find another job? Or get a new hobby?').

This is perhaps also the immediate danger of the machine at work in the call for authenticity. It presents any drop in productivity, creativity and passion for work as an existential issue concerning authenticity that can only be handled by the employees themselves. It treats potential problems with productivity as a question of authenticity. After all, a career is nothing without a personal life.

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## the author

Michael Pedersen is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Management, Politics and Philosophy at Copenhagen Business School. He is currently part of a research-project on self-management, productivity and well-being ([www.trips.dk](http://www.trips.dk)) and a research-project on management of self-management ([www.cbs.dk/las](http://www.cbs.dk/las)). In addition he is a member of the editorial board of *ephemera*.  
E-mail: [mip.lpf@cbs.dk](mailto:mip.lpf@cbs.dk)