

Releasing the Power of Teams – Episode 3: Navigating Informal Teams and Networks: Flexing Styles to Make Influence Count

Transcript

Declan

Hello everyone and welcome to releasing the power of teams. So over the first two episodes of the series we explored this thing called team coaching and what it is, how it can unlock potential and the importance that each of us can play as a member of a great team.

So today we're looking to take the conversation even further. We're looking to take a step forward and we'll talk about how to go about working as a team through informal networks, through matrix structures and working across and through organisational boundaries. And in those sort of settings, influence can be far more important than hierarchy and seniority.

So if you've not yet had a chance to listen to episodes one and two, there's an opportunity to do that after the conversation today. So I'm Dr. Declan Woods. I'm the CEO of Team Genie, the creator of the global standard for team coaching and the creator of Team Salient, the team transformation tool.

And I'm delighted today to be joined by Dr Heather Melville, OBE, who's got over 40 years of experience. So Heather, I know you've worked at IBM, at PWC, you've run your own business, and more recently you are the Chancellor of the University of York, a partner at Stork and May, you sit on the committee of Women in Finance, Banking and Finance, and you're an honorary fellow at the Chartered Banker Institute. Wow, what a varied and impressive career. Welcome. We're delighted to have you with us today.

Heather

Thank you. Thank you for the invitation. I'm really excited.

Declan

We could be here for hours, but maybe let's get into this conversation. Give us a sense of some of those 40 years of leadership experience with maybe a bit of a sense of some of that experience in project matrix and dependent teams.

Heather

It's quite interesting. It's like 40 plus years and it's gone so quickly. And I've done so many exciting things, met so many amazing people. And actually what I think has happened now, you can see a slight change is starting to happen.

I think COVID changed the way that we work. If you imagine 10 years ago, organisations allowing people to work from home for a day, much less a whole week, much less as part of their contracts. So that I think is really quite interesting.

I think technology has changed the way we do things in some ways, very positive ways. And in some ways, it's made us probably a little less communicative. We're on our phones all the time. You see

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people in groups and they're all on their phones individually rather than having a conversation. So that's one of the negative sides of technology.

But at the end of the day, business is still business. People buy from people. People learn from people. And organizations cannot operate a strong business without people. We haven't reached that place yet where robots can take over and do everything. So there is a big element that people are our most important assets in any organization.

How do we get the best out of them? How do we make sure we transform them so that they can be the best leaders we want them to be? How do we get them to be part of a cadre of people that are making change, taking accountability for the change that they want to see, rather than sitting back and waiting for someone else to do it?

And then the other side of that for me is I've always been quite lucky that I've worked for organisations that have either challenged me in a way which I use that as a personal challenge to grow or I've worked for some really top leaders who have helped me on my journey and even the ones that haven't been such good leaders if it wasn't for them I wouldn't be the person I am.

And so when I say that, I say in a tongue in cheek way as if to say, sometimes we can get really upset by the, we don't think our manager likes us, we don't know they're supporting us. We can take it down the trajectory where it's, they don't help me, they don't, they don't, they don't. And actually what we need to do is take some responsibility and accountable for what it is that we want. What are we going to contribute to? What are we going to do to make our team stronger? And in the outlook of that is make our business stronger. That we have a responsibility of.

And I think the minute you start to take responsibility and accountability for that, you have a different mindset. The other thing that you do, you build networks of people across different industries that are supporting you, that can be your market for you, that can be the comms person, that can be the advisor. And I think there is something about building a community.

And I remember many years ago when I first started in my banking career, going to a conference called Sibos every year. And for me, that was one of the best things ever. The first time I was invited to go and the bank would prepare to pay the thousands for me to attend. I remember thinking, oh, this is great. I didn't know what to wear. I didn't know how to speak to anyone. 3,000 delegates across how many different countries. And I remember at the time I was the first black person from the UK and out of 3000 delegates, there were 10 black people. So that, and I remember those numbers quite, vividly.

But what was really powerful about that is that most people remembered me because I got to know them. I got some fabulous relationships. And I like little stories because I think they would help. I remember once we had sent a payment to the wrong place, a swift payment to the wrong place. and I needed to get it back same day value. And everyone's going, there's no way you're going to get it back. They're going to wait till tomorrow because of the interest. I said, right, you wait.

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And I remember I had met the head of that business at the conference and I messaged him, I rang him and I said, I'm really sorry, but we've made a really big mistake. They've sent this payment out. I need to get it back same day value. Please, would you help? And we got that payment back same day value. And my boss went to me, how did you do that? Right, so there is a power, there is a power in connecting with other people, not just when you want something, but building those networks and keeping them going throughout your career.

Declan

What your examples have done is really anchored the fact that teams are made-up of groups of people. And you just underlined the sort of, the relational aspects of that, because ultimately we're social beings, we want to belong to things. And you've just demonstrated the tissue that connects members within teams and between teams.

Heather

I think there is something about empowering people to be the best version of themselves also. And I think when we make people team leaders or managers, We think a lot about what they can deliver and we don't think much about how they are going to deliver it through their people. And actually that's the most important thing. A real leader isn't really on the ground doing all the day-to-day work. He or she will have great leaders that are delivering for him and therefore making sure, it's very much like, I call it the orchestra. You have the conductor who knows what the music should sound like, but doesn't need to have to be able to play all the instruments themselves.

Heather

They can make great music just by conducting it in the right way, bringing people in at the right time, making them feel that they're part of what's happening. And that's really what the role of a leader is.

Declan

Yeah. And of course, that's an interesting transition, isn't it? And one that many of us find tricky because we've often been promoted into that first time team manager or team leader position because we're a great individual contributor and certainly doing less ourselves and orchestrating in the way that you were describing places a different role on us. What tips do you have for those that are listening about how you might make that sort of transition from individual contributor to first time team leader or manager and leading differently?

Heather

So it's interesting. So for me, I start with saying, always look at the people that do it badly. Right? The people that do it badly don't have followship. Followship is what you need to be a great leader. understand what it is that they're doing wrong and make sure you make that as one of the first things that you focus on in terms of when I become a leader, I am going to make sure I get the support to make sure I know how to do it, whether it be coaching, whether it be having a coffee with a leader or who's already in that role. It's absolutely bringing that to their attention. This might be the area of strength of growth that I need to become a strong leader. Can you help me?

And then there are other leaders that do it really well. Understanding how they deliver results through what they do. Because being a leader is about doing the nice stuff, but also having some tough conversations. And sometimes leaders are not equipped to have tough conversations because the way the hierarchy goes is that we've got to tell them all nice things.

And actually, if somebody's not delivering, Sometimes our leaders don't know how to tell them that they're not delivering and to do it in a way which has, look, let me help you or what can I do to help you so that you can be successful? So that's the first thing.

There are some people who don't have the will and will never have the skill. And there are some people that have a mixture of both. Ideally, you want somebody that's got will and skill because actually those two things work really well. But as a leader, you need to understand the tsunami of things that you need to make you be successful, that ultimately makes the organization successful. And if there are some chink in armor, as a leader, you've got to address that.

So if you've got a car and you know that, okay, the body's in good shape, I need a great mechanic to make sure the engine is serviced, but I've got a good person that does all the bodywork and is a good spray paunter, a spray painter. Actually, if they can't fix the engine, they're no good to your business. And that's sometimes how we've got to think about the people who are in our business.

And when I say that, I'm not saying get rid of people who aren't good enough, I'm just saying some people will never be what you need them to be when the business transforms. And then it's your job as a leader to help them learn something else. If they cannot learn what they need to do to be excellent, help them identify what they're really great at and then empower them to do that. And if the organisation doesn't allow that to happen, because, you know, head count or whatever it is, help them on the journey to finding something that really feeds their soul and feeds their passion.

Declan

Yeah. So, of course, there's a lot of.

Heather

Responsibility on leaders' shoulders apart from delivering the financial outcomes and the objectives.

Declan

Yeah. Well, that's that word responsibility is coming through as a strong theme, whether you're an individual team member and delivering your part or whether you're a team leader or team manager responsible for the output of the whole team. I'm bringing the conversation back to teams that might span multiple teams. It may be that people work in different teams for different periods of time. And sort of complexity to this topic of teaming. I'm wondering what your sort of thoughts are there about how people might do that. You know, gone are the days where we just work in a single team. We might have different work in different teams. What are your thoughts on that and how we might make that a success in these more fluid teams?

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Heather

In every team, there has to be a leader. In every team, there has to be someone who's accountable for delivering the objectives of that business. So whichever way you look at it, if there are teams that are connected to each other, you've got to deliver something together. So it's being able to identify what is it that we've got to deliver and then look at how are we going to deliver it. And I use the we so that we're always thinking we rather than thinking I.

And how do you bring that together? So you need, first of all, people who feel empowered, people who want to be part of something, and you've got to invest in people to make it feel like a team. There's A glue that as a leader you create, which is around that bonding.

So for instance, even though during lockdown, we weren't together for months, even years really, we were working virtually. I think leaders who did a great job were those that had a town hall where they brought all their people together and the disparate teams brought their people together and they would have that weekly check-in. How are you doing? What's going on? How's your family? How are you doing with that piece of work? Do you need any help?

Being able to see if somebody was really struggling. I remember being on a call with somebody one day and in my team, she'd lost her dog. And I didn't know that at the time. I could see she was quite withdrawn. And so everyone was talking about everything that was happening to them and their families that weren't well. And after the call, I rang her straight away. I said, you seemed really withdrawn. What's going on? And she burst into tears and she said, I lost my dog yesterday. And I didn't think that people would think it was important, so I didn't want to talk about it. I said, of course he's important. That was your soulmate. That's very much the same as losing a part of our family.

And so actually recognising that loss comes in different ways. And by how you deal with that brings that person together, brings that person back under the fold, make them feel that you care about them. It's like when you ask somebody how they are, right? Ask them how they are and wait for the answer. Many people say, how are you? And by the time the person's opened their mouth to say how they are, they've gone off somewhere else because they're not really interested. Well, with COVID, You're on the camera so you can't even pretend. And it's actually waiting for the answer.

And I think some of the great leaders that I certainly worked for during that time made an effort to make sure every Friday or every Thursday at 3 o'clock the whole team came together. There were no excuses, but we all had to come together because we needed something to connect us back together again.

I think now we've all gone back into the workplace. That may have changed somewhat. You know, they call it the water cooler moment. I'm not sure that's happening so much because you've got people working at different times, different places, different countries. But teaming is about people. Delivering is about people. Collaboration is around people and understanding the right skills that you need to make things work properly.

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But then you also want people to work for you. That means you don't want them to see this as it's a job, a task I've got to do. You want that fire in their belly that they want to go a step over. And they'll only do that when they work for leaders who really treat them with respect and actually care for them.

Declan

And I'm loving the fact that you're talking, yes, about bringing people together, whether that's in the same place or through technology, but it's going beyond that about recognising the sort of people components of that and the relationships and really demonstrating that you care for them. And I'm wondering how you might use that, those relational strengths, those bonds, those networks as part of getting work done, particularly work that might spread across teams or fall between teams. How might you use some of those relationships and networks to help you in that as a team leader?

Heather

I think, if you remember when we were back at school and we had to go and work in little groups, so they'd bring the whole class together and then they'd separate you and put little groups to work on little projects. And if you think back to that time, then the excitement that was in the room while people were sitting together, creating things together or working together, well actually in the workplace when we're adults, that's the same sort of thing we're doing.

We might not be doing arts and crafts, but actually we're solving a business problem together, whatever that business problem is. Or we're agreeing on a way that we want to work for the benefit of our clients. And that's really quite important. So the whole thing of bringing people together and then getting them to really connect, find something that brings them together and that allows them to feel that they're at their best and they're contributing their best.

The best leaders are the ones that call out people across the teams that have done great work together. You very rarely hear great leaders say, I did this and I delivered that. The best of the best leaders will always say, I either delivered this through my team, which means that without my team of excellence, I couldn't have done this. You imagine if you're part of that team and you hear that, it gives you a sense of pride, you want to do more of it.

If you're part of a team where you hear the, you know, everyone's done the work and the leader said, well, I did this and I did that and I'm responsible for that and I'm accountable, actually, you switch off. because there's no appreciation for what you have contributed to. So there is the peace within the whole team thing of really being appreciative of what people are doing and making sure you're giving praise where it's due.

Declan

So there's a part of this about taking individual responsibility, whether it's a team member or team leader, but also giving recognition and attribution to those that have done the work and really sort of recognising that. And I'm wondering if that takes us into trust and how trust you can develop that and how that might grow in a team. What are your thoughts on that?

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Heather

Well, you know, trust is a two-way thing. So there's personal trust and then there's professional trust. So let's start with the personal trust. The personal trust is you and I have a contract on how we might work together. And if I deliver on that and you deliver on it, that trust between us gets stronger. It means I can depend on you. When I look at it from the work perspective from a business, if your business is asked to deliver a project by a certain date, and another area of the organisation is dependent on that project being delivered and it doesn't happen, you've broken that law of trust because actually as a result of you not doing that, they can't do that and somebody else at the end of the chain is going to look like they've fallen down. And so to build trust, it's about your ability to do what you say you're going to do. Or if you can't do it, it's to communicate in a good enough time scale to let people know that you can't do it and when you're likely to be able to do it. And that for me is quite powerful. That builds trust in terms of the organisation and your line manager and your colleagues knowing, well, actually, do you know what? They couldn't do it at this time for whatever reason, but they can have committed to doing by this time. And that builds strong trust. And that's your ability to see people know you as a person that delivers, people then know you as the person they can trust, and people then know you as somebody that works collaboratively to make stuff happen.

Declan

What I like about your example there, Heather, is that you talk about trust more as a sort of an outcome, having done some maybe difficult work together and delivered something, including on the sort of promises or the commitments that have been made. So it's a sort of an outcome of rather than many teams start with, let's do a trust building exercise or something like that in a slightly artificial way. But you're saying trust is earned through delivering work together. So I really enjoy that bit of it. I'd like to bring us back to one of the implications really, I guess, of COVID-19 and how organizations have changed their thinking about teams. Of course, that's led to more distributed teams, more dispersed teams, the sort of use of technology that you've talked about. And I guess the implication is that we can get team members not limited by geography and physical proximity, but we can get team members from all over the world. And I'm wondering, that creates a possibility to create more diverse teams. And I'm wondering what are your thoughts about that and the benefits of increasing the amount of diversity in teams?

Heather

So I think when we think about diversity, are we talking about skill? Are we talking about race? Are we talking about age? We could be talking about a whole host of things. So for me, rather than using the word around diversity, I'd probably focus on creating an inclusive culture. And that means where people are encouraged to bring the best version of themselves because they feel that they will be included in it or they'll feel they're part of something. That I think is a real driver for change.

Declan

And how do you do that? What's maybe your first one or two steps in creating that inclusive environment where people feel a part of something, they feel included and can be I'm sort of thinking of psychological safety where people can be themselves in a team without fear of censure or it creates the conditions for learning. How might you go about that? So I guess the.

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Heather

Very first thing where that's concerned, and it's a topic that's really close to my heart, is how do people feel when they go to work on a Monday morning? That gives you a sense of the culture of the organization that you're working for. If you can hear a buzz on a Monday morning, that means people are happy to come into work. If you hear that buzz on Monday afternoon and well into Wednesday, everyone's busy but there's a buzz. When it's flat, you know that something's missing.

And that is really where we have to think, what is it that's missing? Are people not connecting together, people not working collaboratively together? Is there an issue in the business that we haven't identified or we've identified and we've done nothing about it? You know, sometimes people will support other people. If somebody, especially in the UK, we have a culture which is very caring and nurturing. So if somebody feels that, you know, their friend hasn't been treated very fairly, somehow everyone comes together against it once they know about it. And so there's this thing about fairness. What does fairness look and feel like?

What does it feel like to really include someone? So we invite people to things and we might forget that Joe over there can't go because they've got caring responsibilities or they've got something else. So do we always create events? where the team go to that are in the evening. So actually the others don't get to do. Or do we say sometimes let's shift it around. If we do it as a breakfast meeting, maybe a few more people can come to that. If the next time we do it as a lunch meeting, everybody else can attend. So it's really been quite thoughtful about who do you want to be there and how do you want them to feel when they're there.

And the other thing I think is really important is when you get people in a committee or on a board talking, make sure that everybody's got a voice in that room. Sometimes you can have the person that does the loudest voice, does the most talking and they will talk for the whole hour. If you haven't got a good chair or a good leader, they will not notice. that person A in the corner has been trying to press the buzzer or put their hand up to say something and they haven't been able to do that. can be one of the most demotivating things that can happen.

And what happens, people then think, I'm not going to be bothered. Then they sometimes think, I'm not putting my camera on. What's the point of putting my camera on? No one will notice whether I'm there or not. Then they not only not put their camera on, they don't turn up. And you've lost them. Now you haven't lost them because they don't care. You've lost them because they don't feel that they're part of something or they're not being heard.

Declan

Yeah. And I'm sure we've all been part of teams where there's, you know, one or two dominant members. How do you get a bit more balance there? How do you encourage those that may be quieter or holding back in speaking up and getting their voice heard? How might you go about that?

Heather

So for me, I think about bosses who I've worked for in the past. who have included me in a conversation. Say, Heather, what are your thoughts on that?

Declan

Actively inviting them into the conversation.

Heather

Absolutely actively inviting them. Or how was your weekend? What did you do? Or how was your holiday? You know, we're social beings, right? The minute you ask somebody something about them shows that you care.

Declan

Okay, so remembering the details and what's important to them.

Heather

So remembering some of those things. So the best meetings I have are the meetings when I start by saying to everybody, how you doing? How are you doing? And actually that's quite important because you're contracting with them to say I care about you. And that's quite a big thing. And that's why I say the value of making people feel they're part of something creates a community where they want to do more. It's a circle that goes round. You say thank you to someone for doing something. Yes, it's their job, but it's not their job when they're doing it out of hours. They're doing that there because they've got a sense of pride and they actually care about the organisation and they care about their colleagues that they work with. And so that needs to be rewarded in some way. And that is that reward that creates the culture of collaboration and change and drive and innovation and the fact that people want to do more for their organisation. There are many people who I know that work for organisations that have said I would never leave this organisation because of how they treated me or my family or my colleagues when they lost somebody or when something awful happened during that time. So I do think employer loyalty and employee loyalty is really important.

Declan

Yes, and of course those two things go hand in glove rather than them being one direction.

Heather

Happy teams are happy businesses and I don't mean this woke, happy, clappy stuff. What I mean is you bring people, get the best out of them.

Declan

And that example is really making me think, Heather, of the conditions that we need to not only do our jobs but thrive at work. And of course teams have those conditions as well. And I'm wondering, again, thinking about your experience, what are some of those conditions that we might be able to influence and put in place to allow our groups of people to do great work when they're together?

Heather

What might be some of those things? run consistently right from 10 o'clock to 11 to 11.30, right away, back-to-back without a moment's thought that the individual may need to go to the bathroom, the individual may need to have something to eat. These are the kinds of things that

when I talk about us not being prepared for that, because in the world when you're at work, you get out from your desk, you just go to the bathroom when you want to. But the minute someone's scheduled a meeting and the meeting's at 10 o'clock and you've come out the other meeting at 9, 9.59. And also the other thing is you needed space-time to get to, you know, when you're in the office, you've got 5 minutes or 10 minutes to get to your next destination. When you're on team, just bam straight onto the next call.

Declan

Yes, and we've almost forgotten that, haven't we? So you're saying, let's go back to basics and remember the, needs that we have as humans and building some time for that?

Heather

Also, if you've got someone that's got a disability, for whatever reason, they may not, they may not tell the whole world they've got a disability, but they may tell their line manager they've got a disability and one that they don't want to tell everybody about, they need to make sure that we cater for that. We're looking, we have a duty of care as leaders to make sure we care for all of our people.

Declan

And of course, often we know or think we know or assume what they need. And often we can be wrong about that. So sometimes just asking the question can be enough. And of course, people being willing to say that is a real sign of loyalty. People are willing to say that explicitly. Yeah. What else is front of your mind, Heather, thinking about those 40 years, the range of organisations you've worked in, they all use teams in slightly different ways. I'm wondering what tips you might have for some of our listeners at different points in their career. What top tips or advice might you offer them?

Heather

So I think one of the first thing is think of the skills that you have and the skills that you haven't got and the skills that are needed. and think about how you can make that cake wholesome. That's what I call it. I love cake. So I always think of it like cake is not one ingredient, it's many ingredients. And so being able to make sure we've got a wholesome cake means that we've got to make sure we've got all the right skills, we care about them, all well mixed together, all to deliver this great outcome. That is really quite important. And I see that more and more now. I think when I look across some of the organizations I've worked for, every job I've been into, I've done a different job. And every job I've learned something else. And that's because the employer gave me the opportunity and I had the will.

Declan

Okay.

Heather

Right? And so this is to the people who sit back and think my employer needs to do this and my employer needs to do that. Absolutely not. It's a two-way thing. It is a two-way thing. So if you start

thinking that it's a two-way thing, put in what you want to take out, you'll find that you strive better. If you're sitting there waiting, my line manager hasn't done this, my line manager hasn't done that. Absolutely not. You've got to take some accountability for it.

Declan

So jump in the driving seat of your own career, look for those opportunities, including to develop some of the skills that may need developing or that you may be missing. and find new opportunities in conjunction with the organisation and give it a go. And maybe your career is a great example of that. You've worked in such a variety of organisations and sectors. I'm wondering, how do you make that transition from one setting to another and do that successfully? What are your what are your tips for that for the rest of you?

Heather

I think when I think about this, I always think it's my drive to always wanting to be successful and always wanting to give my children a better life. And that's what always made me feel that I need to work harder.

And actually, Having a sponsor and not knowing you've got a sponsor is fantastic because actually what they do, and that's the person that when you're in that, you're not in that room, is saying, I think this person could do this if we put the right support infrastructure around them, they'll do it. And letting them know that you believe in them. The minute a boss makes their, you know, their direct report believe they can do something, they go out all stops to make sure they can do it. Because there's a sense of pride, right? And that's what's always driven me, a sense of pride.

When someone says to me, well, how are you going to do it? I think, let me show you how I'm going to do it, rather than if I can do it. I'll go away and think about it. And I think that's really important. Everybody has their first leadership job. No one was born being able to drive a car. No one was born a leader. Contrary to what some people might think, no one was born a leader. You have to learn those skills.

And actually, I always think the best way of doing that is either being reverse mentored by someone or you mentoring somebody and sharing the load, learning something else, and also making sure that you're helping somebody else develop because that person might help you.

An example of that I would think is much more mature people in organisations have got a whole expertise of skills that because of the years of being there, they've got a young person will come in, they're really savvy on technology. So actually what you need to be doing is how do you put those two together? You get the person who's been in the organisation a long time, sharing and helping that young person to develop, mentoring in the organisation. Then you've got the young person that's got all the latest skills, re-technology, being able to share that with a much more older person and buddying up with them, that creates a fantastic culture of change in an organisation and learning. And it doesn't cost very much, right? Maybe a coffee or a glass of wine, but that I think is really quite important.

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Declan

So that's a couple of examples of reverse mentoring. And so it's sort of challenging the assumption that only more senior people have the experience and are the ones to impart their sort of knowledge and wisdom and recognising that learning can take place in both directions.

Heather

Feedback is a gift and it's the gift that keeps on giving. And I say that not just as a mantra, but actually as if you don't know what you do really well, Or if you don't know what you don't do so well, how can you adjust it? And that's why feedback along the way is really good. Now, we do need to teach people how to give feedback sometimes because when people don't do it right, it has a devastating impact on people. And that once again is the responsibility that sits on the shoulders of many leaders.

Declan

Yeah, and we hear that a lot. And so Yeah. And I'm sort of struck that feedback can be a bit of a loaded dice. Many of us react negatively to feedback. Even the word itself can cause some reactions. How might we sort of start thinking about giving feedback in a way that it lands in the way that we might hope and encourages people to be open minded to change? What's the, how do we go about that?

Heather

So the first thing for me is I always give the best of the feedback at the end of the meeting. That's the first thing. So that's where you lead the meeting at that place, remembering what you've done really well and feeling proud, having a sense of pride. The development pieces will be communicated in such a way that says, this is what the feedback is telling us. You could be this if you did that. What do you think is stopping you from doing that? Can I help in any way? Do you need help? what's causing that? And it's just a small thing that's a ***** in the armour for you. And the minute you get people doing what you're doing now and nodding, you get them accepting that there's a part of development that they've got to do. You know, a good percentage of people go away and work on that. because you've told them what it is, when you give them a generic view of, well, you didn't do that very well. And then somebody say, well, what do you mean? I don't understand. Well, you know, it just wasn't very well. If feedback isn't clear, it doesn't become constructive and it's not useful.

Declan

Yeah, being clear on the sort of feedback and the key messages. And what I'd also heard was providing support to them in making some of those changes. So yeah.

Heather

The role of a leader is pretty big. It's more than just delivering. The objective for the business is delivering through your people. And that means taking care of your people. And what the taking care means is being able to console them when they need it, being able to make sure you give them that negative feedback that wants them to also go away and improve themselves to be the best version of themselves. And that's what great leaders are like.

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Declan

And so people and how we work with and for them has come through as a strong theme throughout this whole conversation, Heather. And I'm wondering what final remarks or comments or thoughts you might have about how we work in teams and make the most of teams, just to leave our listeners with.

Heather

So I think about what is your, what's your magic that you bring to the team? What do you do really well? And understanding where your development areas might be and finding the person that does what you don't do so well really well and vice versa. Buddying up with them.

I'm a big believer of having these coffee breaks where people sit and have their sandwiches together and just talk things through or ask for help. ask for help, but also, recognising what are we doing for the business? How are we doing it? Why are we doing it?

And actually, sometimes what people don't realise, if you can help create the great culture of that team, you help the team be successful. So little things like, you know, organising a team event, instead of moaning, oh, we don't do anything in our team, why don't you organise it? Why don't you bring people together? You know, those sorts of things help change the energy. of a team.

And the other thing I think is really important when we win, we win together. So when we've done a successful project or we've had something that we've a project we've worked on and we've come to the end, let's celebrate this together as a team. Let's talk about what we've learned from it and make sure that we're not talking about just the conductor, but we're talking about all the other people that played all the other instruments that made that project or that team successful.

Declan

So looking and finding the magic in ourselves and the magic that others have and working out how to bring that together to create a winning culture where you can be successful together. Well, that sounds like a mantra that many of us could adopt. So let's round off the conversation here. Heather, it's been delightful to talk with you. Thank you for sharing your experience and your wisdom And there's lots of views there and tips that I'm sure the listeners will be keen to put into action.

Heather

Thank you.