

Leadership Skills: Demonstrating Patience Without Being A Pushover

One of the most challenging skills to master as a great leader is patience. Too little can lead to employees feeling unsupported... but too much can lead to managers feeling taken advantage of. Here's how to strike the right balance.

Almost everyone in their career has experienced a manager with the wrong amount of patience. Managers that are too lenient can lead to resentment when those who follow the rules feel foolish. On the other hand, managers who don't have enough patience can lead to employees feeling misunderstood, mistreated, or overlooked.

Just as having patience is a part of a healthy personal life, having patience in the office is also a part of a healthy work life. Business owners would do well to hone their patience skills thoughtfully over time to ensure that they're striking the proper balance that their workforce needs. Here are some tips to actively improve your patience skills in the workplace.

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Tip #1: Maintaining Balance is Key

Maintaining the proper amount of patience in leadership is the ultimate key. Leaders who adopt the mindset of growth and trust in their employees stand to have the most success. Set the expectations that your employees should all be working towards.

Embracing performance plans can be a great way to strike a tone of expectation and allows you to keep a running dialogue regarding an employee's work.

Don't make the process too cumbersome but give yourself avenues to keep employees accountable without blindsiding them with criticism can be a great way to strike a healthy balance. This can be a great way to actively practice patience with others regarding deadlines, achievements, and targets.

If you sense an employee is falling behind or requires additional support, offer it before you move to punishment. However, when it's warranted, the right accountability measures may be required in specific situations. Appropriately measure your punitive actions as a business owner and act confidently in your management style.

Tip #2: Monitor your Metrics

Your business success over time is largely dependent on your managerial style. Weighing your return on investments (staffing, strategies, projects) can give you a good sense of your overall patience level. Patience in business doesn't mean letting everything slide or being "too cool". Monitor your investments and know when it's time to take a new angle to an old problem. Actions like this are a big part of maintaining total patience in a leadership position.

Tip #3: React Mindfully

Patience in the workplace means projecting a predictable response level. Managers who fly off the handle do not display patience – but neither do managers who react differently in the same situations. Being a strong and steady business owner means taking a minute to compose yourself before reacting.

Mindful action is important when you're handling everyday challenges. If you feel that your control over emotion is slipping in a situation, step out from the call or room and take a moment to find some calm. Return to the conversation when you know you can control your emotion in a patient and kind way with whomever you're dealing with. This style of mindful reaction is applicable to interactions with customers, investors, coworkers, and employees.

Tip #4: Focus on Solutions, Not Problems

Dwelling on problems or negativity can lead to a shorter fuse as a manager. It's important to encourage not only your employees to find solutions but to focus on those solutions yourself. Patience and a healthy emotional mindset can be encouraged by focusing on the positives through the day. It can be too easy to become bogged down by problems and negativity as a business owner. Encourage yourself and others to find solutions – and suddenly, the problems won't seem as insurmountable as they did before. ♦

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