Newsroom culture

– How the pandemic helped us make the newsroom more powerful

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Changing culture takes time

But look for opportunities that will speed things up
The early months
Smooth transition

- All communication in Slack, clear structure for channels (open channel policy), etc
- Using google meet, more meetings than usual (also social "gatherings")
- Teams working very well together, supporting each other, actually growing
But then what happened?
Drifting apart

- Relations within teams thrived, but relations **between teams** was struggling.
- A sense of not belonging, not knowing what was going on, not being part of the whole.
- The tone in slack hardened, misunderstandings grew to become
Exhaustion

- People felt less creative, unhappy, unengaged and alone.
- The managers were getting exhausted trying to communicate with everyone.
- Lack of safe space for discussions, sharing different perspectives.
What we did
Belonging

- Two meetings/week open to everyone, one business focus, one editorial focus.
- Ask questions about anything (raise your hand or send anonymously to trade union representative).
- Addressing problems/criticism, and celebrating success.
One newsroom, one culture

- Respectful, friendly, empathic. Learning from each other, promote diversity in perspectives & inclusion - showing by doing.
- Putting together small teams, reporters from different parts of the newsroom.
- Focus on the good examples of collaboration.
Stormöte: journalistik inriktning
Focus on managers/editors

- Reorganizing, adding a few editors.
- New project, "close editorship": seminars, coaching, hubs for sharing/support, etc.
- Focus on wellbeing, balance between work/personal life, building trust.
All the small things

- Chairs, desks and computer screens.
- Deliveries of flowers, bread, easter chocolates.
- Walks, lunch outside.
- Online weekly yoga classes.
What it led to
Hybrid working - best of both

- A more modern, sustainable take on the work in a newsroom.
- Better balance between work and personal life - trusting each other.
- Top management very accessible, flat organizational structure.
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