

How to Empower everyone (Even average employees)

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SPEAKERS

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Hello there. In my previous episode, we talked about five steps to increase empowerment. Because with an empowered team, you get higher profits, you get a motivated team, you can do cost savings, and you have also more happy customers. But then I often get the question. Yeah, that's nice to empower great people or motivated people. But what about average people or people who are not that motivated? How do you deal with those? Can you empower them? And that's what we'll talk about in this episode.

But first, let me tell you, I don't believe in average people, I believe that everyone has the potential to be great with their own talents. But of course, the reality is not always like that sometimes you can have a team with people that are not motivated, that are resigned that are negative, or that are average because they haven't grown yet. And of course, I believe everyone can grow and everyone can have a defined role with their own qualities. And that's why I believe that we can do something about it.

And also, I don't really believe in programs for high potentials. Because when you have a program with high potential, what does it say? about all the other people in the organization, are these low potentials? Don't you believe in them have to reach their top? If you have a high potential program, why not let everyone in that high potential program because that's the first thing I want you to do when you want to empower or deal with average people or less motivated people.

The first thing is that you have to believe in people, believe in people more than they believe in themselves. And I had that with my team.

In my team, I had one of my managers, one of my directors, he lacked a little bit of confidence. And because of that, he was also very hard with himself. What was happening then is that he could get defensive every time somebody had a remark or a feedback to him and he could get in this





defensive mode in the mode of staying in his comfort zone. And that's how he could stay average. And he wasn't growing when he was in that position.

But I truly saw big potential in him. And I believed in him and I told him that I truly believed in him. And because of that he really grew. And he became a great leader, not only a great technical person, because he was he had more of a technical background. There, he stayed really good at that. But he also grew as a people manager, because I believed in him. And he told me a couple of years later, that he's really thankful because of that, because he said, You believed more in me than I believed in myself. And I think the first step that you should do believe in people more than they believe in themselves. And of course, that's only possible if your energy is high, and your fears are under control.

Because if that person is making a mistake and you are low on energy, you're stressed, you could get angry, impatient, and then it's really hard to believe in that person and to keep believing in that person.

And I wanted to talk about a research that had been done by Rosenthal and Jacobson in the 80s. And what they did is they went into a school, and they tested all the pupils of that school. And from all those pupils, they not only tested their IQ, but they also tested their potential, or that's at least what they said to the teachers. And at the end of the test, they chose a couple of pupils that were in fact average. Their IQ wasn't higher than the rest. They had nothing special and they told the teacher That, in fact, these pupils were high potentials, and that they were ready to realize their big potential and they needed to have more attention. And so after one year, and these pupils were in fact, average, they just picked random ones. But the teachers believed that these pupils were high potentials.

And so after one year, they retested everyone in the school. And what they noticed is that these pupils that were in the beginning average day grew, and they got higher IQs by the end of the school year, and that was only because the teachers believed that they were high potentials. And so they challenged them more and they encouraged them because they felt Yeah, those were really great pupils so we have to motivate them.

It shows that if you believe in people, it's called by the way In the Pygmalion effect, if you believe in people, those people and then challenge them, of course those people will grow. So try to do that with your team as well. And you will see that the people in your team will grow. So the first step is to believe in people more than they believe in themselves. And remember that it's only possible if you have high energy. And that was the first step.

The second step is to listen with care to these people. When you listen with care, the people, they find the energy to grow, because maybe they are average because nobody ever believed in them, or maybe because they had some challenges in the past and didn't dare to go through these challenges





and believe themselves that they are not worth it. Or maybe they are resigned and they don't even try new things because of that mood. And when you listen with care to somebody and listening with care just means listening, showing empathy, not giving any advice and really showing that you care about that person. When you listen with care, they start to accept the change, accept some things, they start to see new possibilities, and they also start to believe in themselves. And that's when they are able to get out of their comfort zone, to make mistakes to try new things. And that will help them grow.

And the third step is you not only focused on the person on the average people, you can also focus on the processes. So when you put processes in place with your whole team, and then you motivate everyone to follow that process. Well average people that follow great processes get great results. Well, excellent people that have no processes might not even get ordinary results. So do not only focus on tasks and on the person, but focus also on improving your processes with a whole team. So for instance, I had at least once a year, a three day meeting with my whole team, sometimes it was two days, where we just looked at the past year, what went well, what could we improve? What are the steps that we could put in place to improve it, so we didn't only look at all the tasks, but we looked at what went well and what went wrong, so that we could improve the processes. And it's because we did that focused on these processes, that we became better and better each year.

And what I also did with my team, I would always say no, don't focus on what others can do, we will focus on what we can do to improve that process. So I always brought everything back to us. Okay, that department is not delivering what we need, but what could we do so that we can get what we need and so that we get what we need from that department.

So focus on the process. And when the average people follow these processes, they will automatically get better.

Then the fourth step is what you focus on will grow. And so that means if you constantly focus on what went wrong, on the mistakes, on the average people or the bad mood, and that's where you give your attention, that will grow. So you have to focus also on the positive people. The positive behaviors, you have to reward the behaviors that you would like to see more. You have to give attention and celebrate successes, even if it's small successes, like simply following the process, and especially celebrating following the process and not only the results, because if you only celebrate results, that's when you get a fixed mindset, because you're only focused on the results. And so people are afraid of making mistakes.

Well, if you focus on the process, and we work, the fact that people follow the process and improve the process, the result will follow. And that's also when you will get a growth mindset. So focus on the positive because what





I often see is that you have a team and in that team, you have a couple of person or a couple of people that are average, and usually we tend to To spend a lot of time with these people, well, it would be a better idea, of course you listen to them, you believe in them, you make them follow the processes, but then put your attention on the people and the behaviors and the actions that you want to see more of.

And we tend to do the contrary.

And then the last step I want you to do is to motivate people to learn and grow. Because if you want to have a great team, you have to have great people, of course that listen to each other that are empathetic, but average people can become great when they learn and grow. And that's really crucial. Just don't let those people like this and only give like great courses to the high potentials or the good people just try to motivate everyone to learn.

But then of course, I understand that sometimes people are not motivated. Learn or they're so busy, that they have difficulties to take time to learn. That will be the topic of my next episode. How can you motivate busy people to learn because if everyone keeps learning in your organization, that's also when you will constantly adapt to the changes that you're going through and grow as an organization and have great results.

So as a summary, how do you deal with average people if you want more empowerment? Well first believe in people more than they believe in themselves. Listen with care, focus on processes, focus on the positive things and not only the negative things and motivate people to learn and grow.

And we have a free guide about empowerment and if you want to increase empowerment in your organization, you can listen to our previous episodes, but you can also go to the show notes of this episode, and there, you can download our FREE eBook with the five strategies to increase empowerment. You'll understand why empowerment is a crucial strategy why it's often not working. Even though organizations want empowered people, they don't always succeed. And then what you should do to implement empowerment successfully. So go to the show notes of this episode to download it.

Thank you for listening, and we'll hear each other in the next episode about how can you motivate busy people to learn.

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