

# Culture Audit 2022





# Welcome home!

Welcome to Viisi, welcome home. That's the feeling we want to be able to give every new Viisionair when they start working at Viisi. And, as a whole team, we all maintain that feeling. Through these past two years of Covid, we literally have been at home. How we look forward to being able to meet each other again, to work together again without seeing each other through a computer screen, and preferably in locations that we choose ourselves - in complete freedom. In the woods, at a colleague's home, on the beach, during a workation... or just in the 'old-fashioned way' at one of our offices.

But we also manage to get along in that same way, through trial and error. The People First idea connects us, even at a distance. It

connects us as we are, simply as ourselves. Through this Culture Audit you'll get to meet us all; we have visited every Viisionair's home, we have taken snapshots, and gathered together everyone's life motto. This shows how diverse we are, and how we pull together with that diversity for a common goal: making the financial sector healthier, more sustainable and more focused on the long term. We do this first of all by setting a good example ourselves. It is not without reason that we put our colleagues first and treat each other as we would like to be treated ourselves. Everything within our organization revolves around these two principles. We hope that we can inspire others in doing so, because real change towards more humane organizations only takes shape when everyone participates.



# I Trust

**Trust. It's all about trust at Viisi. Our organizational culture ensures that our Viisionairs consider their working environment to be absolutely safe. But it goes beyond that: it also promotes development, and the flourishing of talents. We'll explain in this chapter how our organizational philosophy works, and what the basic principles of our organizational culture are.**

# People First

**This is Viisi. And we are Viisionairs who are proud of what we achieve every day as a team, and of the purpose that we work towards.**

Our purpose is two-fold:

- We are changing the financial world, we are making it better, more sustainable and increasingly long term-oriented.
- We do this by putting our people first, and by creating a workplace within which everyone can pursue the purpose of the company, but also his or her own purpose, based on their own talent. We call it People First.

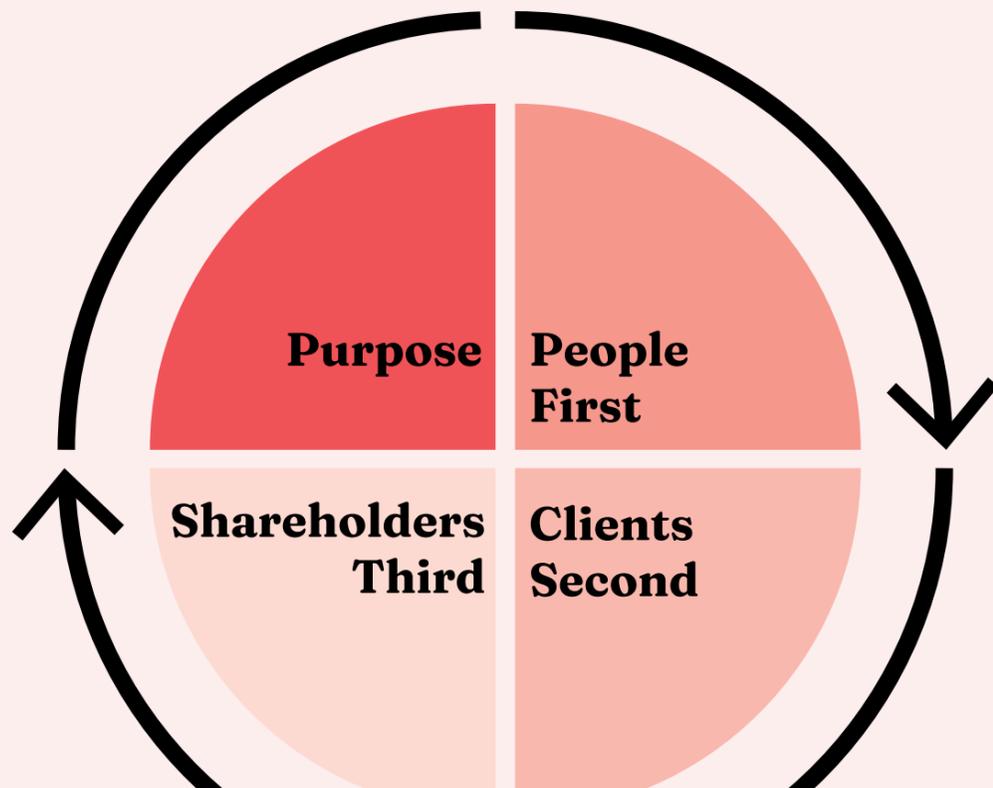
For this audit, we wanted to zoom in on People First, which is a basic principle throughout all our actions. We think that this principle should always be at the heart of a Great Place To Work, because that is what it all comes down to in the end. Which of the stakeholders has which priority? This often only becomes really clear when you have to weigh up the interests of all stakeholders. And in times of crisis, such as now during Covid, values and principles are put to the test.

At Viisi, we not only have a clear opinion about the order of stakeholders, we have even defined it within our Viisi Circle, which is visible to everyone on our website, including our clients.



**Everything starts with our Purpose:**

# Let's Change Finance



## **1 - People First**

The Viisionairs come first: Because if we are happy, then the rest will automatically follow

## **2 - Clients Second**

Every day we are fully committed to making our customers happy

## **3 - Shareholders Third**

Financial health in order to remain solid in the long run.

So, we come before our customers, and the shareholders follow in third place and not - as with many companies - in first. The principle is not new, we're aware of that. But in practice you often see that the customer comes first, and in listed companies the shareholder, but rarely the people themselves. Richard Branson, one of our figures for inspiration, explains People First in [this video](#).

So, with People First as a basic principle, we are constantly looking at what motivates people to work at Viisi. We are guided by the self-determination theory of Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. At the heart of the theory is the proposition that there are three basic natural needs that, if satisfied, allow for the optimal functioning, well-being, and growth of a person.

**These basic needs are:**

1. Autonomy
2. Competence
3. Connectedness

The only assignment you have as an employer is to remove as many obstacles as possible to offer autonomy, so that everyone can let his / her intrinsic motivation flow to work on a better version of themselves, in a team that collectively and connectedly strives towards a common goal.

**Inspiration Ted Talk: Daniel Pink**

The surprising science of motivation. Vocational analyst Daniel Pink studies the mystery of motivation. He begins with a fact that social scientists know, but most managers don't, which is that traditional rewards aren't always as effective as we think. His illuminating story provides a lot of context for the programs and initiatives we maintain at Viisi.

A portrait of Romy van den Nieuwenhof, a woman with long brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, button-down shirt. The background is a soft-focus indoor setting.

**“Believe you can do it, and you’re half-way there”**

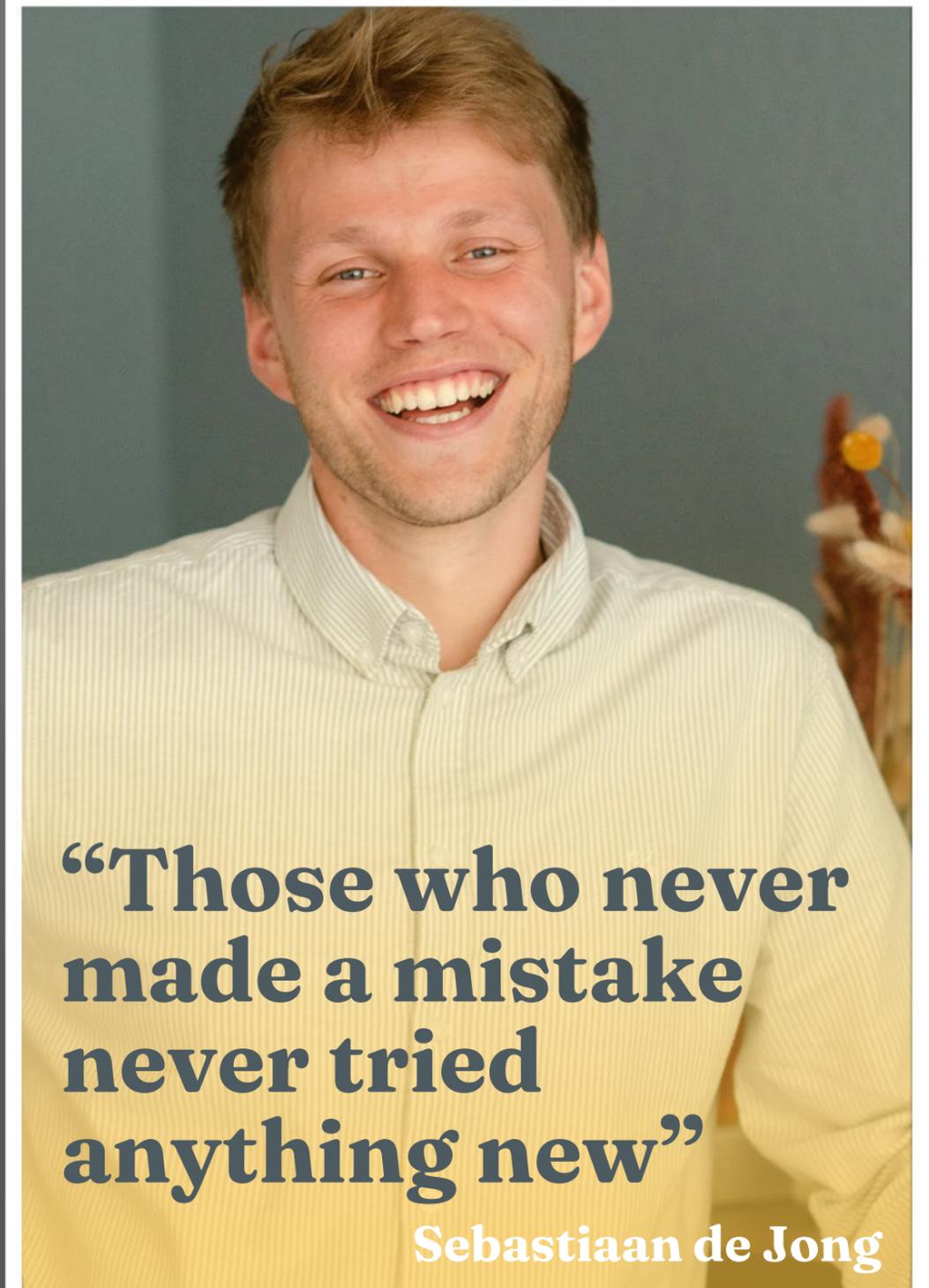
**Romy van den Nieuwenhof**

# Psychological Safety

How do you create a culture in which our colleagues are able to satisfy the basic needs from the self-determination theory however? One basic principle for us is what has become known as “Psychological Safety”.

In the so-called Project Aristotle, Google conducted research into teams that deliver top performances, and what they found out, was that what turned out to be even more decisive than the composition of the team and the abilities of the team members, their experience, or the way in which the decision-making process is designed for the success of teams, was psychological safety (see “Psychological Safety” box).

As far as we are concerned, “Psychological Safety” is also at the heart of mutual trust at work. When people feel safe, the freedom arises to make decisions for themselves, to make mistakes, and to ask for and give feedback. Most importantly, within a safe environment, you are also valued simply for who you are: People First in other words. We would like to highlight a number of programs and initiatives below. It shows how we create a culture of trust and Psychological Safety, and how the People First philosophy forms the foundation of this.



**“Those who never made a mistake never tried anything new”**

**Sebastiaan de Jong**

## Inspiration

### Amy Edmondson

Harvard Business School Professor Amy Edmondson conducted research into which elements of a team render optimum performance. She found that teams that made more mistakes were more successful than other teams. Why? Because these teams create an environment where people feel comfortable taking risks, bringing in new ideas, asking questions and giving honest feedback, without being judged for it. This phenomenon has become known as 'Psychological Safety'.



# 1. Equal Pay

Equal pay is a no-brainer for us. With our transparent salaries, the room for negotiation, from which assertive men reap the benefits more often than women, has completely disappeared. Everyone is rewarded according to relevant work experience, and all employees within the same field receive the same annual salary increase. Among the Viisionairs, the colleagues that fulfil the central Compensation Architect role regularly carry out a salary benchmark for each field, so that we can always be sure that we remain among the top twenty-five percent of highest-paying companies. They do this in conjunction with colleagues who fulfil the Salary Role in a decentralized manner. And what if the salary of a field needs adjusting? You guessed it: the adjustment will then apply to everyone within that field.

**Annelieke Oort-Oerlemans:** “The great thing about Viisi’s salary model is that, as a young mother, I never have to worry about things like a ‘pay gap’ or ‘child fine’. When the salary model was introduced, careful consideration was already awarded to fair principles, so that the foundations ensure that remuneration is only based on relevant matters, such as roles and work experience, and not on negotiation skills or temporary absence due to parental leave.”

A portrait of Annelieke Oort-Oerlemans, a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a green blazer over a dark floral top. The background shows a bookshelf with books and a blue and white ceramic object.

“Ubi caritas  
et amor deus  
ibi est”  
Annelieke Oort-Oerlemans

# 2. Optimal team performance

Ideally, you don't want to have to think about your salary, because it's only when your salary is in the background that you can work with your team in the best way possible to allocate tasks and achieve goals. Because we work with fixed salary increases, which are not linked to the roles you fulfill within your field, and are not linked to performance goals, you won't be burdened by competitive behavior among team members, meaning you don't have to worry about your salary if you return your own roles, or decide within the team to allocate the roles in a different manner.

With a matter such as salary shifted to the background, it also makes it easier to take care of each other. And, as far as we are concerned, that goes beyond short-term solutions. Sure, you are there for each other when things don't work out, but caring is always centered around the long term. Caring is offering certainty, knowing that someone always has your back and therefore automatically also provides it in return (Golden Rule). That basis ensures that 'Most people are good' :)



**“When  
in doubt,  
assume the  
best aspect”**

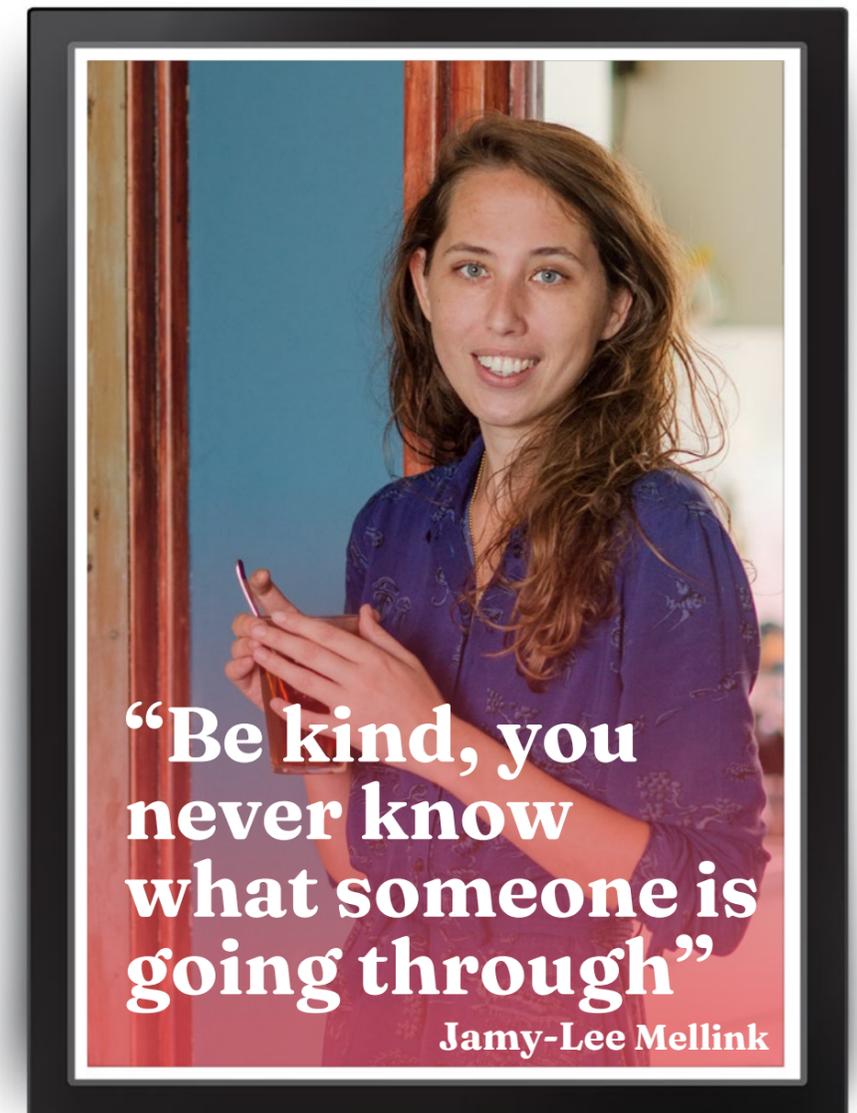
Jessica de Jong



# 3. Horizontal feedback beats vertical feedback

Because there are no people ranking above you, it is very important to stimulate feedback ‘in the workplace’, there where it actually belongs. We notice that during our daily Tacticals good feedback is given every day. The advantage is that in these Tacticals, we provide feedback in terms of roles instead of directly to people. This makes giving feedback more accessible. You address the role on what you expect from that role. In addition, because you do it daily, many tensions, including feedback, never become very major issues. The same applies to signalling or resolving conflicts.

Feedback is at its most valuable if it can be given permanently, by colleagues themselves. With us, there are no annual assessment cycles, no ‘top-down’ assessment interviews. Our salary model supports a safe environment for giving and receiving feedback, which also contributes to the success of our teams. This so-called horizontal “peer-to-peer feedback” arises automatically within self-organizing structures, because teams define their own goals and roles, and can and want to be able to address each other about those goals and roles.



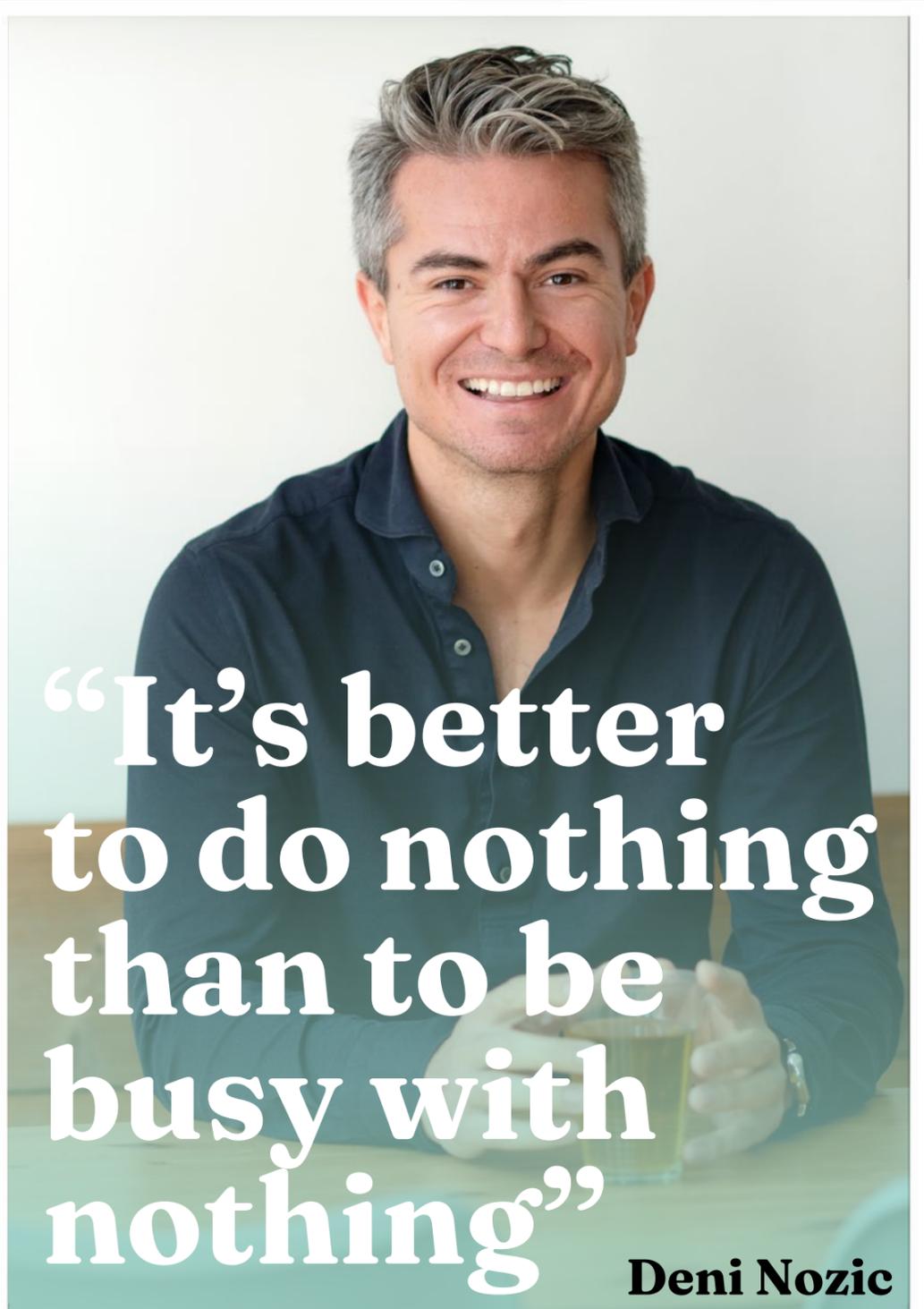
## Inspiration

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN EEN AGILE WERKOMGEVING

Kilian W. Wawoe | Maud Schaapveld | Rutger Verbeet

The authors Kilian Wawoe, Maud Schaapveld and Rutger Verbeet wrote the book Performance Management in an Agile Working Environment. Their conclusion is that only 21 percent of the reviews of performances in a traditional assessment interview can actually be traced back to the performance delivered. The rest appears to be mainly related to the perception of the assessor. A review score therefore says more about the assessor than about the individual being assessed!

Many organizations have indicated that they would like to get rid of the classic performance management concept that consists of setting goals annually, passing judgment in the form of a score, and the associated rewards that follow on from that. It takes a lot of time, generates a lot of frustration and paperwork, and does not align with a flexible, agile working environment. It is for this reason that the authors of this book presented alternatives for this classic assessment cycle. Viisi is included in this book as a best practice in the field of rewarding, assessing and performance management.



**“It’s better  
to do nothing  
than to be  
busy with  
nothing”**

**Deni Nozic**

# 4. No budget for training

For many employers, the old-fashioned promotion to team leader or manager is the only way to earn a higher salary. You are then expected to be in charge and lead; something you might not want to do, or might not have any talent for. That is why, at Viisi, we do not work with set development paths, because everyone is unique in our eyes. We look at individual talents and then collectively determine how and in which roles people will best come into their own. We consciously work without a fixed training budget. In order to stimulate the following of education and training, as an organization, we fully reimburse all training costs; this also applies to courses that fall outside our own Viisi Academy. You decide collectively within your circle who is going to be allocated a certain task. In addition, following training courses is a fixed topic in our development discussions.

A portrait of Nancy Brussel, a woman with long blonde hair, wearing a light blue cardigan, smiling. The portrait is framed in black and has a semi-transparent red overlay at the bottom where the quote is placed.

**“What’s  
meant to be,  
will always  
find a way”**

Nancy Brussel

**Nancy Brussel:** “Because Viisi does not have a training budget and you can decide for yourself in your team which program you are going to take on, it makes you think about what you really want. I get a lot of energy from educating people and passing on my knowledge. In the past year we have grown enormously, and hopefully we will continue to grow. That’s why I wanted to follow the Holacracy Practitioner training. This way I can get even more new

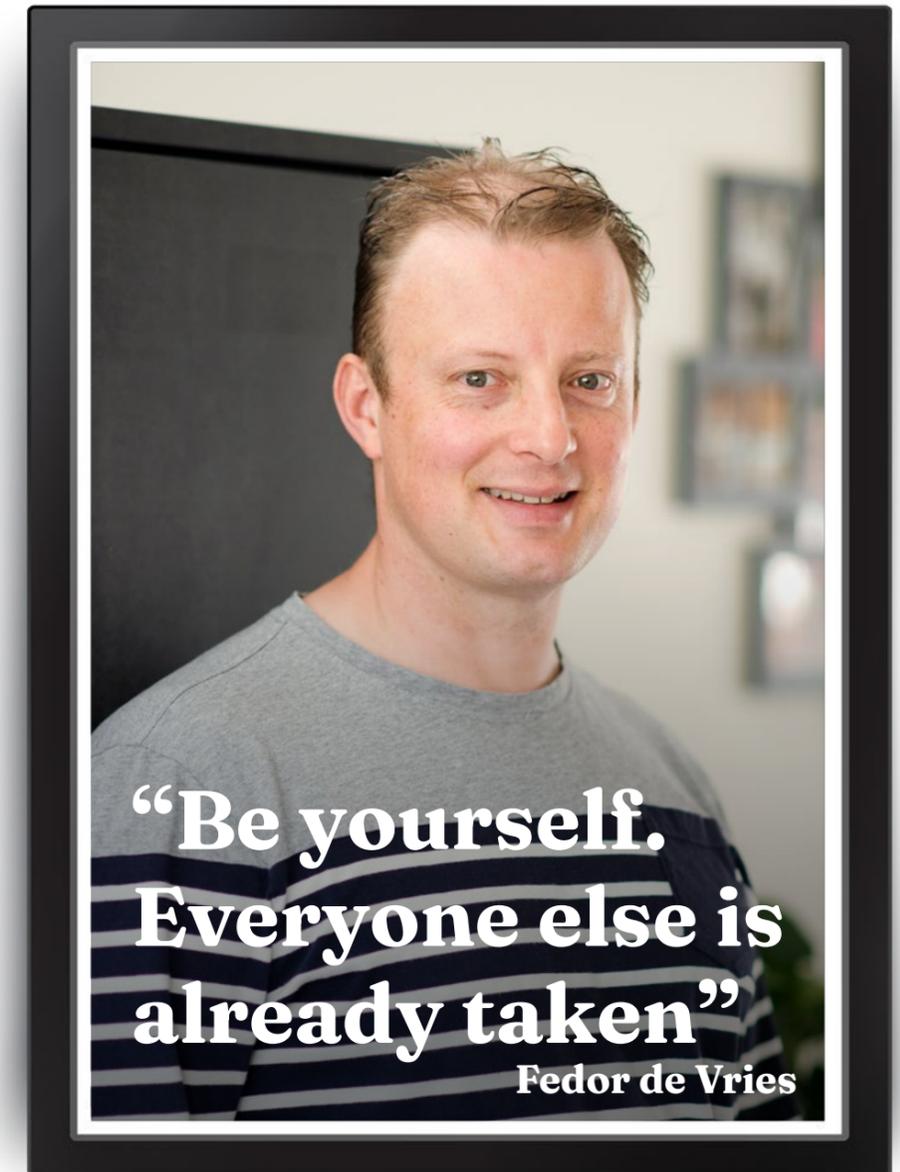
Viisionairs excited about Holacracy and explain everything about it. The training has given me confirmation about what I already knew, but it also gave me a lot of new insights. My goal now is to share these new insights with all of the current and new colleagues. Together with a few other colleagues, who also completed that same training, we started a new circle to take the entire organization a step further in terms of self-organization.”

# 5. Teams hire colleagues and set the salary themselves

In addition to the fact that teams hire new colleagues themselves, they also determine the starting salary of those new colleagues by means of their own salary role. They assess the relevant work experience of the candidate, and thereby calculate the starting salary for the new colleague. Candidates will be told their starting salary in the first job interview. Then that matter has already been handled, and we can talk about the really important issues, such as ‘do we fit together?’

**Fedor de Vries:** “I fulfill the Compensation Guard role within our circle. That gives me the freedom and responsibility to resolve tensions that exist around our salary model. Initially, I provided input for the role of Compensation Architect through extensive market research, which led to the first major adjustment of our salary model. In the meantime, I have already worked on a number of

improvements in our salary model. I can’t imagine there are many companies where the input from the teams themselves is so trusted, which for me, greatly increases the level of engagement, and in turn, I feel extra responsibility to act in the interests of Viisi.”



# 6. Radical Transparency

Our entire Holacracy organizational structure is transparent (also to the outside world): from roles to projects, from planned action to metrics on revenue and liquidity. Every Viisionair may join any meeting, and it's even encouraged, because we have nothing to hide. In fact, radical transparency is a basic prerequisite for our holacratic organization; it is the fuel for our autonomous teams. It's not that everyone continuously wants or is required to be at every meeting all the time, but the notion that it's possible at all times lends a sense of trust and ownership.

Holacracy promotes transparency through the structured way that metrics are discussed in each Tactical Meeting and are placed on public digital dashboards. This ensures that every Viisionair has access to all information within a company. In addition, everyone can place a 'tension' on the agenda at any time during the meeting. The tension of one individual is not more important than that of another. Tension can be positive or neutral, as well as negative. A tension is only the difference between the current situation and how it may be in the future. This system automatically leads to much more information being shared than in a traditional meeting.



**“Teamwork  
makes the  
dream work”**

**Carlo Goedhart**

Each circle has a number of key metrics that are utilized for control. The Metrics Designer role was devised to clearly display all this information. What accompanies this, for example, is that everyone within Viisi can see how many leads we receive weekly, where they're from, what the turnover is per week, what the annual turnover is, and what the annual overheads are. Even the liquidity position of the organization is transparent to everyone!

### **Maarten van Gelder**

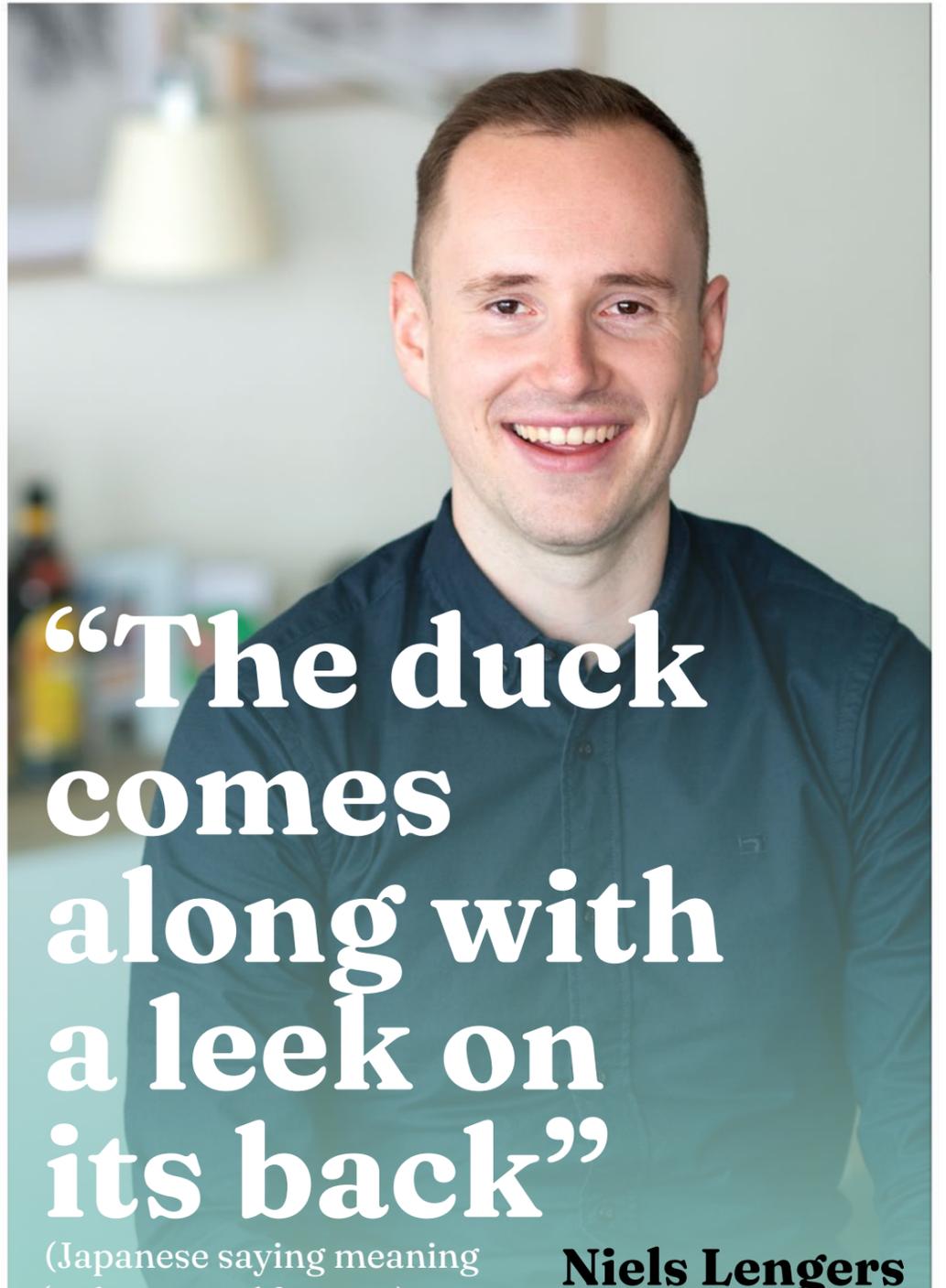
“As a Metrics Designer, you have a lot of data at your disposal. Through this data, we create different dashboards to provide more insight for colleagues. As a colleague or new colleague, you'll receive a lot of insights into the company. With other companies, this isn't usually transparent. It's especially through sharing this data that you're able to help each other better, and feedback is very welcome in that sense. That way, everyone stays sharp, and you can also adapt your tasks to become even better together.”



**Maarten van Gelder**

# 7. The walking and cycling commute for all

Many companies open offices wherever they think they'll be able to draw in clients. We considered the location for our offices with People First in mind: what will we do when we can safely return to the office? Many colleagues miss working with others on location, but would like to continue working partly from home. The big advantage of working from home is that there is no travel time.

A portrait of Niels Lengers, a man with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. The portrait is set within a white border and a black frame.

**“The duck comes along with a leek on its back”**

(Japanese saying meaning  
'to have good fortune')

**Niels Lengers**

We then started a new project to find out if we could open new offices with as a goal, that every colleague would be able to walk or cycle to the office. In addition, this was inspired by Anne Hidalgo, the first female mayor of Paris. Her revolutionary idea for the city was that every Parisian should be able to be at all of their lifestyle-essential locations within 15 minutes: schools, shops, culture, healthcare... and work!

We placed all Viisionairs on a heatmap, and using that as a guideline, we opened offices in Hoorn, Zaandam in 2020 and Zwolle in 2021; all with short commutes, but working together in the office, and a big improvement in terms of sustainability! For the interior, we didn't opt for a fixed Viisi style. Colleagues were awarded the freedom of furnishing the office in line with their own taste.

**Marc Meulhof**

“Viisi has given me every opportunity to open my own office in Zwolle. After I revealed this wish, they gave me every freedom to choose interesting locations. Within a few weeks, I was able to open an office and decorate it to my own taste. I did that together with Natascha, who is also from Zwolle. So right away, it felt like our own cozy office! Especially in this time where less commuting has become the norm, it was great to be given this opportunity. You have a goal in mind, Viisi listens, and then offers you every opportunity to go and achieve your goal!”

A portrait of Marc Meulhof, a man with short brown hair, smiling, wearing a dark green button-down shirt. The photo is set within a white border and a black frame, with a red semi-transparent overlay at the bottom.

**“Making the financial world much better, more sustainable and more long-term oriented”**

**Marc Meulhof**



**“Everything  
is possible, if  
you want it  
enough!”**

Natascha Wienen

## II Meaningful values

**What are our core values and how do we put them into practice? In this chapter you can read what our Golden Rule entails, how this translates into our salary model, and why we would like to see employees work at Viisi throughout their entire working lives. You will also get acquainted with our Traffic Light Model and our Culture Days.**

# The Golden Rule

At Viisi we really only have one rule, and that is our golden rule to “Treat others as you’d want to be treated yourself”. So, we do not work with the staid 10 core values for instance, but with one overarching rule. This is easier to remember and easy to apply in practice. The rest often turns out to be just a matter of common sense. And if anyone’s still in doubt, they simply ask a colleague.



The fact that the Golden Rule works so well is partly due to the fact that this rule is not new at all. For example, it is a basic rule in most religions (see the picture), and is defined within many constitutions. As far as we’re concerned, the Golden Rule is just as much the common thread at Viisi.



« Norman Rockwell: The Golden Rule across religions

# So, how do we deal with each other at Viisi?

The short answer is: just as people basically, so therefore not as 'Human Resources'. We have listed four examples, which explain how we put the Golden Rule into practice on a daily basis:

- **The Viisi Salary Model**
- **The Traffic Light System**
- **Growth: Quality over quantity**
- **Culture Days**

But as we mentioned before, People First and the Golden Rule are the guiding principles throughout our organization, so you'll encounter these meaningful values everywhere in our Culture Audit.



**“Helping others  
gives more  
satisfaction  
than just helping  
yourself; those  
who do good, will  
encounter good.”**

**Michiel Goris**

# The Viisi Salary Model

Before we introduced Holacracy as an organizational model, we were already working on the principles of a new reward and assessment system. After all, in which way can salaries be allocated if you no longer work with job descriptions but with roles instead? Who is responsible for assessing, if the 'management roles' within the team are applied on a rotation basis?

How do you create an environment within which team members can provide the optimum feedback for each other? How do you facilitate the teams so that they can perform to their highest capacity? And how do you offer everyone the security to be able to develop (see Maslow box)?

**“Make today so awesome that yesterday gets jealous”**



**Marlies Liebrecht**

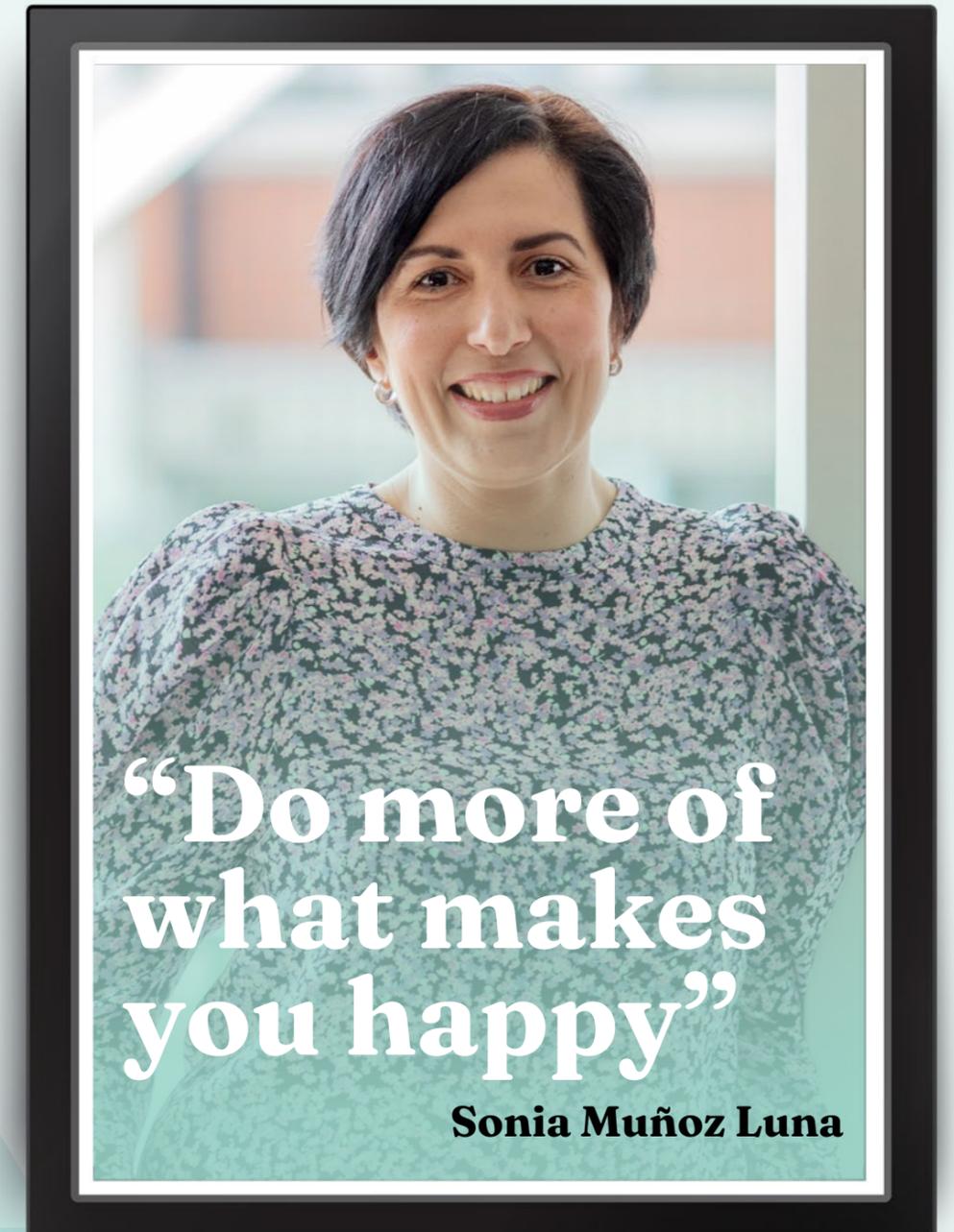
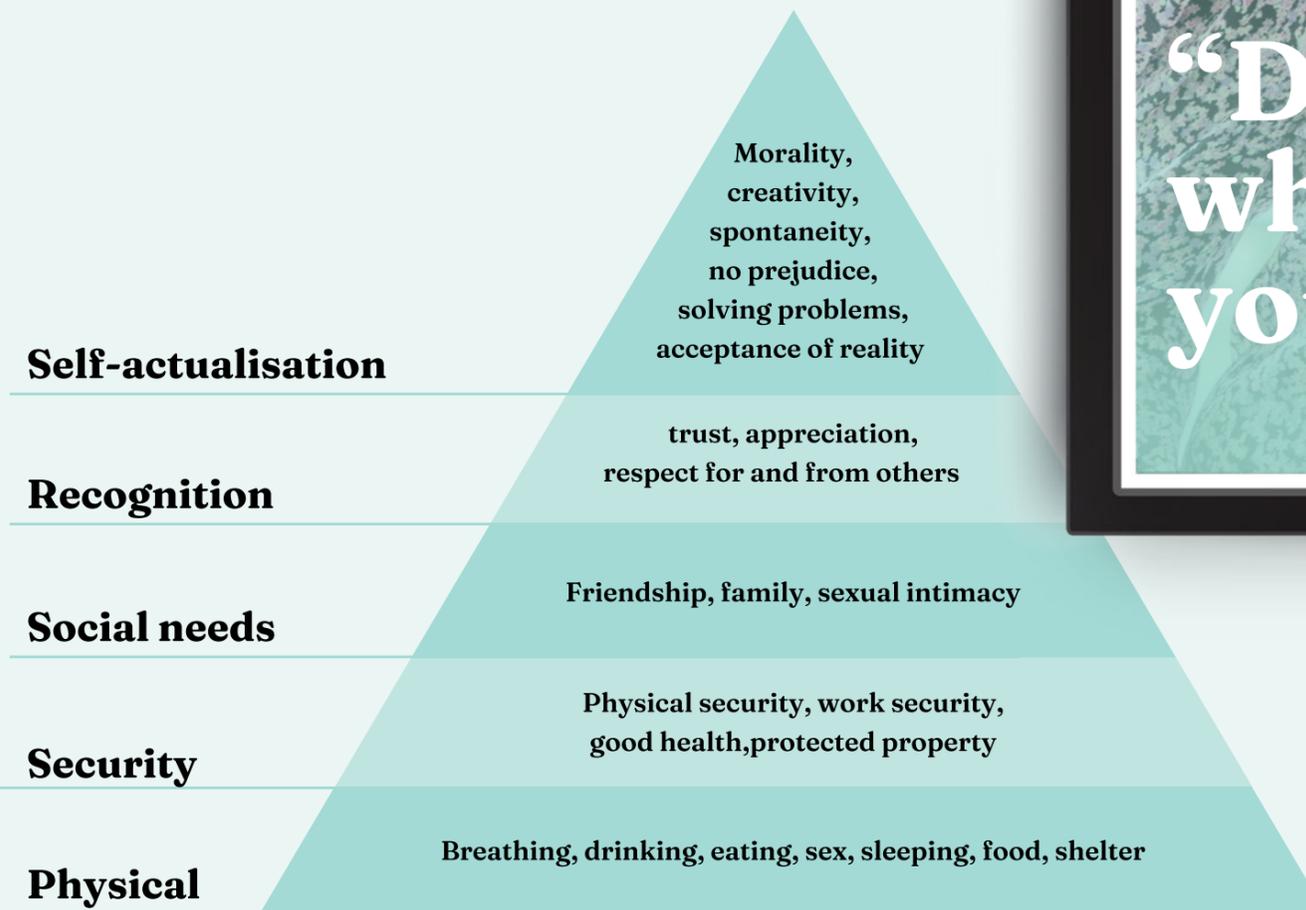


The clinical psychologist Abraham Harold Maslow (1908-1970) is best known for 'his' pyramid. So, what does it look like? Maslow also called the physiological need the 'Lower fundamental need'. The four higher needs are the 'Higher fundamental needs'. The key word here is 'fundamental'. According to Maslow, a failure to satisfy these fundamental needs would lead to a reduction in full humanity and the blocking of human possibilities. According to Maslow, the need for growth is not fundamental, as a person can only realize (grow) if they have at least satisfied the basic needs.

A starting point for the salary model for us was the previously mentioned "Psychological Safety". When people feel safe, the freedom to ask for and supply feedback will accompany it; moreover, in a safe environment, you are also appreciated for your work, which works best when colleagues

give each other permanent feedback. This so-called horizontal "peer-to-peer feedback" arises automatically in self-organizing structures.

By completely separating performance and salary in the new remuneration model, the concept of psychological safety is supported, because without any form of financial consequences, individual and team performances are optimized.

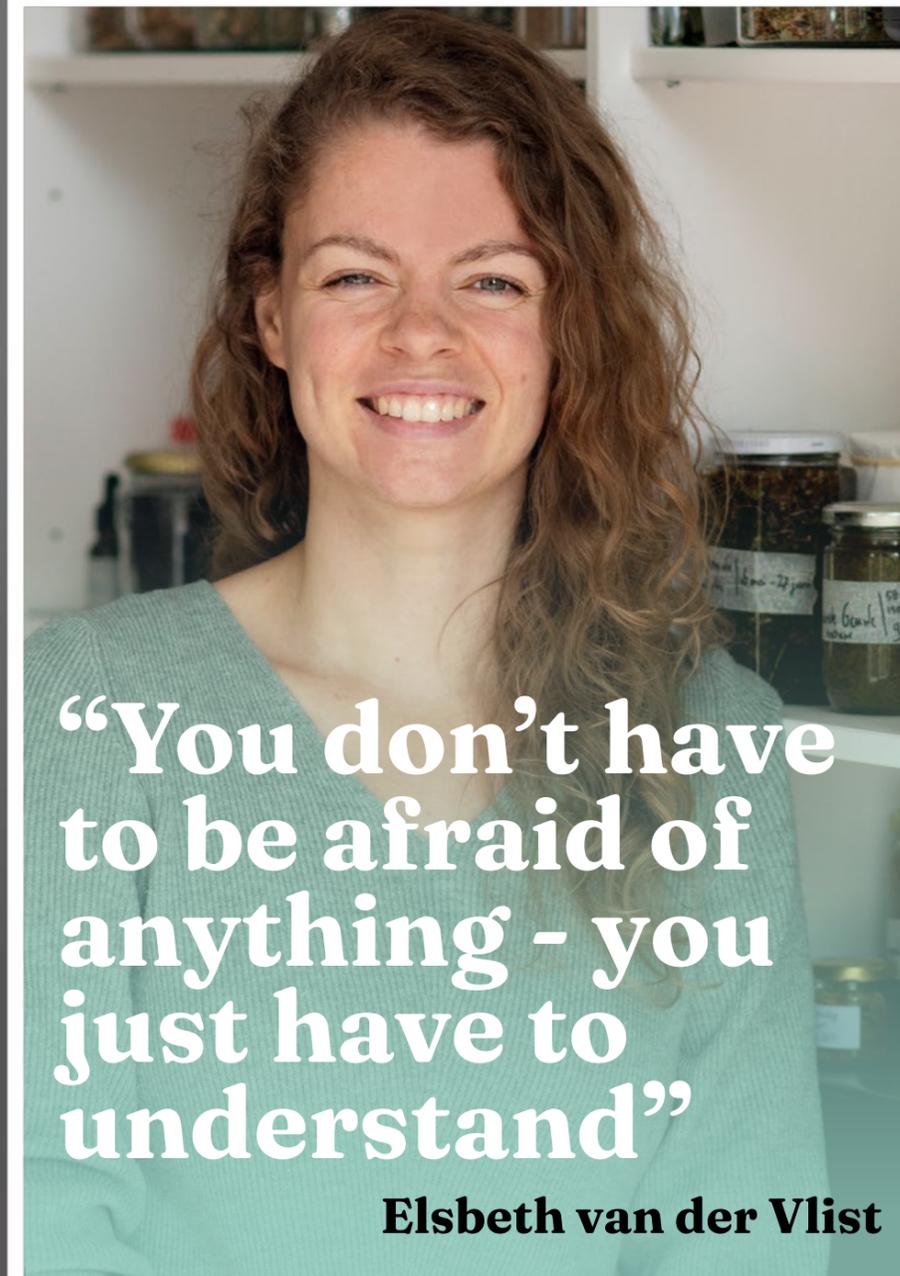


# Development of the Viisi salary model

At Viisi, we strive for maximum team performance, which means for us that we want to work without ‘salary static’. It’s only when salary is shifted to the background that our teams can work in the optimum manner to achieve goals. We therefore strived to create a simple system, and even so, it was still pretty difficult to keep it simple. For example, look at how complex and untransparent the payrolls of large organizations are. That’s already evident on the outside by the large number of job titles. The question for us was: what errors are

embedded in these salary models, and how do you resolve them?

We worked on the new reward system for several years, whereby we reviewed all kinds of salary models. We looked at a wide variety of industries, both public and private. This led to a large number of data points, and lines were then created that could be extended until retirement. At the same time, all employees were asked to check these lines based on salaries in their peer group, or former colleagues.

A portrait of a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a light blue sweater. The background shows a kitchen or laboratory setting with shelves and jars.

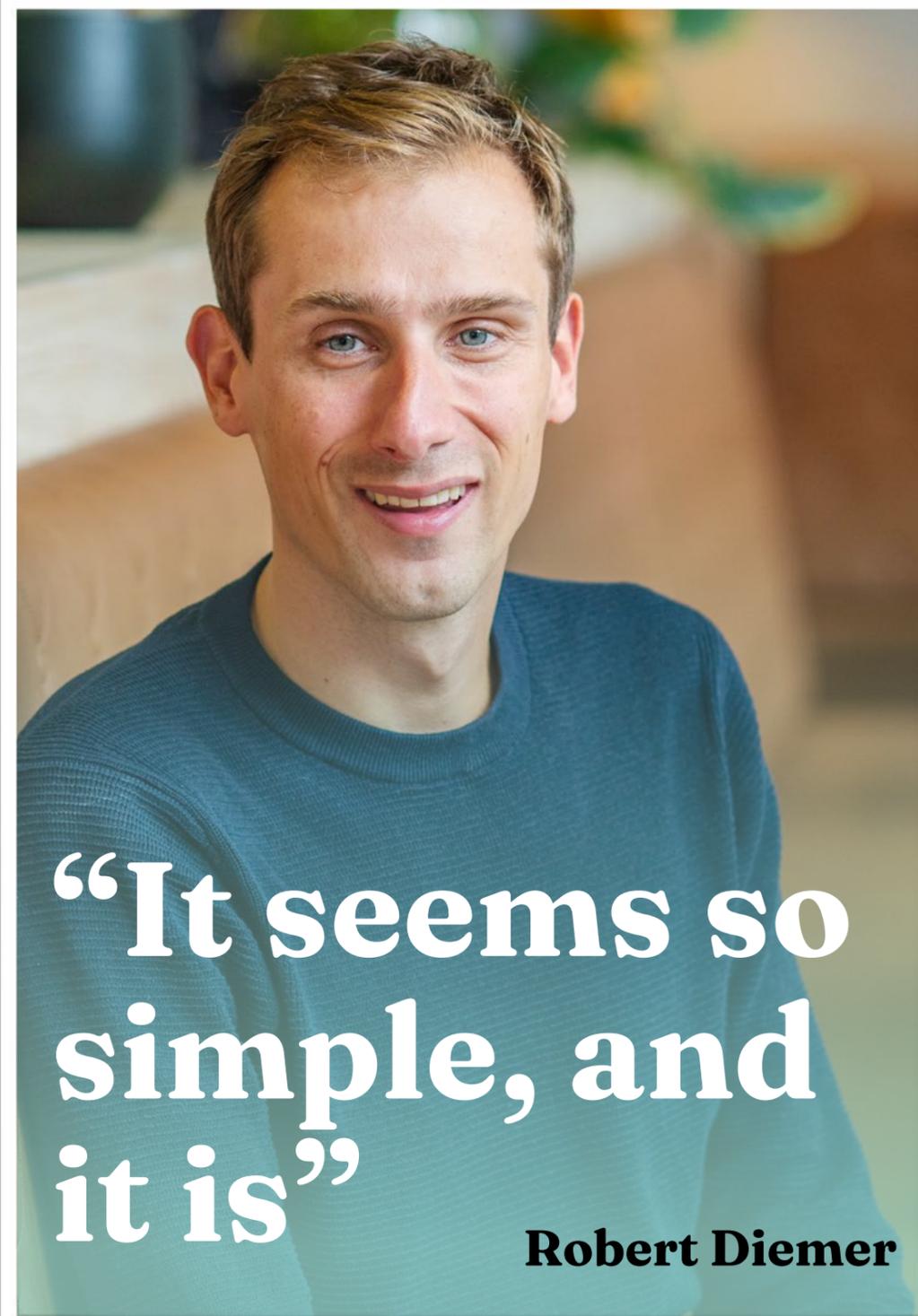
**“You don’t have  
to be afraid of  
anything - you  
just have to  
understand”**

**Elsbeth van der Vlist**



**“Only  
you can  
turn your  
dreams into  
reality”**

**Gita Wiegel**



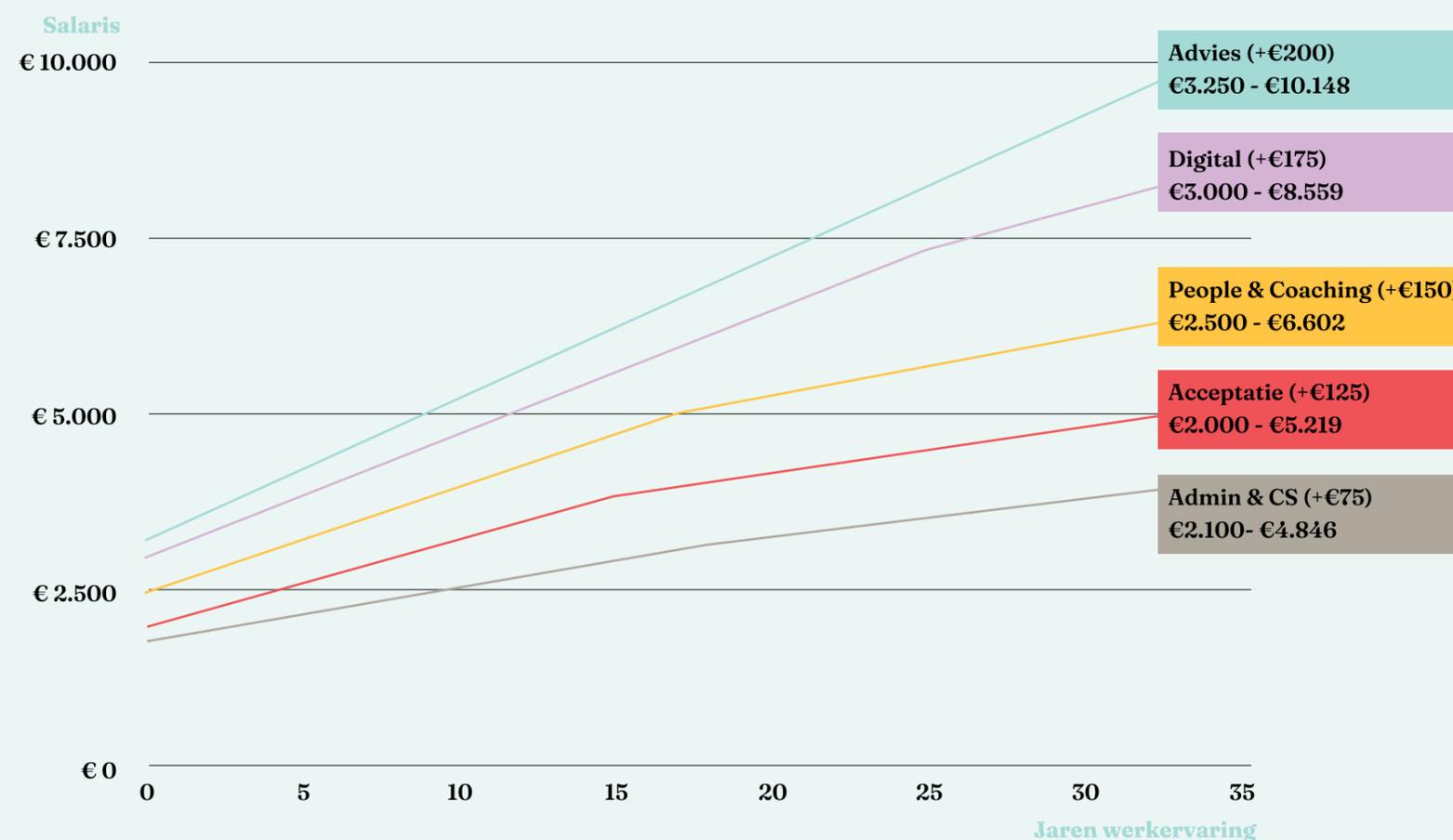
**“It seems so  
simple, and  
it is”**

**Robert Diemer**

As a starting point for the development of a new remuneration model, all salaries were registered and made transparent in one of the weekly Town Hall meetings. After that, individual ‘speed dates’ were held. These were brief conversations, where everyone could express their opinion about their own salary. In a second round of speed dates, everyone could also provide feedback on the salaries of all the colleagues and how they relate to one another.

Ultimately, the new Viisi Salary Model consists of five salary development curves, each of which relates to the field in which the Viisionair performs the most roles. This new model eliminates any risk of a possible pay gap. Equal pay was one of the starting points in Viisi’s new remuneration model. Due to the transparent salaries, the space for negotiations is removed, from which assertive men more often than women would reap the benefits.

Everyone is allocated fixed annual salary increases, and therefore performance is disconnected from salary development, and formal assessment is also not part of our performance management system. As a result, employees can exchange feedback without ‘salary static’. Financial consequences of giving feedback are never an issue for employees, so there are no secretive scenarios with us surrounding salaries. Our salary model is openly viewable on our [website](#), and all [vacancies](#) are accompanied by a formula with which you can calculate your own salary.





**“You can only  
waste time if  
you forget to  
enjoy it”**

**Lotte van Weezel**



**“Wissen  
ist noch  
lange nicht  
Weisheit”**

**Thijs Visscher**

The new salary model enables us to immediately tackle the so-called 'Peter Principle'. Because many people get promoted, and are placed in charge, but are actually not all suited to that task. We solved that by not maintaining any difference in salary. Team members decide for themselves who is the best match for a coordinating role. And - again - that only works if there is no salary static.

Salary is really only a matter of fair distribution, and it should provide Viisionairs the certainty that they will be paid well now and in the future. It seems simple, but was actually quite complex.

# A lifetime at Viisi

Loyal. Happy in your place of work. Years of contributing something to the bigger picture. For us, it goes without saying. But being employed at a company for decades is now almost a thing of the past.

Why do people think it's normal to think 'it's about time for something else' after working somewhere for a few years? Or that you're 'probably ready for a new challenge'? Meanwhile, a quarter of the workforce in the Netherlands

are on a zero-hour contract, six-month contract or some other type of 'flexible employment relationship'. The number of flexible workers has increased by almost a million over the past 20 years. Permanent contracts are rare nowadays - especially among young professionals.

At Viisi, our aim is exactly the opposite, because if you want to be successful in a rapidly changing society, you have to assemble a team that stays together; a team that is fully attuned to each other, whereby the work is divided so that it perfectly matches the strengths and motivations of its individual members, and where you flow seamlessly to other slots within the organization, or participate in other projects than you initially applied for. So basically, a team working optimally for the long term on the overarching goal of the organization: to make the financial sector healthier, more sustainable and more focused on the long term.

We therefore consciously look beyond the 'risk' of permanent employment contracts. In other words, not: 'How do we get rid of people when things are going badly', but rather: 'Thank you for committing to our company for another year'.



# Celebrating your work anniversary

We do this by celebrating the annual Work Anniversary, with a fixed salary increase as a mini-anniversary gift, which we extend in our transparent salary model until retirement. As of this year, we have taken this a step further for 3, 6, and 9-year work anniversaries. As an extra bonus, we multiply the fixed salary increase by a factor of 2.25.

Furthermore, we adjust the salary every year by the average inflation rate of the past year, and carry out a salary benchmark to find out whether we are still competitive. As of 2022, the salary for everyone at the company has risen by approximately 5%. For some that figure is higher, because of their working anniversary, so no one has to leave for the sake of money – and not for the sake of self-development either, because everyone can try out different roles, or even switch to a different field.



“Carpe diem”

Arjen Goedmakers

A portrait of Margy van der Veen, a woman with blonde hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue top. The photo is framed by a thick black border.

**“Find your  
happiness  
in small  
things”**

**Margy van der Veen**

**Margy van der Veen**

“At Viisi, I had the opportunity to switch from the Happiness Factory (where advisors and customers are supported) to our People First circle. Here I am now mainly involved in recruitment and supervising applicants. Besides the fact that this is of course new, very exciting and also a bit scary, I think it is especially cool that I have been given this opportunity. This way I can continue to develop myself and learn a lot of new things. It is very special that a company radiates this trust so transparently and allows me take new steps.”

# Virtual shares

As an additional reward for loyalty, we have introduced Viisi Virtual shares. This means that a selection of the shares of Viisi have been made virtually available to all Viisionairs. The distribution is done according to a simple points system: every year you work at Viisi, you earn a point. Every five years you accrue double points. This way, your relative share in Viisi grows in line with the number of years you have been employed. The moment (part of) the shares in Viisi are sold, you share in the proceeds. Your share will retain its value for as long as you work at Viisi. We have chosen to offer them virtually to avoid complexity, keeping it simple in other words!

**This is how we set up everything to make a life-long tenure at Viisi possible, because we believe that we can then generate the impact we're promising. A long-term interplay is basically how you'd like to be treated yourself, isn't it?**

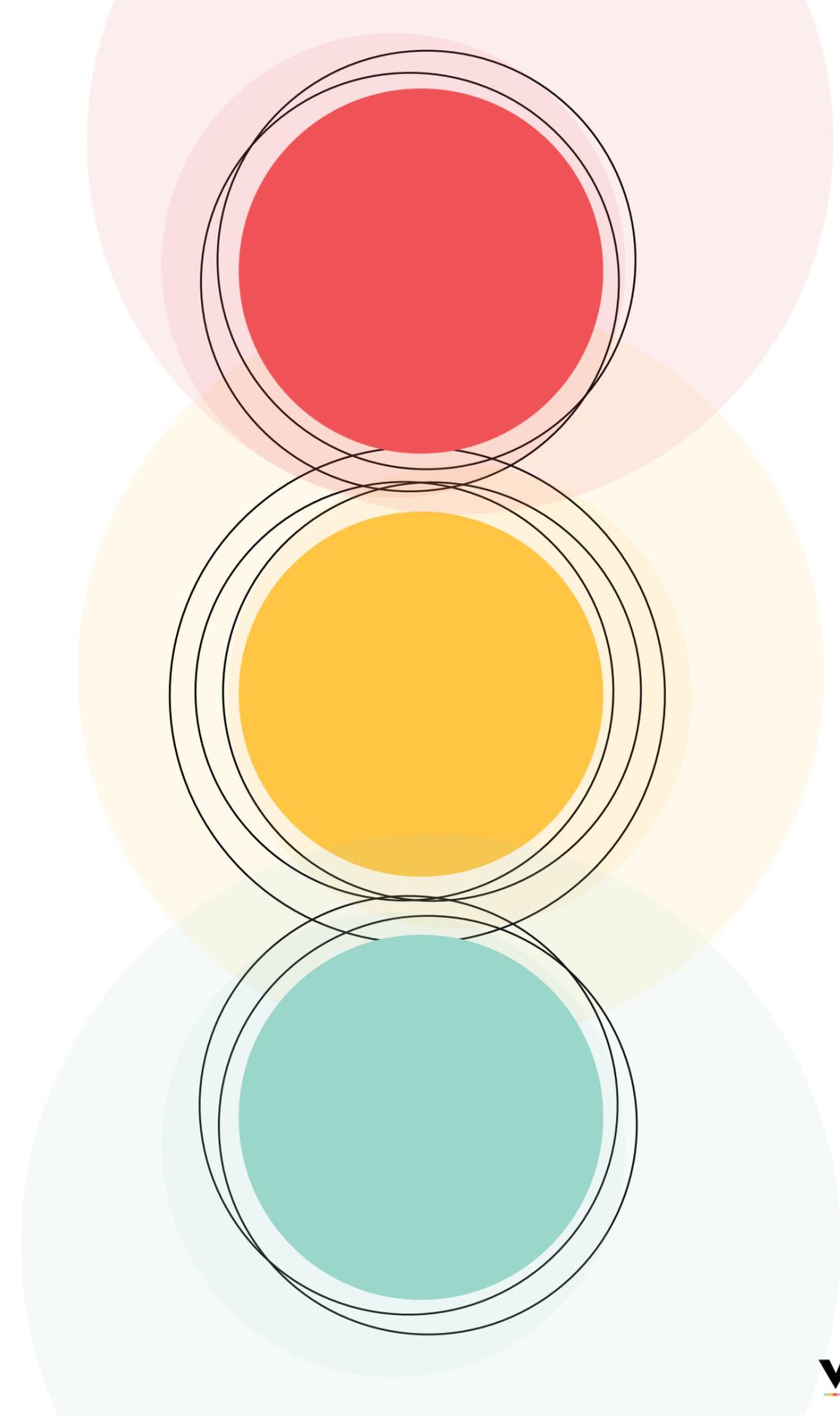
# The Traffic Light System:

## How much work can you take on?

**“Are you green, orange or red today?” This question has been asked regularly at Viisi since the first lockdown. With the traffic light system, it quickly becomes clear to what extent our colleagues are able to work.**

Red means that someone cannot work; this can mean a colleague whose partner is a key worker and has to teach the children at home during the lockdown or quarantine. Orange means that someone can work fifty percent, for example, if you have to divide the teaching of the children at home with

your partner. Green signifies that you're able to work one hundred percent, such as single people or the double-income no kids group for example. The latter therefore regularly went the extra mile.





**Suzanne Heukels**

**Suzanne Heukels**

“Working during Covid and having young children remains a challenge. Fortunately, Viisi has always lived up to its ‘People First’ motto. By means of a traffic light system, you were able to indicate to what extent you were available to work during a school closure. As a result, it was immediately visible where there were bottlenecks in staffing levels, and all circles worked together to restore the balance. This afforded me a sense of peace, knowing I could be there for my children on my days off, so that - when I was working - I could fully focus on my work. This balance is worth its weight in gold!”

# People and Family First



People First is not only about our colleagues themselves, but also about their home situation. During the recent Covid years, the emphasis has also been on Family First. Our colleagues are given all the time and space to provide their attention where it is most required, which, during the lockdowns was their family in most cases. The color of the traffic light does not impact salaries in any way.

Among other things, our traffic light system has ensured that we have become number 1 on the list of [the National Talent Development Research](#) This year. In this study, employers are tested on two aspects: talent development and employment conditions. It is based on [PhD research by Dr Mirjam Baars \(MBA\)](#), in collaboration with [PWnet](#) and research agency SatisAction.

**Marc-Peter Pijper**

“At Viisi, we always look at the long term. The next time someone else needs your help, you’ll go the extra mile. That makes a lot of sense to us. If we have our three children at home all day due to a lockdown, I’m reassured to know that no one expects one hundred percent commitment from me during such a busy time. As far as I’m concerned, this is the application of the Golden Rule pur sang.”



“Most  
people are  
good”

Marc-Peter Pijper

# Grow: Quality more important than quantity



**We have an ambition to grow, and go on to become the market leader, but not at the expense of People First however, which is why we slammed on the brakes when remote onboarding proved to be difficult. The simplest solution would have been to slim down our onboarding program so that we could hire people faster. We didn't opt for that, because we wanted to onboard all of our new colleagues in the way we would have liked.**

The reason we pay so much attention to that aspect is because in our Holacracy organization, everyone is a leader; a leader in the roles they fulfill. In order to provide everyone with the same number of tools to develop the leadership role, we would rather expand our onboarding program even further rather than shorten it. That's why we hired fewer people in 2021, which resulted in us not being able to help potential? customers... People First

always has priority over results in daily business. Our philosophy is: if you treat each other as people, and others are treated as you yourself want to be treated, then that will always pay off in the long run. Despite the fact that we took on fewer people than planned in 2021, a record number of new Viisionairs have been added, no less than thirteen, which we're very proud of course!

# Referral Recruiting

Fifty percent of new colleagues still come from our own, increasingly diverse, network: twenty-five percent are themselves customers of Viisi, and the remaining twenty-five percent have seen or read something about us in the media somewhere, or came to us through other channels. We strongly believe in the power of referral recruitment. After all, you know someone personally and that means you can indicate why they would be a good fit for us (Cultural Fit). You think about it several times before introducing someone you know as a colleague, unlike many recruitment agencies, which end up having to ‘fill vacancies quickly’. It also generates a positive effect for the Viisionair who brings in a new colleague, as they have a greater sense of ‘ownership’.

We notice that Viisionairs actually already do this out of intrinsic motivation, but from the role of Referral Recruiting we have decided to award a referral fee; simply because it has such great value for the organization, and that should be rewarded. It doesn't matter who brings someone in, or for what vacancy. The only condition is that you are still employed by Viisi yourself, at the moment the compensation is paid:

**If you put forward a new Viisionair, based on 1 FTE, you will receive:**

- at the first contract extension (four months): a gross compensation sum of € 1,000
- at the second contract extension (seven months): gross compensation sum of € 1,000

*If the new Viisionair works less than 1 FTE, the remuneration will be adjusted proportionally.*



# III Effective leadership

**Viisi has a strategy that is as clear as crystal, but how does that translate to the organization? In this chapter you can read about our - for the financial world - unique, holacratic approach, and about how an organization without a CEO, managers and team leaders can in fact be effective and switch quickly - even in times of crisis management.**

Viisi's entire strategy, both short-term and long-term, is focused on placing the Viisionair at the center. By continuing to remove every obstacle for people to move freely within the organization (see for example also the explanation about Holacracy, our salary model and the training budget), we create a safe working environment for everyone.

As far as we are concerned, this is also the only way to successfully expand our organization. And the best way to pursue our ultimate purpose, which is to create a healthier financial sector.

## **No bosses, everyone a leader**

At Viisi we say: 'There are no bosses, everyone's a leader'. Yes, our co-founders have determined the purpose and direction of the company, the well-known 'Why' of Simon Sinek's Golden Circle. But that's where the classic leadership position ends. The co-founders as people are 'just' role fillers within Viisi, just like all other Viisionairs, and it is the Viisionairs who determine the 'How' and they do that within their autonomous teams. Everyone is therefore a leader in achieving our purpose in a unique way.

A portrait of Previskha Bisnathsingh, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a green blazer over a red top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a window.

**“Be the  
change that  
you wish to  
see in the  
world”**

**Previskha Bisnathsingh**

### **Previskha Bisnathsingh**

“At Viisi, we work on realizing the biggest and at the same time most terrifying dream in an individual’s life: taking out a mortgage, the biggest debt of a person’s lifetime. After my academic studies, I embarked on several new challenges, but I always felt out of place because I was looking for more. I was looking for myself, for a purpose, a goal with which I could create value and at the same time see what the result of my efforts were. At Viisi I found that, and I now contribute towards the realization of the big dreams of our customers, and try to guide and inform them as well as possible during the process of buying a house, and taking out a responsible mortgage. My personal goal? Assisting and informing customers in the best way possible, so that they know what steps they’re taking, which will enable them to make informed decisions with all the available information, as well as being an advisor who provides them with tailor-made advice at all times. The result is clear: a mortgage taken out, a dream of the customer coming true, a smile as a token of thanks, and a customer who’ll consider Viisi again when they’re ready for a next mortgage. By working with Holacracy, Viisi represents an accessible organization, where there is ample room for self-development, responsibility,

assertiveness, initiative and to ‘just’ be yourself. The possibilities are endless, and personal input appreciated and stimulated. Viisi is a linear organization where we are all equal, part of the same ‘family’ and within that family, there is a lot of scope for self-development through mutual trust, belief in personal responsibility, and common goals. We are all free, and at the same time connected to, and present at Viisi.”

Leadership can be shown in different ways. It often comes down to setting a good example as a professional, but as far as we’re concerned, you show real leadership by also showing your human side, by not being afraid to be vulnerable - especially during the time of Covid, where you work at a distance from one another, and therefore run the risk of losing the connection with each other, it is important that colleagues are allowed to speak out among themselves about how they feel. In addition, it’s only common sense that they also do not know how things will progress. We do not know all the answers during these confusing times of lockdowns, a genuine curfew, and the almost continuous advice to work from home, but we can make sure we’re there for each other.





**“If you give everything, you can’t lose anything”**

**Jeroen Luitjes**

# Autonomy - Self-organization through Holacracy

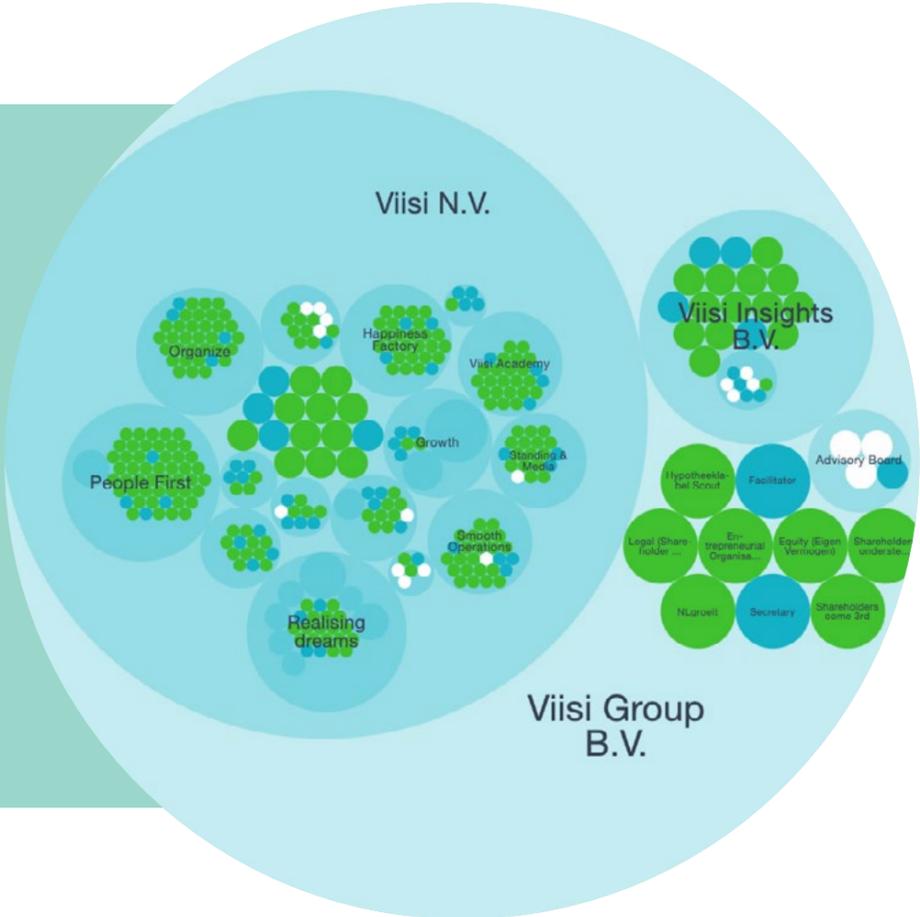
We are the first organization in the financial sector to work with Holacracy. We now know that this purpose-driven organizational model fits seamlessly with our People First conviction.

We do not have traditional management layers or job descriptions, but within Viisi, control is divided over the entire organization through autonomous roles. In this way, everyone has decision-making power within the roles that everyone themselves fulfills.

Our Holacracy structure is completely transparent, and is therefore accessible to anyone who is interested.

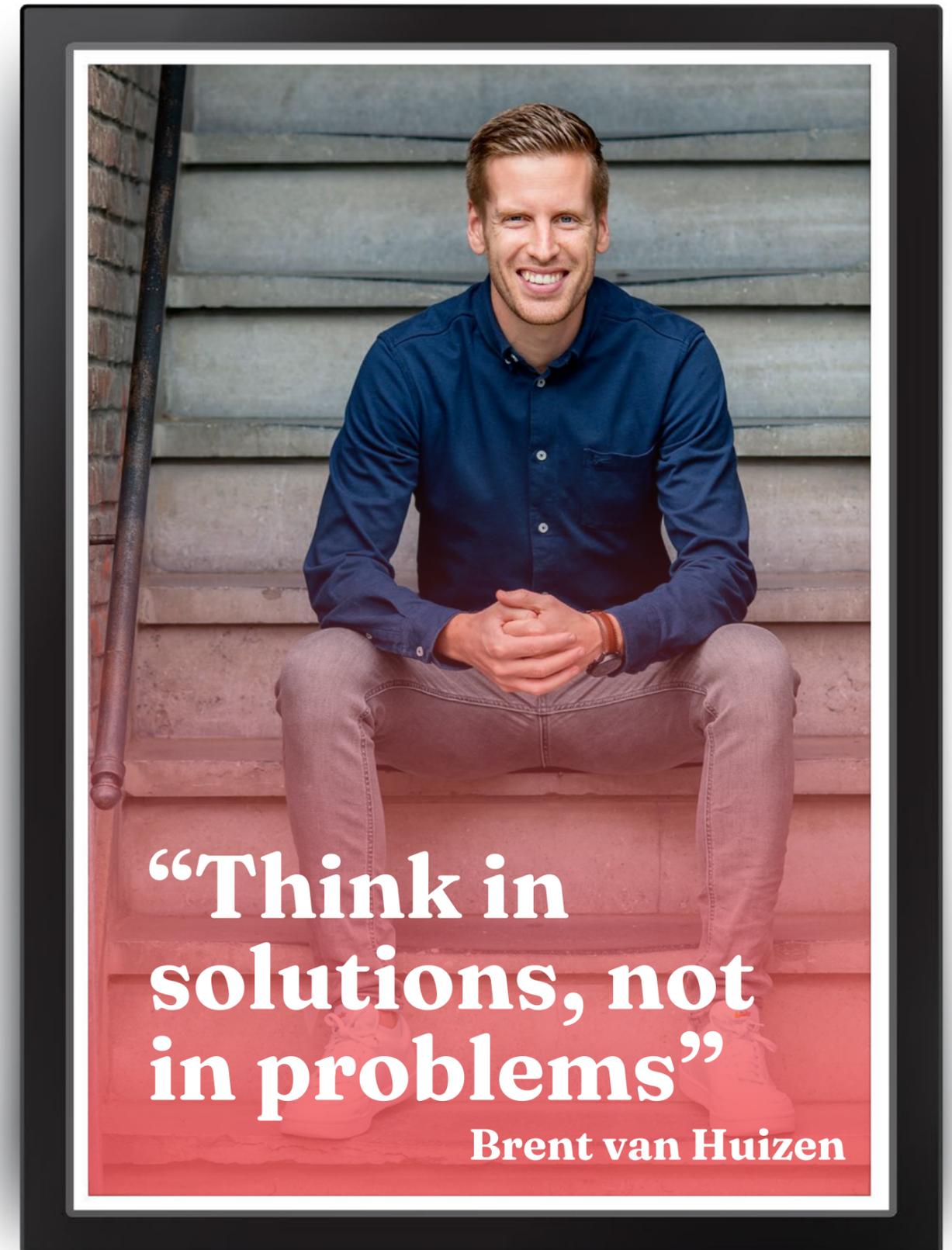
We work in small teams, called circles, in which we set up autonomous roles around specific tasks. Each role has its own purpose and specific responsibilities (“accountabilities”).

This means that you work completely autonomously within the purpose and responsibilities of your roles. Your responsibilities are clearly defined, and you can fully decide for yourself how you fulfill your responsibilities. Every Viisionair has a unique role package, tailored as much as possible to their talent and motivation.



The advantage of this way of organizing is that the teams themselves determine ‘on the work floor’ which roles are needed and how the work is carried out. If someone wants to pick up something, they can suggest a role themselves. When the need arises to add a new role of that nature, or to remove an irrelevant role, this can be proposed at a role meeting (“Governance meeting”). This way, it’s made clear to everyone who has which responsibilities, and when. The organizational structure is therefore always in motion, so that we are working with the most optimum configuration at any time. The work itself is divided during the daily work meeting (“Tactical meeting”); whereby practical actions are briefly coordinated.

During this get together, everyone in a meeting can and may place a tension on the agenda. The tension of one person is not considered more important than that of another. Tension can be positive, neutral or negative. A tension is only the difference between the current situation and how it might be in the future. In order to be able to extend priorities to tension, many circles work with a categorization based on the Eisenhower matrix.





**“If it doesn’t go  
the way it should,  
then it should go  
the way it goes”**

**Karlijn Dirks**

**Karlijn Dirks**

“When I wanted to delve further into Holacracy at Viisi, it was applauded. I took a course for a week, and since then, I have been fulfilling the role of Holacracy coach together with 3 colleagues. We have all the freedom to shape this role ourselves. I thought it would be fun to develop a kind of Holacracy game for new colleagues, so that’s what I’m working on now. This way, everyone’s intrinsic motivation is addressed, and we get the best result.”

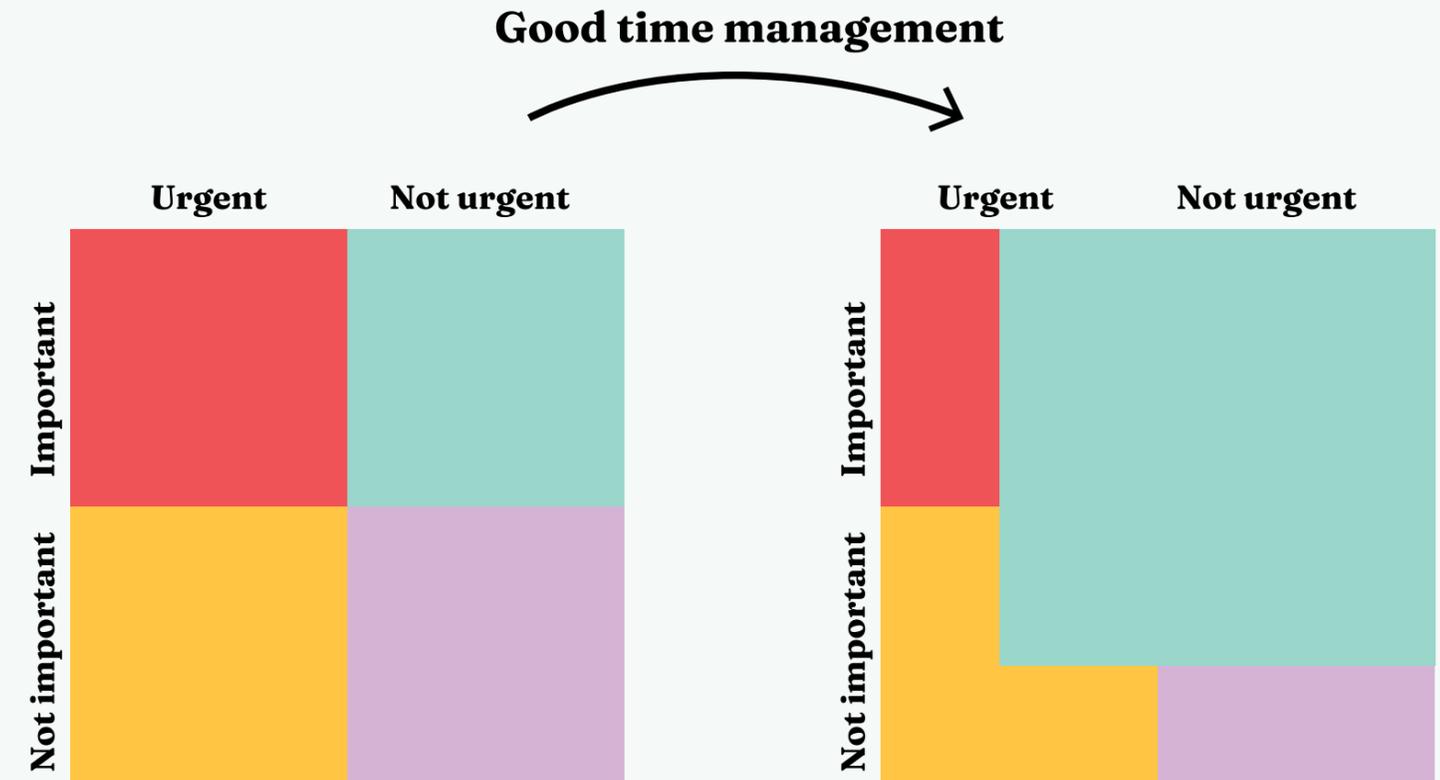
# Eisenhower

The Eisenhower matrix, also known as the Eisenhower model, Eisenhower scheme or Eisenhower quadrant, is a widely utilized model within time management, which on the one hand highlights urgency and on the other weighs up the importance of tasks and assignments against each other, and helps to set priorities. The model was designed by Dwight D. Eisenhower (president of the U.S. between 1953 and 1961) and consists of four quadrants. At Viisi we have also awarded each quadrant a letter:

- **important & urgent (A)**
- **important & non-urgent (B)**
- **not important & urgent (C)**
- **not important & non-urgent (D)**

By considering whether a task or assignment belongs within one of these quadrants, it is easier to prioritize, hand over, or delegate tasks to another, or include it in a schedule.

During our Tactical meetings, we state the tension that starts with an Eisenhower letter. ‘What do you need’ is the question that is asked of the person who introduces the tension. The goal is not to find consensus, but to solve each tension of a role keeper one by one according to a fixed structure. More introverted individuals get to have their say much sooner this way, and meetings are no longer ‘hijacked’ by egos.



## Manager position split into four roles

Within each circle, the traditional managerial function is split into four roles that are periodically divided by the team members themselves, based on the idea that they have all the information needed to make the best choices. Fulfilling these roles has no effect on anyone's salary, we simple view the roles as operational roles just like any of the others. So the team is always able to make the right choice and is not 'disturbed' by financial incentives.

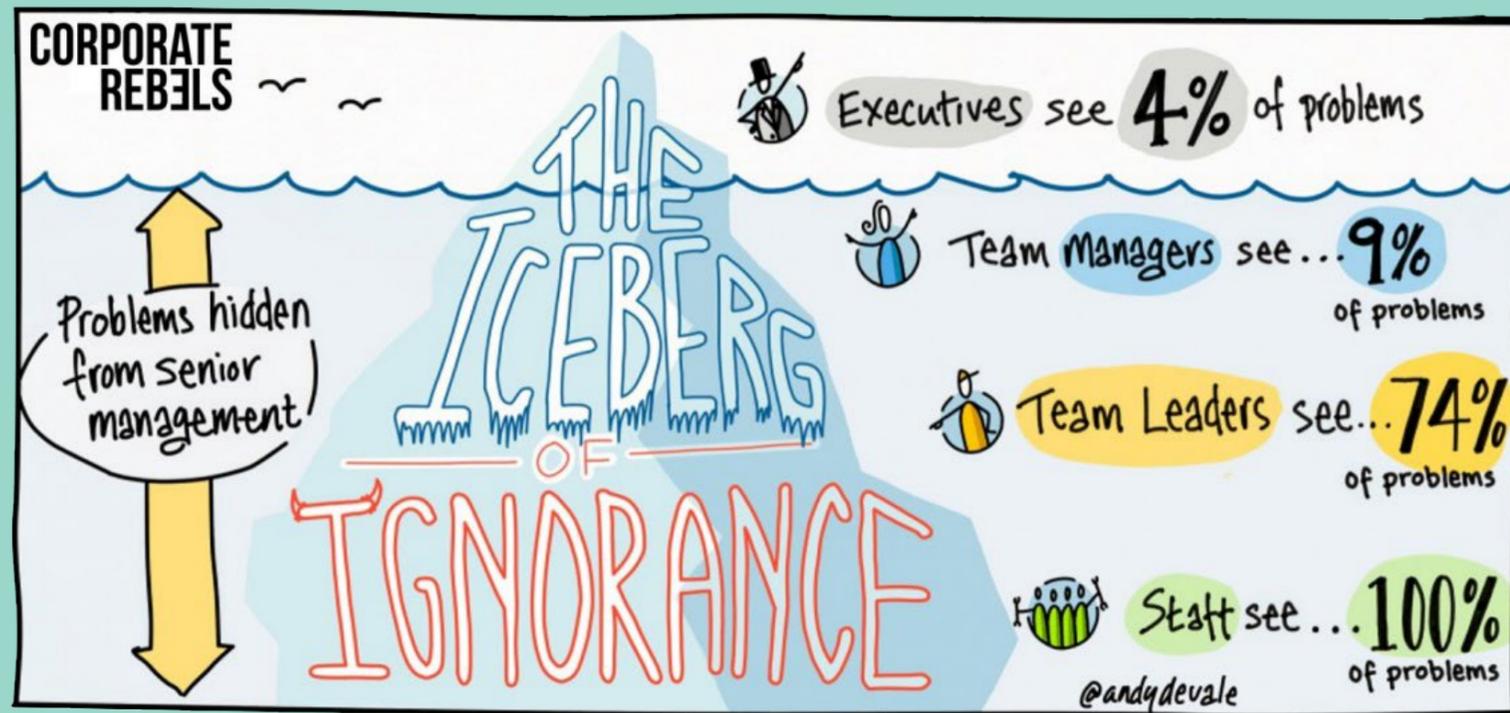
- The coordinating role ("Lead Link") monitors the purpose and strategy of the circle and assigns roles to people;
- The delegate ("Rep Link") represents the interests of the circle in the overarching circle, and reports on the progress of the circle to the organization;
- The moderator ("Facilitator") heads the meetings (Governance and Tactical meetings) of the circle, and monitors the structure and time of these meetings;
- The secretary ("Secretary") records the agreed action and projects, plans the Governance and Tactical meetings of the circle, and is responsible for the interpretation of the Holacracy rules;

The reason that this position has been divided is not only because of a better distribution of control, but also because they are four different disciplines, which often cannot be optimally fulfilled by one person simultaneously.



## Inspiration: Sidney Yoshida's 'Iceberg of Ignorance'

In 1989, researcher Sidney Yoshida discovered that the distribution of power and information dissemination within a traditional management hierarchy was in a bad way. Knowledge about front-line problems in particular was found to evaporate in line with how high up you went in the management chain. Upper management was hardly aware of the real problems within the organization. They were, as he put it, only aware of the tip of the iceberg.



Merel Liefink



“A man  
must  
have a  
code”

Ricardo den Brinker

**Ricardo den Brinker**

“At Viisi, you can set goals within your own circle(s) yourself, with the team, that contribute toward the goals of the organization. Within Growth, the circle in which 95 percent of my roles are, we have determined with the team which projects will generate the most impact, and will therefore work mostly towards those goals. This way, we are working daily to achieve market leadership, so that we are one step further in making the sector healthier. For me, being able to set up goals, projects and project management systems myself contributes towards greater involvement and more autonomy.”

# Viisi Town Hall

**In addition to the consultation structure of each circle, we as a team often have overarching themes that we want to discuss. Especially during Covid, during which time we all had to work remotely from each other, we put aside time in our calendars for an online Town Hall every Thursday. These meetings were often dominated by our joint crisis approach, but also by important projects that circles were working on. In addition, we always paid attention to key metrics of the organization (turnover, liquidity, etc.) and celebrated successes (the first client for a new advisor, anniversaries, births, etc.). For themes where group decisions were desired, we utilized this time to make decisions.**

To explain how our leadership philosophy is expressed in practice and how it is shared by everyone within the organization, one example is the approach over the past two Covid years: an approach in which not a singular strong CEO or a select number of senior managers maintained leadership over the organization, but where everyone was a leader and all felt a sense of ownership.

# 1

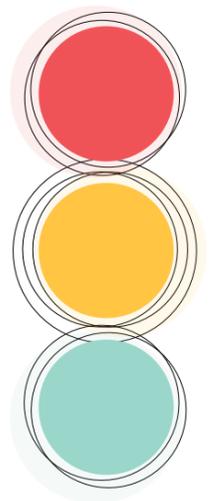
## Crisismanagement

# Making sure we emerge through the crisis as a solid team

**During those first few weeks of the Covid crisis, we told each other that we wanted to come out of this crisis as a solid, complete team, including those Viisionairs on a temporary contract, and even freelancers. We noticed at Viisi that the Netherlands was in a state of shock, the housing market also seemed to be in a state of suspense. No one knew what was going to happen, there was uncertainty all around.**

We decided first of all to look at the personal situation of all the Viisionairs. Was there still a way of working in a full capacity, seeing as people were now all at home? Were colleagues getting into trouble because their partners were key workers? What about those colleagues with children, school-going or otherwise? Or who was sitting alone at home and felt like the walls were closing in on them? Or were together with their partner in a very small space, while both had a profession requiring (video) calls? Afb.: Red – Able to work 0% Orange - Able to work 50% Green - Able to work 100%

We quickly introduced the previously described traffic light system, to indicate to the teams who could work and at what percentage. The most important aspect was that everyone did what he or she could do, and if someone was temporarily on orange or red, you - if possible - went the extra mile yourself.



# 2

## Crisismanagement

# Ensuring that our liquidity planning is in order

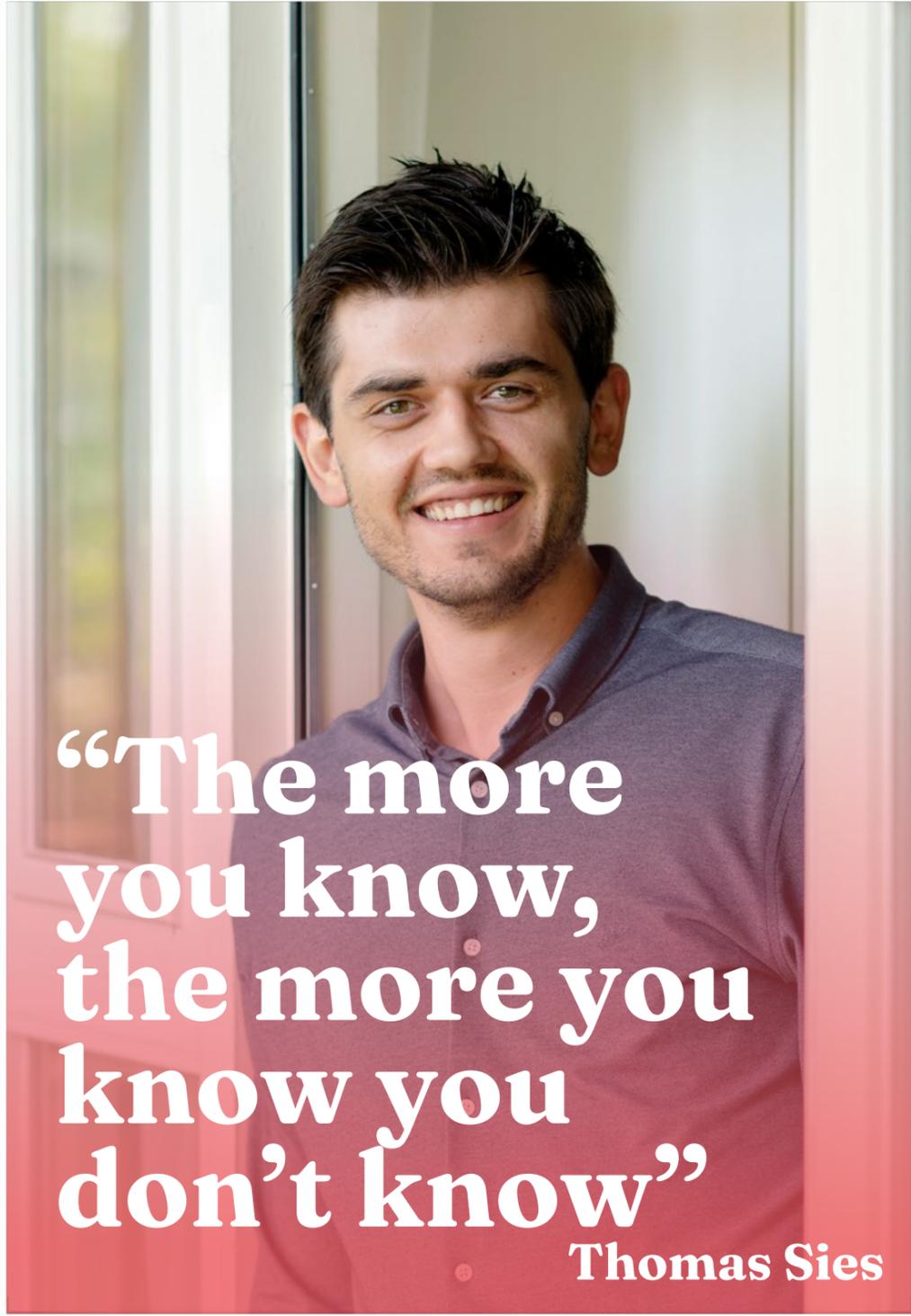
**At Viisi, there is as much transparency as possible, and that has always been the case. Viisi's financial situation is also accessible to everyone, and is actively shared with the entire team on a weekly basis, so we didn't have to change our policy to discuss our cash flow situation.**

In times of crisis, as a company, you know that your liquidity position is of great importance. So, the first step for us was to determine how much money we needed to survive the current situation.

Although no one knew how long the situation would last, we did assume that it would be temporary. We decided to outline a worst-case scenario and discuss it with the team: We were going to calculate using zero turnover for the next three months. This worst case scenario was our starting point; from there, things could only improve. The turnover would not amount to zero in the end, and perhaps some help would be forthcoming from our bank or the government. But calculating with zero yield created a basis, and indeed, at the end of the first week, we had surpassed the zero-income mark. We noticed that things were better than we had calculated, with our worst-case strategy even generating a positive dynamic.

Using that financial forecast, we started looking for solutions to possibly last even longer, which is where the co-founders as shareholders set a good example, because in times of crisis, they felt they should act first and promised to strengthen Viisi's cash position if necessary. It's not without reason that we say People First, Customers Second and Shareholders last... This was 'walking the talk'.

We decided to set up a crowdfunding campaign. This move was a resounding success. At the beginning of 2021, with a revenue of almost € 900,000, we were able to realize an ambitious growth strategy, and hired a record number of new colleagues over the course of the year, which substantially supported the impact of our purpose. You can read more about this crowdfunding campaign in the chapter Bold Leadership.

A portrait of Thomas Sies, a man with dark hair and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt. The background is a blurred office interior with a window. The portrait is framed by a thick black border.

**“The more  
you know,  
the more you  
know you  
don’t know”**

**Thomas Sies**

# 3

## Crisismanagement

**Ensuring we emerged from the crisis stronger than before we went into it**

**The starting point was a situation where everyone would continue to work the same number of hours, because then, in the absence of turnover, work could be done with the whole team on projects that made Viisi emerge from the crisis stronger.**

Full productivity provides the opportunity to think about other measures to stabilize revenues. Ultimately, it is about the openness and honesty of the collective search for solutions. In this sense, we are not approaching this crisis any differently than other profound changes in the organization: collective intelligence provides the most interesting solutions, and the decisive factors to help the company through difficult times. What happened in the end? The housing market picked up again and we are currently happy that we are still very busy as a company. All in all, we don't know what's to come, but at least we're better prepared.

# IV Maximizing everyone's potential

**There is a huge amount of talent among the Viisionairs. How does all that talent come to fruition though? And are Viisionairs always aware of what talents they possess? As early on as the application process, Viisi starts searching for what drives people and what they're good at. Subsequently, there is also plenty of focus on this during the onboarding. And the Viisi Academy is for all Viisionairs who are in need of additional knowledge and skills. You can read exactly how it works in this chapter.**



The logo for Viisi features the word "VIISI" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letters are positioned in front of a stylized rainbow graphic. The rainbow consists of several concentric, semi-circular bands of color: teal, yellow, red, purple, and grey. The bands are layered, with the teal band being the outermost and the grey band being the innermost. The word "VIISI" is centered horizontally, with the letters "V", "I", and "I" partially overlapping the teal band, and the letters "S" and "I" overlapping the yellow, red, and purple bands respectively. The bottom of the rainbow graphic is a solid horizontal bar with the same color segments as the bands above it.

# VIISI

In recent years, we have given extra thought to diversity & inclusion. What does that mean for us? Does our pursuit of ‘Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose’ offer enough starting points to build a ‘For All Culture’? So, what exactly constitutes a diverse and inclusive organization? For many companies, it seems that the whole discussion about diversity and inclusion quickly translates into an Excel sheet: what is the percentage of women at the top? What part of our new human capital has a non-Western background? Fortunately, we do not keep track of that, but we do see more and more people with, for example, a non-Dutch background working with us. The ratio between men and women within Viisi is also virtually the same.

But Excel sheets won’t get you there. Let’s not lose ourselves in pie charts to achieve an optimal diversity score - otherwise we’ll miss the heart of what diversity – and especially inclusion – actually means, namely that you can be exactly who you are, especially at work.

Because how warped is it to attract a group of very diverse and talented people and then have the staff all show up in dark blue tailored suits, and force them into a hierarchical system with fixed job descriptions and rigid targets? Isn’t that a surefire way to get all that talent running out the door screaming?

The strange thing is that it is not at all up to people whether an organization is diverse and inclusive, as everyone is basically inclusive. Everyone has been brought up with the Golden Rule in one way or another.

Solidarity and respect for others: in many systems, individuals do not feel safe enough to comply with this simple rule. It's not the people's fault, but the system within which they are made to work. At Viisi we have a system whereby autonomy, solidarity and the development of talent are paramount.

So, what we strive for on a daily basis is a workplace where you can just be present with your whole being, including any insecurities, sexual orientation, origin, religion, offbeat habits, gender and unique talents; a workplace where you can simply add topics such as hormones, ego or uncertainty to the agenda. **Somewhere where you are valued for who you are, because that is genuine inclusion.**

### **Esmee Zijp**

“As far as I'm concerned, working at Viisi means that you can and are allowed to be yourself. During the Covid pandemic, I noticed that I found it more difficult to find the right balance; my work and private life were completely enmeshed, because I was just working from home every day. I missed my colleagues and working in the office. It's hard for many people to share these kinds of personal things, but having the courage to share can also be a relief. Your colleagues will therefore notice sooner if things are not going too well. It's very nice to work with colleagues who don't judge you for having such a vulnerable attitude, but who are there for you!”



**In this Culture Audit you will meet our entire team, and you will learn about everyone's life motto. This is our way of showing how diverse we are, and how we, within that diversity, collectively work towards that one goal, which is to make the financial sector healthier, more sustainable and more focused on the long term.**



# Holacracy and Talent Development

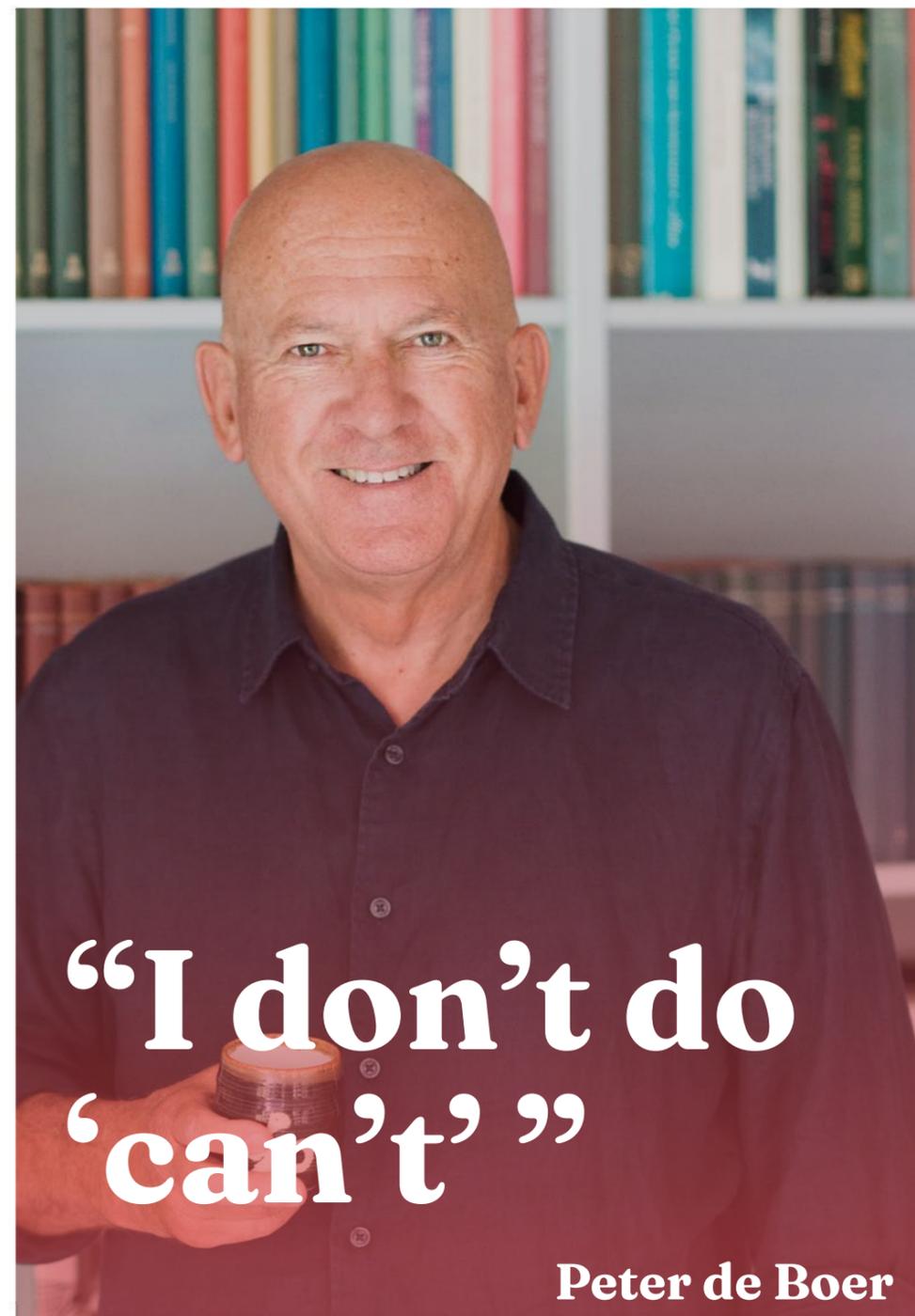
In the Culture Audit of 2019, we explained in detail how Holacracy is applied at Viisi (see here). This year, we are adding a number of underlying motivations of the choices we make to let everyone develop his / her talents freely and autonomously, and to strive for maximum team performance.

Because together, you simply achieve more. In everything we do, we focus on a workplace in which intrinsic motivation is awarded plenty of space; an environment where colleagues can work on the best version of themselves and work together using their own capabilities, and all help each other that is what renders top performances.

## Inspiration: Daniel Pink

For simple reproductive tasks, money may work as a reward, but for more complex tasks that require tapping into conceptual and creative skills, money as a reward is not workable. In order to motivate people, they need to be earning enough (so as not to have to think about money) and have a certain degree of Autonomy, Mastery and Purpose, according to the American bestselling author Daniel Pink.





**“I don’t do  
‘can’t’”**

**Peter de Boer**

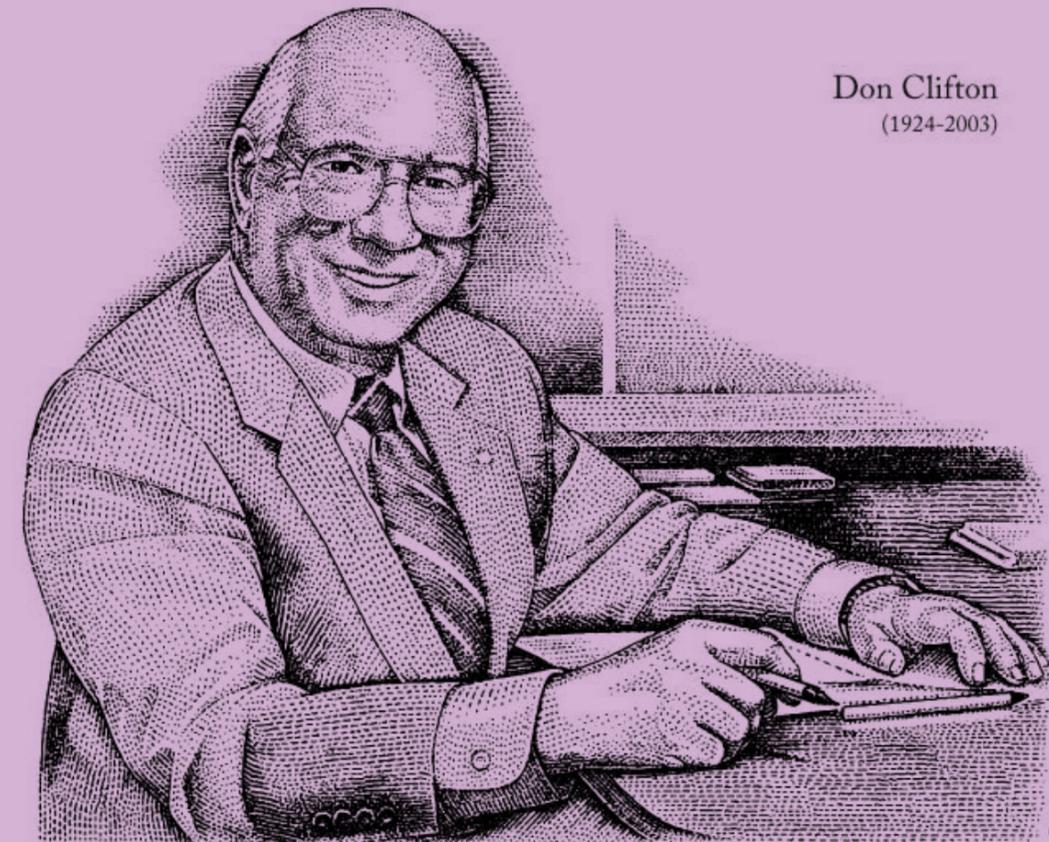
# **Mastery - Talent development**

We deliberately do not use ‘design and plan’ methods for personal development, such as drawing up a structured growth trajectory for each Viisionair, but the approach is much more ‘agile’ and lies in their own hands, and within the team itself. Holacracy as a self-organizational model helps in this regard, as everyone decides for themselves how they carry out the work, and can align roles with their talents. By deliberately keeping roles small, everyone can easily try out a new role. The roles that no one likes are also divided within the team, so that the balance is correct for everyone. Viisi uses, among other things, Gallup’s CliftonStrengths assessment to help people discover and use their talent within their work.

Ever since we started using Holacracy as an operating system for our organization, something about our Viisionairs has changed: everyone has become an “entrepreneur”: an entrepreneur within his or her roles. This in turn allows them a lot of freedom to contribute towards the purpose of Viisi in their own way, and to take on the very roles that make them happy within themselves. In this way, all boundaries that exist within traditional organizations to grow (shift vertically) or change departments (horizontal shifting) are actually removed. Development is therefore inherent within Holacracy.

### **Inspiration: CliftonStrengths assessment**

“Are you doing what gives you the most energy every day?” The research firm Gallup discovered that many people answer ‘no’ to that. They talked to successful people all over the world and concluded that the extent to which you can use your talents within your work was key to your success and satisfaction. Based on this information, they developed a method to help people discover what their talents are, and how these can be used more consciously in your work. They call this method the CliftonStrengths assessment.

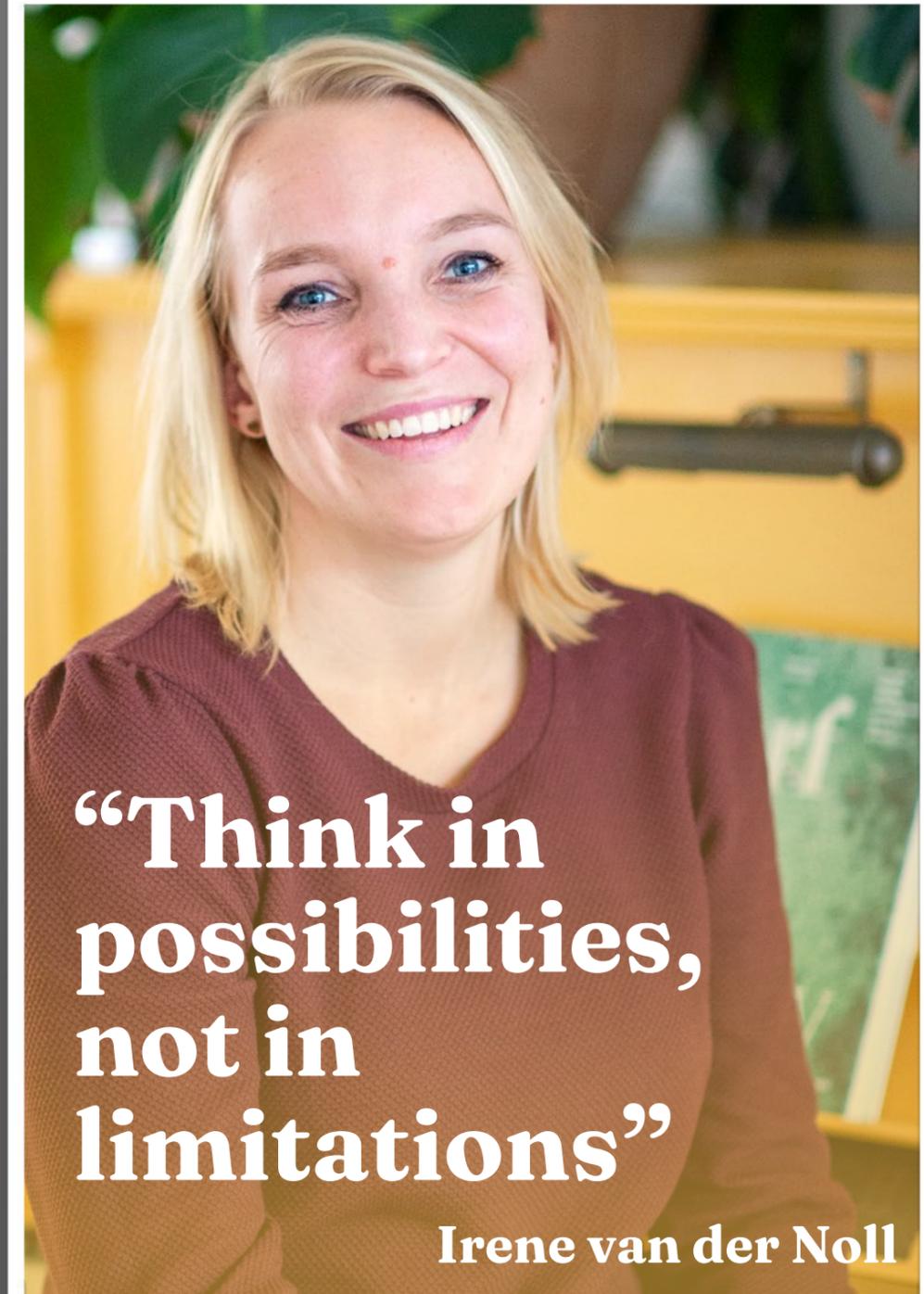


Don Clifton  
(1924-2003)

# Variation in role packages

Within a traditional organization, it is the responsibility of the supervisor or manager to ensure that someone's tasks are varied, and that someone is presented with a challenge time and again. This is not the case with Holacracy. Our Viisionairs have the choice themselves to take up entrepreneurship to create and shape their own roles.

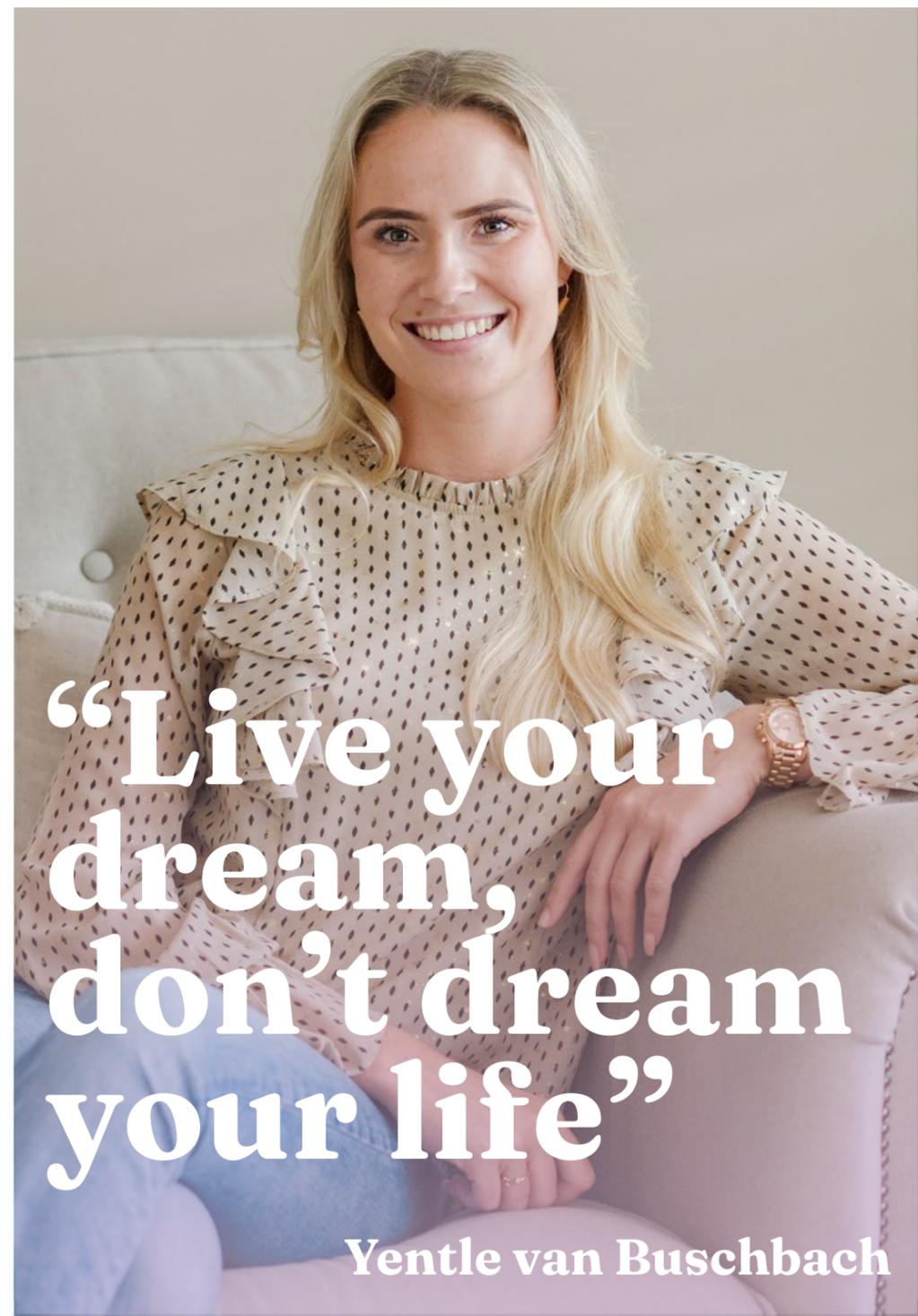
Of course, you will be guided in this regard if you are still finding this difficult, or if Holacracy is a new concept for you. It's also why we have a [Holacracy Coach](#) where you can go for questions and someone who can coach you in the background if you're stuck about something.



**“Think in  
possibilities,  
not in  
limitations”**

**Irene van der Noll**





**“Live your  
dream,  
don’t dream  
your life”**

**Yentle van Buschbach**

**Yentle van Buschbach**

“At Viisi, in addition to your standard tasks, you’re granted the freedom to take on other roles. In addition to my work within the Happiness Factory circle, I also contributed to organizing the Qronde, our event that we organize every quarter. I also fulfill the Gift Butler role, which entails sending gifts to customers. I spend a few hours a week doing that.

This way I have a lot of variety in my work at Viisi, which keeps the work fun and challenging! I am therefore very pleased that we at Viisi are given the freedom to have some variety within the role package.”

Within Viisi you can therefore compile your own role package to a large extent. You can even “give back” a role or multiple roles to the circle if those responsibilities don’t really suit you. But you can of course also create a new role with responsibilities that you want to take on yourself, and indicate that you would like to realize this yourself. The Lead Link of the circle in question can then assign you to the role. That way, your tasks are no longer static at all, but something that can be tweaked regularly.

Viisionairs are therefore free to develop in this sense, as long as this is initially viewed as bringing added value within the associated circle. Ultimately, you collectively work together towards the purpose of your circle.

### **Stimulating optimal development**

Development is a topic that we consider to be very important at Viisi, from the first day you start work. This is reflected in the policy that we have set up for this purpose.

We think it is important to always understand what makes our people happy, and in which work their talents come into their own: do what you love, love what you do.

Of course, this starts with the recruitment and selection process. We really view this process as a two-way street, and the view that you look ‘unilaterally’ at whether someone is suitable as an organization, we therefore find to be very outdated.

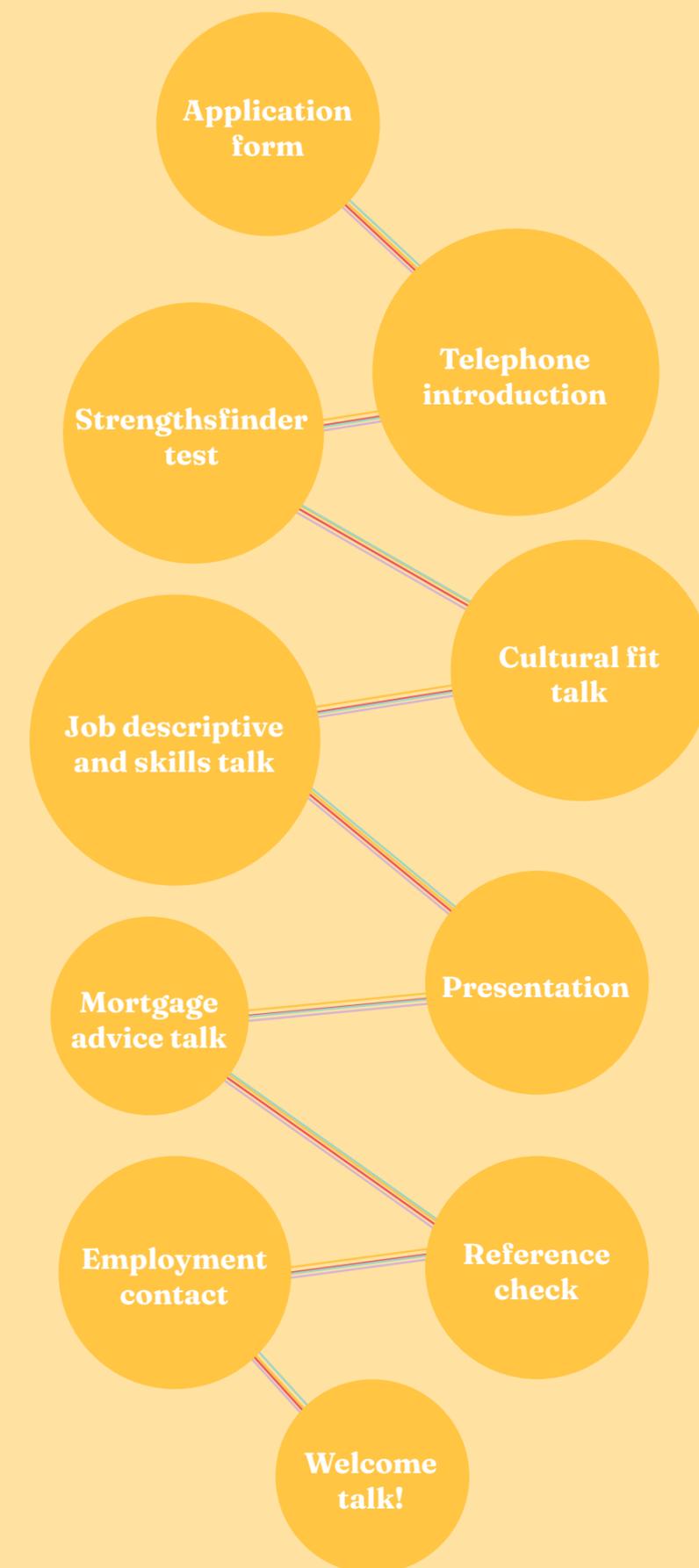


# Recruiting and selecting

Our job application process is very extensive and that is appreciated by the candidates. It is structured in such a way that we can make a pretty good assessment from a Viisi perspective. But why not also place part of the responsibility with the applicants themselves? After all, people have known themselves longer than anyone else, so they're the best judge of whether or not the work would suit them. We've made improvements in terms of the total duration of the process, as we received feedback from applicants that it took a long time. We now schedule multiple conversations within one day, with the aim now of progressing through all the steps in two weeks; a week faster than before on

average. Afb.: Application form, telephone introduction, Strengthsfinder test, Cultural fit talk, reference check, job descriptive and skills talk, presentation, mortgage advice talk, employment contact, welcome talk!

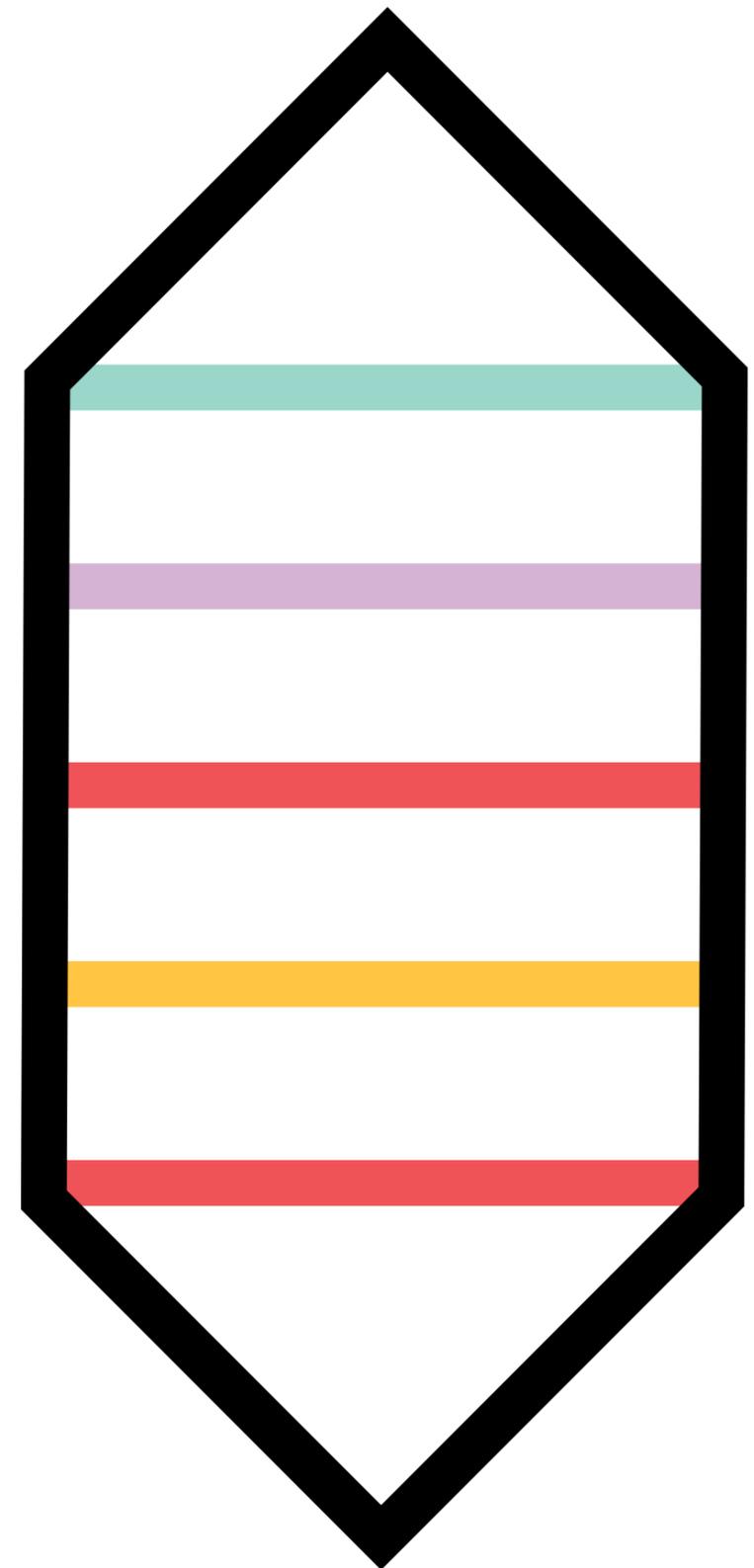
We have divided the process into different roles, which are distributed throughout the organization, so that both we and the applicant get a much more 360-degree view. After the applicant has completed the online application form, the application is reviewed by a Viisionair with the role of Screeener. If we are curious, the applicant is then invited for a first telephone introduction to the Viisionair who has the role of Telephone acquaintance contact... it's all in the name ;).



# CliftonStrengths assessment

The CliftonStrengths assessment (formerly StrengthsFinder test) has become a regular part of our application process. With the aid of 177 questions, a top 5 is compiled based on 34 defined talents. With the result, the candidate receives an appointment and recognition of his or her talents, and what the results of this can mean for the candidate in collaboration with others. We purposely handle this during the application procedure, because we want to introduce as many people as possible to the 'strengths mindset' from our purpose, even if they do not end up becoming colleagues. For us, it is an interesting insight into the talents

of the candidate, the candidate himself often experiences it as a gift when applying for a job. Through the CliftonStrengths assessment you position yourself within your own power, and gain an insight into the talents of others. For example, do you need a listening ear? Then you knock on the door of a person with a talent in that regard. Are you someone who needs to think through a decision, but it's a long-term one though? Then go see a person with 'Strategic' in their profile.



## Cultural fit, vakinhoudelijk gesprek en presentatie

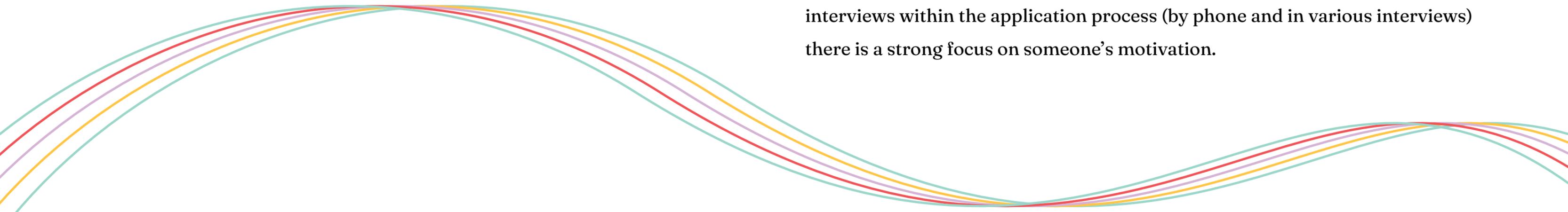
The colleagues with the role of [Cultural Fit Interviewer](#) handle the subsequent interview. We ask the applicant not to prepare for the interview, as we want everyone to be themselves as much as possible. We are not going to talk about subject-specific themes; it's an open conversation. We will touch back on the results of the CliftonStrengths test however, where there is no right or wrong judgement by the way. How does the potential new Viisionair look back on it? Does he or she recognize the talents, are there new insights, and what strengths would he or she still like to develop?

This is followed by the professional interview, and a presentation by the candidate on a subject-specific topic to our [Professional Interviewers](#) provides an insight into the knowledge transfer and attitude of the candidate.

## The work walk-in day and reference check

What started a few years ago as an experiment with our colleague Nancy Brussel has now become a fixed element of our application process: the work walk-in day helps candidates obtain an even better impression of what it's like to work at Viisi. As people from all kinds of backgrounds apply for a job at Viisi, it can be the case that they don't exactly know what the profession of mortgage advisor entails. A work walk-in day is also a good, efficient way for them to get an impression of working at Viisi. During the planning of the work walk-in day, the reference check is simultaneously carried out.

For anyone who wants to become an advisor with us, a consultation is included in the application process. In this interview, the applicant is advised by one of our Viisionairs, in the role of a customer. The applicant will get a good impression of the work of our consultants, and the consultant will have an insight into the knowledge and personality of the applicant. Also, in the various interviews within the application process (by phone and in various interviews) there is a strong focus on someone's motivation.



## Open and honest communication

In addition to always providing feedback to applicants about their job interview within one working day, we try to paint as good and realistic a picture as possible of the work, and of us as an organization. By being open about this, the

applicant can also assess whether his or her qualities and core values come into their own, and whether they will be happy with us. That is what we consider to be most important.

## Fixed component: team training

New Viisionairs start in our onboarding program, in which they are immersed in the work of all of Viisi's main circles. All new Viisionairs work within the Happiness Factory circle for a period of time, where the first customer contact takes place. We believe that every new Viisionair should know what it's like to answer customer questions. After that, everyone is also included in the work of the Smooth Operations circle, where the mortgage acceptance takes place, and Realising Dreams, the circle of the mortgage advisors. You will quickly learn how our organization works, what our products & services entail, and who our customers are. Moreover, in this way you'll get to know many new colleagues, and gain understanding for each other's work.

In order to properly supervise and guide the new Viisionairs from the start, we have a buddy team. They provide (classroom) training and individual 'on-the-job' feedback. This way, we can allocate sufficient personal attention, and

our new Viisionairs can learn swiftly and develop quickly. We work with the so-called '70-20-10 mindset', which is the principle that seventy percent is learned by working; in other words, learning in the workplace, twenty percent by receiving training and feedback, and ten percent by formal (classroom) training.

For the new Viisionairs who start as mortgage advisors, there is a structured training program of two years, whereby they are trained step by step to be able to advise customers in the right manner. The tasks become more and more extensive and complicated over the course of the two years, and the consultants are allocated an increasing amount of responsibility during that period. A lot is learned 'on-the-job' and is enhanced by the (partly legally required) professional training courses that they obtain through our Viisi Academy (such as WFT Basis (Financial Supervision Act Basic), Vermogen and Hypothecair Krediet (Assets and Mortgage Credit)).

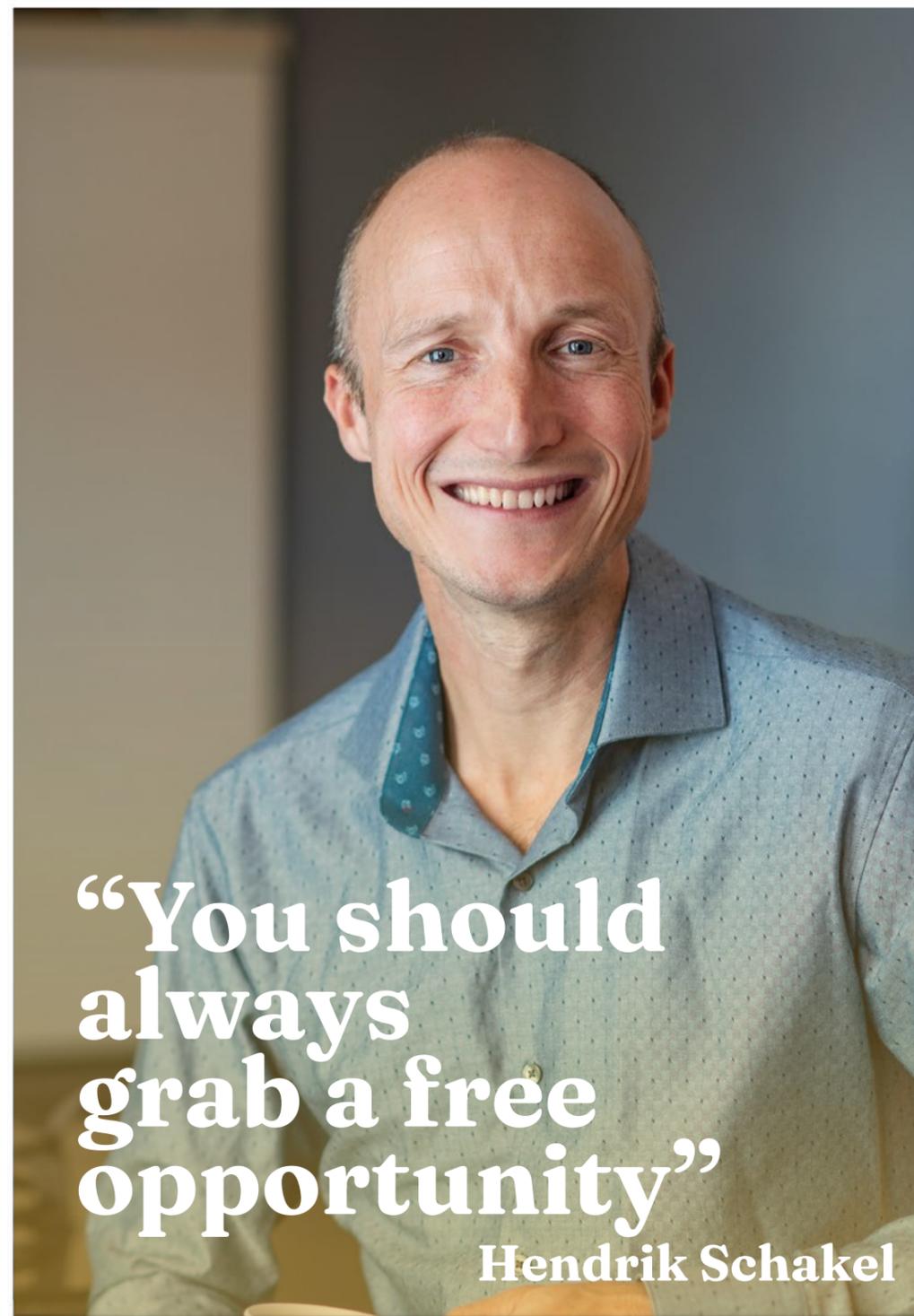


**“If you want something you never had, you have to do something you’ve never done.”**

**Michael Payano**

**Michael Payano:**

“You can’t really compare the application process at Viisi to a traditional approach. It was initially about who I am as a person. That was very clearly more of a priority than my professional qualities. As far as I’m concerned, it was really a reflection of what Viisi stands for: People first. I even feel like I’ve got to know myself even better during the process.”



**“You should  
always  
grab a free  
opportunity”**

**Hendrik Schakel**

## **Viisi Academy and training budget**

**For the professional training in the financial field, we have our own Viisi Academy: a digital learning platform, in which we can offer a variety of training courses in collaboration with the company Hoffelijk Financieel.**

Through e-learning lines, you will be guided step by step through a module, your questions will be checked, you will receive personal feedback, and you can schedule your exam.

Furthermore, you can follow all kinds of masterclasses online and you regularly receive questions to ensure you keep abreast of developments within the market. Anyone who wants to can follow courses there, even if you don't necessarily need it for your work, but more out of personal interest.

In order to stimulate the following of training courses further, we as an organization will fully reimburse all training costs. This also applies to courses that fall outside the Viisi Academy. You decide together in your circle who is going to do what. See also Variation in role packages. In addition, following training courses is a fixed topic within our development discussions.



**“Try to enjoy  
the good  
things in life  
as much as  
possible”**

Laura van der Lem

**Laura van der Lem:**

“Through Viisi Academy, we want to give everyone the opportunity to fully use his or her talents. In addition to the mandatory external training courses, we also conduct a lot of internal knowledge exchanges. Every week, during our technical consultation, advisors share their experiences and learning moments. It’s nice to be able to spar! Many colleagues specialize in a certain element of the advice. At least once a year, each expert provides an internal training about his / her area of expertise. Anyone who wants to can also follow extra courses, even if their interest is more personal. You decide together in your team who is going to do what. All training costs are reimbursed by Viisi.”

## **Internal trainers**

We regularly provide internal training sessions. For each area of expertise, we have a role that one or multiple people fulfil. They are responsible for sharing their knowledge with colleagues by answering questions and providing training. In this way, we have also distributed that responsibility within the organization. For example, in the Realising Dreams circle, we have a Medici expert role and a Variable Remuneration expert role. The Viisi Town Halls are often used to provide training that is interesting and relevant for all Viisionairs. For example, training courses are held on sustainability, advice quality, advising expats, and the use of LinkedIn.

## **Daily peer-to-peer feedback replaces traditional review**

The development talks have been improved upon since this year. Many of the real development and appraisal interviews take place in real time in the Tactical meetings of the circles. The assessment of performance is discussed among colleagues within the teams, where the real work takes place.

Much of what happens stems from our aforementioned Golden Rule: treat others the way you want to be treated; so, from that mindset, you automatically provide feedback for your colleagues. Because our teams set their own goals, and come up with accompanying roles with explicit responsibilities, and because they choose who allocates those roles, team members can address each other about this more easily. In fact, we talk to each other about what everyone expects from the roles. This is how we separate the person from the assessment, which creates a safe feeling.

# V Innovation power

**How does innovation manifest itself at Viisi? And why do Viisionairs feel comfortable in practice to come up with ideas that help move the company forward? It's because innovation is inextricable from the way Viisi makes decisions. That's what this chapter is about.**

You could say our entire organization is focused on innovation from its very foundation, getting a little better with every day. 'Safe enough to try?' is one of the main questions in working within a Holacracy. The problem with innovation often lies in the fact that it becomes too big a thing. A little bit better every day is often much more valuable than a large, protracted innovation project.





**“If you  
never shoot  
you always  
miss”**

Roxy van Dijk



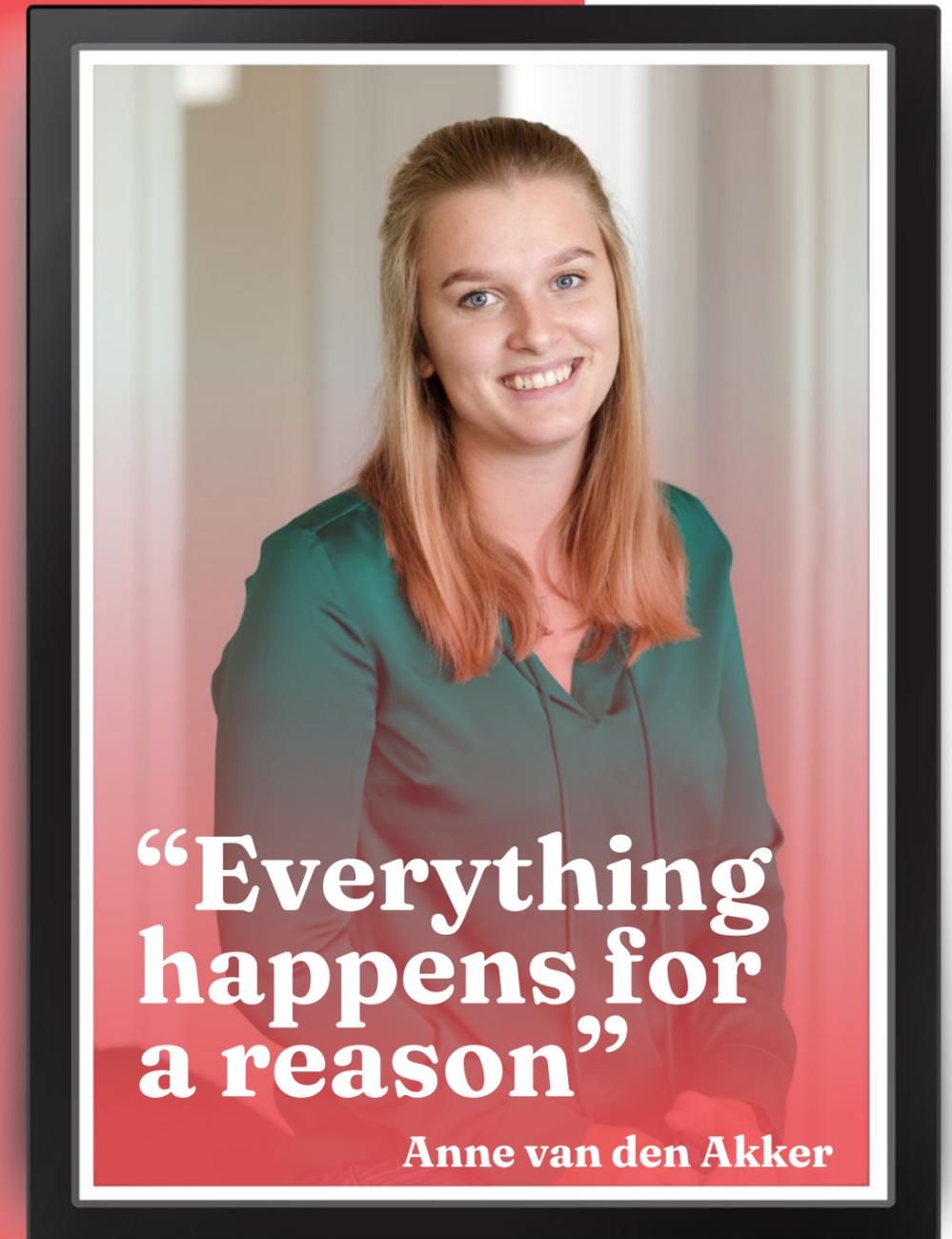
**“Why wait?”**

Heleen de Jong

Because of our philosophy of radical transparency, which allows everyone access to all information, innovation comes from every corner of the organization. And Viisionairs who spot room for improvement or innovation can participate in the project in which the improvement is included. For example, it might be the case that a Happiness Factory colleague comes up with a proposal for an event, organizes it, and then collaborates on our Viisi Fashion project, or there might be an advisor who participates in the production of informative videos that we post on social media, or a mortgage underwriter who conducts Cultural fit job interviews.

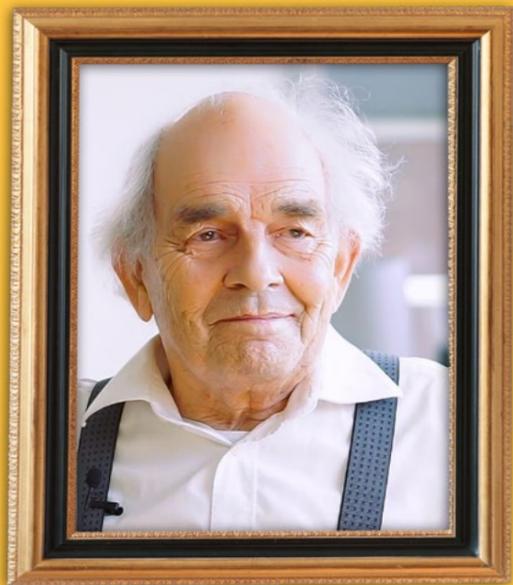
**Anne van den Akker**

“I started as a Support Employee in the Happiness factory in May 2021. In this team we support the advisors, and speak to different clients when they call Viisi. This already makes for a very engaged and varied job, but because we are a holacratic company, I soon got the opportunity to develop myself even more in other circles and roles. For example, I now also ensure that every colleague receives a gift on his or her birthday, and I have also been busy with Viisi Fashion in the Branding circle in recent times; our own Viisi clothing line! I notice that I get a lot of energy from the different possibilities and roles, allowing me time to vary things myself and create my ultimate job, which is certainly the case for me right now.”



# Decision-making focused on Innovation

In addition to the fact that roles have far-reaching autonomy in decision-making in their own field of operation, which facilitates the daily improvement of your own work, we use decision-making based on consent when it concerns more major, cross-role or circle-transcending decisions at Viisi. This is facilitated by way of integrative decision-making within Holacracy.



## Inspiration: Gerard Endenburg

The sociocratic circle organization method of the Dutch entrepreneur Gerard Endenburg consists of a dynamic network of double-linked circles. This network can be added to the structure of any existing organization.

By utilizing the sociocratic circle organization method, organizations can:

- increase the effectiveness of meetings by more than fifty percent;
- provide management with accurate and fast feedback so that it can respond adequately and quickly to internal and external developments;

- promote learning processes;
- significantly speed up change-related procedures;
- consolidate the involvement of employees and customers within the organization.

Prof. Endenburg developed this method during its daily use within his own company: Endenburg Elektrotechniek. Since 1978, further development of the method has taken place in the Sociocratic Center in Rotterdam.



**“A good start  
is half the  
battle”**

**Lotte Kleter**

## **Consensus and consent. What’s the difference?**

Consensus is a decision based on unanimity. The decision is only taken when all participants are “in favour”. Unanimity prevents the power of the majority, and the minority has equal importance. Everyone agrees. Naturally, this all sounds great, but the likelihood that a proposal will go through is therefore very limited. Is it really necessary for everyone to be

“completely in favour”? Consensus-based decision-making is not based on unanimity, but on ‘good enough for now, safe enough to try’). If no one in the group objects to the execution of a proposal, the proposal will go ahead. The objections and concerns are used to enrich the proposal, rather than block it.

## Contributing to our purpose yourself

For almost six years now we have been working with Holacracy as an organizational model. Holacracy extends the opportunity to everyone to be able to contribute to the purpose of Viisi in their own way.

Holacracy is all about purpose. There is a general, overarching purpose for the entire organization, which indicates what our ultimate goal is. In addition, every circle and even every role has a purpose. This way, there is a “hierarchy of meaning”.

By dividing the larger purpose into small segments, the manner in which they can individually contribute to achieving our purpose becomes more consolidated for Viisionairs. The responsibilities that are defined within all roles subsequently make it even clearer what contribution is expected of everyone, so that each time, we’re one step closer to our purpose. Using this method, everyone works in a purpose-driven manner, and innovation comes from intrinsic motivation and is not an ‘imposed thing’.

### Tara Coppolse

“I was looking for a mission that we can work on together, to make a positive contribution, and that’s also the reason why I ended up at Viisi. It’s now my second week at Viisi, but I already notice that it’s good, that people really care about each other, it just makes me very happy.”



## Our customers

Although our customers consciously come second, they are an important indicator when it comes to improving our services. What we strive towards for our customers is simple: we help them with one of the most important decisions in their lives, the purchase of their own home. In that process, we want to offer an 11-star experience, where customers feel at home with us, just like our own Viisionairs.

We offer independent mortgage advice and are specialized in helping young professionals, first-time buyers, people moving on within the housing market, and expats. We assist customers in the purchase of a home, put together the mortgage with the customer, and ensure that the onward process is handled smoothly and quickly. We do this by working transparently and efficiently (read: digitally) in order to let customers prepare the process themselves as thoroughly as possible.



**11.424**

**mortgages processed**



**9,8**

**average customer rating**



**€4,4 miljard**

**billion mortgages**

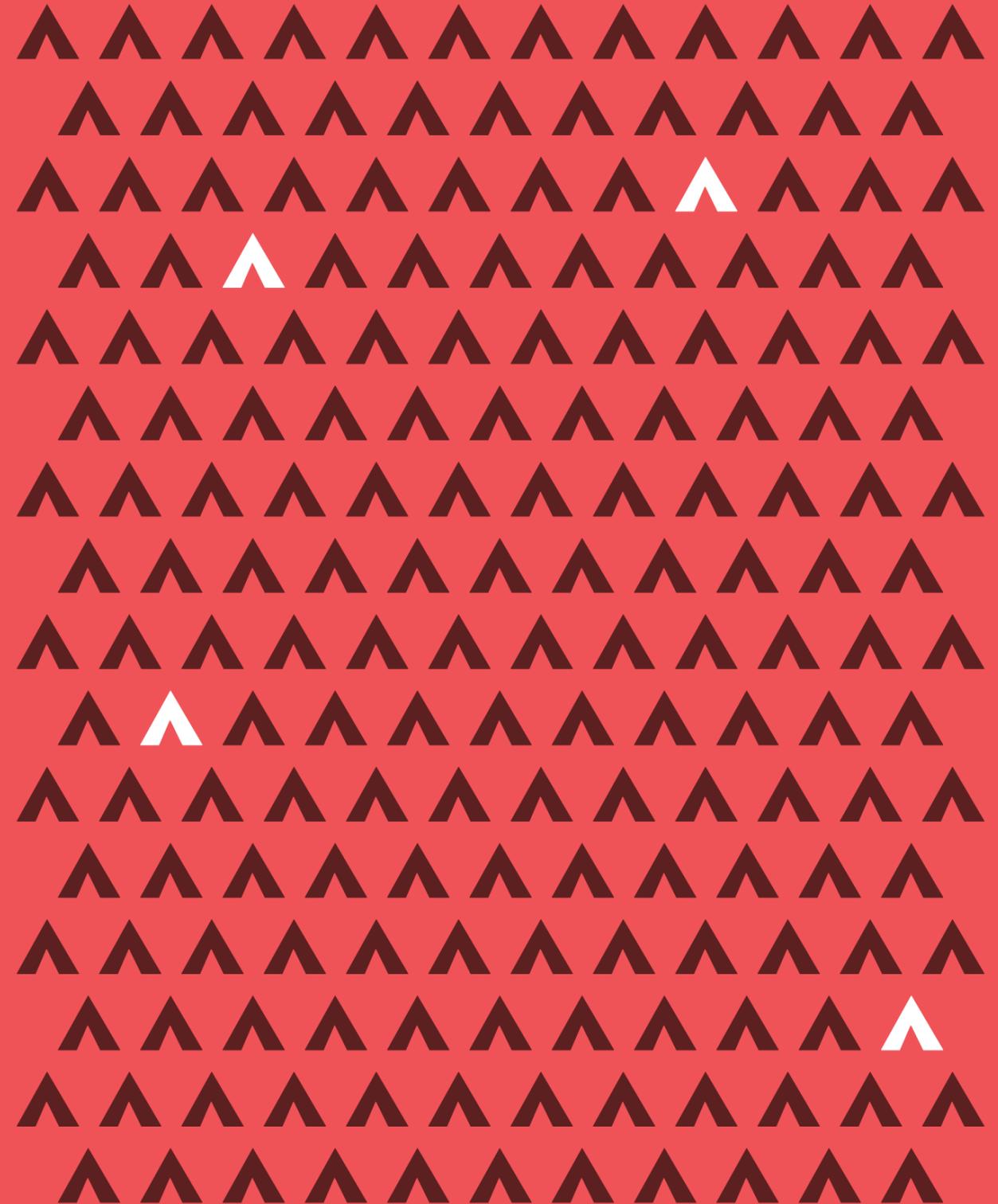
**“Strong together”**

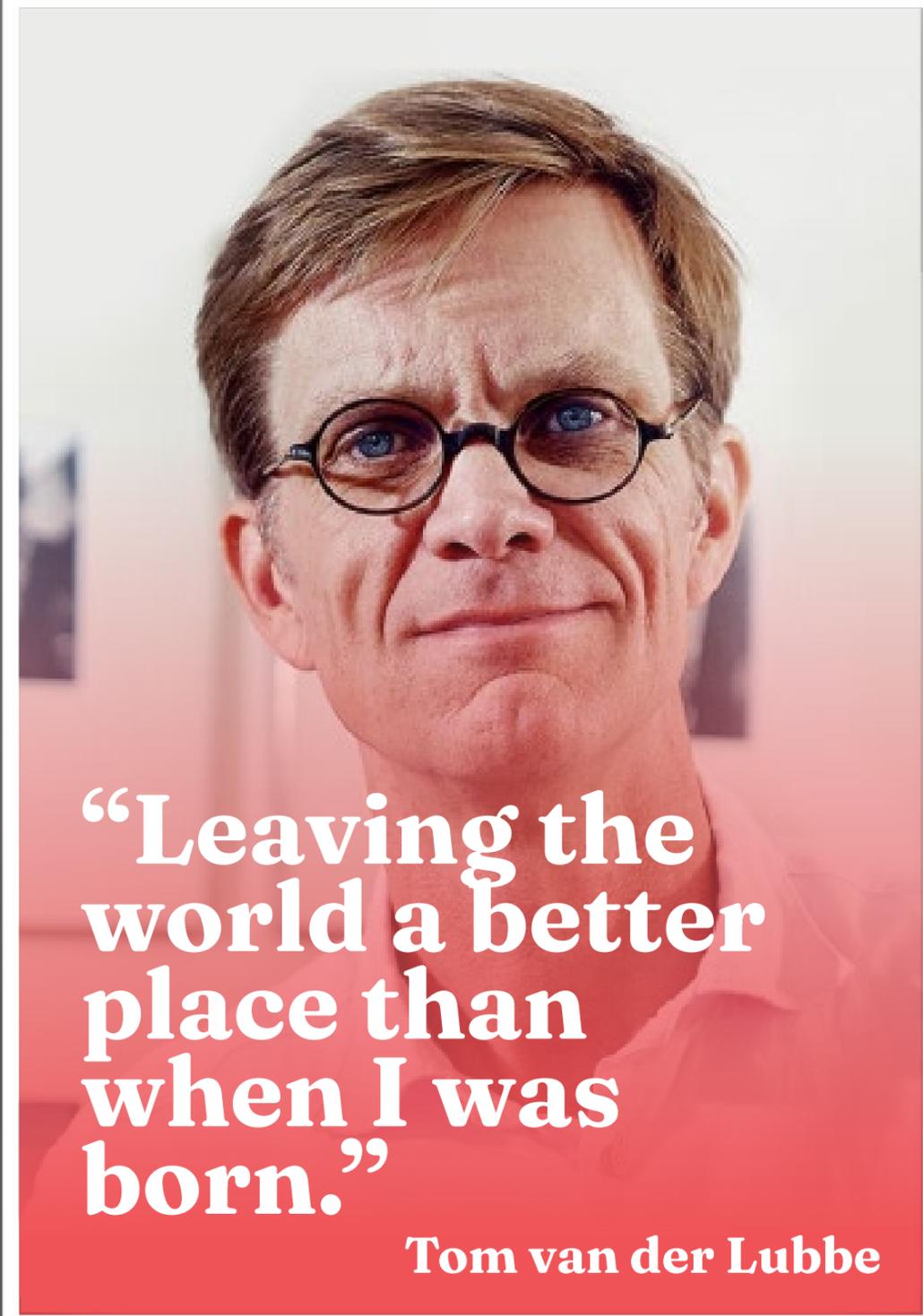
**Frank Tukker**

We also have an underwriting team (our [Smooth Operations](#) circle), which is all about making the mortgage application process as fast and efficient as possible, which is not only good for our customers, but also for all Viisionairs, who can spend a lot of quality time on the customer due to the automation of our processes. All this has resulted in an average customer rating of 9.8 in recent years (gathered from almost 5,000 customer reviews on Google, Independer, Trustpilot and Advieskeuze).

# VI Bold leadership

**At Viisi, leadership is not tied to a person or a management team, which means that everyone can take up leadership from their own role - or from a new role, if there's a need for it. And, the unique aspect is that many Viisionairs do just that. For example, Viisionairs express themselves in the (international) media through columns, opinion articles, podcasts, or guest lectures, or explain the research they've conducted. And the company is also happy to show its colors to the outside world in its (media) expressions. That's bold leadership right there.**





**“Leaving the world a better place than when I was born.”**

**Tom van der Lubbe**

**Tom van der Lubbe**

“We absolutely want to change the system. Isn’t it crazy that a two-euro pack of chocolate sprinkles features a description of the ingredients in it, but people have no idea what a mortgage of several hundred thousand euros is comprised of? We want the customer who’s about to incur the biggest expense in their life to know where the money from the mortgage is coming from, and where the monthly payments go. In 2022, we expect to handle the processing of 1.5 billion euros in mortgages, so our impact is increasing.”

#peoplefirst

# Who's Your Number One?



In April 2020, we launched our WieZetJijOpEen.nu Viisi website. Through this open platform, we wanted to offer a vehicle to employers who show solidarity towards their employees and who, especially during the time of Covid, put them first. Parties that joined up were allowed to use the PeopleFirst logo.

We feel it was and still is a shame that there is too much media focus on companies that behave in a non-ethical manner during the Covid crisis. Companies that made mega profits in previous years (and often paid them out to their shareholders) were first in line to receive financial Covid support at the beginning of the crisis.

Of course, we do not concern ourselves about the hospitality industry or travel industry, as everyone understands their appeal for support, and that they were forced to fire people. What we don't understand however, is that companies that have earned a lot of money over the years already sent their staff packing after a few months, when lay-offs really should have been the very last resort.

#peoplefirst

That is why we have set up the open platform WieZetJijOpEen. For employers who do show solidarity towards their employees and look for solutions together, also with their suppliers and customers, based on the conviction that together we will come out of this period stronger.

Within a few weeks, more than 250 companies and entrepreneurs had joined the platform: companies that showed solidarity with the more than 300,000 people who work for them. And the initiative received attention in more than fifty articles, podcasts and interviews in the media.

Sometimes we still get despondent when we read all the negative news, but we believe that most people are good. We really hope that we'll use this crisis as an opportunity. and that companies become more humane, and we therefore like to support other companies through the platform.

It's now more than a year on, and we still receive invitations from all areas, including internationally, to talk about our People First philosophy. It has also partly resulted in the nomination of fellow Viisionair Tom van der Lubbe for the Thinkers50 award.



# Leadership in the media

The fact that our impact is growing was clearly noticeable in the press again last year. Both in the financial sector and in the 'world of work', we are often in the news. Getting into the media is important to us, and also essential, because we want and need to become better known. We don't believe in paid 'self-promoting' marketing, but our goal is to be convincing through real content. Last year our content appeared in the (national) media at least once a week, but usually more often.

[View the real-time overview of all media appearances.](#)

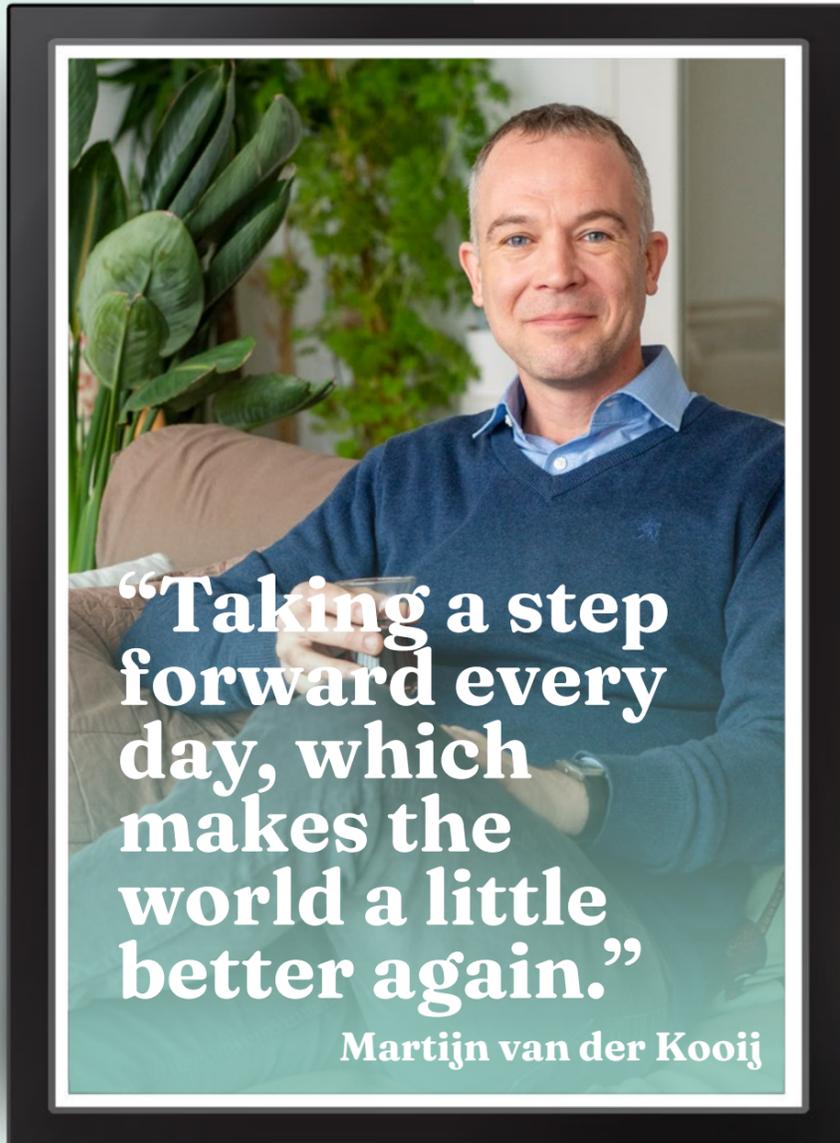
**Tom van der Lubbe, co-founder of  
Viisi in VVP magazine, the platform for  
financial advisors:**

“What makes you crucial as a bank, what is – with a nod to America – your ‘why’, what is your ‘purpose’? Or to keep it close to home: what is our raison d’être, who do we do it for? Are we helping SME entrepreneurs, or the large multinationals abroad”? Do we see it as our task to guide the agricultural sector in the transition towards more sustainable agriculture? Is it the objective of the financial sector to help as many people as possible to find affordable housing or to actually help self-employed people? As a financial sector, we will never become as crucial as the healthcare sector, but at least we should become a little more crucial than we are at this moment in time.”

# Viisi in the international press

The international media also managed to find us again last year. For example, the [Brazilian edition of MT Sloan Management Review published the article 'É a solidariedade, stupid!](#), in which Viisi's People First strategy is highlighted. And in an [article by Haufe New Management](#), Viisi was mentioned as best practice. [The Swiss SGO Herbsttagung also published a preliminary discussion with co-founder](#)

[Tom van der Lubbe](#) about purpose-driven organizations. In a videocast with Hard Talk HR, Tom explained why solidarity is the cornerstone of organizations that revolve around people. He was also a guest in [Karin Volo's Amazing Leaders Series](#), and that is just a random selection of the international attention Viisi has generated.

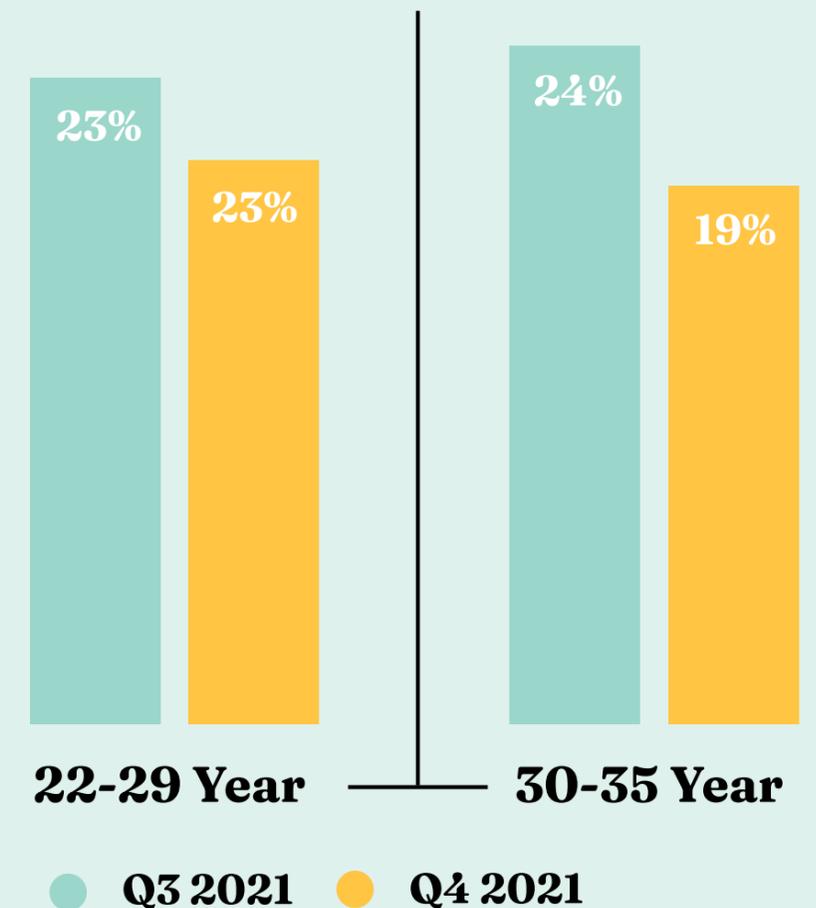


## Starter (first-time buyer) barometer

Since 2018, we have been conducting periodic research under the name Startersbarometer. Viisi does this to gain insight into the position of first-time buyers on the Dutch housing market. We are an expert partner in the field of first-time buyers, and actively engage in the debate about how the housing market problems could be solved. Nowadays, our studies always make the national press, and colleagues Deni Nozic and Hergen Dutrieux were also guests in an [episode of Nieuwsuur](#) in 2021. For a complete overview of our work to map and resolve the first-time buyer problem, view the [Startersbarometer page](#) on our website.

**Only one in 5 first-time buyers expects to be able to buy first home in 2022**

**“I expect to be able to buy a first home within the next twelve months”**





**“ Was  
mich nicht  
umbringt,  
macht mich  
stärker”**

**Hergen Dutrieux**

### **Hergen Dutrieux**

“Media coverage of the housing market by financial service providers is dominated by large market parties (banks/mortgage chains). The tone is mainly descriptive and a position is rarely taken. Examples abound: record number of mortgages, interest rates rise/fall, etc. Viisi chooses to highlight the group in the media that has been the hardest hit: the first-time buyers on the housing market. We also explicitly state that the interests of first-time buyers must weigh much more heavily than those of current homeowners. The haves versus the have-nots. Then remember that all our customers are homeowners!”

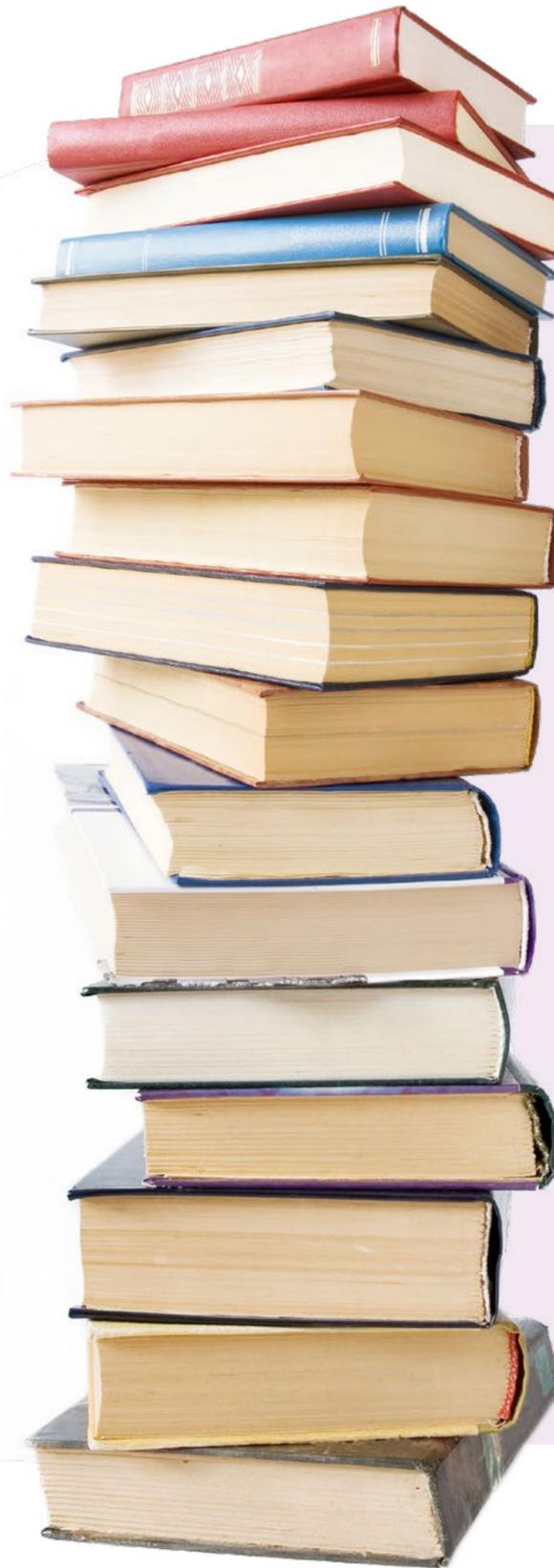
# Holacracy Safaris

From 2019, we will give students, professionals, organizations and companies outside Viisi the opportunity to take a look behind our scenes during a Holacracy Safari. Before the onset of Covid, more than a hundred companies were visiting us here. What was striking was that the groups were getting increasingly larger in size. That's why we created the Holacracy Safari XL: a full-morning program that starts with attending a Tactical & Governance meeting, followed by a presentation on Holacracy at Viisi. Themes such as the new reward, equal pay, assessment and peer-to-peer feedback are also discussed.

By opening up in this way, we bring external, fresh perspectives into our homes, so that we also grow ourselves. The Holacracy Safari also has a positive effect on our employer branding. It mainly helps us to promote our way of working and that is ultimately what we do it for. Unfortunately, due to the Covid measures, we were also unable to receive any companies over the past year. However, we still share many of our experiences with self-organization in various podcasts, online conferences and other media ([check our website for an overview](#)).

# The People First philosophy at colleges, universities and in government

Every year we supervise several students with their graduation theses, and have published a number of them on our [website](#). In 2020, together with a group of students from the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS), we managed to incorporate Viisi's People First story as a practical component into the curriculum of the Human Resource Management programme. In 2021, colleague Marc-Peter Pijper presented several guest lectures at Avans Hogeschool and Hogeschool Utrecht, among others. Colleague Tom van der Lubbe has been invited to various international universities, such as the University of St. Gallen and the ESCP in Paris. Marc-Peter has also hosted workshops during the Leadership Day of the Ministry of Finance and the Government-wide working group for Talent-oriented working. In this way, we share our People First philosophy more broadly within society, and generate an impact beyond our own company walls.



## Viisi Bookcast

Every week, Tom van der Lubbe reads an inspiring management book. Together with Erno Hannink, he then discusses that book in the [bookcast of De Ondernemer](#). Not surprisingly, Tom and Erno pick out books that either challenge entrepreneurs, or that they can learn from. For example: 'Towards New Leadership In 10 Steps' by Toon Franken, 'No rules rules' by Reed Hastings and 'Scaling Up' by Verne Harnish. In the bookcast, it not only becomes clear what Tom thinks of these books, but he also cites examples from his practical experience at Viisi.

## Growth despite the Covid crisis

With Viisi, despite the Covid crisis, we aim to grow into a party that leads the way, in order to ultimately achieve our goal: to make financial services radically decent and fully transparent. You need to talk about the future right now. We're now determining how we are to live, work and be housed ten years from now. That may seem strange coming from a mortgage advice provider, but align that with our purpose and you'll see the puzzle pieces begin to fit together.



“Later  
is now”

Mariska Kerkhof

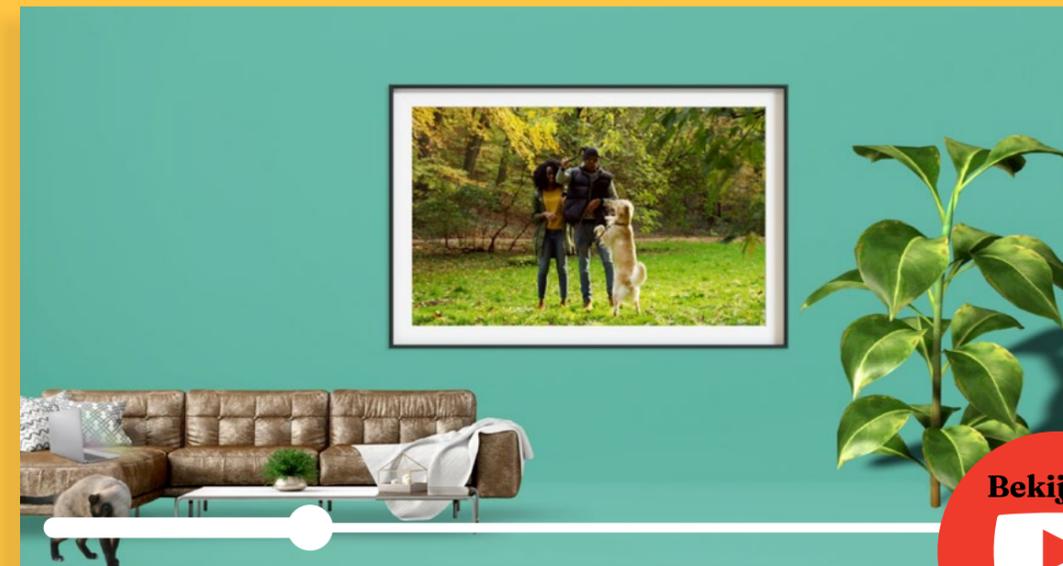
# Crowdfunding

**Our goal is for customers to be able to live comfortably, responsibly and sustainably within their own homes. But our mission doesn't stop there, Viisi looks beyond the horizon: towards a sustainable society where we look after each other and are considerate towards one another. In order for this not to stay a mere dream, we have set up a crowdfunding campaign this year with comments from ex-newsreader Noralie Beyer.**

The campaign was a resounding success. With a revenue of almost EUR 900,000, we're able to recruit many new Viisionairs over the coming year, and realize a doubling of our advisory capacity, which substantially supports the impact of the purpose. Hiring people is therefore a means to the higher end. The more people who support the purpose, the closer the goal gets. This means that more people will be able to finance a home that becomes sustainable. That's good for all of us.

We are proud to have received so much support and perhaps even more proud that no less than a third of the total amount comes from our own Viisionairs, friends and family!

Our crowdfunding campaign was also a great opportunity to pay even more attention to sustainability, as with every contribution from 1000 euros we will plant an extra tree in the Viisi forest.



It is now a year on, and the first annual interest has already been transferred to all investors. We wanted to double in advisory capacity and deliberately did not do so. It turned out that the qualitative onboarding of so many new colleagues turned out to be more difficult than expected, especially because Covid dictated that it also had to be done at a distance. Based on the People first idea, we decided to apply the brakes temporarily. As a result, we have often had to say 'no' to customers, which is a pain at times, but we set the bar high for ourselves, and that is what the customers expect from us. We know it'll pay off in the long run. People First all the way.

## Great Place to Work as a stage for People First

Even though the presentation of Great Place To Work was held online again this year, we didn't celebrate any less when we were awarded Best Workplace in the Netherlands for the third time running! We're incredibly proud to once again win first place with the whole team.



**“It’s better to regret the things you did than to regret the things you didn’t”**  
**Myrthe Romeijn**

Of course we know we're a very strong team, but this was another jewel in the crown of our workplace! It shows that the focus on our own team, People First, is the only right one. Solidarity is not only important in times of crisis, but during the good times it's also crucial to put employees first. The secondly the customer and, lastly, the shareholders. We see this title not only as a prize for ourselves, but as a stage for People First. And how proud we are at Viisi to also finish in first place in the election of European Best Workplace of the year, so we're definitely on the right track!



**“If you want  
to go fast, go  
alone. If you  
want go far,  
go together”**

Daan Dutrieux



# And finally...

**VIISI**

We hope we have been able to inspire you with how we as Viisionairs see the world. That we can be ourselves. Everyone is different, yet collectively we form a close-knit team - not in spite of, but precisely because of all our differences.

At Viisi we say: you can feel and act at home with us! That applies to everyone: from the coffee supplier to ourselves, and from customers to visitors. Everyone who seeks contact is welcome, which includes you too. Our door is always open.

