



“I haven't
FAILED.
I've just found
10,000
ways that
WON'T WORK”
-THOMAS EDISON

Research suggests 20-30%
of business performance is
determined by mood



Do you practice positive leadership?

...It wont just be your mood that benefits

*by Kathryn FitzGerald
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The Positive Leadership concept is not new. However, until the last decade or so the touchy-feely notion of “happiness” seemed more the concept for artists and philosophers than scientists and economists.

Now, a growing body of research shows that “happier” leaders are better at engaging teams, lowering turnover, producing more sales, being more productive, enhancing customer satisfaction and avoiding burnout.

Sound like a few outcomes that might help your business? I thought so. Here are five practical steps to help you create happier leaders.

Five practical steps to positive leadership

1. Improve positive emotion

A positive mood increases your resources; knowledge, resilience, social integration and health. Research suggests that between 20-30% of business performance is determined by mood.

A positive mood changes the way in which your brain functions; research suggesting you are 15% more aware of what is happening around you, you think with more flexibility and creativity and you are more attuned to others.

So, *dial up* your positivity to improve performance and *dial down* your negativity.

Effective ways to improve positivity include exercise, getting out in nature and performing acts of kindness. You can also minimise your own negative thinking and avoid surrounding yourself with negative people and influences.

2. Engage your team

Engage your teams by identifying what they do well and getting them to maximise their efforts in this area. If you emphasise weaknesses rather than strengths, it can have up to 36% greater negative impact on performance.

That's not to say that you shouldn't bother improving areas you find challenging; neuro plasticity means you can improve abilities through focus, effort and practice; but this takes time and commitment. Consider whether your time might be better invested in doing what you do best **more often** to achieve better outcomes faster.

3. Invest in relationships

Take the time to identify people's strengths and practice gratitude to improve office relationships.

Sharing positive emotions, mirroring body language/movement and mimicking vocal tone all create moments of common positivity and improves relationships. This shared moment of positive emotion is powerful; impacting moods and emotions by influencing vagal tone - an internal biological process that regulates your body's organ systems, directly affecting emotions.

Simply asking your team what's working well or what the highlight of their day/week was, or thanking someone for a job well done is enough to positively impact vagal tone.



4. Provide meaning and purpose

What drives you? What type of leader are you? If you can't answer these questions then your team is likely to be equally lost.

Identifying your purpose will make you and your team members feel more satisfied and confident, lowering levels of anxiety and depression.

5. Define and recognise accomplishment

The belief or understanding that you can improve your own situation creates a feeling of resilience and ultimately leads to a sense of accomplishment.

One of the factors that influences this is whether you reward effort or outcomes. The recognition that effort is important and that an individual's ability or lack of ability can be improved, is vital for a growth mindset and creates a sense of accomplishment, even if outcomes are not achieved.

Celebrate and reward effort as well as outcomes to encourage team participation and growth.

Your workplace checklist

- ✓ Find out what your positivity levels are by spending 2 minutes each day for 2 weeks www.positivityratio.com.
- ✓ Do a positive psychology session with the leadership team first, then the seniors/influencers to help it filter down.
- ✓ All leaders need to genuinely commit to being in a good mood at work.
- ✓ If you are in a bad mood do something to put you in a good mood - don't ... bring it into the office.
- ✓ Where possible, design employees' roles around their strengths to maximize satisfaction and productivity.
- ✓ Celebrate both EFFORT (something someone worked really hard on) and OUTCOMES (achievement of budgets etc).

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