

Volume 23**What I'm hearing**

I feel like I'm constantly reacting as a leader and spending most of my time dealing with the daily work instead of looking ahead and planning. I'm tired, and I feel like my people are getting burned out.

What it means

As a leader of a small or growing business, it's pretty normal to be constantly reacting. However, I often see a reluctance to hire, with the result that incremental growth is handled by working everyone harder, including the CEO. The question for you is, "Why change?" Are you feeling the health effects of the cycle? Are you noticing your people waiting for your orders instead of proactively solving problems? Have you lost someone valuable recently? Are you sensing a cynical attitude towards your vacations or a lack of raises?

The leader sets the tone for the organization, so if a change is needed it must start with you, and there must be a compelling "why" for you or it won't happen.

What you should do

Your first step is to assess where you are as a leader and as an organization today. Here are four key actions:

1. **Observe:** What is your energy level coming to work? Do you see your people taking initiative, or do you have to repeat things many times or do them yourself? What is your energy level when you leave? Take five minutes to answer these questions three times a week for the next two weeks. What does it tell you?
2. **Self-assessment:** What are your habits as a leader? I created a free tool called the Talent Scorecard (www.thetrugroup.com/scorecard/) that measures your key habits and gives you feedback. What does it tell you?
3. **Ask people:** How are your people feeling about things? For an organization with less than 75 people, schedule some breakfasts and start the conversation with questions like: "What's working? What should we start doing? What should we stop doing? What are you wondering about?" Ask and listen. If your organization has multiple locations or more than 100 people, do a simple employee survey. Visit www.thetrugroup.com/resources/talent-management-templates/ for some tips on doing an effective employee survey.
4. **Look at the numbers:** Is the performance of your business flat? Do you keep losing key people and getting pulled back into the day-to-day tasks? Is the return/reward you're getting from your effort not worth it anymore?

One reason executive coaching has taken off in the last decade is because the pace of business has changed significantly. Making a personal change is a challenge, and now it's even harder because there's so much to do on a day-to-day basis. The key is to ask yourself if things are where they need to be for you and for your business, and find a compelling "why" for making that change. A coach can help clarify what has to happen and provide a partner to help make the changes stick.

It's that simple, but, needless-to-say, not that easy.

Do you need help thinking through your "why"? Are you ready to make a personal shift with the help of a coach? Are you interested in starting a conversation within your organization through an employee survey? Contact me. scott@thetrugroup.com

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