

Leading with Humour – Laughter Improves Performance



Laughing is healthy – that’s a fact, and not only during times of play or fun. Worldwide research proves that laughing is not only healthy, but also improves personal performance. Happy people work faster; they are more creative; more motivated; and will perform better under pressure. Therefore, laughing should be part of the normal office life.

Humour and taking your work seriously are not mutually exclusive. Humour is a successful leadership tool and skill with a potential that is underestimated in many companies. A manager who uses humour does not undermine his own authority. He will instead appear to connect in a more personal way. Such leaders are usually excellent communicators in an open working atmosphere. With permission to laugh, even conflicts become easier to handle.

Everything works better with humour! The results of humour as a leadership tool:

- Improves the working atmosphere
- Reduces stress
- Strengths open communications
- Eases conflicts
- Improves the staff’s creativity
- Enables effective problem solving
- Improves performance for more productivity

Permission to laugh is granted by the manager

In the matter of humour, the manager must set an example. Racial, sexual and jokes or comments at the expense of other staff members or colleagues have nothing in common with humour in the workplace. The best thing is to laugh about a situation or topic together: employer and employees. Nobody should feel hurt or excluded. With humour, the working atmosphere becomes more relaxing and this reduces stress. If the manager blocks humour and laughter, he will often become the target of jokes - in his absence or behind his back.

Wonder weapon – self-mockery

Self-mockery is an easy and uncontroversial tool for encouraging laughter. Personal stories and experiences taken from everyday life are a good source of stories. The old idiom says: ‘People who can laugh at themselves will be taken more seriously.’

Ease conflicts – create room for creativity

Humour is useful to ease difficult situations, for instance, by addressing a problem or difficult situation with an anecdote. The opportunity to look at serious topics from the cheerful point of view will lead to a change in perspective and a reduction in stress or pressure. Therefore, new and creative solutions can be found. Research proves that relaxed people demonstrate more creativity during brainstorming.

Not at any cost

Trying to be funny in every situation can end up being stressful to others. The humorous point of view should not get out of hand. In some situations, humour is inappropriate. Moreover, humour should not lead to trivialized situations and crises.

Quotation of the month:

„Humour is the button that prevents us from blowing our tops.“

Joachim Ringelnatz

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