

Worst ceo: noel forgeard, airbus essay

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



In 2006, the Airbus A380 came under fire due to manufacturing issues that lead to an almost two-year delivery delay . The Airbus CEO, Noel Forgeard's overly ambitious plan, poor product management, breach of public information responsibility, and insider trading, make him my choice of worst CEO.

Nicola Clark and Katrin Bennhold emphasized that a leader is not likely to be effective without planning , especially for an ambitious plan like the A380. While Forgeard promised to deliver the first A380 aircraft within five years, I need to point out that the A380 was the most complex aircraft Airbus had ever produced . If Foreard had kept a firm control of the planning process and bore in mind that certain available resources could later turned into constrains, Airbus would have been able to determine a much more realistic turnaround time. For example, Airbus employed engineers in both France and Germany for technology advancement .

But Forgeard should have foreseen that French-German jealousies could amount to friction, which created rivalry rather than co-operation the workplace . Furthermore, I argue that operating under a tough timeline meant very little room to handle problems. Airbus' mechanics admitted that the initial wiring problems were minor, but eventually snowballed out of control because the issues were not addressed as they occurred . As Amelia Fawcett correctly pointed out, a real leader should never ignore a problem and hope it will go away: it only makes matters worse . I would argue that if Forgeard addressed the initial minor issues in time, particularly through a more integrated work environment, the project would not be delayed so

badly. Forgeard's failure to tackle problems as they happened and his inability to execute needed direction proved himself as a bad leader.

Reports indicated Forgeard knew these problems in 2004, but it was not until June 2005 that Airbus made public the manufacturing troubles and announced a first delay in the delivery schedule . I am convinced that Forgeard purposely kept the delays quiet from the market to protect his power at Airbus . Forgeard allowed his ego and selfishness to be an obstacle for the success of the A380 project and showed the opposite characteristic to what Jim Collins has observed in all Level Five leaders . Finally, Forgeard sold Airbus shares in March 2005 ahead of a profit warning caused by delays in production in April but denied insider trading .

Later in 2008, French market regulators found evidence of insider trading at Airbus following an 18-month investigation . Forgeard's dishonesty embarrassed himself as a leader, for history has proved incredibility brings distrust and weakens leadership ability as documented in Character Counts: Leadership Qualities . For the four reasons discussed above, Forgeard created true disappointment for Airbus, the shareholders and airline customers. Although the A380 has lifted into the sky, I would suggest that Airbus learn from the lessons of the A380 production to set realistic timeline, improve production management, comply market information duties, and most importantly, select of a trust-worthy CEO.