LR6 Positive Culture & Mindset Transcript

This is video six and the last video, in the module on leading remotely in a crisis, where you can engage everyone around a common purpose, with positivity, solutions focus and systemic perspective. In this video we look at how do you create a positive culture and mindset that supports both individuals and the organisation as a whole, to be more resilient and have high wellbeing and truly pull together, especially during a crisis.

00:30

Welcome back to the modules on leading remotely and in a crisis. In this video we’re talking about how you create a positive culture and mindset to embrace all the challenges you're facing with resilience, and wellbeing. So I'll start by asking you how often do you have a to-do list that's too long for the time available. And at the end of the day you look at and you say, “oh fabulous I got my top three priorities completed plus several more near the bottom of the list?” Or do you say, “Oh, no, look at these ones that I didn't get done? I still haven't done these three. “

And this is an everyday example of how the brain in default mode tends to prioritise attention on potential threats, negatives, problems, and so on. And it leads to a negative distortion....

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The brain is our safety organ. It has evolved to keep us safe. It has evolved to make sure that if there was a Sabre tooth tiger behind the hedge that we noticed it, long before we got anywhere close to that hedge, and that we escaped from it and then we survived. So people who did that survived in the population. And that's how our brains are prioritising anything that might be a threat, and we need to then take action and avoid it. Unfortunately the brain still reacts in the same way. And it might be a social threat or it might be a physical threat like that. And we still get that sense of feeling uncomfortable if there's a change, or we get stressed because, if there's anything uncertain, or changed or different, the brain flags up an alert centre in your brain, and it's drawing attention to you. That's why people feel… people quite often feel stressed and uncomfortable when there is a lot of change, and especially when there is a lot of uncertainty. It also means that the negative pathways in the brain are faster and stronger, and they are the ones that are going to keep us safe. The positive emotions we have are all about wellbeing, but they are not so involved in our safety and so they're not prioritised.

2:53

That means it is up to us to consciously choose to pay attention and notice the positives, so that we raise our wellbeing and really importantly so that we maintain full access to all the cognitive capability of our brain that will help us to be creative, to come up with new ideas and get into that calm state that creates really creative ideas, the slow kind of thinking that that can happen in our brains. So, we… in default mode, we tend (oops)... in default mode, we do tend to just pay attention to the negatives and we take them for granted. We plan to do something, we achieved it and we move on. and especially the everyday, day to day small things that go well, they were on our to do list than they were so small they didn't even get on the big to do list and we didn't tick them off and we just take it for granted, we got them done. Even the good things, the big things and our priorities on the to-do list we very often take them for granted.

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So in default mode we can get stressed, even when things are actually going quite well. In a crisis it's vitally important we get out of default mode and we actively choose a positive mindset, so that we can access our full cognitive capacity to think, to be creative, be resilient, be confident and maintain wellbeing.

And in a crisis that means it's even more important for you, as leaders, to act in a way that makes people feel positive, and that's especially important for what and how you communicate with them.

4:28

So we need to notice the positives. To notice what we do still have. So really draw people's attention: we have all of these things. we still have the resources that we had before. Not to constantly focus, which is default mode, focus on what we've lost. Get out of default mode and focus on what we still have and what we can still use as resources. We have ourselves. We have our strengths. We have our values. We have our guiding principles. and that if nothing else is a start. There is a lot that we still have even if we feel that we've lost a lot.

Notice what we are achieving and what we are still achieving on a day to day basis as well as the big things. Remember to celebrate in small ways and as well as big ways. The really big wins obviously need a big celebration. But think about what you can do in day to day small things that don't cost a lot, that are not necessarily a lot of time but they create meaning and joy for people.

5:25

Notice what we can feel grateful for and actively think about what are the things that we can feel grateful for. How do you encourage people to do that?

So, one thing that you need to do is act positively for yourself and encourage others to do the same, including people in your team as well as everyone in your organisation. So think about and show how are we supporting each other. How do we show recognition and appreciation so that people do feel valued? And that's especially important when you're working remotely as well as in a crisis.

Something that might be useful for us to look at the five languages of appreciation. And that's a book. You can get it on Amazon and I talk about it more in the managing remotely module.

Actively look out for the opportunities. So in every challenge there will also be an opportunity. you need to look out for it, to reframe your challenge to say what are the opportunities here, because they do exist and you will only notice that when you actively look for it. See the possibilities, instead of just the barriers.

6:32

 Reframe your perspectives, and the problems. This is why it's so important to get perspectives from different levels in the system because they will help you to see different perspectives and help you to reframe the problems and discovered solutions as well.

Manage your energy. Refill your tank with positive energy. And that's your mental energy, your emotional energy, as well as physiological and physical energy. So, that will involve making things for the, making time for the things that you love to do. Do the things that energise you. Remember to take short five minute breaks to re energise you between meetings, whether that's to go and get a glass of water. Vitally important to hydrate yourself. Or just step outside if you're able to do that. Take in something from nature. If, if you're energised by, you know, communication with people then is there someone you can have a brief check-in with. Recognise what energises you and then make sure you can do that regularly throughout the day. Things that are energising, that are fun, that make you smile and laugh at your regular breaks.

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Also important is exercise, your nutrition, getting good sleep, quality sleep as well as enough sleep, and making sure you have positive relations not only at work also at home. Pets are also quite good for this as well. So, whatever works for you.

And choosing to grow you're positive mindset. Building optimism. Building confidence and resilience. and encourage everyone to choose a positive mindset and ultimately it does come down to a choice but it's that choice to get out of default mode which the brain would want to be in. And when you create a positive group mindset that's reflected in having a positive culture. And that is vital to create this environment, and that supporting mental wellbeing for everybody, where you can take care of yourselves and take care of others, and be effective in the work that you're doing.

08:33

And your mental strength is a really useful tool. The more that you can build mental strength, it involves the positivity, as well as your ability to embrace the challenges with confidence, and commitment. And mental strength is a really useful resource for building a positive culture. There is something called, the old question I was the MTQ48, the new one is the MTQ Plus questionnaire and model. And it has this connection between resilience and positivity. And there are four top levels. It measures how do we think. And our mental strength or personal or mental toughness is, it's a personality state for how we respond to challenges, and stress and pressure and irrespective of the circumstances. So if you've got higher mental strength, you will tend to achieve success in all areas of your life.

So you can develop mental toughness and this questionnaire is a very useful tool to get that starting point, you're not starting from a blank piece of paper. So it combines resilience and hardiness and confidence, and there are four levels the control, the challenge, confidence, and commitment. So, this is a really useful tool. This is something you can get from me. There are also colleagues at the college development network could also help you to access the MTQ Plus questionnaire and, and it's a very very useful framework to help you develop your own mental strength, resilience and wellbeing.

10:10

Another useful tool is learned optimism that was designed by Martin Seligman. This is… He was one of the forefathers of positive psychology. There is a free online test at Stanford University and this link here, and bit.ly forward slash three Aeona is a short link that will take you to that free questionnaire. it's very very useful. Effectively, there are three thinking styles. There always, everywhere or generalise, and me or personal. And so when you have thinking for good events pessimists tend to think that sometimes, in specific circumstances, they might succeed, and it's a fluke and it's not influenced by them. Things happen to them e.g. “I was lucky. I was in the right place at the right time.” Optimists, however, for good events, think that always, in all parts of their life, they will succeed. It is down to my actions and what I influence. And, for example, “I worked hard for the promotion and I deserved it”.

And contrast, thinking for bad events: Pessimists tend to think that it's always, and in all parts of their life, in some way they'll fail and it's down to their actions. Whereas optimists think sometimes, in some circumstances they might fare less well, and that it's not really down to me, it's down to external factors, and contexts and circumstances or other people.

So that's another very useful tool, I'll encourage you to use that as one tool for recognising “Where are you, in terms of thinking optimistically?” and you can use this to help build a grounded optimism in the culture in your team and your organisation.

11:58

So finally we need to think about as a leader, you are responsible for communicating in a way that will promote collaboration and connection. And this is particularly important while working remotely. It also helps very much while you are working through a crisis. And... As a leader, you need to ensure that you create a structure for communication, and that will help you to create clarity around the expectations for yourself and expectations for those that you're working with. And it all… What's really important about this structure is it facilitates different ways to connect with each other. We talk a lot more about this in the managing remotely module, about how do you create that structure for communication that will help you to connect and have that clarity of, of our expectations of how do we communicate.

 In the way that you communicate, you want to make sure that people feel valued. This is really important when you're working in different places. Really important when you're working through a crisis. Some of the simple things you can do for this every day, are: listening with purpose and we talked earlier on about the importance of listening; ensuring that people feel heard and understood; and show appreciation that is meaningful to them. so appreciation in a way that's meaningful for them. This where the five languages of appreciation at work can be very valuable.

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And lastly, you want to make your messages meaningful and memorable to your audience. So have some case studies are there some examples, stories or metaphors that you can illustrate with your communication that will help them relate to it and understand go “Aha, I get what you're saying.” They can be really short, and they can be brief. And even when time is short, these case studies and examples and stories - they are not a waste of time, which is very often what people think about it. They say we've got very little time, let’s stick to the facts and not sway from it. However, when you only talk about the bare facts, you're not engaging people emotionally. And they… that does… That means they don't necessarily get the importance of what you're saying. So being able to give an illustration, help them really understand what it is that you're saying, why it's relevant and meaningful to them, will very much help. Even in short, short… when time is short.

14:12

So lastly when we're working remotely, do look at the working remotely and the managing remotely modules for examples of the challenges people face specifically around working and managing remotely. And also understanding what are the costs of virtual distance. We've got in there some ideas for how do you structure your communication strategies and processes, and some frameworks for helping people feel valued. Two of which are: the Patrick Lencioni Pyramid. If you're managing this highlights the importance of building trust, very very valuable in working remotely. also very valuable when you're working through a crisis keep that pyramid in mind. And there's also the languages of appreciation that I mentioned earlier. And the third thing that's very useful is to have your team charter.

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And if you've set yourself up well and already got a team charter. This is something you then, when you hit a crisis, you can draw on this team charter to remind people about how we've agreed to work together. And it helps to create some more of that consistency that we've been talking about, that helps people feel there is some level of consistency, despite all the chaos that might be going on around you.

So I hope that you found this module, useful and constructive for you to think about how are you communicating and creating connection, as well as collaboration and consistency, while you're working remotely, and also while you're working through a crisis.

I’ll invite you to go through with the workbook, all of the different sections that we've mentioned just now, and think about “just how are you creating that communication structure? How are you helping people to feel valued? And what additional case studies stories metaphors, could you use in the way that you're communicating that will help people to be more on board with you and to feel more confidence, and to really get behind the message that you're trying to convey?

I wish you every good luck with the progress that you're making through leading remotely, and / or leading through any crisis, and I hope that you've gained real value through this module. Thank you.

16:25