How Leaders Set the Tone for Conflict Resolution

Image Source: Pexels

Cohesive teams can be the key to a thriving business. When handled correctly, they can collaborate efficiently. This empowers them to innovate and give your company a competitive edge. Yet, working so closely together every day will inevitably lead to occasional conflict. Unless you can help your team to address and overcome these, their relationships and your business will suffer.

This is one reason cultivating relevant abilities is so vital. There is a range of key skills every leader should have whether you work in nursing, small entrepreneurism, or sit at the head of a multinational corporation. One of the most consistent requirements here is a solid approach to conflict resolution. Your actions, leadership style, and attitude impact not just the immediate problem, but influence how

workers move forward and cooperate in the future.

Let's take a closer look at this idea. In what areas can your leadership approach set the tone for conflict resolution? What are some steps you should consider and how far can the effects reach?

Respecting Diversity

Many conflicts stem from team members' inability to recognize or appreciate the differing perspectives of their colleagues. Diversity of thought is crucial for the success of any business or project, but in some cases, there may be roadblocks here. If team members can't see past the limits of their own experiences and perceived expertise, they may not give alternative ideas space for consideration and application. This can breed discontent within groups and limit their ability to innovate.

Your approach to conflict resolution can help to engender positive engagement here. This doesn't fall neatly into any of the 5 styles of conflict management, though it bears some hallmarks of collaborative and compromising approaches. Essentially, you need to guide employees to recognize why different perspectives may be better for the project.

They need to learn how to step back from their own ideas to accurately assess this. Teach them to detach from the potential to take rejection of contributions personally. Enable them to review the circumstances objectively and free from their unconscious cultural biases. It may be that in the long-term you'll need to provide training to help workers build their empathetic skill sets.

Taking this approach is not just a route to find a way out of the current challenges of the conflict. Considering diverse perspectives and recognizing the value of their colleagues' perspectives can have a positive impact on your overall

corporate culture. It gives team members the tools to work together effectively, boosts morale, and strengthens the position of the business.

Valuing Compromise

Asserting the opinion that one member of the team's position is correct over another can sometimes be necessary for time-crunch scenarios. The downside of this is it can cause resentment and doesn't always make for cohesive team experiences in the future. Wherever possible, it can be more conducive to harmony and progress to approach the matter from the perspective of reaching a compromise.

Compromise features as one of the common conflict resolution styles. It's about finding common ground in a disagreement to allow team members to meet in the middle and overcome disagreements. It doesn't prioritize one idea over another and tends not to leave anyone to feel their contributions aren't appreciated. It's not something you'll find is practical in all circumstances. But showing you favor this approach as a leader can influence the group's behavior and considerations to all such challenges ahead.

However, compromise isn't something your team members are always likely to favor. People have egos and want to feel valued. As such. It's important to provide your perspectives on why you consider compromise to be important and how it helps the team reach mutually beneficial outcomes. You should also provide training on how staff can assess the circumstances and the challenges. This helps them to establish what aspects of compromise are acceptable and conducive to progress.

Recognizing Boundaries

When left unchecked, conflict can quickly evolve into cycles

of toxicity. Team members may get more frustrated as time goes on, potentially pushing one another's buttons and undermining contributions. One approach to conflict resolution is to keep mindful of the various boundaries staff members harbor and ensure that activities and the behavior of colleagues don't cross them. This can serve to relieve tension within the group and keep projects productive.

In some ways, this awareness of boundaries is indicative of the avoiding style of conflict management. But it has much further reaching benefits. Most industries are vulnerable to staffing issues like high turnover, talent shortages, and workplace inflexibility. A key part of mitigating such issues is creating an environment in which staff feels happy, safe, and respected in their contributions. Boundary maintenance to halt and resolve conflict is an effective element of this.

This approach also helps to influence team behavior on a wider scale. Encourage them to be open about where their boundaries are so everyone can recognize and respect them. Make discussing these a part of team-building exercises at the beginning of any project. You may find this presents a point of vulnerability for some. But embracing it as part of your business culture can also build trust. This gives your staff more empathetic tools to drive collaborations and handle conflict in the future.

Conclusion

While conflict may be inevitable, a negative impact on your team productivity and cohesion isn't. Your approach to handling tension and discord can set the tone for successfully overcoming difficulties. But it can also influence the way your team functions in future projects and during their day-to-day interactions with one another. Appreciation of diverse perspectives can elicit an understanding of more appropriate and innovative ideas. A culture of compromise helps teams

recognize how to move forward for mutual benefit. An awareness of boundaries is key to mitigating disruption to progress. It's not an easy issue to handle, but your commitment to resolving conflict is another demonstration of your efficacy as a leader.

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People-first Leadership: Why

It's Important and How to Achieve It

Image Source: Unsplash

John F. Kennedy said, "leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

The President had a good point and a strong understanding of what it means to be a successful leader. As the most powerful man in the country at one point, Kennedy recognized that the people around him made a difference. That's the entire point of a democratic society over a regime or dictatorship. Great leaders put people first.

That kind of leadership is especially important in the workplace. Unfortunately, it doesn't always happen that way, which can lead to unhappy employees and unsuccessful businesses.

According to a Harvard Business Review survey, 58% of people

trust strangers more than their own bosses.

If you're an employer or in a management position, what can you do to change that statistic? Start by putting people first.

Why People-First Leadership is Necessary

You haven't been in a leadership role your entire life. You had to start somewhere. Think back on those days, and the kind of employers you worked under. Chances are, you would consider some better leaders than others. Now, consider why.

Successful leaders typically have certain skills and characteristics that truly make them great, including:

- A positive approach to their business
- Introspection
- A love for what they do
- Strong motivation
- A willingness to "do the hard stuff"

Great leaders are also often great listeners, recognizing that there is always room to grow and learn.

There is power in putting people first. It improves collaboration efforts, can introduce fresh ideas and perspectives, encourages diversity and inclusivity, and creates a more positive workplace environment.

When your employees feel valued and appreciated, they're more likely to remain loyal to your company. They're also more likely to stay motivated and productive, knowing they're than just another cog in a machine.

By being a people-first leader, you'll develop a stronger team that is more willing to work together rather than compete with

each other. When obstacles arise, they'll be better equipped to handle them. That includes everything from a lack of clarity (even halfway through the project) to internal conflicts. When your group is strong enough to push through those obstacles thanks to your leadership, everyone benefits — including your business.

How to Put People First

So, how can you make the right choices in putting people first? What can you do to be a learning leader that listens? It's easier than you might think.

First, understand what it truly means to be a leader. It's not a dictatorship, but a position designed to keep everyone working toward the same goal. Think about the kind of leader you want to be and the things you want to accomplish. Then, you can start to focus on:

- Knowing your people and what they truly want
- Focusing on employee experience
- Recognizing human factors (people aren't numbers)
- Remembering your purpose

When you put your focus on these things, you'll establish a culture where everyone is on the same page. Encourage collaboration. Set SMART goals, and communicate with each member of your team regularly. By checking in and keeping your messaging consistent, you'll make your employees more comfortable and provide more assurance that you trust in the work they're doing.

Lead by Listening

President Kennedy couldn't have been more correct in his words about learning and leadership. But, growing as a leader doesn't just mean obtaining more knowledge. In the workplace, it can mean learning and listening with the heart.

One of the best ways to be a people-first leader is simply to let your employees know you hear them. Their ideas are valued. They are an important part of the company, and you want them there. That doesn't mean whatever they say goes in one ear and out the other. It means giving them opportunities to share their opinions, perspectives, and even feedback.

A great way to encourage that kind of open communication in the workplace is through retrospective meetings. These are meetings that typically occur after a big project. They give the people involved a chance to review the success of the project while working on any issues that may have come up.

Because each employee has a different role, listening to those suggestions and areas for improvement can offer insight into things you may have never thought about on your own. It's when every employee recognizes that they have an important role to play that they are more willing to speak their mind and offer suggestions.

Those specialized suggestions and ideas for moving forward are necessary for your business to keep growing and improving.

So, take a look at your leadership style. Are you listening to your employees? Are you putting them first? How would you describe your workplace culture? There's always room for learning and improvement, and it's important to know that "with great power comes great responsibility". But, part of that responsibility is to the people looking up to you to lead them in the right direction. You can do that by understanding more about them, and valuing what they do for you every day.

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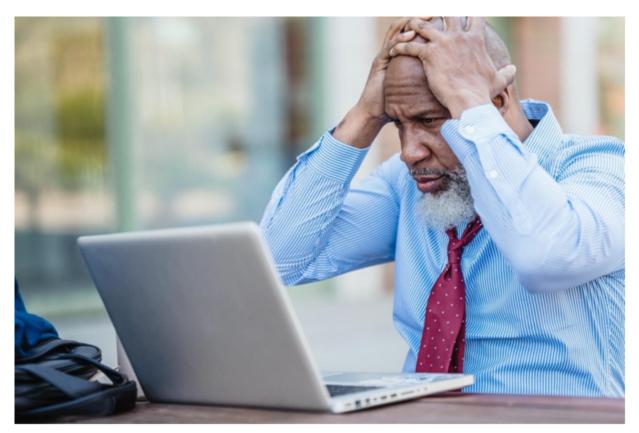# Executive Burnout and How to Combat It

Image Source: Pexels

I work with executives who are on the brink of burnout, some who have burned out as well as those who have not. The imperative to understand that we MUST address the burnout rate and fix it is of critical importance, as is finding new ways of thinking that help us deal with the ever-constant world of change, challenges, competition, and priorities. Burying our heads in the sand will not help. I help clients develop a new perspective and a new kind of focus that creates less stress and better results. perspective and develop a new kind of focus and collaboration that lessens the reality of burnout or other stress-related problems. If you are interested in winning the race against stress, please reach out. irene@justcoachit.com *Delighted to host this guest post by Adrian Johanssen*

Burnout has become common amongst executives in all industries. One recent study found around 60% of business leaders have reported experiences associated with it at the end of each day. Is it any wonder so many leaders are living with symptoms of this condition? Executive roles are

frequently high-stress and require professionals to shoulder responsibility for the company's successes and failures. This can also be exacerbated by the lifestyles of high achievers.

However, it's vital to recognize burnout isn't an inevitability. Indeed, it is vital for your continued physical, mental, and emotional well-being to mitigate the potential for it to arise. It's not always easy to combat burnout, but it's in everyone's best interest that you do so.

We're going to take a closer look at executive burnout and some of the steps you can take to avoid it.

Understand the Symptoms

Part of the problem is it can be easy to overlook the early warning signs. Indeed, some of the symptoms may have become so much a part of the background of your working life that you don't consider them problematic at first. There is also a toxic corporate culture of equating exhaustion as an indicator of commitment and hard work. When people look at burnout as a c-suite feature rather than a glitch, it's difficult to fight it. To combat burnout effectively, you need to be able to recognize it.

Start with the basics. Learn what the common symptoms of burnout look like and how they are part of the executive lifestyle. These are likely to include exhaustion, a higher degree of cynicism than usual, and perhaps a dip in your efficiency. Burnout may also include aspects of other conditions like depression and anxiety. Alongside these elements, also review how your behavior may suggest burnout. This can be difficult to be objective about, so it's worth gaining input from your friends, family, and peers. Listen to them, they have useful insights.

This leads us to another key aspect of being able to recognize burnout — you need to start talking about it. Be open with

your colleagues and other leaders in the industry about the elements you may experience and encourage them to share their own. Firstly, this highlights the various symptoms others may not be aware of. It's also an invitation to note symptoms of burnout in each other and work to mitigate them. Perhaps most importantly, it creates an honest and stigma-free dialogue in the C-suite that makes it easier for everyone to be happier and more successful.

Set Boundaries

A tendency to push yourself too far is likely to be among the primary causes of executive burnout. This can be rooted in various areas. You may have a certain amount of external pressure to perform. Your personal expectations may also be higher than are healthy. The combination of influencers can see you crossing the borderline of healthy commitment and hurtling into burnout. To combat this, you need to set boundaries.

Be clear about these in your mind first. It's difficult to maintain boundaries if you don't have clarity on what they are. A good place to start is reviewing the contributors to burnout. If your tendency to work long hours is problematic, set hard rules for when you finish all work. Be clear on when you will accept and reply to non-emergency business emails. This includes clearly defining what qualifies as an emergency.

Setting boundaries is the easy part. It's communicating them and maintaining them that is challenging. Discuss your boundaries with all relevant parties. This is likely to include colleagues and potentially supply partners. Explain why you're setting these boundaries and how you intend to keep to them. This can prevent others from pushing you to overstep those boundaries and sets an expectation for you to start saying no. This can take some practice, but it's a step toward

a happier and more productive life.

Shift Your Perspective

Executive burnout doesn't just come from pushing yourself physically too hard, too often. You can find symptoms arising as a result of your psychological or emotional approach to your position. While it's not as simple as applying the mythical panacea of positive thinking, mindset can be a component of addressing burnout. As such, it's worth considering how achieving different perspectives can help.

Think about what might contribute to or drive your tendency to feel run down. One of the common roots of this is the feeling of being stuck in a career rut. You might even have imposter syndrome in which you don't feel you have the skills to innovate effectively. As such, taking time to learn some new skills can be a good way to address this. Many mid-career professionals have taken to following an executive master of business administration (EMBA) program. This type, of course, allows you to leverage your leadership experience while developing fresh abilities. Importantly, you'll have opportunities to network with tutors and peers in a way that can unlock new opportunities and help you to think differently about your career.

This type of mindset adjustment doesn't just come from learning, though. To some extent, it's about finding ways to be newly inspired in your role. Feeling like you're just going through the motions each day is likely to exacerbate the other symptoms of burnout. Consider what you found interesting about your executive position. Assess what elements excited you in the beginning and why they may not be present now. It may be the case you need to look for new people and experiences to surround yourself with so you can reignite the spark.

Conclusion

Burnout is a reality for a growing number of executives. This affects your mental and physical health and could derail your career. Consider your relationship with the symptoms of burnout so you can better recognize and address them. Set and maintain strict boundaries to avoid negative behavior patterns. You may also find looking at your career from a new perspective can inspire positive change. There are no easy steps to combat burnout, but it is in the interest of your success and wellbeing that you commit to overcoming it.

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P.S. If you are interested in learning more about our stress-busting service and programs, do not hesitate to reach out to book a complimentary meeting. irene@justcoachit.com

More….Yes!

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