

VANDAAG - Specialist in healthcare matters

Case description, Pieter Wanten (August, 2024)

Information about VANDAAG

VANDAAG supports healthcare and SME organizations nationwide with the strategic and operational challenges in business operations. The goal of the organization is to support clients in such a way that they can fully focus on the execution of their primary process. VANDAAG does this by providing services such as preparing a business plan, implementing software and supporting business operations through dashboards with steering information. The company has grown gradually since its founding in 2014 and currently consists of about 50 employees (mainly highly educated).



The social innovation

The founding of the company can be seen as a 'social innovation'. From the beginning, VANDAAG has been committed to a horizontal organizational structure where there are no hierarchical differences between employees in practice. All employees, including the three founders (the management), are equal and are treated with the same standards and values. Vitality and job satisfaction are highly valued and investments are made in the knowledge and skills of employees through training and a personal growth plan.

Brief history

In 2014, Vandaag Zorgvernieuwing was founded in Baexem with the mission: converting passion into healthy care. According to VANDAAG, healthy care consists of two parts; on the one hand delivering good services to clients and on the other hand a (financially) healthy organization. In order to be able to support their clients as well as possible in the financial area, the department 'Vandaag Zorgvernieuwing Financieel' was established in 2017 under the leadership of Werter Fiscaal Advies en Administratie. In 2019, it was decided to merge the companies (Vandaag Zorgvernieuwing and Werter Fiscaal Advies en Administratie) under the banner of VANDAAG.

VANDAAG provides services to both healthcare organizations and SME organizations outside of healthcare, which is why the original mission of Vandaag Zorgvernieuwing has been changed to 'Converting passion into valuable business'. Clients of VANDAAG put their passion mainly into providing high-quality services, VANDAAG puts its passion into making business and administrative processes as optimal as possible. VANDAAG does this through an integral approach; both the client and their environment are looked at. The issue of the client is approached from different specialist angles, so an appropriate solution can be found for each client.

Vision, mission and values

VANDAAG turns passion into valuable entrepreneurship and supports its clients through integral support. With a focus on entrepreneurship and innovation, VANDAAG optimizes business and administrative processes. As a business partner for Dutch entrepreneurs, VANDAAG strives to be the innovator of the Netherlands. The organization inspires professionals to achieve mastery by continuing to develop as a company. The founders of VANDAAG provide a breeding ground (see 'The house of VANDAAG' below) in which teams and individuals can grow. With a mix of specialized professionals, VANDAAG offers services that match the daily practice and ambitions of its clients.

Decisiveness, Mastery and Connection. These are the three core values of VANDAAG.

VANDAAG is fully committed to working with clients to achieve their goals, with an emphasis on action and results. The credo is: ask not for permission but forgiveness.

Personal development and knowledge sharing are central. VANDAAG continuously invests in gathering and applying new knowledge to promote personal growth.

The focus is on sustainable relationships and long-term goals. People-to-people connection is essential for achieving goals for both clients and the organization.

Strategy

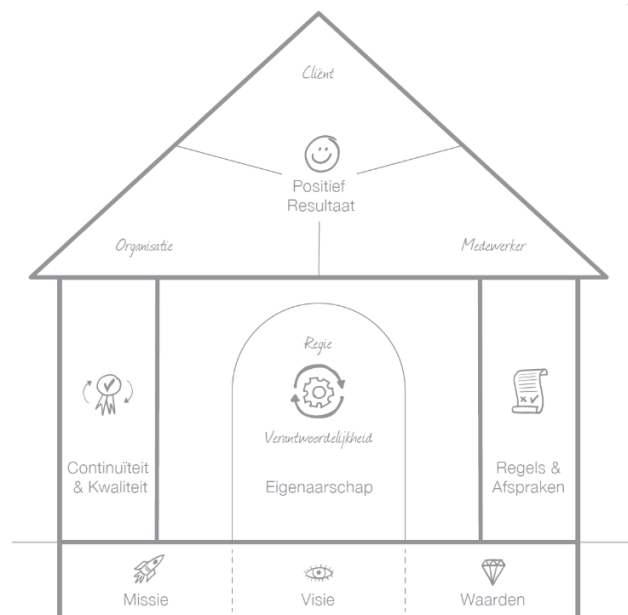
VANDAAG's strategy revolves around turning passion into valuable entrepreneurship by providing integral support to Dutch entrepreneurs. With a strong focus on entrepreneurship and innovation, VANDAAG optimizes business and administrative processes. As a business partner, the company wants to be the innovator of the Netherlands.

In order to give employees a voice in the strategic path, a project group has been established, which includes three employee representatives plus a board member. An X-matrix is currently being experimented with, for which employees provide input so that improvement initiatives and (multi-) year goals can be drawn up. An X-matrix is a tool used to set and communicate strategic goals. This X-matrix should ensure that multi-year goals are more concrete and transparent than before. Moreover, this gives the opportunity to translate the vision/mission into concrete multi-year goals, which in turn can be translated into annual goals. These annual goals can be converted into concrete actions, providing a foothold for employees. In this way, the strategy is no longer something elusive that is determined by the management.

Furthermore, the three founders have a monthly strategy session with each other and they look at the previous month's figures. This is done on the first Friday of the new month allowing the management to intervene quickly in case of any difficulties. Moreover, once a year the three founders work together with a strategic expert to spar about the strategy through which they also get input from an external person.

Working method

Through the founders, trust is given to employees and ownership is created by making employees responsible for their own work and their team. 'The house of VANDAAG' illustratively describes the working method within the organization. Through the mission, vision and values, the founders try to create a breeding ground where employees feel they can take responsibility. However, this freedom must fit within the rules and agreements of both VANDAAG and external parties (e.g., government rules). Furthermore, the work of employees must contribute to the continuity and quality of the organization. The frameworks within the House of VANDAAG are very important and attempts are made to deviate from them as little as possible. The roof of



The house of VANDAAG

the house emphasizes that a positive result can only be achieved when client, organization and employee work together in a good way.

Structure

VANDAAG's organizational structure can be described as a horizontal structure since there are two hierarchical layers within the company. The upper layer consists of the three founders of the company and below them are the other employees. In practice, there is little noticeable of these layers since the three founders are part of a specialized team and therefore cooperate with the other employees.

Currently, VANDAAG consists of just over 50 employees divided into 8 specialist teams: Team Process Optimization & Implementation, Team Care Administration, Team Financial Care, Team Financial SME, Team BI & Automation, Team Business development, Team People & Organization and Team Contracting & Quality. Customer teams are formed from the specialist teams surrounding the customer, in which employees from different specialist teams (can) be included. Moreover, an employee can be in several customer teams at the same time, depending on the size of the assignments.

In addition to the work that employees perform for clients, they also work for VANDAAG itself. For example, the Team Process Optimization & Implementation ensures that the processes within VANDAAG run as efficiently as possible, and Team People & Organization arranges the HR-related matters for VANDAAG. This ensures that VANDAAG is not dependent on external parties and that they can manage their operations internally.

Specialist teams

The specialist teams include employees based on their substantive expertise. The teams bear responsibility for the interpretation and quality of services in their area of expertise. Furthermore, they are responsible for the proper division of tasks of the substantive assignments and have the initiative in the further development of the services and their marketing. Each content team has its own dashboard containing quantitative targets. Within these specialized teams, employees support each other by sharing knowledge and experiences. In addition, more experienced employees take on the responsibility of training/coaching less experienced colleagues.

Customer teams

To achieve the integrated approach, VANDAAG works with so-called customer teams, which consist of employees (substantive specialists) of the various specialist teams. These customer teams can be seen as project teams, as they are created to carry out a particular assignment for one client.

During the company's growth, these customer teams were created since it was no longer possible for each employee to know all the customers (personally). The customer teams ensure that good contact can still be maintained with the customer and a personal bond can be built. In this way it strengthens customer loyalty and the continuity of the organization.

The size of these teams depends on the assignment from the customer and can consist of 2 employees, but in some cases also of 8. The composition of the customer teams happens organically and is partly done by the employees themselves. Looking at the wishes of the customer and the availability of employees, it is determined which employees will form a customer team. In addition, consideration is given to whether a particular employee has already established a relationship with a customer, such as during a previous assignment for this customer. This employee will then be added to the client team (should this employee be available) so that the existing relationship between the client and VANDAAG can be built upon.

The customer teams work independently while carrying out their assignment and have complete control over the process. They decide at what frequency they schedule a meeting to discuss the status of the project and must ensure that they stay within the agreed budget. Customer teams do not have to report to employees outside their own client team or to the founders, which is consistent with creating a sense of ownership in each employee. As they work, employees are supported by dashboards and Microsoft Teams.

Technological support

Dashboards

In order to work as efficiently (smartly) as possible, self-developed dashboards are used. The dashboards help employees by providing up-to-date management information that they can use to help the customer as effectively as possible. The customer himself also benefits from these dashboards by visualizing up-to-date information. Currently, these dashboards are not yet used by every customer team, but this is the plan for the future. In this way, every customer team will be able to work more efficiently and the work can be taken over more easily by colleagues in case of illness/sudden absence.

Microsoft Teams

The challenge for the customer teams was mainly in the communication area since the organization is divided into several specialized teams that are not always in direct contact with each other on the work floor. To make collaboration within the customer teams run smoothly, an environment is created within Microsoft Teams for each customer. In this environment, employees within the customer teams can leave notes that their colleagues will see when the environment is started up, keeping everyone up to date on the current situation at the customer.

Roles

At VANDAAG, employees have roles rather than functions. In addition to their role as content specialists, employees can take on two additional roles within the customer teams. These are the roles of 'customer director' and 'salesperson'. Both roles are filled by a content specialist. The customer director is responsible for the relationship between the customer and the team. Should there be major changes, or should the customer be dissatisfied or want to discuss something, the customer director ensures that the entire customer team is consulted (digitally). There is no intervention by the management here, except if there are major problems, and because of this the responsibility lies with the customer teams themselves. Moreover, a program was developed in 2024 for the employees who fulfill the role of customer director. Knowledge and experiences are exchanged in meetings to learn from each other and the client.

The salesperson mainly has contact with the client in the beginning to sell VANDAAG's services, so to speak. This role has evolved over the years within the company. The role was first performed by an employee and 1 board member, but today each specialty team has at least 1 person performing this role. When the role was performed outside the specialist teams by 2 employees, other employees noticed that it could often take a long time before a quotation could be sent to the customer. The 2 salespeople were busy with other tasks or they were not in direct contact with the customer. As a result, an improvement project was started and with the new division, the team can react faster to possible opportunities and send a quotation to the customer more easily. In addition, the salesperson is now closer to the customer, allowing a more appropriate quotation to be sent.

Vitality

The health of employees is of great importance within an organization and therefore VANDAAG organizes a lot in the field of vitality. A vitality team, consisting of three employees, facilitates several activities in which employees can participate. Moreover, once a year a vitality day is organized in which employees are educated about the many aspects that influence health, such as physical and mental health and nutrition.

Twice a week there is the possibility for employees to go to the sports hall in Baexem prior to work, between 07:00 and 08:00. Here a hired coach provides a boot camp. Furthermore, there is the possibility for employees to come up with their own ideas; for example, a tennis clinic was recently organized by a number of employees and, on the initiative of another employee, a cooking workshop will soon be held. Exercising with colleagues was viewed skeptically at first by some employees, because why would you do this outside your working hours with other employees? The opinion of many has since turned. Being with colleagues in a different setting allows you to get to know each other in a different way which creates a better bond and atmosphere in the workplace. Apart from the physical condition of the employees, VANDAAG also pays attention to the mental aspect.

For example, a group of employees is going to meditate together to find peace of mind.

VANDAAG's commitment to vitality is underscored by the title 'most vital employer of Limburg 2022' and this commitment to vitality could also explain the low absenteeism rate within the company, which is below 2%.

Culture

During the interviews with employees, the word 'conviviality' regularly came up when describing the atmosphere. Colleagues are easily approachable and this also applies to the three founders; there is no sense of hierarchy within the organization. There is an attempt by the founders, together with the other employees, to create a safe climate where employees dare to challenge themselves and their colleagues and dare to make mistakes. This is also reflected in one of their core values decisiveness: 'ask not for permission but for forgiveness.'

Within VANDAAG there is also room for personal development and this is emphasized by the core value mastery. To gain new knowledge, the company gives employees room to develop themselves and the organization. Within VANDAAG they work with the 80/20 rule, 80% of the work must be billable and the remaining 20% can be used for development.

Personal development is also stimulated by a personal growth plan. Every employee has his/her own growth plan in which the employee's own plans are described. These can be plans related to improving their knowledge and skills in a particular area or acquiring totally new knowledge or skills. Once a year, or more often at an employee's request, a founder holds a 1-on-1 meeting with the employee to discuss the development around the growth plan. This human-to-human connection is reflected in the third core value of connectedness.

The moment a new employee joins VANDAAG, he or she is supported by another employee who serves as a mentor. This mentor is appointed from the specialist team in which the new employee will perform his/her work. The mentor is responsible for familiarizing the new employee with VANDAAG and is supported in this by a 'Welcome to VANDAAG' document and a checklist that is run through.

Lessons learned

Since its founding, VANDAAG has been a rapidly growing company with a current growth rate of about 15% per year in terms of the number of employees. This growth could cause the organization's horizontal structure and informal atmosphere to be compromised. But by sticking to vision, mission and values, VANDAAG has managed to safeguard the structure and culture. Sticking to its own created norms and values have ensured that the company has been and continues to be successful.

Including employees in the company's strategy and giving them a voice in it has also proven to be important. As a result, employees associate themselves with the direction the company wants to go and will actively participate in it. Concrete goals, which help employees make the strategy visible, are another important aspect of making the strategy flow through the organization.

Perhaps the most important lesson learned over the years; in VANDAAG's industry, the client is truly king, without clients VANDAAG could not exist. A good relationship with the client, guaranteed by the customer teams and the culture of VANDAAG, creates loyalty from the client and this ensures the continuity of the company.

Justification

To create this case description, interviews were conducted with: two executives, a Financial Advisor, a Process Optimization & Implementation specialist and a People & Organization specialist. In preparation, the company's website was reviewed and during the visit, a 'Welcome to VANDAAG' document and the book 'ALERT! Ontstress je organisatie' (Peeters & Govers, 2020) were shared. These three sources were used in addition to the interviews to prepare this case description.