

MENTAL HEALTH FOR PERFORMANCE



JESSICA VLIAGENTHART

Create environments where people thrive, achieve and want to stay.

HOW DO LEADERS BUILD TRUST?

Employees are looking for more than a paycheck. They want to be seen, valued, and trusted at work. “They want to show up and do a good job and go home and feel like they did a good job for good people”. How do you become a good leader that people want to do good work for? Jessica Vliengenthart reminds us of important steps to take that build trust with the people you work with.

HAVE TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

First and foremost, don’t avoid the tough topics. When there is an issue or challenge, open the dialog and just start talking. You might not be perfect at these types of conversation – and that’s ok. Many of us stumble when broaching very difficult and complex topics, especially with people who are wired very differently from us. The key is to try. Start practicing so you can get better at it. If you are willing to really listen, and if you show that you are willing to adapt and adjust, it will be easier to determine what truly needs to happen next.

The more skilled you become at having difficult conversations, the more you will be able to support the people you work with and “spare them the emotional labour”, which will go a very long way towards building trust in yourself as a leader.

“I hope our kids become lawyers, if only because tough conversations is what we do. It is a skill. You have to practice this.”

PROMOTE AUTHENTICITY

Start with yourself. Do things in your own authentic way. Speak, lead, and do things in a way that is true to who you are.

Then extend that to others. Accepting differences isn’t enough; it’s important to respect and value the way people are wired and the unique characteristics they each bring to the table. The more diverse the team, the more skills and abilities there are to draw on. It is helpful to know what motivates each individual, as well as how they personally deal with stress.

Allowing space for people to be their authentic self and to be vulnerable strengthens teams, especially when things get tough.

“When I think about all the times that I really wanted to walk away from something, every single time it was because I was trying to force myself to do it in a way that wasn’t authentic for me. And thankfully, I had someone step in and say, ‘just do it how you need to do it, and you’ll be fine.’ And that’s a message that isn’t heard enough.”

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DON'T HIDE THE BODY!

When someone brings forward a personal issue, you must respect it. For most people, it is incredibly difficult to bring a complaint, concern, or negative issue forward at work. If you operate from the assumption that what the person is saying is true and important, and you genuinely investigate it, you will become more trusted by that person. It's that simple. Alternatively, you can push aside the complaint, try to pretend like it never happened... and watch the trust between you and that person evaporate.

"People generally don't complain. The vast majority of people do not want to complain, they don't want to create a fuss. If somebody is coming to you to say there is a problem, then 99.9% of the time, there is a problem. You have to take it seriously. You have to make efforts to investigate what is going on and see what you can do to fix it."

EVOLVE

Do you respect the fact that everyone responds differently to stress? What do you do to give the space to find out how the people you work with are wired? What do you do to support them as individuals during stressful times?

In leading your employees, how do you use your knowledge and experience to "spare them the emotional labour" when they are up against challenges?

When have you made it clear that it was ok for someone to do things in their own way, even if it meant changing the way things are done by everyone else?

EXPLORE

[Find out more about Jessica](#)

[Dr. Faisal Siddqui](#) is a medical doctor who adapts how he supports the people he leads based on who they are as individuals.

Hear from psychiatrist [Dr. James Bolton](#) about the incredible challenges that the Covid period has placed on mental health and so much more.