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Courageous leadership conversation cards

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Topic: Embracing vulnerability in leadership

"Great leaders don't see themselves as great; they see themselves as human."

– **Simon Sinek**, Author

How can we, as leaders, use humility to foster a culture of trust and innovation in our teams?

Did you know?

Vulnerable leaders spur innovation.

Research by Brené Brown indicates that **leaders who embrace vulnerability tend to cultivate trust, spur innovation, and nurture an environment of creativity and development.**[1]

Humble leaders improve team performance.

Leaders who embrace humility build **psychologically safe work environments, which encourages risk and leads to improved team performance.**[2]

Leaders should communicate more of what they don't know.

Leaders are **9x more likely to be criticized for undercommunicating** than overcommunicating.[3]

Sources: 1. Brown, Brené. "Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead." April, 2015. 2. Edmondson, Amy. "The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth." December, 2018. 3. Zulkey, Claire. "When it comes to communication from the top, less isn't more." Insights by Stanford Business. September, 2022.

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Topic: Trust and accountability in the AI-mediated workplace

As GenAI gains more acceptance in the workplace, it highlights the need for improved trust and transparency upward and downward.

What's the current state of trust and transparency in your organization?

How is AI impacting trust in your workplace?

Did you know?

Managers are more willing to leverage AI than direct reports.

In collaboration with Stanford Social Media Lab, BetterUp has been tracking knowledge about and perceptions of trust in AI, as measured by Ability (AI's output is accurate), Benevolence (AI has a positive effect on people), and Integrity (AI is safe and secure). **Managers were shown to have more knowledge of AI, trust in AI, positive mindsets about AI, and willingness to leverage AI than their direct reports.**[1]

Trust in AI varies across industries.

BetterUp Labs found that **Technology, Manufacturing, Finance, and Retail workers have higher trust in AI,** whereas those working in Healthcare, Government, Arts, Media, Entertainment, and Education have lower trust in AI.[1]

AI-generated content impacts trust.

A 2019 study[2] co-authored by Jeff Hancock found that when people face a mixed environment of AI and human-generated content, content suspected to be AI-generated was trusted less. The authors attribute this distrust to how humans make strong attributions based on minimal signals (i.e. over-scrutinizing potentially AI-generated content) and how uncertainty in authorship causes us to more carefully process the information presented.

Sources: 1. BetterUp Labs + Stanford Social Media Lab, 2023. 2. Jakesch, Maurice, Megan French, Jeffrey T. Hancock, Xiao Ma, and Nor Naaman. "AI-Mediated Communication: How the Perception that Profile Text Was Written by AI Affects Trustworthiness." *CHI 2019 Paper*, 2019.

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Topic: Cultivating a sense of purpose to align meaning and performance in the workplace.

"Workers want happiness. Companies want performance. Purpose aligns them."

– **Adam Grant,** Psychologist, Author, and Chair of the Center for Purpose and Performance

How are we helping employees bridge the gap between their individual purpose and the broader organizational objectives?

Did you know?

Employees place great value on purpose and meaning at work.

BetterUp Labs found that **more than 9 out of 10 employees are willing to trade a percentage of their lifetime earnings for greater meaning at work.**[1]

Purpose and meaning drive performance.

A 2019 BetterUp survey found that employees who described their jobs as highly meaningful were more likely to have received a promotion in the past six months.[1]

Productivity gains from **a single employee experiencing work as highly meaningful results in an average organizational gain of $9,078 in labor output.**[1]

Cultivating purpose and meaning in your organization pays off.

Publicly traded BetterUp partner **organizations that scored highest on employee purpose and meaning outperform their peers** in key financial metrics, including 5-year average revenue growth (+12%) and Y/Y EPS Net Growth (+15%).[1]

Sources: 1. BetterUp Labs, "Meaning and Purpose at Work," 2019. 2. BetterUp Labs, 2019.

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Topic: C-level burnout

What do you perceive to be the biggest barriers to addressing burnout in yourself or others at your organization?

Did you know?

If you are dealing with burnout, you are not alone.

Nearly **70% of C-suite executives are seriously considering quitting** for a job that better supports their well-being.[1]

Leadership sets the well-being standard for all employees within an organization.

Deloitte found **84% of the C-suite agree that employees are more likely to be healthy if their executives are healthy**; however, just 16% of workers say they see this level of transparency from their leaders.[1]

Caring for yourself is a sign of strength.

Leaders who model self-compassion, in addition to empathetic leadership, are seen as **more inspiring, resilient, and effective in the eyes of their direct reports.**[2]

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Topic: The impact of RTO mandates and ever-changing work arrangements on employee and business performance

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What policies has your organization implemented regarding working arrangements? Have they been successful?

Did you know?

When implemented without transparent communication, return-to-office (RTO) mandates do more harm than good.

In addition to being less productive (-16%), less engaged (-12%), less resilient (-9%), less innovative (-18%), and more burned out (+18%), **employees who are not provided with an explanation for their mandated return to the office are 14x more likely to cite significant resentment** as a significant barrier to doing their best work than those provided with a RTO justification.[1]

Frontline managers are the linchpin of return-to-office success.

A 2023 BetterUp Labs survey found that frontline managers returning to the office were 33% more burned out and 38% less engaged than Managers of Managers or Individual Contributors.[1]

When returning to office, **direct reports with supportive frontline managers are more productive (+22%), more engaged (+39%), and significantly less likely to be stressed (-26%) and burned out (-31%)** than direct reports without supportive frontline managers.[1]

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Topic: Designing management for the next generation

How are you building the leadership pipeline in your organization? What's worked well and what hasn't?

Did you know?

Younger workers greatly value career development and lack mentorship.

Compared to older generations, millennials rate professional development as nearly twice as important when evaluating a new position.[1]

A recent Adobe poll showed that **83% of Gen Z employees believe a workplace mentor is crucial for their career**, but only 52% reported having one.[2]

Younger generations will not tolerate intolerance.

In 2023, a Gallup poll revealed that Gen Z ranked not getting along with managers or coworkers as the number one reason for leaving a job,[1] while Adobe reported that **56% of Gen Z-ers said they would not accept a job at a company without diverse leadership.**[3]

Gen Z and Millennial executives are changing the way the C-Suite operates.

Compared to their Gen X and Baby Boomer colleagues, **younger executives invest more in their employees' well-being** and are significantly more likely to cap their own work weeks at 40 hours.[4]

Sources: 1. Gallup, "Employee Engagement Survey," 2023. 2. Adobe, "Future Workforce Study," 2023. 3. ManpowerGroup, "Workforce Trends Report," 2023. 4. Deloitte, "Well-being at Work Survey", 2023.

Develop leaders at every level.

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