

PODCASTS

Breaking Down the Default Energy of 'No': Insights from The Leadership Podcast

This episode of The Leadership Podcast provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of leadership and company culture.

Sensei Labs August 1, 2024



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Topics Covered:

- The Importance of Cultivating Company Culture
- Navigating Remote and Hybrid Work Environments
- Leadership as an Art and Science
- Building a High-Engagement Workplace

Introduction

In this episode of The Leadership Podcast, hosts Jim Vasilopoulos and Jan Rutherford engage in a dynamic conversation with Jay Goldman, New York Times bestselling author and co-founder of Sensei Labs. They explore the nuances of leadership, company culture, and the challenges of navigating remote and hybrid work environments. Goldman shares his insights on how leaders can fight against the default energy of 'no' to create an environment that encourages innovation, collaboration, and personal growth.

1. The Importance of Cultivating Company Culture

Goldman emphasizes that company culture is like a garden: it requires constant care, attention, and maintenance. He discusses the concept of "culture by design" versus "culture by default," explaining that companies must intentionally cultivate their environments to encourage desired behaviors. Goldman believes that culture is shaped not just by big decisions like office layouts but by the small, everyday actions of leaders and employees alike. Leaders should aim to foster an environment where positive behaviors are encouraged and negative influences are weeded out, much like tending to a garden.

2. Navigating Remote and Hybrid Work Environments

One of the episode's key discussions revolves around the evolving nature of work from anywhere. Goldman shares his company's approach to hybrid work, detailing how Sensei Labs built a collaboration-focused office space without private offices or mandatory attendance. Instead, their workspace is designed for flexible use, promoting spontaneous interactions and teamwork when employees choose to come in. This approach balances the needs of both in-office and remote employees, ensuring that no group feels secondary or excluded. By investing in technology that supports seamless communication, Sensei Labs maintains a cohesive culture that values both in-person and virtual contributions.

3. Leadership as an Art and Science

Goldman explores the dual nature of leadership, describing it as both an art and a science. While data and structured approaches play a significant role in organizational leadership, the art of leadership involves empathy, understanding, and the ability to connect with individuals on a personal level. He emphasizes the importance of emotional intelligence and the ability to read and respond to the needs of team members. For Goldman, effective leadership goes beyond implementing best practices; it's about genuinely caring for and understanding people, which ultimately drives engagement and performance.

4. Building a High-Engagement Workplace

To build a high-engagement workplace, Goldman recommends that organizations actively engage with their employees and utilize data to understand what drives them. He discusses the concept of "data as

a sixth sense," highlighting how companies can use data to anticipate employee needs, predict turnover, and optimize team dynamics. However, he cautions against a "Big Brother" approach, advocating instead for transparency and mutual access to data insights. By fostering an environment where employees feel seen, valued, and supported, companies can create a virtuous cycle that benefits both the business and its people.

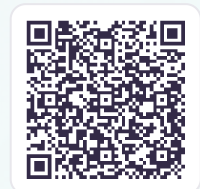
Conclusion:

This episode of The Leadership Podcast provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of leadership and company culture. Jay Goldman's perspectives on intentional culture creation, hybrid work, and empathetic leadership offer a roadmap for companies looking to foster a positive, engaging, and productive workplace. As organizations continue to adapt to new ways of working, the lessons from this conversation remind us that successful leadership is about much more than strategy—it's about connection, care, and the courage to fight the default energy of 'no.'

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