

How leaders can empower their teams to learn?

Leaders aren't born, they are made. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal which is worthwhile” - Vince Lombardi Jr.

Many leaders are a testament to this quote by Vince Lombardi Jr. Leaders aren't born, they're made. They strive their entire life to get themselves to the post and position they achieve. Real leaders not only push themselves but also the people they work with. They influence, accelerate and empower their co-workers and teammates to take the next step in the direction of greater success and help them discover their talents that they themselves were unaware of. Being a person “in charge,” they are always expected to take action and guide everyone to success. But what most people forget is that without difficulties there is no growth. If there is a yin, there has to be yang.

Delegate responsibilities that serve as opportunities, not tasks.

There are many such factors a leader needs to keep in mind to empower their employees, delegation being one such factor. A leader should be able to guide and set opportunities instead of just assigning tasks efficiently. Each task assigned to an employee should be an opportunity for them to grow and learn something new. This may not always be possible, but this thought will go a long way. The team starts looking at every task as an opportunity rather than a mundane filler.



Let the employees fail to learn

There is a fine line between these, and a leader needs to understand that fine line and urge the team to move forward with a positive “get this work done” attitude and not let them worry about the repercussions of failure. While doing this, they should also keep in mind the dynamics of the work and the feasibility of a calculated failure. As said by Zig Ziglar, “Remember that failure is an event, not a person.”

Look for a solution, not the one who created the problem

The first instinct of a human is to look for who caused the problem rather than searching for an answer. A leader needs to set himself apart by giving the team a solution and not complaining about the problem in the first place. Once the problem has been solved, the leader can then find the one responsible for it. Necessity is the mother of all creation, seeking the solution is the way of challenging the employee positively instead of putting them in the limelight for making mistakes or facing difficulties.

Appreciate efforts more than outcomes

An appreciation goes a long way, even in the work environment. A leader's positive reply or even something like "job well done" earns the employee a push that they need and boosts their morale. According to one research[t1], 69% of employees would work harder if they felt their efforts were better appreciated. If the outcome was negative, it's always necessary to overlook the failure and give positive feedback, ignore (but not entirely) the negatives of the situation and go forth with the positives. By doing this, the leader is creating a more comfortable atmosphere for the employee to grow and learn from their mistakes.



Challenge how people think and encourage diverse opinions

Challenges must be placed and thinking out of the box should be given preference. Like Jeff Bezos in his yearly Letter to Shareholders, last year wrote about the rule of 'disagree and commit.' He says, his teams don't have to convince him to take a particular route, they just have to convince him enough that he's willing to take the gamble. By doing so, the leader can explore the limits of the employee and better understand how to empower them. Acing yourself should be the priority. Not just for the employee but for the leader too.

A leader must not just give constructive criticism but also accept it from the team

Excelling yourself and empowering others to do the same is one of the essential qualities of a leader. People like Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, Steve Jobs, Jack Ma and many more are known for pushing their boundaries and tried to help employees to harness their potential. With a hunger to learn and grow, these leaders pushed themselves and their employees hard, and as a result, today, they are known for the achievements they've made. Even after having suffered themselves, they did manage to take all the criticism thrown towards them and turn it into a learning point. This type of mentality must be inculcated into the employees by giving and receiving criticism and helping them excel themselves.



Extra-ordinary leaders play a huge role in increasing the profits and driving the brand image, but that's not the only point here. With those same leaders are a workhouse of employees that make that happen, and pushing those employees to their absolute limit is a leader. Leaders inspire employees not just by giving them monetary benefits but also by boosting their morale. Though effective leaders are increasing the profits and brand image might sound a little unconvincing, but the cycle is crystal clear. A satisfied employee delivers the best service to the customer, and a happy customer contributes to increasing the profitability of the business.

A study conducted by the Harvard Business review in the year 1998 proved this, where a 5- point increase in employee attitude towards job increased the customer satisfaction by 1.3 points. So, talking about the bottom line here, leaders who can empower their employees are the ones who are winning in some ways. The leaders themselves get a chance to grow with their employees, that creates a bond that is very empirical for all three, the business, the leader, and the employees.

All the successful businesses follow the 'for the people by the people' mantra. Employees are rightly defined as internal stakeholders, and their personal growth must be aligned with organizational goals for a business to be successful.

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