

6-12-20 Returning to the Office--Create Return Policies that...

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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Hi, everyone, welcome to another episode of legendary leaders. Keep hearing rumblings and hearing conversations that are coming out of, you know, friend conversations and client conversations. And just conversations that are happening on Facebook and everywhere else right about returning to the office. And I get it. You know, there are some businesses that really need to be in the office that have had been able to manage and get by with working remotely, but some of them just truly need to be in the office. Now. I can't tell you what those businesses are unless they are a customer facing business. Now that's different, right? If you're a customer facing business, and those that come to mind immediately are our businesses like restaurants and dry cleaners, right, um, grocery stores, car dealerships where you have service that needs to be done to your vehicle, right? Any type of medical practice doctors offices, pharmacies, things like that all of those, you actually have to be in an office for because customers are coming to you, to pay you for whatever it is you're offering. And that makes sense. But anyone else I would imagine you should be able to, in in general, and trust me, I understand I'm generalizing. One would expect that you should be able to run your business remotely. Because ultimately, if your customer is not coming to you, then what you're doing is you're collaborating



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in an office to,



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you know, to essentially come up with an idea and work together to execute that project or that program or whatever it is. And so, do I really need to be sitting beside you to collaborate? Surely not right? Surely I should be able to overcome that. So, again, I'm speaking in broad generalities. Alright, so get that. And also this is Katrina's opinion, gotta keep that in mind too. I've done a lot of jobs and throughout my corporate career, the



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bulk of what I did



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was I worked away from the home office, I worked, you know, away from my team and I had to travel to go and visit with them and, and it was purposeful time spent with them. But the bulk of the time it was spent communicating through email and on the phone and, and all of those things using technology to bring us together in order to collaborate and problem solve. That's just how I ran the business. I'm used to working in a remote environment to accomplish whatever I needed to accomplish in the business, right. So that's probably the other reason why I'm a bit more comfortable with it. Those of you that have never had to work remotely for a period of time or run a business from a remote perspective. It can be a little, you know, frustrating or fearful or annoying or just there's a lot of unknowns so I get that but I wanted to talk about returning to work today. Because, again, a lot of companies are talking about returning to work. And a lot of employees are worried about returning to work, whether they're going to tell you that or not, they are worried. And there's a lot to do with peer pressure and not wanting to be the only one that makes a big deal out of going back to the office, because people want to feel trusted, right? We've gone through this over and over and over. I want you to trust me if you're my supervisor. And I want you to know that I'm loyal. And I want you to know that I'm going to show up and I'm going to work hard and I'm going to do all that I need to do. Right? Everyone wants their supervisor, their boss, whomever, to know that they're a good employee. So the last thing they want to do is try to cause a problem to make it come across like they're not a good employee. And so what we have to do as leaders is not put them in the situation to make them feel like they even remotely have to make a decision or question if they're going to come across that way. And that's really important if that's if you don't walk away with anything else in this episode, I want you to remember that at the end of the day, your job as a leader is not to ever put an employee in a situation where they feel as though they're going to be called out in front of their peers. They're going to

have to stand up for what they believe in in front of everyone and potentially suffer, you know, any type of kickback for that or retaliation, whether they're going to experience or not, they don't even want to think about the fact that it could occur. Okay. And so your job is to reduce any type of potential situation where that could happen. Because you want your employees to speak their minds and be honest and open and sharing.



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You want them to communicate and feel



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safe to share all of their ideas in a trusting environment in an environment where there's no judgment. And really what they're worried about is the judgment. So right now, there's a lot of people that still want to wear masks. I definitely still want to wear a mask. Why? I mean, I understand. I've been in healthcare. Okay, I want to wear a mask to protect you. I want you to wear a mask to protect me. If we both wear masks, we're trying to keep each other safe. I think it's just respectful. But if you go in and you allow your employees to decide whether they want to wear a mask or not, and I'm, I'm the key one that really cares about wearing a mask. Now you've made me create the policy. That's not fair. Don't do that to your employees. Create the policy. Create the policy. Don't allow options. Care about your folks and enforce the fact that even if there's just one person who wants to wear a mask, you owe it to them because they're a part of your team and equal part of your team to not force them to create the policy. That's your job



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as the leader.



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Okay, there are some people who still have their children home. School may be out. But there are no summer camps. I can tell you in my area, for example, there are no camps until the end of June. That's a whole month without any summer camp. But that's there's still a whole month that we all have to work right. And so everyone was still very lenient understanding whenever, you know, we were going through not just social distancing, but the work from home expectations that you know, that were sent down by various governors and the majority of the states. So when the governor sent the work from home

order, everyone was obviously completely understanding of that. Because the governor said you had to and so working from home and having the kids at home, it was it was acceptable, but



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now that those orders have been relaxed.



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And, you know, the ability to go back to the offices they are. There are some leaders and there's some owners that say, hey, well, you know, the orders been relaxed. So you need to figure out what to do with your kids. And for some people, that's hard, they may not have any family or you know, in the area, they may not have the ability to pay for individualized childcare. Right, it can be a financial burden that they hadn't planned on. They may have a month left where they're going to have to come to you and say, I can't come to the office because I have to care for my children. And they're gonna carry that like a burden. Because again, they don't want you to think that they're not loyal to your business, or that they're a bad employee. Now let's step back and look at that for a second. Are they in bad employee because they have kids and in any other normal sessions, That kid would have been in school or after school or summer camp, or with family or whatever. But just because of this scenario, maybe they have a high risk parent and I can't send their kids over to that household. Now, they have to have the embarrassing conversation of telling you that they can't come to the office because they have to care for their kids. Don't put them in that situation. Solve for it through your leadership. Software, tell them hey, everyone's welcome to come back to the offices in June. It is not required. If you have children, obviously, you're still going to be there taking care of your kids, we completely understand that. If you can make it into the office, please let us know we'll plan on doing that. If not, just let us know no big deal. We're going to continue to maintain, you know, you know, zoom calls, whatever it is, right. Whatever you've been doing, just reiterate the fact that you're going to maintain that. But it's optional to come back into the office, and that if they have children, it's completely understandable that they would have to work from home. Just assume that if they have children, they're going to be working from home and say that make the assumption they're going to have to work from home, especially if they don't have to. They can show you that they want to come into the office, they can come and have the conversation to say, No, no, I can come into the office, instead of having a very hard conversation that they're going to belabor over for probably days and maybe even weeks to have to come and tell you that they can't come to the office. All right. Take the burden off of them. Take

the burden off of them by understanding the scenarios. All right. So that's my challenge for you as you think about returning to the office, as you think about what's changing in the world right now. And the fact that it'd be really nice for everybody to come together and share information or just be in the same room or go grab a bite to eat, or whatever. Having the idea that it's nice, is what you want doesn't necessarily mean it's what's best for your team doesn't necessarily mean it's what they're comfortable with, doesn't even necessarily mean it's something they're able to do. So instead of putting them in the position where they have to tell you, they can't create all the expectations around them not having to, and then therefore giving them the chance to show up in a way in which they're comfortable showing up. Okay? So they don't feel like you're going to question their loyalty. They're loyal. They're absolutely loyal. And that's why they're going to belabor and stress and worry and, and just not sleep at night trying to figure out how to have the conversation to tell you they want to wear a mask or they want to have social distancing in the office, or they can't come back to the office right now because they don't have childcare. one or all of those things, is going to be on someone's mind in your team. If you have an office, and you're debating on how to return back. Keep that in mind as you establish those expectations. All right. Thanks for listening, go and be legendary.