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# The Founder's Evolution — From "Doing" to "Leading the Leaders"

## CASE STUDY

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## Case Study: The Founder's Evolution — From "Doing" to "Leading the Leaders"

**Client:** Rares Retegan, Founder & CEO

**Company:** Routier European Transport, a regional transport leader with ~400 employees and €90M turnover.

**Service:** [The Connected Executive](#)

### The Challenge: When a Company's Growth Outpaces a Founder's Style

Rares Retegan didn't just join Routier European Transport; he built it. Since 2006, his drive, vision, and hands-on approach grew the company into a €90 million powerhouse. But this very success created a new, complex challenge. The company had scaled, but his leadership style hadn't yet made the full leap from a founder who is central to every decision to a CEO who leads through a strong, autonomous management team.

His leadership team felt the friction. While respected, Rares wasn't yet perceived as a "judge" who empowers his managers to resolve their own conflicts. He needed to transition from being the primary problem-solver to creating an environment where his leaders felt trusted and equipped to lead their own departments.

The core challenge was one of evolution: **How does a successful, hands-on founder learn to let go, foster true collaboration, and build a structure where the company can thrive beyond his direct involvement?**

### The Solution: A Practical Framework for Empowered Leadership

Rares engaged [The Connected Executive](#) program to architect this crucial evolution. The process was grounded in direct, honest feedback and focused on tangible behavioral shifts that his team could see and feel.

Together, we defined a clear set of strategic objectives to guide his transition:

1. **Create a True Environment of Collaboration:** Actively encourage managers to solve their conflicts and step in only as a final arbiter, not as the first resort.
2. **Systematically Show Company Direction:** Move beyond ad-hoc conversations to consistently communicate the company's direction and connect it to departmental goals.
3. **Become a More Analytical Decision-Maker:** For high-impact decisions, deliberately slow down the process to be more analytical and less reactive.
4. **Structure the Company for Clarity:** Define and communicate clear roles and responsibilities so that every manager understands their mandate and authority.
5. **Lead by Listening:** Become more available and actively listen to his team leaders, fostering an environment of psychological safety.

## **The Journey: Building Trust Through New Habits**

This wasn't about theory; it was about practice. Rares was committed to a disciplined journey of behavioral change. He started holding more structured "one-to-one" meetings with his team leaders to listen, not just to direct. He consciously practiced stepping back in management discussions, letting his team lead the debate.

He began using meetings not just to solve immediate problems, but to consistently reinforce the company's strategic goals, giving his team the context they needed to make better decisions on their own. By focusing on these new habits, he started to build a new leadership muscle—one focused on empowerment rather than control.

## **The Result: A CEO Who Scales His Leadership**

Through this focused effort, Rares is successfully navigating the critical transition from founder to CEO of a scaled enterprise. By learning to lead his leaders, he is building a more resilient, autonomous, and collaborative organization.

This evolution allows Routier European Transport to continue its impressive growth trajectory, now powered not just by the vision of its founder but by the collective strength and alignment of its entire leadership team.

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**Are you a founder facing the challenge of scaling your leadership as your company grows? Let's discuss a practical roadmap for your evolution.**

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## **About George Bragadireanu | Executive Coach**

George Bragadireanu specializes in coaching successful leaders through their most critical career transitions. His proven process helps executives step back from the daily operational demands to embrace a more strategic perspective. With over a decade of experience, George has guided numerous leaders to achieve transformative growth, renewed purpose, and measurable results.

**The Connected Executive** is a structured program designed to provide the clarity and support needed to succeed in a new, demanding role.

**Schedule an exploratory call to discuss your unique leadership challenge.**

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