

Curriculum Vitae

Wanderer, the road is your footstep, nothing else;
Wanderer, there is no path, you lay down a path in walking.
In walking you lay down a path and when turning around
You see the road you'll never step on again.
Wanderer, path there is none, only tracks on the ocean foam.

— *Antonio Machado*

My Information

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summary

I am a system worker, organizational development leader and anthropologist working at the intersection of strategy, culture, and human potential. With an interdisciplinary foundation in Political Science, Marketing, and Social Anthropology (Research Master, University of Amsterdam), my career began in international corporate environments including Coca-Cola, Beiersdorf (NIVEA), and Natura, where I led marketing and global strategy initiatives across Europe, Global and Brazil. Over time, I became increasingly concerned not only with growth and performance, but with the cultural systems and power dynamics shaping people's lives inside organizations. This led me to anthropology and to a professional path grounded in one central belief: that leadership can be ethical and decentralized, and that lasting impact emerges from dignity, trust, and shared responsibility rather than control.

Since then, I have worked across Europe and New Zealand designing applied research, organizational interventions, and leadership journeys that translate insight into lived transformation. I led Organisational Development at Transavia for four years – including through the COVID crisis – where I designed enterprise-wide leadership programs, supported executive teams, and introduced participatory governance practices rooted in bottom-up contribution and collective intelligence. Later, as Lead Senior Consultant at Relevance (Schouten & Nelissen), I facilitated leadership and team development trajectories for international organizations such as IKEA, Rijk Zwaan and Omron. Trained in Co-Active Coaching, ORSC, Deep Democracy, and Process Work, I integrate systems thinking, relational awareness, and embodied learning to support individuals and organizations in moving toward greater freedom with dignity, creating cultures where people can contribute fully and responsibly. I currently lead my independent consultancy, Kotka, focused on designing and facilitating meaningful, high-impact learning and change journeys.

Strategy & Culture

International corporate leadership across Coca-Cola, Beiersdorf, and Natura

Applied Anthropology

Research Master, University of Amsterdam – systemic research and intervention design

Organisational Development

Four years leading OD at Transavia, including through the COVID crisis

Kotka Consultancy

Independent practice designing and facilitating meaningful, high-impact learning and change journeys

a start, my values

I was born on October 5th, 1981, in a small city in Romania. My early years unfolded during the final phase of the communist regime, a time shaped by restriction and censorship. Yet even then, I found spaciousness. As a deeply curious child and bookworm, I discovered freedom in books and in the worlds imagination made possible. That early experience of living between constraint and possibility shaped me. It cultivated in me the ability to move between worlds, intellectual, cultural, and professional, and to feel at home in transdisciplinary spaces. Curiosity remains one of my core strengths: the capacity to inquire, to imagine alternatives, and to navigate complexity with openness rather than fear.

I grew up in a family and culture that placed value on relationships. From an early age, I became fascinated by how people support one another, how trust is built, and how collective strength emerges. I believe that individuals hold immense potential, but that the greatest power often lies between people, in the quality of their relationships and shared responsibility.

The pursuit of freedom with dignity underpins my work and worldview. When people can see and be seen in their full humanity, without shame or fragmentation, they are able to act with integrity and create work, communities, and legacies that are both meaningful and humane.



my work path, three journeys

1

**marketing, development,
strategy**

2005-2014

2

**systemic research, applied
anthropology, entrepreneur**

2014-2019

3

**system sensing, coaching and
development, leadership**

2019-2026

1. marketing, development, strategy (2005–2014)

In my early twenties, I began my professional path as a high-potential trainee with Coca-Cola HBC and later The Coca-Cola Company in Romania, working in Marketing and Product Development. For two years, I led complex marketing and communication initiatives, combining research, creative strategy, and execution. I won an internal creativity competition and was invited to present at the global HBC headquarters in Greece. I was drawn to the scale and complexity of the work — developing campaigns, conducting market research, spending long days setting up in-store activations, and standing on stage telling stories. Through collaboration with regional offices, I began to feel a strong pull toward working across geographies. I wanted to understand markets, cultures, and people beyond my own national context.



That opportunity came with Beiersdorf. From my very first interview, I stated clearly that I aspired to work internationally. The CEO responded, *"If you are good enough, you will."* While managing NIVEA Baby in Romania, I developed a national program that positioned Romania as the number one performing country globally for nearly a year. Yet what mattered most to me was not the revenue growth. The initiative improved conditions for Romanian women in maternity wards — a program that remains active almost twenty years later. It was my first clear experience of aligning commercial success with social impact. This led to international roles — first in Vienna, overseeing marketing and development across European markets, and later in Hamburg with global responsibility. During my time in Hamburg, I moved to São Paulo to join Natura, one of the world's largest beauty companies, where I managed global strategy and development for key product categories.

- It was in Brazil that a decisive turning point occurred. While working on the global launch of a haircare line for ethnic hair, I met three anthropologists collaborating on the project. They showed me a video of a seven-year-old girl crying in a salon as chemical straighteners burned her scalp. Her mother reassured her: *"It will pass. It would hurt more if you go to school with curly hair."* The anthropologists then turned to me, responsible for one of the country's leading haircare brands, and asked: *"How responsible do you feel for a culture that shames young Black girls into looking like white girls?"* That question stayed with me. I realized that beyond shaping markets, I wanted to understand and question the cultural systems that shape us. That moment marked the beginning of my transition toward anthropology — toward examining power, identity, and responsibility and toward placing human dignity at the center of my work.

2. systemic research, applied anthropology, entrepreneur (2014–2019)

I moved to Amsterdam to pursue a Research Master's degree in Anthropology. Although I had previously studied Political Science, this was my first immersion into the rigorous world of social science research. I was immediately drawn not only to ethnography as a method, but to the possibility of applying anthropology beyond academia, at a time when "applied anthropology" was still marginal and not widely recognized as a professional path.

Impact Hub

My first applied research project was with Impact Hub, where I studied the organization's identity and the foundations of its global community. Rather than producing a conventional report, I experimented with form: partnering with an artist and a documentary filmmaker, I developed a multi-layered output combining written analysis, audio, and video. The research aimed not only to describe the community, but to reflect it back to itself. The Global CEO later shared that it was the first time she had seen the organization articulated so clearly — a reflection she continues to reference to this day.

Tech Scale-Up & Organizational Culture

At the end of my master's program, I declined a PhD opportunity and chose instead to build my own practice in applied anthropology. My second project emerged from a chance conversation at a conference with the founder of a tech scale-up. When he asked what I did, I replied, "I answer interesting questions and offer advice, do you have one?" He answered: "I have too many women crying in my office every day. How do I make that stop?" From that question, a project was born, one that examined organizational culture, power, and emotional dynamics beneath the surface of performance metrics.

New Zealand & The Human Show

Shortly thereafter, I moved to New Zealand, where I continued working with companies, universities, and government institutions. My work combined applied research with intervention design, always seeking to move from insight to practical change. During this time, I developed a growing interest in the relationship between artificial intelligence and human values. As this was still a niche field, I launched a podcast, The Human Show, to explore conversations at the intersection of technology, ethics, and humanity. The podcast has since surpassed 100 episodes, maintains a five-star rating, and continues to evolve alongside my intellectual interests.

KLM & Namla

After two years in New Zealand, I returned to the Netherlands and led a twelve-month research and intervention design project for KLM, managing a team of anthropologists and designers. It was during this period that I began to confront the limits of research alone in driving systemic change. I observed how often valuable knowledge remained confined to reports and recommendations, rarely translating into lived transformation within organizations. Together with fellow applied anthropologist Rosalie Post, I co-founded Namla, a venture dedicated to helping anthropology students, graduates, and researchers translate knowledge into meaningful societal impact. We developed a bootcamp model combining anthropology and design practice, and secured two European grants (Creative Europe and Erasmus+) to support this work. I was actively involved in Namla for four years before exiting one year ago to pursue a new direction.

Throughout these experiences, a question continued for me: information is widely accessible, yet change remains difficult. I think that what prevents individuals and systems from transformation is rarely a lack of knowledge. Deep learning does not occur simply by reading a report; it happens through lived experience, relational shifts, and embodied insight. This realization became the foundation for the next phase of my work: designing and facilitating learning experiences that enable change not only at the level of understanding, but at the level of being.

3. system sensing, coaching and development, leadership (2019–2026)

Toward the end of my assignment with KLM, I met the CEO of Transavia for coffee. We connected around a shared belief: that people hold immense potential, and that meaningful impact begins with how people relate, lead, and take responsibility together.

He was seeking a Head of Organisational Development to support his ambition of making Transavia a more people-centric organization. He told me, *"I think you would be a wonderful fit – but I won't hire you. You need to convince your future team first. If you succeed, I will see you in the final interview."* I went on to lead Organisational Development for four years – two of them during the COVID crisis. During my tenure, we designed and implemented a new leadership journey for the organization. We co-created bottom-up policies, including flexible work arrangements and diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. I began coaching and facilitating the executive board, supporting them in navigating complexity with greater awareness and cohesion. I experimented with elements of holacracy and decentralized governance, and trained my entire team in Deep Democracy to strengthen participatory decision-making and collective ownership. We expanded the team and gradually reduced dependency on rigid roles and functions, moving toward a more fluid learning and working infrastructure rooted in people's talents and intrinsic motivations.

A priority for me was succession and continuity. Before leaving, I hired and developed my successor – a talented leader who continues to shape and evolve the work in her own way.

Relevance – Schouten & Nelissen

Following Transavia, I joined Relevance, the international arm of Schouten & Nelissen, one of Europe's leading providers of learning and development. As Lead Senior Consultant, I designed and facilitated leadership, team, and personal development programs for international organizations including IKEA, Rijk Zwaan, Omron, and Synthomer.

Deepening Practice

During this period, I deepened my conviction that sustainable change arises not only from strategy, but from awareness – from how individuals and systems sense, relate, and take responsibility. I became trained in Co-Active Coaching and ORSC (Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching), and further developed my practice in Process Work, somatics, and embodiment-based approaches. These modalities strengthened my ability to work at the intersection of cognition, emotion, and collective dynamics.

Kotka – Independent Practice

At the end of 2025, I chose to step fully into independent practice and founded Kotka. Kotka means eagle in Finnish and female cat in Polish. I like holding both. The eagle reminds me to step back, look wider, and act with dignity. The cat keeps me close to the ground – attentive, sensitive, independent, and respectful of timing. Together, they say a lot about how I work :)

Through this consultancy, I bring together my experience in organizational leadership, applied anthropology, and developmental work. My focus is to intentionally hold space for meaningful transformation – supporting leaders, teams, and organizations to align purpose, structure, and human dignity in ways that are both practical and deeply lived.



Learning

Leadership development, learning journeys, programs, and facilitation



Organizations

Strategy, culture, and systems development to align purpose with the way work is done



Teams

Team coaching, alignment, and conflict work to build trust and collective ownership



Coaching

1:1 work supporting leaders to develop awareness, clarity, and authentic presence



Projects

Erasmus+, Creative Europe, EU initiatives



knowledge, education, mentors

1. Education

I hold degrees from three universities across political science, economics, and anthropology:

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science – Romanian American University
- Bachelor of Science in Marketing – Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest
- Research Master in Social Anthropology – University of Amsterdam

This interdisciplinary foundation – spanning governance, markets, and culture – continues to inform how I understand power, systems, and human behavior.

2. Coaching & Development Training

I am a Co-Active Coach (CTI) and trained in Organization and Relationship Systems Coaching (ORSC). I am also a student of Arnold Mindell's Process Oriented Psychology and currently continue my studies at the Deep Democracy Institute (DDI) under Max and Ellen Schupbach, deepening my capacity to work with conflict, power dynamics, and systemic awareness.

3. Facilitation & Systemic Practice

My facilitation and systems work is informed by training in:

Deep Democracy

Process Work

Art of Hosting

Liberating Structures

Theory U

Futures Literacy

These approaches strengthen my ability to sense systemic patterns, design participatory processes, and support collective intelligence in action.

4. Intellectual Lineage

My thinking is shaped by mentors and thinkers whose work continues to inform my practice, including **Arnold Mindell**, **David Graeber**, **Tim Ingold**, **Ursula K. Le Guin**, and **Carol Sanford**.