



PROCESS + RESULTS

LEAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Video 2: Develop Leaders Who Create Connection, Commitment, Action & Ownership

Hi, Jamie Parker here. You know, I work with operations leaders and one of the things I hear a lot from them is something that goes like this, “I want respect for people and I want people to feel fulfilled and to feel valued. I want it to be a great working environment. I want them to recommend this place as a good place to work to others. I want it to be good and happy and fun, *but* we also have a job to do. I want respect for people, *but* we've got to hit our numbers. *But* we all know that we're here to do a job”. It's something along those lines.

And my challenge is this. When we say I want this respect for people, *but* we also have a job to do, then we are starting with the premise that we can only have both up to an extent and at some point, we then have to choose. Either we can have respect for people, have a good place to work, be engaging, create an environment where people can feel fulfilled, *or* we can get results. It only works together to some extent and then we have to choose. I want to challenge that and say instead of saying, “*but*” it's actually “*and*”.

We want respect for people. We want a good working environment. We want people to feel valued, *and* we want to deliver results and create value for our customers and hit our organizational goals. We want respect for people, *and* we want continuous improvement. We want process, process improvement, and a focus on the process, *and* we want results. So, it's not a “*but*”, it's an “*and*”. So today, I'm excited to talk about one thing that your operations leaders need to do in order to have both. We're going to talk about it from respect for people *and* continuous improvement. This is going to talk about building effective teams *and* delivering positive business results. So, let's dive in. We'll get the slides up on the screen.

So, you guys, you know this movie, right? Classic! *It's A League of Their Own* and in this scene, what is Tom Hanks saying? “There's no crying. There's no crying in baseball”, right? So classic! And I feel like this is really what I learned in business too. I learned things like, “Check your emotions at the door. Leave your personal problems at home. It's not personal. It's...” what? Yeah, “...it's business”, you just filled in the blank. “It's not personal, it's business.”

The thing is, that business is personal, and leadership is a relationship. You see, I know Lean folks, we love some process, right? We love process improvement and we love process mapping and we love to go in and dig in and dive into the process. And while work is made up of process, organizations are made up of people. And not just any old people either, because organizations are made up of messy, complicated, weird, confusing, emotional people with a bunch of stuff going on, right? We're people and people have stuff.

Right now, there is someone in your span of care who is stressing out because they don't know how they're going to pay for their child's college education. Right now, someone in your span of care is struggling with a decision that seems impossible because their parents are aging, they



PROCESS + RESULTS

LEAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

live three states away, and they can't live independently anymore, and no answer feels like a good answer. Right now, someone in your span of care is crying and hiding it because they're ashamed and they're scared because their child is battling drug addiction.

You see, we're people and as people, we have stuff. So, organizations aren't made up of processes, organizations are made up of people, people with emotions and that's normal. That's in the every day. And so, everything that I'm going to talk about today is relevant all of the time. However, it is even heightened right now because what COVID-19 did is it took us, and it shoved us down Maslow's hierarchy of needs. And while we were looking for this self-actualization and this feeling of fulfillment, now there are a lot of folks who are afraid. It might be health. It might be concerns about job security, income. "How do I pay my mortgage? How do I keep food on the table?" It might be, "What's going to be next? Is this organization going to keep everybody or are there going to be layoffs? Is it going to close?"

These are fears and they're real fears, and not just in the immediate aftermath. These fears and these heightened emotions are likely going to carry on for a while because it's not just the immediate it's also the change that is lasting because your business has changed and you can't ignore that fact. So, we are always working with emotion and for the next couple of years, that might be a little heightened.

Now, one of the things that we all as leaders need to be able to do to help have this personal relationship, understand that business is personal and leadership is a relationship, is we have to be able to listen. And I'm not just talking about any old listening, we're talking about really listening, being present, understanding. Not just understanding but building connection. Not just connection but really building ownership.

I call this impact listening. It's when we skillfully listen with empathy and with purposeful intent. So, with empathy, yes, we want to listen with empathy, and we hear a lot about that and read a lot about that right now. When we talk about emotional intelligence. When we talk about empathetic listening. This is that connection. This is, "Let me feel this with you. Let me connect", and on the people side, that's really important. It's also, however, listening with purposeful intent, and this is the part we don't hear about as much because we want to develop the skill of listening that is not just empathetic, is not just connection. It is also purposeful in helping our team members develop, in helping them have ownership, in helping them improve, in helping them to problem-solve.

So, we want both. We want respect for people *and* continuous improvement. Not just in the way that we do Kaizen events or the way that we do our leader standard work, but in the way that we listen. And when we do it with both, here's what happens. We acknowledge the emotion, the reality, the humaneness, we acknowledge that. And when we acknowledge that, we're able to move past it a little bit better.



PROCESS + RESULTS

LEAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

We also build relationship, and leadership is a relationship. This is where that commitment comes from. So, we don't have to manage to compliance, we can lead from commitment. It advances ownership. It advances the team member development. This is critical. Impact listening is something we need to be doing right now. It's going to build better teams and it's going to help you deliver better results because right now you're facing change. You're facing challenges, challenges that you did not anticipate when you did your strategic planning for this year.

And so yes, you've got to go in and you've got to rework your strategic planning. You've got to go in and figure out your product development. You got to go work on figuring out how you're going to respond to changing customer demands and what that looks like. And this will be more successful when team members are engaged, when they feel heard, when they're developing their skills because we listen with empathy *and* with purposeful intent. If this is something that would be helpful for you, then let's talk. You click on the "schedule a call" button, we'll get on the phone, and we'll talk through it. I'll get a feel for what's going on in your organization, where you are, where you want to be, what the challenges are. Maybe it's the fit, maybe it's not, but at the very least, I can point you in a direction and make a recommendation. So, you schedule a call to start the process.

Everyday leadership behaviors - the way your operations leaders interact with team members day in and day out - that's where leadership happens. That's where respect for people happens and that's where continuous improvement happens. So, you're going to use this skill to make your Gemba walks better, to make your stand-up meetings, your Tier 1 or Tier 2 or Tier 3 meetings better. You're going to use this skill to make your Kaizen events or your rapid improvement events better. You're going to use the skill of listening to help make your structured problem solving better. So, if you're doing A3s, or Kata storyboards or whatever that process might look like for you.

However you are practicing Lean, at the core is not just the tool, but it is how we interact with people. If you want to improve Gemba walks, improve the listening. If you want to improve Kaizen events, improve the way we listen. If you want to improve, start-up meetings or stand-up meetings, daily meetings, huddles, whatever you call them, improve the listening. And if that's what you want, then schedule a call and let's chat.