12-17-20 What Is Your Founder Type?

Tue, 12/1 6:20AM · 11:18

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

founder, ambiguity, delegator, business, dictator, cake, type, talk, room, share, leader, clear, pathway, part, harvard business review, framework, creative, discussed, define, debate

---

00:00

Welcome to another episode of legendary leaders. What is your founder type? That is the question that we're going to answer today. Now, can you tell that I have gotten caught up and all of my Harvard Business Review reading? Can you tell? Because you'll find, and I think you've probably figured it

00:19

out by now from

00:19

time to time, I'll go and I'll read the magazine that comes to me, and I'll catch up on all the different emails. And I soak in all of that knowledge. And I find some really good reference information, I find some things that I've learned. And I definitely want to apply to the way that I run my business of the way that I lead. And inherently, that's what I'm here for, I want to share that with you, I want to take it and see, well, how can I help you take those nuggets and apply them to your business, to your corporate career to both to better arm you to move you forward. So you want to go read the article, you can listen to me, while you're, you know, running on the treadmill, or walking outside, or whatever it is. And I've saved you all the reading, but you've gotten the nuggets, and then you can move forward. So that's what I'm doing. And that said, Today, we're going to talk about your founder type. There are various types of founders. And we're not talking about a founder, I'm talking about a business founder, right? A business founder. And there are various types of business founders, some are better than others at taking this amazing idea of impact and

improvement for their customer. And sharing that idea, for example, in such a way that everyone feels connected to and owns it, and feels like they are part of the business. Okay, there are some said differently, there are founders that are out there that serve their business. And they can take their vision of what they want to do from a service perspective, how they want to serve people how they want to improve that

01:53

customer's life.

01:55

And they can share that in such a way that everyone wants to join that company, and be a part of that team, and really make a difference in the lives of those customers. There are some founders out there that are great at that. There are some founders that are not so wonderful at it. And that's okay. It's just it's your founder type. It's just who you are as a founder. And so it was this was really interesting to me, to have it defined in this way. I've always talked about, you know, what kind of leader are you, but we really need to talk about what type of business founder Are you because if you're going to take habits from your corporate world, and bring them over into your business world, you want to make sure that the right habits is what we constantly talk about. And so let's make sure that you're establishing yourself as the founder, you want to be Stephen gray, Andrew Knight, and Marcus Mayer got together and wrote an article about startup founder types in Harvard Business Review. And I'm going to share those types with you. And then, as always, I'm gonna throw in some of my perspective and experiences to take you to the next level. So let's talk about the three there three founder types that they shared, let's talk about all three of them. Number one, they call the delegator. Now, this person doesn't just seek information out of their teams, meaning, hey, what do you think about this? Or what do you think about that? relative to how work gets done? Right? Because most of time you go to the frontline and say, Well, how are you doing that? How are you serving the customer? How are you making that product better? That's what they're there to do. So naturally, you would ask them that question. But the delegator actually goes and asks for feedback of their teams. For everything, the entire landscape of the business from should that be the KPI we focus on to should that be the revenue target that we should deliver to this this year, this month? Every part of it from the How to the financials to all non pillars. Everything the delegator asked for input on everything. Now, the really cool thing about being a delegator is and you can probably already see it. This increases the buy in and the ownership of all the employees because I mean, they get to weigh in on every part of the business. So they become a true owner of the business because they get

to talk about everything. The problem with this though, right? I'm not gonna say the only one but the big one is that because the founder doesn't clearly draw the lines now, every employee feels like everything is up for debate. Right? Everything is up for debate. Everything's up for discussion. Everything has to be questioned and challenged. Everything has to be assessed to make sure that that really is the right pathway. And I can tell you, in my experience, I have had relationships and work with founders who are delegators, the delegator founder type, and it caused lots of confusion. And it calls that leader to not be trusted in a lot of ways because how did They know what was the line in the sand. And that's the leader was going to decide that versus what did the individual need to make sure everything was right around. Where was the line because there wasn't a line. And so there was a lot of worry and fear in some instances, right? This fear that Oh crap, if I'm not in the room, and I'm not in that meeting, are they going to make the right decision? And not every employee needs to feel that level of responsibility, but that's what can happen with a founder type of delegator. Now, number two, is the dictator. Now that sounds really negative, just stick with me, okay. It's not as negative as it seems, I promise. So for the dictator, there is a clear ownership of an idea. And the leader paints the picture of what the business or project should look like. Okay, so it's, Hey, guys, I want you to bake this cake for me, I want it to be, you know, round, I need to be this size, I needed to be three tiers. This is what it's gonna look like, this is a color I want the buttercream icing, I want to have this design on the top. And this is what it needs to say. And I need it ready by this date, right? That's a dictator. painting the picture of what the project exempt should exactly look like, okay? ambiguity is absolutely reduced. So you don't have to debate every single part of everything ambiguity is out the window. Because you see, in that example, I just told you exactly what the cake needed to be made of, essentially, the type of icing the color would need to say the design on top. And beauty is gone. It's very clear. But the problem with that, okay, and so there's a negative side of this one, is, there's less room to really influence my direction at that point, right?

06:47

Because if I just came and told you, that's what I want the cake to look like, you're not going to maybe feel like you have a lot of room to say, Oh, well. But what about this? Or what about that? Or can this not be creative? Just tell me the framework. Don't tell me every bit of it give me the ability to be creative with my art, you know, my artistic desire in nature and capability, let me make you this amazing cake. Don't stifle my creativity, right. But in essence, I've done some of that, by reducing the ambiguity, I've stifled some of your creativity, and I've shut you down, there's less room for you to give me honest feedback about where we could go with this cake if I just allowed it to be a little bit more open. So be very aware of that. And that happens a lot in the corporate world, right, especially with the hierarchy. And you talked about that recently, about being PC. And this is part of

being PC, right? The dictator comes in and says this is how it's going to be and I thought it through and here's what it is, there's not a whole lot of room to push back on that. Especially not if you're having to be PC. Okay. Now, the third founder type is called the designator. The designator, and Stephen and Andrew and Marcus, the authors of this article, they said, this is the perfect balance between the delegator and the dictator. And so, ultimately, this is the sweet spot. And if you can choose and you can try to work on becoming the founder you want to be this is who you should work towards. This is the type of founder you want to work towards. Because what they do is they define what can be discussed, they define very clearly this is up for debate, this is the framework Come at me, bring me all your thoughts, ideas, we need to have everybody's input on this. But then they also very equally define what is off limits and what has already been defined. So for example, you can say, hey, look, I want us to talk about the way that we make cakes, in all the different ways we could do it, I want you to feel free to be creative within this framework. So let's define what the framework is, you know, you can't be making 10 tear cakes, it can only be as big as three. But within the three tier, you can pick the color and the flavor of the icing. And you can be very creative with the top, you know, the design on top and all these different pieces. But it can't go to 10 tier because we cannot financially afford to produce 10 tier cakes, right? See how that works. That's the designator, I was very clear, I gave you a reduced ambiguity, but I still gave you flexibility. And that is the best type of founder. So what I want you to do now is I want you to look within yourself. If you've already started your business, or you already sort of going down the pathway of creating your business, I want you to ask yourself, when I describe those three types, which type of founder resignated you know, resonated with you? Which one really sounded like oh, that's me. That's, yep, I'm that one. Do you allow everything to be discussed? potentially causing delays, potentially. But getting lots of via? Or do you allow a minimal input and increased production? But then there's potentially less ownership in the process? Or do you balance the two? There's no wrong answer. Let me always be clear, there is no wrong answer here. You just simply need to be aware of how you lead, and how you're going to lead as the founder of your business. And if you like the idea of being the designator more than where you're sitting today, then just make the change. Look at where you need to be a little bit more flexible, or look and see where you need to be a bit more clear and reduce the ambiguity provide guardrails. And then just decide what's what can be discussed versus what's already established, and share that with your team and then start moving down that pathway. And if you don't have a team yet, then go ahead and sit down and think about things that you'd be willing to discuss with the team and what would be decided upon by you. And then you immediately start that culture and that process right out of the gate. Either way, there's no wrong answer. It's just your answer. And I want you to come to your answer, and I want you to decide how you want to do it, and commit to it. That's your challenge today. Go and be legendary.