



YOUR TEAM SUCCESS PODCAST

Are You Guilty Of Drive-By Delegations?

Shannon Waller: When you're delegating with your team, is it tempting to actually completely let go and not check in with them again? Well, stay tuned to find out why abdication as opposed to delegation can actually lead to a lack of engagement. Stay tuned. Hi, Shannon Waller here, and welcome to Team Success. Today, I want to talk about what to do to prevent a lack of engagement with your team, and this is to delegate, don't abdicate. Now, you might be familiar with this expression. I know that I've heard it before. I didn't really appreciate what this meant—I mean it makes sense, it's logical—until I was talking with a client recently where she described a situation where the person that she was working for actually didn't seem to really care what she was up to on a daily basis. And what she described was a situation where she would have these ideas and she'd be excited and she'd be moving ahead with projects, and then meetings would get canceled and then there was really no response. And eventually this happened so much she said, "I really became disengaged. My engagement went way, way down."

And I was like, "Mayday, mayday, mayday. Red flag, red flag, red flag." I'm like, "Oh, this is a source of disengagement." And lack of engagement is something you read about all of the time right now, especially this quiet quitting. I cannot imagine anything worse than having someone just put the time in because they're supposed to. Yes, they do what they think they're being paid for, but to my mind, there's none of their excitement. There's none of their energy, there's little of their creativity. I mean, I can appreciate it, if you're in a crappy working environment, yeah, don't do more than what you're paid for. But in an entrepreneurial company, we count on people operating at the level of excellence and uniqueness. Not just competence. Not just minimum standard. That just makes my skin crawl. First of all, because I never want to be in an environment like that for me.

I want to be in an environment where I can be my full self, where I can pour my whole self into it. I want to be mentally tired at the end of the day, but not because I was fatigued, but because I got used up. I want it to be because I expended every iota of creative energy I had and then I can just relax. That's what I want to be a part of and I want to be part of a team where other people are doing that too. I don't want where someone's looking at their watch going, "I'm done now, sorry. Bye." I'm like, "Huh, what happened? I just lost the leg of the stool here." So, this whole thing about, making sure that we are giving enough attention, the issue is, are we delegating without abdicating? And I actually do think it can happen with Who Not How a little bit. Now, when you're the Who, you're going to do what you do best, and when you find someone else who's the Who to do the How that you're not great at, it's important that we still maintain the lines of communication.

Just tossing the ball, we actually call it a drive-by delegation sometimes, and whipping the baton at their head and hoping they catch it and not communicating again, is actually not the best way for Unique Ability teamwork. What's really important and critical is that you have the lines of communication open. You actually leave time for people to ask questions. You say, "Hey, this is the project." At Strategic Coach, we use Impact Filters or new Certainty/Uncertainty exercise



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and say, "Hey, what do you think?" And you have this exchange of creativity, people have room for input, and you don't just throw it at them and run away. But I've seen this happen time and time and time again. It can be with important projects, it can have to do with projects that the person isn't all that interested or doesn't want to have anything to do with because it involves none of their talents or skills, and they can abdicate.

They can just go, "Yours. Bye-bye," and they run quickly in the other direction. That's not cool. That's actually not teamwork, just so we're clear. And what happens is, the other person's left holding this thing, whatever it is, probably has some questions, does some work, comes back, doesn't have anyone to share it with, doesn't know if you actually now care—which there's nothing worse than expending your creativity and your time, your effort, and energy, and then going back, "Hey, I've got this great thing," and the other person's not even present, doesn't seem to give a, you know what. That's not cool. So it's really important that we give our, what's called time and attention, to the people that we work with. And it can be external people, it can be internal people, it can be our colleagues, it can be our subordinates, it can be our team members, you name it.

It's very important to make sure that you have not abdicated your role in terms of leadership, management, accountability, all of that, to actually make sure that you are present. I've seen the cost of when this happens, and given the engagement issues that seem to be true for a lot of companies, I'm going to really hope it's in far fewer of the entrepreneurial companies than in some of the larger organizations because I think we are naturally more engaged because there are fewer of us and we're hopefully having a lot more fun and having a bigger impact and we're more mobile and it's a smaller system, you can actually see that what you're doing makes a difference. But I'm sure it can still happen. And I know it's this client, who's in an entrepreneurial company. And so it's really that sign of that leader who also may have checked out. Maybe they're not being paid attention to so they pass that down the line. You'll have to go back and examine that yourself.

But I just really want to stress, if you are experiencing any kind of a lack of engagement, make sure that people are being paid attention to. Make sure that they're not having to operate as lone rangers. Best case scenario in that is that people end up siloed. Worst case is they end up completely disengaged. So your management, your leadership, it's absolutely vital that they're delegating, not abdicating, that they are passing the baton over, answering questions, picking the baton back up if it comes around. It means that they are really astute and tuned into what is actually going on with their team and not running away in the other direction empty handed. So short and simple message today, delegate, don't abdicate. Make sure that people know that you care. Make sure that they know that you're invested in the end result.

Don't give people projects if you're going to forget about them two days later. Use our tool called the Impact Filter from Strategic Coach. Make sure that you're really sold on the idea. Sometimes



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we're like, "Isn't this a great idea?" Someone goes off and does it and then we're like, oh, we fell out of love with our idea and we forgot to tell anybody. So don't waste people's time and effort doing that. But there are so many ways to fix this very simple problem, but, again, it's simple, but it also happens a lot. So just make sure it doesn't happen with you. Thanks so much for listening. If you have any questions or comments, please let me know at questions@strategiccoach.com. And as always, here's to your team success.