PART I · BEGINNING



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FORMER GILLETTE

Ferdinando Frega

FORMER GILLETTE

Gillette Trailer 1 — Nando the Scribe

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When he was hired — arriving after twenty years at P&G — they put him through a week-long course at headquarters, to walk him through every company process and brief him on every piece of information useful to his role.

He passed through customer service, credit, logistics, personnel management, the managing director's office, closing the loop with the general sales director.

What he told me afterward was that, beyond being an elephantine company that had stood still for a few decades, Gillette also carried enormous potential — potential that needed developing — and he wasted no time contributing his part.

But there was a particular attentiveness toward people: where he was used to operating with employees, subordinates and superiors as a hierarchical ladder, here he found the figure of the sales agent. And it wasn't only the language that needed adjusting — the whole attitude did too: never command or order, but calmly state a point of view, and, where the company authorized it, communicate procedures.

He was a company man, and adapting came easily to him. But he did more than that: he decided to invest in the youngest agent in his area, making me his best pupil.

A few weeks after he settled in as my area manager, I found myself in a hotel conference room in Catania, facing what felt like a second job interview, measuring myself against someone with far

greater experience, corporate culture, and training — because P&G didn't just train and build managers, it always made winning men out of them, and that was the spark that kept my attention burning ever since.

I remember he opened a sheet of paper and drew a St. Patrick's cross. I thought he wanted to play battleship — instead he wrote: STRENGTH AREA, WEAKNESS AREA, IMPROVEMENT AREA, AREA OF…

I was walking into P&G with a sales agent mandate bearing the Gillette signature — almost a preview of destiny — and that was the first time I worked for another company, still paid by my mother.

The test didn't last long: just two years, enough to say I had learned something, but also that I had put something of my own into it.

Ferdinando

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