



The partners of Promethevs

## Developing great leaders with the help of history

**With stories about historic leadership icons and journeys to classic destinations, Promethevs supports leaders in achieving a deeper understanding of themselves, better cooperation skills and stronger results.**

By Malin Norman | Photos: Promethevs

The Norwegian consultancy Promethevs is specialised in leadership, team development and organisational change. Its professional coaches work with development programmes for senior management and executives, arrange lectures and training courses, and hold seminars in, for instance, rhetoric. The ambition is to support leaders in becoming more proactive, and help them reflect, gain perspective and be wiser in their leader-

ship role – for a greater good than just their own career.

The owners and partners of the consultancy are psychologists, philosophers and one actor. They are involved in Executive Master of Management programmes at the Norwegian School of Management, and have more than 20 years of consultancy experience. Mariann Ovesen Crantz, CEO

and one of four partners, talks about the unique direction of Promethevs: “We combine philosophy, like existentialism and humanism, with history and modern leadership theory. We work mostly with senior leaders, who have more experience and the ability to reflect deeper on their situation and progress.”

Ovesen Crantz also elaborates on the trend in leadership, which has moved closer to knowledge management. “In the past, co-workers used to have firmer routines and more set tasks. With the rapidly changing environment we have now, people tend to have tasks that require high levels of knowledge. Today’s

leaders need to extract that competence from team members, which requires better skills in relationship building, and they have to be able to create meaning.”

### The three cornerstones

Promethevs takes its name from a Titan in Greek mythology, known as the creator of mankind and also its greatest benefactor. He sided with the humans and stole fire from Mount Olympus to give it to mankind, against the will of Zeus. Promethevs has been a major inspiration and symbol for artists, sculptors, musicians, novelists and poets, and the myth has extended well into our time.

Leadership in the 21st century also requires a balancing act of collaboration and humility, direction and action, and ambition. According to Ovesen Crantz, these are classic dilemmas and the company bases its coaching on a mix of modern science and history. “It’s important for us to have one foot in the academic world, and at the same time look at history and philosophy,” she says. “There’s a lot for our modern leaders to learn from the past.”

The leadership programme is based on three cornerstones. The first is an academic base in theory and research. The second provides classic perspectives on history, philosophy, literature and art – for a deeper understanding of leadership.

Finally, an opportunity to reflect on one’s own performance as a leader makes the third cornerstone. The triangle makes a powerful symbol of people’s ability to achieve creativity and insight, and features in the company’s logo, which also includes four smaller triangles symbolising the cardinal virtues of courage, prudence, justice and temperance.

### Learning through time travel

In the search for timeless leadership, Promethevs offers tailored programmes and themed trips to classic destinations such as Florence, Rome and London. “We frame our seminars with stories about the great leaders, and our participants can use the inspiration and learning in their own leadership,” says Ovesen Crantz. “But we don’t just look at the strengths of these giants; we also analyse the weaknesses and failures, and by doing so we can initiate discussions about difficult situations and how to tackle these in new ways. What really resonates with our participants is the realisation that leaders face many of the same dilemmas through space and time.”

In October this year, Promethevs is holding an open course in Athens, the birthplace of politics and democracy. The theme is rhetoric, and participants will learn the art of executing their leadership. The four days include excursions

and hikes, lectures and discussions, group assignments, individual study time, and a range of practical tasks. “We usually have a great mix of people from different organisations,” explains Ovesen Crantz. “Through teamwork, they get to know each other, build their own network and learn from experiences from new environments.”

Another exciting project is Partnership Mimesis, in collaboration with the National Theatre of Norway. This new concept integrates the best of two worlds: leadership and drama. In addition to professional consultants from Promethevs, actors from the National Theatre take part and play out key scenes from classical plays. The actors also share their experience of acting and how to get into a role, which has similarities with leadership roles. The initiative has received fantastic feedback and one of the previous participants says: “The Mimesis programme challenged me to see my role as a leader from a new and rewarding perspective.”

For more information, please visit:  
[www.promethevs.no](http://www.promethevs.no)

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