

TELEGRAM



ARE YOUR GUESTS DOING ALL THE HEAVY LIFTING?

By Linda Komornik, TeleGRAM Editor

"Digital transformation has been welcomed by hospitality operators. One of the primary reasons is it takes the pressure off with respect to labor."

"On a recent trip to New York City, I booked my plane ticket online. I made my hotel reservation online. I checked to my flight and hotel using an app. I checked out of the hotel on the app. I ordered lunch using mobile/order pay, etc. Everything was easy and efficient."

"Other than the flight attendant, I interacted with nobody at the airline. I had no interactions with staff at the hotel. I interacted with no staff at the lunch I ordered and paid for on my phone. People who know me will attest that I am not an introvert. As I flew home, I was thinking about the service touch points I had on my trip, and there were almost none."



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The above comments were copied from a recent opinion piece entitled **Digital Transformation in Hospitality and the Potentially Disastrous Implications for Service**. In the article, the author was lamenting that touch points between customers and our hospitality selves were becoming less frequent and that John Q. Public was getting used to doing things themselves. His worry was that as these points of contact begin to diminish, how do we emphasize and focus on the touch points that are left? His end message was that "the winners in the hospitality industry will be those operations that deliver service excellence alongside new digital interfaces."

So, what does that mean? Let's look at some important service excellence touch points that we should focus on and maintain so that we do not become over-digital and lose ourselves in this hospitality transition period:

- **Attracting and retaining staff.** The hospitality industry is in the same predicament as every other service business. Lately, we are all just hiring "warm bodies" in hopes that someone learns to love our business and wants to make a career in hospitality. Warm bodies notwithstanding, we need to seek out people predisposed to providing great service — people that are gregarious. You can't teach that, so it's best to try to hire an out-going personality and train for the skill set you want.
- **Salary and benefits.** In addition to the point above, make sure that you are paying competitive wages. It is just as much a mistake to overpay as it is to underpay. All businesses seem to be looking for staff; it is a job applicant's market, maybe more so for those who are naturally outgoing. You don't want to lose out on a great potential employee over a dollar an hour. Try being creative. Maybe you could provide a meal-, gas- or transportation-stipend in addition to hourly salaries. Look at the start/end shift times. Perhaps tweaking times a bit would attract a student or parent with school aged children who need to work specific hours. Think a bit outside the box.
- **Spend time training.** OK - so you've found someone with personality but no skill. Don't throw them to the wolves! Invest time training them to do a job they can be proud of doing.

In conclusion, digital transformation is great for the industry and is a welcome development given the challenges in recruiting and retraining hospitality industry employees. Such transformation; however, reduces the points of contact with our guests making each point of contact extremely important. This is the hospitality industry, and we must practice service excellence to ensure long-term success.

The above article was written based on information suggested in an op ed written by Jeff Dover in Hotel News Now, published on July 5, 2022, and combined with the experience of the author.

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LET'S CELEBRATE

CELEBRATION STATION

In case you want to celebrate, here is a list of National and "other" holidays: **7/20 - National Lollipop Day;** **7/26 - Aunt & Uncle Day;** **8/1 - Girlfriend's Day;** **8/4 - Daughter's Day;** **8/8 - International Cat Day;** **8/10 - National S'mores Day;** **8/11 - Son & Daughter Day;** **8/25 - National Banana Split Day;** **9/5 - Labor Day;** **9/9 - Teddy Bear Day;** and **9/11 - 911 Remembrance Day**

Remember salesmanship means being unique and standing out from the crowd. Some of these "days" will allow you to get your customer's attention in a positive and unique manner.

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER



July and August are often referred to as the "Dog Days of Summer". While it is HOT in most of our cities, there are great opportunities to cool off at your hotel and/or in surrounding areas. Make sure your customers know where the "cool spots" are located!

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AROUND THE BLOCK

Wishing a "Happy Anniversary" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Linda Komornik - 26 years (July)

A LITTLE BIT WISER

Wishing a "Happy Birthday" to our Great American Hotel Group office and property GMs:

Dave Akridge - August 14

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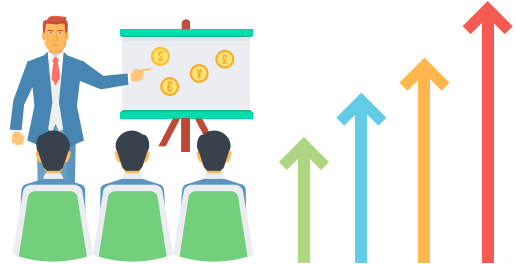
STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD

Weird and wacky sales suggestions from Linda.

Here are a few ideas on how to be a horse of a different color. Make sure you are taking advantage of some of these 'weird and wacky holidays' to celebrate your guests!

- **National Lollipop Day:** SpringHill Suites by Marriott brand identity includes a Chupa Chups lollipop. Why not make sales calls and give out these sweet treats?
- **Aunt & Uncle Day, Girlfriend's Day, Daughter's Day, Son & Daughter Day:** Put together a package or promotion featuring ideas for one of these groups of people. Everyone loves to celebrate so why not take advantage of the day to promote a room/activity on social media?
- **Teddy Bear Day:** Order some cute little mini teddy bears from discount stores and hand out a companion to solo travelers or kids! You'll make quite an impression!

While some of these ideas may seem a bit far out there - it definitely will leave an impression on your customers. If you are willing to work this hard to earn their business, they can't help but remember you. It also adds a bit of fun to your day (and their's). Caution: don't revolve all your sales efforts around "weird" holidays, sprinkle them in for maximum effect.



TIPS FOR BOOSTING HOTEL REVENUES

Hotel occupancies and ADRs are up, but many hotels are still looking to boost bottom lines. Here are a few ideas to step out from the crowd and make a little extra money:

- **Create packages:** Look for partners from your community and create an experience package to lure travelers. Examples could be beach packages, romance packages, special event packages (think concerts, theater, attractions, or community fairs), team stay and Add A Day To Stay and Play packages, family (bleisure) packages, etc.
- **Turn guest rooms into offices or dining rooms.** Pull the furniture and offer companies or private caterers the opportunity to host private events in a guest room (or meeting room).
- **Outdoor Spaces:** Is your parking lot conducive to hosting an event? Fairs, trade shows, car shows, flea markets, etc. might generate income that your indoor facility cannot accommodate.
- **Food Trucks:** Hosting a large meeting or group at your hotel? If you don't have the ability to provide food - think about contacting food trucks to come park in your lot.
- **Solicit bus tours.** If you see busses in your town, follow them to see where they are going and then reach out to the company and try to share shift the business to your hotel.

BY THE NUMBERS

GABRIELLE SMITH, CORPORATE CONTROLLER



Despite the turmoil and unpredictability of the early 2020s, the current speed of business continues to increase. Many of the challenges facing the hospitality industry today are the most prevalent problems to solve across the board: identifying and retaining talent, scaling the business for growth, and providing key visibility for necessary insights.

Now more than ever, Finance and Accounting organizations are under increased pressure to complete the month-end close faster and more accurately. Financial reporting is a key component for Owners to help them make faster critical business decisions, by providing insightful real time analytics. Many recent events—from the pandemic to the Great Resignation—have highlighted that traditional, risk-prone manual processes make it more difficult to produce necessary financial statements, track key metrics, and deliver those effectively.

The Accounting Office can holistically address the financial close by combining effective accounting best practices with technology that improves the process overall.

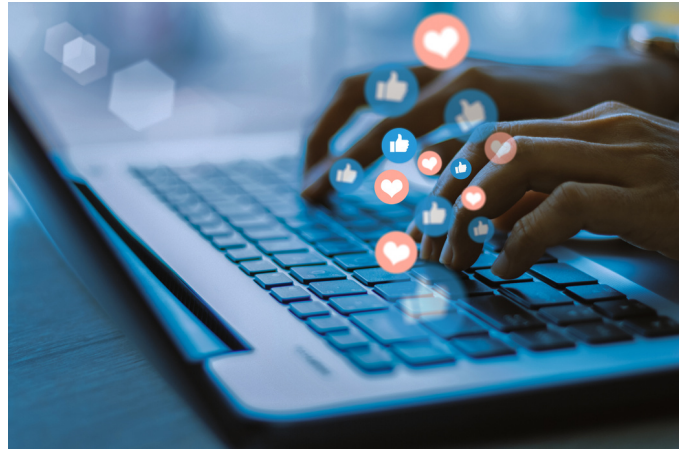
HUMANIZATION: THE KEY TO BRAND SUCCESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The following is an excerpt from an [article](#) written by Justin Kline, Forbes Council Member, Forbes Magazine, published on June 22, 2022. Justin Kline is also the Co-Founder of the influencer marketing firm, Markerly

It's hard to pinpoint when it started, but sometime in the last decade, people started to notice a shift in how brands were behaving online.

There were never any rules about what kind of tone a brand needed to maintain on social media, but for a long, long time, most brands behaved the way they thought was expected of them: cold, distant, advertorial and, most importantly, inhuman. At some point, this started to shift. As social media became more integral to a brand's business, some of the savvier brands began to unlock a new way to use these new platforms.

Instead of the traditional, one-way communication brands were used to, some started to open up a dialogue with consumers. From there, brands became more human, and the possibilities became endless. Many brands started to realize the best way to connect with audiences was by behaving the way they do on social media: by having fun.



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Here are just a couple of ways brands, both big and small, can boost their connection with their audience on social media:

Take Part In Trends - TikTok may be seen by some as a silly app for high schoolers to lip-sync to their favorite songs, but at this point, there are people of all generations on the platform.

The app has been an incredible way for brands to connect with audiences. Look no further than the use of trending sounds and videos. It might sound odd at first, but brands have received a lot of attention and audience goodwill by participating in popular trends or just acting downright silly on the app.

Talk To Individuals - One of the great advantages of social media is its interactivity. Comments, tags and replies are all great ways for users and brands to actually speak to one another. Brands would be wise to take advantage of this opportunity, which traditional advertising does not provide.

What's great about engaging with users on this level is that it does not need to be anything high-effort or over-the-top. You don't need to surprise people with free giveaways or anything like that; all you need to do is reply to someone. That alone is often enough to get people on social media excited because the brand now feels like a person, not a faceless entity.

So, tweet back at someone. Answer someone's question in the comments. Comment on a trending video. Do whatever you can to show there is a real human on the other side of the account having just as much fun on social media as everyone else is. The more you engage with people in this fashion, the more likely they are to want to engage with you. Everyone wants a little shoutout from a popular brand, so they'll be more likely to comment and engage with your brand's content if you establish yourself as a brand that actively talks to its followers.

Wrapping It Up

Humanization is key. We are living at a time when brands and people are more connected than ever and all having fun in the same place: social media.

Brands would be wise to take advantage of this opportunity to not only increase their number of followers but also spread brand awareness and positive word of mouth. A few trendy videos and responses to user comments can go a long way toward increasing your brand's reputation as a more human entity, rather than a cold, distant corporation.

OPERATIONAL SPEAKING

DAVE AKRIDGE PRESIDENT AND REGIONAL
DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS



THE HOUSEKEEPING & MAINTENANCE GUIDE TO HOTEL BED BUG INSPECTION IN 5 EASY STEPS

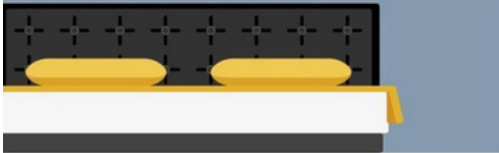
WHAT TO LOOK FOR:

- LIVE BED BUGS
- SHED INSECT SKINS
- BLOOD SMEARS OR SPOTS ON SHEETS
- BLACK FECAL MARKS ON MATTRESS, BOX SPRING, OR HEADBOARD
- BED BUG EGGS (1MM, PEARLY WHITE)



#1 MATTRESS, BOX SPRING & BED FRAME:

- ALONG THE MATTRESS/BOXSPRING SEAMS
- AROUND ZIPPERS
- IN THE JOINTS OF THE FRAME
- ALONG THE RAILS OR SLATS
- UNDER THE MATTRESS
- IN THE CREVICES IN THE DESIGN OF THE FRAME/ HEADBOARD



#2 SOFAS, CHAIRS, PILLOWS, OTTOMANS & OTHER SEATING:

- ALONG THE SEAMS
- INSIDE CUSHION COVERS
- AROUND ZIPPERS
- UNDER REMOVABLE CUSHIONS
- IN FURNITURE CREVICES



#3 WARDROBES, DRESSERS & BASEBOARDS:

- WHERE FURNITURE, BASEBOARDS, AND CARPETS MEET THE WALL
- ALONG SEALS OF DOORS AND DRAWERS
- JOINTS OF THE FURNITURE
- IN CARPET PILE



#4 NIGHT STANDS AND WALL FIXTURES:

- AROUND FIXTURES, DECOR, LAMPS, AND OUTLETS
- PICTURE FRAMES
- ALONG CRACKS AND CREVICES
- IN DRAWER JOINTS



#5 CLOSET ITEMS:

- CHECK FOLD OUT LUGGAGE STANDS WHERE THE WEBBING WRAPS AROUND THE FRAME
- INSPECT CLOSET FLOOR FOR LIVE OR DEAD INSECTS



3 STEPS TO PREVENT BEDBUGS FROM CHECKING IN WITH GUESTS

The following are **highlights** from an article written by Eric Braun, Rentokil North America, in *Hotel Management* published on July 5, 2022. Follow this [link](#) to read the full article.

It's no secret that the 2022 summer travel season will be busy. According to a recent survey by the online travel resource the Vacationer, 80 percent (280 million) of Americans plan to travel this summer. As hotel and lodging facilities prepare for what will likely be the busiest travel season since 2019, the last thing these businesses need is to have operations halted due to a costly bedbug infestation.

Like guests, bedbugs love to travel. As expert hitchhikers, bedbugs attach to luggage, personal belongings and clothing to travel to different locations. With a constant flow of people and high guest turnover, hotels and lodging facilities are more susceptible to bed bug infestations.

Once introduced, bedbug infestations can spark negative brand backlash that often can be more damaging than the already costly repairs. According to a study by the University of Kentucky, "a single report of bedbugs in recent traveler reviews can reduce room revenue by \$23 to \$38 per room per night for business and leisure travelers."

The best line of defense is to establish a multilayered strategy before the first pest is even spotted. During a time when labor shortages run high, a pre-established plan and a little extra training for housekeepers can help keep even short-handed businesses one step ahead of these unwanted guests. Hotel owners and lodging managers can use these three steps to build an action plan and better protect employees, guests and their business.

Adjust Operations for Proactive Protection - When establishing a plan, assess day-to-day facility operations and identify likely methods of introduction and high-risk areas. High-risk areas like guest rooms, seating areas, laundry rooms, break rooms and storage areas should be monitored daily.

Outsmart Pest with Early Detection - Bedbugs are small, varying between the size of a grain of rice and an apple seed, and can be extremely hard to spot. Training housekeepers on the common bedbug hiding spots can help prevent a potential widespread infestation through early detection. See the side graphic for details.

Establish Relationship with Trusted Pest Control Expert - Bedbugs can be repelled when certain pesticides are released, crawling into hiding spaces beyond the problem area. This further necessitates the need for an established partnership with a pest management provider who can help develop a customized strategic plan based on the business's unique needs.

The sooner a bedbug issue is identified, the more likely it is to be resolved quickly and effectively while keeping costs manageable for the business.

SUSPECT A BED BUG PROBLEM?

- MAKE NOTE OF THE ROOM NUMBER
- REPORT DETAILS OF WHAT YOU FOUND TO YOUR MANAGER
- NOTIFY THE HOTEL'S PEST CONTROL PROVIDER IMMEDIATELY
- REQUEST THAT THE PEST CONTROL PROVIDER INSPECT THE ROOM WHERE THE PROBLEM WAS FOUND, AS WELL AS ROOMS NEXT DOOR, ABOVE AND BELOW

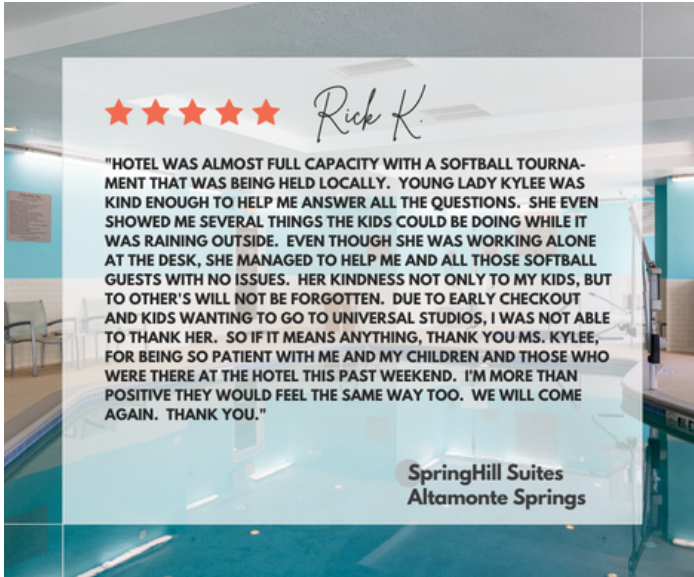


Rentokil
The Experts in Pest Control

CELEBRATING SERVICE HEROES AMONG US

WE DON'T SAY IT OFTEN ENOUGH - You
AND YOUR TEAMS ARE AWESOME!

SPRINGHILL SUITES ALTAMONTE SPRINGS FL



ROOMER HAS IT

SPRINGHILL SUITES ALTAMONTE SPRINGS

Independence Day is more than a national celebration for the team at the SpringHill Suites in Altamonte Springs. Each year, GM Gregory Teagarden hosts a BBQ at his home. "It is our annual team 4th of July party. We gather together to appreciate our efforts half way through the year. We cook out, do fireworks, and bond beyond the hotel. EVERYONE truly loves it and it brings us even closer together! We are the best team ever," notes Teagarden.

As you can see below a great time was had by all.



SELLING THE SIZZLE

LINDA KOMORNIK, CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING



The Purpose of the Purpose Story - Storytelling Part 3

Your customers might be excited about what you're selling, and they might be excited how you are selling it, but wouldn't they be more excited if they know why you were selling it to them? That is what is at the heart of the Purpose Story. This chapter of storytelling (remember Part 1 was the Value Story, and Part 2 was the Founder Story), will demonstrate how one of the most versatile story types (Purpose Stories) will bridge the gaps between the Value and Founder Stories, and connect the story to the team.

"Companies that have a stated purpose other than profit, and that align themselves with it, return more profits over time. It can seem counterintuitive, but in the absence of a purpose, profit steps in to fill the void."

I am sure you are wondering why I would talk about a Purpose Story for hotel sales; but, trust me, we really, really need "the why" in our missions. We as humans have an almost inescapable habit to want to give meaning to things and, from an evolutionary perspective, being goal-oriented and purpose-driven is an advantage. "We're [all] wired to want purpose and give meaning to things. It's part of why the story matters, but it's also why purpose matters so much in work. People want a purpose. If you don't give them one, they'll make up their own. Tell your stories first, otherwise someone might tell them for you, and you might not like their version."

OK – so how does this affect my salesmanship style?

"Purpose stories live and die on how well, how strongly the story supports a specific message."

Let's review some of things I've spoken to you about in the past.

- **Relationships:** Building strong relationships with your customers emphasizes the fact that 'people buy from people they know, like and trust'. Researchers have long studied the effects of storytelling as a means by which humans connect and organize themselves and their understanding of the world. Storytelling, as a method for uniting, clarifying, and motivating groups of people, has been used for years and for many different goals and initiatives both in and outside of business. Building a relationship with a customer is often a case of finding commonality. Relating stories appropriate to the customer builds like and trust.
- **Brand Identity:** Review your brand's Value and Founder stories again and you'll likely find a Purpose Story. Using Marriott as an example, consider the humble beginnings of Alice and JW Marriott and the events that led them to build a business filling a gap in the market. It started with root beer and tamales, and over the years has morphed into total hospitality. Every Marriott employee, from doorman to manager, is oriented with this Purpose Story! How you use your brand's identity to tell the Purpose Story for your hotel is up to you.
- **Testimonials:** Over the years, I have encouraged all of us to use testimonials from happy customers in your sales messages, letters, emails, and collateral. Using firsthand and relatable information is paramount to convincing a new customer as to why your hotel is the right hotel for their needs. These are a type of Purpose Stories. If you use one, the purpose must be clear, and they must clearly illustrate the message you are trying to convey. Using a real customer story in your message conveys that message.

Purpose stories are successful if the story strongly supports a specific message. And, they need to have all of the following components in order to convey that message:

- **Identifiable Characters:** Keep your audience in mind. What details will they relate to or connect with? What detail will make them say 'yep – that's so me.' Is the identifiable character in your story you, someone on your team, your founder, or one of your other customers (testimonial)? Use the right voice at the right time to convey the message.
- **Authentic Emotions:** The success of your Purpose Story is entirely dependent on your ability and willingness to share how you felt about these events. Sometimes you need to be vulnerable and sometimes you need to be emotional. "When we're vulnerable in the workplace, we connect on a human level, increasing trust among leadership and employees, encouraging the sharing of ideas, and increasing loyalty." For example, *"I remember seeing the look on the president of XYZ's face when he walked into our meeting room for his annual conference. He was struck by the attention to detail our set up crew had taken to make sure every table and chair was perfectly aligned, linens were crisp and clean, and that they had taken the time to project his company logo into the overhead projection screen. This one little thing let him know that we valued his business and were going to work very hard to ensure his event went off without a hitch. These details, coupled with a perfect meeting experience, helped us build a strong relationship with XYZ company over the years - one that is still active today."*

(Continued on Page 7 - Purpose Story...)

(Purpose Story ... Continued from Page 6)

- **A Moment:** When using a Purpose Story, the decisive moment often coincides with the aha moment for the customer. "It's the split second before a realization. It's the cross-over point between the normal, where things have been moving along as they usually do, and the moment when things suddenly change. You learn a lesson. You gain a new perspective. You enter the new normal."
- **Specific Details:** "The success of a Purpose Story hinges on the [sales manager's] ability to make a story that is technically about him/her to feel like a story that's about the [potential client]." Use specific details to help blur the lines between the identifiable character [you] and the audience [client].
 - Try associating commute times between hotel and office to time gained for rest and relaxation; associate size of guest rooms and the ability of guest to bring their family to stay with them (especially in the summer – think bleisure travel); associate local area attractions to opportunities to explore or partake in activities such as the beach, rock climbing, hiking, golf, or exploring history.... there are so many ways to tie specific selling details to a story.
 - An example might be, *"Mr. Doe – I know you've told me on several occasions how much you and your family like auto racing. Did you know that our hotel is located just 2 miles from the New Jersey Raceway? There are events throughout the summer that you might want to enjoy with your kids. Our guest rooms are large enough for families and rates are reasonable so you can extend your stay through the weekend. Just last week we had three business travelers from ABC Company who brought their family and stayed for the XYZ race. They had a blast and these road warriors finished off a successful week of meetings with a family weekend."*

When times are good, a Purpose Story can drive a business to better performance through better culture. When times are tough, they can mean nothing short of survival. Anyone can tell a Purpose Story. Try one today.

Happy storytelling with a purpose, 

References: "Stories that Stick" by Kindra Hall

TOXIC LEADERSHIP: HOW TO SPOT IT, SURVIVE IT, AND THRIVE

The following is an excerpt from an [article](#) written by Stephano Borzillo, Associate Professor at EHL Hospitality Business School, published on July 10, 2022.

Autocratic and overbearing styles of leadership were once considered socially and professionally acceptable in certain types of organizations. After decades of research, aspects of these management styles are now defined as 'toxic' leadership' and are provenly linked to staff underperformance and violation of the best interests of team members and stakeholders in general.

What is toxic leadership? Researchers exploring the topic generally agree that toxic leadership comes from personality or behaviors that harm not only individuals but also the organization. Toxic leaders are "those individuals who by dint of their destructive behaviors and dysfunctional personal qualities generate a serious and enduring poisonous effect on the individuals, families, organizations, communities, and even entire societies they lead", noted Dr Jean Lipman-Blumen. Leadership toxicity isn't necessarily immediately apparent but instead infiltrates by stealth through a mixture of words, seen and unseen actions and subtle behaviors.

Signs of a toxic boss (Creating a culture of fear). Supportive organizational cultures are based on psychological safety where workers feel they can speak their minds, be respected for their competence, have positive intentions towards each other and feel safe to experiment and take risks. The toxic boss rejects this concept and instead creates a culture of fear where individual workers are continuously fearful about the boss's reaction towards them – like standing on shifting sands. Sometimes your boss will glowingly support your ideas, making you feel like you are the best team leader ever. In the next meeting, your boss's reaction is the complete opposite, inferring that you are incompetent and your ideas are idiotic.

Divide and conquer. Toxic bosses like to meddle in your team creating chaos and disharmony between team members behind your back. They don't do this in an obvious way but instead befriend team members and then start to play people off against each other by spreading rumors or negative comments about the other team members that they 'just happened to overhear'.

Your boss might start to take a closer interest in your team, meeting individual members for coffee or through opportunistic encounters in the corridor. Over time, your team members collaborate less as your boss's chance remarks pit them against each other. Further, you discover that your boss has implied to your team that you are giving the impression that they are simply not up to the job.

(Continued on Page 8 - Toxic Leadership)

HR Corner

New Hot Line Phone
Number guarantees total
anonymity!

All complaints of harassment
must be taken seriously and
communicated to Suzanne
Baele, Corporate Director of
Human Resources at
603 | 978.3201

Closing communications channels between people. Shutting down communication results in employees not only being scared of speaking up to managers but avoiding talking openly to each other to discover the truth. Your boss has destroyed trust between your team members and them with you by sowing the seeds of discontentment. Even when you try to get them to open up individually or as a group, the lack of trust means that no one wants to share their true feelings. Interestingly, no one will say your boss's name but instead refer to him/her in metaphors. You also notice not only in your team, but across any team, that your boss works with a "cover my back" communication style. In emails, everyone is copied into correspondence and people invite colleagues to meetings where their presence is not necessary – but to act as 'witnesses'.

Managing upwards. A toxic boss successfully manages upwards. They present as someone highly competent to their boss, simplifying their life, being great at delivery and full of ideas to move the organization forward. Often these ideas are ones expropriated from subordinates with the toxic boss's spin added to make it sound like their own. They are the perfect employee to superiors and the worst boss to subordinates.

Recovering from a toxic boss. At this point, you need help to work out how to deal with your boss, given that you maybe can't simply leave the company in the immediate future. You need to look for strategies to manage 'you'. It would be impossible to directly address your boss's behavior given they are so well entrenched both upwards and across the organization. Ideally, your company would offer structural pathways such as anonymous channels to report toxic behaviors, ensuring HR plays a role in supporting individual employees with training programs and counseling with registered wellbeing/mental health counsellors. Organizations can create mentoring programs where employees have a trusted mentor who is not in their immediate line management but drawn from elsewhere in the company to act as a sounding board. Unfortunately, you may not have any of these in your company.

You may decide to do various things in parallel. These could include working on your own mental wellbeing and leadership, restoring the atmosphere in your team, focusing on building a stronger network internally in your company and externally through marketing and hospitality organizations in your region.

Working with your team. Make a point of creating more informal interactions with your team members as well as going on a leadership training program to learn how to become a better coach yourself. You also need to encourage your team members to develop their own capabilities. Every team meeting, start with 10 minutes of a fun collaborative activity to lighten up the atmosphere and reinforce relational bonds.

Professional actions. Reflect on your boss's behaviors and identify what you could learn from them. Your boss is a true expert in managing upwards and building a network across the company. You have not done the same, preferring to let your work speak for itself. You realize this has put you in a vulnerable position where your boss has become the only conduit to showcase your performance. Now you need to build a strong internal network by orchestrating opportunities to meet 'by chance' your boss's boss at the coffee machine to build a relationship with him/her.

Keep your cool in front of your boss. Identify mental triggers to remain strong in the face of your boss's behavior. Continue to deliver but be selective about what you share; guard your best ideas. Keep your team close, by debriefing them after every meeting with your boss; this will keep the lines of communication open. Self-promote your work and ideas beyond your boss, reducing some of the control over you.

Breaking away from the toxic boss. All these actions will take time, effort and planning. There is no overnight remedy other than walking away which you can't always do. Upon reflection, you may realize that you have let your boss take your control away. Regaining control over your work and managerial style is the main driver to getting back your self-esteem.

As months pass, you should emerge more resilient and confident in yourself. You may be able to move within the company to a role working for a far more supportive boss because of your internal networking efforts.

As for your boss, it would be a fitting ending to say they were found out and thrown out. However, that is a movie ending where the villain gets their just desserts, and you win the day. Unfortunately, life isn't a movie. Your boss may continue to work for the company, with or without the coveted C-suite position. Either way, you are free to walk your own path.

GRAM Hotline is available to discuss all forms of harassment.



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