

Navigating change: Inspiring Teams and elevating Customer Connections in Travel

Presented by **Jon Purpura**- Director of Sales, Entertainment & Media, United Airlines.

Session Notes:

We need managers who can be productive while fostering a culture of well-being and high employee engagement. Leaders today must learn how to bring out the best in their teams by caring for almost every aspect of the *employee experience*.

- **Building Rapport** – not just small talk; find out about people – triggers in-depth info – great interpersonal skills – can get a lot in little time
- **Be Curious** – genuine - Very positive!
- **Listen** – it's about them, not you; kill a conversation by just talking about you
- **Powerful Questions** – African Proverb – “If you want to go fast go alone. If you want to go far go together. Questions are open doors that let us in. **ASK THEM!**”
- **Why?** - Stay away from “why” Ask what and how.
- **Deep relationships** – Connections!
- **Emotional Intelligence** – EQ
- **High EQ** -> Water the Roots

Powerful Questions

- Say Less, Ask More
- Level 3 listening – it is a choice. It is transformational. Drives motivation.
- What would make this a productive meeting today?
- What is important to you?
- How satisfied are you with our products/services?
- What are your biggest challenges and how can we help?
- What would you like to see us keep (and/or stop) doing?
- How can I help provide more value to your organization?
- What does success look like between our two organizations?
- What changes could we make to have the biggest impact?

- What are your goals and how do we help you reach them?
- Kickstart question - What's on your mind? Inviting, gets to the heart of what matters. Showing trust and granting autonomy.
- The Awe Question - "And what else?" It's magical. It creates more possibilities out of thin air.z

Earn leadership capital

Impose a plan - lose capital

- 18. It's not all about taking care of ourselves, it's how can we help someone? How can we commit to take care of the people around us?
- 23. When we are inhibited, we are more aggressive and selfish -> leadership falters and cooperation declines.
- 24. Prerequisite for leadership - Strong, supportive, willing to sacrifice time and energy so others may gain.
- Look for reasons to be wrong.
- A leader isn't good because they are right, they are good because they are willing to learn.
- Vulnerability - Ask for opinions - builds confidence
- Taking criticism - take it seriously, not professionally
- You can block and be the opposite - welcome it, tell me and I'll fix it - it can be so liberating
- Decentralized Command - Empowerment - Always energize your team

Embracing Change:

- As soon as you try something new you'll get resistance
- Be as Transparent as Possible and Tell the Truth
- Benefits - Improved adaptability
- Innovation - Change often leads to new ideas
- Competitive Advantage - outpace competitors
- Growth Mindset - proactive vs. reactive
- No more fear - Focus on potential outcomes and seek support from others. Brings us together.
- Use an example!!!

- How: Communicate the vision, involve the team in the process, solicit their input and feedback, make them feel valued and included, provide training and resources, create a culture of open communication. Communicate. Take the time to explain why the change is happening, and what it will look like in practice. Make yourself open to questions.
- Create a Roadmap. ... Help your employees understand where the organization is, where it's been, and where it's going.
- Invite Participation. .. Although this won't always be possible, giving employees the opportunity to participate in, or give feedback on, decisions can be a really positive strategy. Employees will be grateful for the chance to make their voices heard, and it can also be a great way to get different perspectives and understand impacts you might not have thought of otherwise.
- Training!
- Costco - we are in the business of making money for the next 50 years - Wall Street - next quarter
- Apple - How to teach and learn -> Microsoft - How to beat Apple?

Building Customer Relations

- Ask questions – understand their needs
- Look at things from their perspective (empathy)
- Be transparent – build trust and loyalty
- Be open to feedback – be prompt
- Foster long term relationships

Motivating Teams

- Drives performance, engagement, and productivity
- Set clear goals (SMART) Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound
- Create a positive work environment – a supportive and inclusive culture
- Promote teamwork collaboration – foster open communication
- Recognize and celebrate achievements
- Empower team members
- Build strong interpersonal relationships
- Understand individual motivators

Collaboration

- Leads to increased creativity and innovation (diverse perspectives)
- Leverage each other's strengths and expertise (problem solving)
- Strategies for building strong relationships
- Celebrate success together
- Conflict resolution – encourage open dialogue, focus on common goals to navigate conflict effectively

Be Unforgettable

- Authenticity – be genuine
- Engage emotionally – emotions create lasting memories
- Master body language – maintain eye contact, move with purpose and convey confidence
- First impressions matter- a fact, thought provoking question or a story
- Encourage Interaction
- End with a Bang!
- Follow-up!