

Today on the show we are talking about moles. No, not the funny little creatures that are digging in Joel's backyard, nor the kind you whack at Chuck E. Cheese with a rubber hammer. We're actually talking about problem team members, and that whack-a-mole leadership style that's wearing you out. And how to solve the problem, all of this and more on the Chris LoCurto show. Welcome to the Chris LoCurto show, where we discuss leadership and life, and discover that business is what you do, not who you are.

Welcome to the show folks. Today, we are talking about whack-a-mole leadership. What we're doing is we're addressing this problem team member, you know, the one that is continuously a drain on your time, a drain on your energy, most likely even a drain on your resources. As leaders, we can easily get stuck putting out the same fires and dealing with the same issues over and over again. That happens all the time, right? A lot of times it can be the same person that we're having to deal with, the same problems. Sometimes you have some folks that do a really good job and you have this person standing out. You are probably thinking of somebody right now, that you're like, "I have to keep coming back. I just want to stop playing the game and lead from a higher level."

Well, that is what we're talking about today, is being able to do that. Well, Chris, what are you talking about when, I mean, when you say whack-a-mole? So, according to the dictionary, "whack-a-mole" is a situation in which our attempts to solve a problem, are piecemeal or superficial resulting only in temporary or minor improvement. So think about that. It can be that we're not putting together a great solution. Why? Most likely because we don't know the great solution, and we don't know how to solve this problem. So we keep trying to do it piecemeal, right? "Let me try this. Let me throw this in there. A little shake of this little dash of that, and maybe this is going to" -nope, that's not going to solve it either. Or it's really surface-level, where we keep addressing something, but since we don't dig down into that big root system of what's actually going on, it still doesn't solve the problem. We still have to come back over and over and over again. To use a different metaphor, if you're stuck in a Merry-Go-Round with the same team member and the same problems, we've got to get off the Merry-Go-Round. So, these are the things we're going to be talking about when we come back right after this.

Hey folks, here's the deal. Every business has a culture, but are you leading yours intentionally, or settling for whatever comes in the door? If you're finally ready to create the company culture you've always wanted, then you're going to want to sign up for my free digital video series, Creating a Culture of Champions. I will personally guide you for 10 days to get clarity on the culture you desire, and lead your team to embrace it. You can sign up at [chrislocurto.com/culturelesson](http://chrislocurto.com/culturelesson). Again, if you're ready to make a change, sign up for my free digital video series, Creating a Culture of Champions at [chrislocurto.com/culturelesson](http://chrislocurto.com/culturelesson).

Alright, we are talking about problem team members. Now we've all had them. If you've been in leadership for more than about five minutes, you've experienced a problem team member. And listen, as I talk through this, we're assuming you're not the problem, okay? So we're going to look at how you are definitely the problem on not solving this issue, but we're talking about somebody who has something that they're struggling with, and that problem keeps coming to the surface over and over again. So let's dive into how you can lead from a higher level and get out of that cycle because here's the real problem, you're not solving the problem. Chances are, you continue to put a bandaid on the problem. Chances are, in an attempt to solve this you're most likely not getting the necessary perspective to help you make great decisions.

Chances are, because you have this problem, because you keep playing whack-a-mole with this, because you keep not solving this, it's probably resulting in task saturation. Maybe on you, maybe on that person, maybe on somebody else that that person is dealing with, leading, whatever. You're probably even getting frustrated and getting worn out. And here's the worst thing. You may be stuck in the leadership crazy cycle. And if you haven't killed that sucker, then you're probably just really getting surface level on this, right? Superficial on your responses, because if you're stuck in the leadership crazy cycle, and if you just started following us, the leadership crazy cycle is that cycle where you are doing 27,000 tasks a day, your identity is stuck really in the things that you do. You do so much stuff that at the end of the day, you're not even sure what you did.

And the last thing you're doing is leading people. You may be experiencing overwhelm. You may be experiencing stress. You may get home and talk to your spouse and like, "Hey, what was your day? What did it look like?" And you're like, "I don't know, but I know I did a lot." You may find a lot of worth in getting tasks done. That is the leadership crazy cycle. That's the worst place for a leader to be. Why? Because it's the very thing that keeps you from leading people to success. Your job as a leader is to lead people to success, not the other way around, right? So if you're stuck in that, and I know a lot of people listening to this right now are going, "Yup, I'm right there." Well, guess what? If you have not killed the leadership crazy cycle, then what's happening is you're not giving a whole lot of fantastic attention to solving this problem child, right? You're probably coming at it in 17 different ways, over a long period of time. You're probably being very superficial with your responses. Here's what's happening. When you have somebody who continues to be a problem, create problems, create issues. then there's some serious areas that are getting drained inside of your business. Guess what the first one is, your team.

If you haven't realized this yet, when you have a problem child inside of your business, I guarantee you, it is affecting team members. Unless it's just you and that person. And maybe you are that person. There's a whole other episode. Unless it's just you and that person, it's draining on the people that need to work with this person.

It's draining to work with somebody who constantly either creates problems, or is a problem. It's draining on team members that you're paying to do their job well. And instead they're either stressed out or having to solve this person's problems or, or, or. You fill in the blank because you probably already know it. Here's another thing; it's draining your resources. So think about it, every time you have to go solve this problem child, it could be that you are wasting money, right? How much time gets spent solving the same person over and over and over again? How much time gets spent solving the same problem over and over again? We have a saying around here, 'You can fail. We expect you to fail. We are a teaching environment.' We don't throw out this ridiculous concept that failure is not an option.

That is the most ridiculous statement to me. Why? Because failure is inevitable. You better fail at something at sometime, or you're doing absolutely nothing, right? You're not moving anything around. We understand that failure is inevitable. Here's our deal. It's okay to fail. Just don't keep failing at the same thing, right? Don't let it be a fatal failure and don't keep failing at the same thing. So if you have this problem child that keeps creating issues or keeps being a problem, at what point do you take a look at how much money is going out in solving this person? What other resources are being drained in your business because this continues to be a problem? And on top of that, your leadership is being drained. If you're the direct leader, then you know, it's wearing on you. You know this is something that you don't love.

There's probably times that when you go into business, when you go into work, you're thinking to yourself, "Oh my gosh, if I can just have a day without so-and-so being a problem." Well, when you experience that, you know that it is draining your leadership. On top of that if other leaders are having to deal with this person you know it's happening there too. So that's why this is so important because that's the problem. So what happens if we leave things the way that they are, and we don't step up and fix the problem? Well, guess what. Your team members continue to underperform. Yes. When you have somebody who's creating issues or somebody who is that island that people don't work well with, or maybe they keep thinking that they own your team, and they can get your team to do whatever they want to, or they're taxing people.

So listen, there's a lot of personality styles that recognize weaker areas of other personality styles. Now I'm not saying weaker people. I'm saying they recognize, "Ooh, this is a person I can press in on. This is a person that I can win over with charm. This is a person I can win over with intellect." There are literally people out there that can be utilizing those skills in a negative way to actually cause your team to focus more on them. You may have a problem child that because they're a pain in the butt, nobody wants to work with them. You may have, and listen, you may be experiencing this right now, you may have one of those problem children that their attitude causes other people to fire back on them because

they're tired of getting tormented or teased or dealt with with passive aggressiveness or, or, or. Right?

Maybe they're super bossy. Maybe they look like a star in the leader's eyes, or in the owner's eyes, and everybody recognizes that so they're afraid to do anything and they're not going to address it. But guess what happens? You do that long enough to certain team members, and how will they respond? They will eventually push back. They will eventually possibly explode on that person. And then how has that problem child going to respond? So think about all of this crap that's going on. What does that do to the team members that are good team members? What does that do to the team members that just want to come in and do their job and serve people and take care of things? It causes them to start backing off of their performance. It causes them to be frustrated during times, or are actually scared or actually thinking to themselves, "I really don't want to go deal with this person today." Think about it. If you're thinking that surely there's other people inside of your team, that don't want to go work with that person today as well. It causes them to try and find ways to do other work. Instead of having to go deal with that person. It causes them to go into meetings and not get great information. They just want to get out as fast as they possibly can. It causes your team members to underperform.

If we don't fix this problem, and you might be looking at this team member thinking to yourself, "Man, they are a pain in the butt, but man, they should put out more. And you know, what's creating success in this business than they're causing problems." And you may not realize that may be flipped. It's even possible. They did a great job at one time, and now their negatives outweigh their positives. So think about it. If that's going on, how is your team responding? Another thing that can happen is your procrastination results in your frustration and the team's frustration.

Leaders. Listen to me. What's one of the biggest fears of a leader? You may not know this. What are the biggest fears of leaders who have not worked through their root system and learn how to not lose worth in situations? One of the biggest fears is being found out that there are fraud. Leaders who lose worth or gain worth by their position, struggle with the thought that they don't want people to learn how much they screw up. Or they don't want people to learn what they don't know, or they don't want people to learn that they're out of control or, or, or. And here's the deal. This is what I tell leaders all the time. Your team already knows. I know you're trying to solve that. I know you're trying to hide that. I know you're trying to keep them from learning all about you. Guess what they do?

They watch you, they experience you. My team knows all of my flaws, all of the crap about me. They know it inside and out. They don't have a hard time seeing that. Right? And I don't have a hard time believing that. It's good. It's actually a great thing to know that my team knows that I'm flawed, right? Because then it allows me to work on those things and lead from not trying to hide or solve the flaws on my own. Instead, I see them, I work on them, I

get over them. Right? I push forward. But here's the deal as long as you procrastinate, and I'm not just speaking to those of you that are thinking I'm talking about a couple of weeks or a month. How many out there right now have left somebody on your team that should not have been there for a year, two years, even three years? I have had leaders that are like, "Chris, it's been so long. It's just absolutely ridiculous. We have procrastinated. It's been year after year after year. And we have not done anything with this person. We've not let the person go. We've tried to fix it, but we've never fixed it. And they're still sitting in the seat."

What do you think that communicates to the rest of the team? It communicates to them that they're not worth fighting for. It communicates to the team that you are just procrastinating, or there is something that this person somehow in your mind, this person is a golden child and they're untouchable, right? You're communicating things to your team, which is causing them to be frustrated. And you might not even be saying it directly. They're just seeing that you're procrastinating. So it causes you to be frustrated. It causes your leadership team to be frustrated, causes the team to be frustrated.

Another thing that happens is distraction, obstacles. I don't know if I have to dig too deep into this. I think you see it. You know that this person can be an obstacle, or people are going to put obstacles in their way. There are certain personality styles that will become obstinance to work with, because this problem child is not getting solved, right? The distraction, it is highly likely that this is causing a lot of distraction. And on top of that, if you still have this problem child in place-and I keep speaking as though it's a one single person. You may have many, you may have multiples in your business. Guess what's going on? Something you absolutely don't want: gossip.

I'm telling you, this is a distraction to the rest of your team. If you've convinced yourself that everybody else in there is just going, "You know what? That person's a problem. And I'm just going to put 100% of myself into my job." It's not happening. Why? Because your culture is screaming at them. They don't matter enough for you to solve the problem. So what happens when people feel like they are stuck in a culture with somebody who is a problem child, somebody who creates issues? They gossip about it. They talk to other people. "Are you experiencing this with so-and-so, did you see this? Do you know what they did the other day? Do you know what they just came by my desk and said?" I promise you it's happening. That's going to lead to a whole lot of stress and anxiety inside of your business. A lot. I mean, think about it.

Think about what's going on in our world right now. If you don't believe me, open up social media, pretty much anywhere. What will you see? Fear mongering. People who are spreading fear like crazy. People who are trying to convince people that they need to be so stressed out. I'm telling you. It's like the news. I can't watch the news. I stopped watching the news back when the inventor of the internet, when Al Gore and George Bush were

running against each other. I used to wake up every morning, turn on the news and find myself going to work upset. It was just ridiculous. And so instead, I decided to take that influence out, right? Imagine that happening inside of your business, people are walking in, and the news is already on because they're having to deal with this person.

The other thing is, I promise you, like I said, you're teaching your team that they are not worth fighting for. That's not the only cultural issue that you're going to see. You're going to see all kinds of other cultural issues start to pop up. You're going to see people that are going to start slacking in their work. You're going to see people that don't want to take care of other team members. You're going to see people that are going to start hiding in their hole, staying away from everybody else. You're probably going to see some gossip that might even carry all the way to clients. You're going to start seeing your culture drop pretty rapidly. So, question leader, what in the world is holding you back? What is keeping you from solving this problem? Well it comes down to one great answer.

Fear. Fear keeps you from pressing in and solving the deeper issue. What is the fear? It could be a lot of things, but I'll tell you some of the highest ones. One of the top ones is, that leaders look at this person who's a problem child, and think that they're a linchpin team member. They think that they are somebody who is absolutely crucial. And I'm not saying that they're not, but it's possible that in your mind, as a leader you're looking at this team member and you're going, "Man, their positives outweigh their negatives. Here's what I want you to ask: is that true? There may have been a time, but if they continue to be this problem child, is it possible that their negatives are now outweighing their positives? Ask yourself the question. Are they truly a linchpin team member? Is this somebody that if we objected this person from the business, what would happen?

And I mean, let's be honest here. I want you to be really, really honest. What would literally happen? Would it be negative? Probably. You're removing a team member. Anytime you do that, there's usually some sort of issues. There's usually some sort of lack somewhere. Maybe people have to pick up extra work. Maybe they knew something that somebody else isn't great at. But think about it. If you did remove that person, how bad would it be? How difficult would it be? If you were to take on a scale of 0 to 10, ten is, "Oh my gosh, this is business destroying devastating." And zero is, "We literally would not skip a beat removing this person." And I'm not saying that this is what you need to do. We're going to get to the solution soon. Removing this person, where would you rank that on that scale? Here's what I discover, people always in the beginning, want to say an eight. And then afterwards, when we talk through it, they're like, "Eh, it's probably pretty low, probably somewhere between a two and a four." So fear will keep you from doing something. And again, I'm not saying that's the solution. We're going to talk through solutions of things you can do. But a lot of times fear will keep you from actually pressing in and solving the deeper issue, because you're afraid of losing that, my air quotes, "linchpin person." Another thing is you may be

concerned of having high turnover. If you start pressing in and you lose people because you're pressing in, then what does that look like? What does it look like to turnover people? Folks. Listen. The stuff that we teach here is tough.

It's not easy, right? That's why there's only so many people that can actually do the things that we teach, because it takes somebody who's dedicated to doing something at a higher level than most people out there are teaching them. Here's what I want you to understand. It's tough when you start putting accountability in. You lose team members. When you are creating a culture that operates incredibly well. When you are putting in a culture that self polices itself, when you are putting in a culture that causes and allows your team to move in a unified direction so that you're using the absolute best of the team, your resources, everything. When you're putting in that type of a culture, that means you must be putting in a couple of things; high levels of quality communication, and high levels of accountability.

Super important. Guess what happens when you start putting accountability in? Listen, if what I'm about to say causes you to go, "Oh, well, I don't need to do that." You are, you're not understanding your role as a leader. And you're not understanding how much not doing this as affecting your business. When you put in accountability, some people refuse to be held accountable. Some people can't live up to the accountability you put in place. Therefore you tend to have turnover with higher accountability, right? What's the reason because people don't want to work at a higher level of being accountable. Now let me rephrase that. Some people don't want that type of accountability in their life. They don't want to come to work and have to be held accountable for what they do today. They don't want to be held accountable for how many hours they actually work in the day.

They want to be able to come in and do the least amount and get away with it. And you know, not have a problem with that. What happens when you hold them accountable to actually getting things accomplished in the day? What happens when you hold them accountable to making sure that they hit deadlines? What happens when you hold them accountable to cultural stuff, like treating people really well, taking care of the internal client, taking care of the external client? What happens when you hold them accountable to their attitudes? Well, for a lot of people, they step up, but that's not everybody. Some people literally can't handle it. There are many times in Stratplan and we talk about, "Hey guys, here's where your business is right now. You're going to go back and push accountability, looking at your staff right now. You're probably going to lose two people within the next month. It's definitely a possibility. You're going to put this accountability in."

And it's funny. People go, "Oh, crud." And then somebody on the leadership team will go, "That's not going to hurt us. That's going to be okay. We actually need to get rid of those people. They should have been gone a long time ago." When you fear diving in because you're afraid of turnover, then you don't put things in like accountability. When you put

accountability in, there is a possibility you will lose people. And let me tell you what normally happens for me for our business. We hold people accountable. We have solid team members, but not everybody makes it. Not everybody can work here. Right? And I'm not saying everybody who's ever left was left because of accountability. But what I'm saying is that there've been many times in my 29 years of leading people that as I put accountability in place, they see it coming.

And so they actually eject themselves. They see the process, they can anticipate me as a leader. They know that I'm going to hold them accountable. They know that I'm going to press in on things. They know we're going to have a discussion. And the last thing they want to do is disappoint me and the last thing they want to do is be in one of those discussions. And so they actually leave. Guess what? That's okay. That is a part of creating a culture where you have people who are willing and desire to be held accountable. That is where you create a culture of champions, where people love that type of culture, where they love being able to come in, work their butts off, get a great pat on the back, get a great paycheck, and go home and not deal with drama and crap and problem children.

Right? But you have to have that accountability in there to make sure that you get to that place of having champions. When you do not have it you know who does leave? Champions. Think about it. If you're a champion and you're listening to this, if you're the kind of person that would consider yourself a champion, and I'm not talking about from the ego fame side, that's not what I'm talking about at all. I'm talking about somebody who comes in and kills it, busts it, does a phenomenal job, takes ownership of your role, has buying into the mission and the vision, and you do just such a great job that you don't need a whole lot of self motivating. You don't need a whole lot of motivation, you get in and you're self-motivating and you get things done. If you're that type of person, let me ask you a question.

How long would you stay in an environment with a problem child? Not very long. Because you don't want to deal with it. You're probably going to leave. Another fear is the fear of failure, guys, the fear that things are going to collapse, that things are going to fall apart. If I hold this person accountable, if I dig in and I solve deeper issues, this whole thing's coming down, that is pure insecurity. That fear is being fed from your insecurities, right? That is a waste of time. Just think of what that looks like when you don't solve a problem because you are insecure. And all of these are coming from fear. If you're being insecure, I can promise you, you're not going to get in and do the best job of solving that problem. So, how do we solve this? Well we're going to talk about that when we come back right after this.

Next level Life is our two day personal discovery experience. It's a one on one personalized event where we guide you through a process to help you discover your root system, to get unstuck in life, and to discover what's holding you back from freedom and peace. Imagine this. What if you could wake up every morning with a clear purpose? What would it look

like to have healthier relationships with less conflict? Where would you be in a few months, a year, five years, if you had clarity, purpose and peace? Probably a big difference from where you stand today. Now, I know it's possible, because I've been where you are asking myself, is there more? There is, and there is a better way. And it starts with Next Level Life. You can go to [chrislocurto.com/discover](http://chrislocurto.com/discover) to take the next step. Now, if you're struggling with discontentment, regret, or not feeling good enough, which most of you are, if you're filled with anxiety or your relationships are lacking, don't keep going through the same motions every single day. Learn how to move past the things robbing you of peace. Go to [chrislocurto.com/discover](http://chrislocurto.com/discover) and take the next step.

Alright, we are back and we were talking about how to solve whack-a-mole leadership. So before we talk about the biggest asset that you've got in your leadership tool belt, let's address the higher level issues. Let's talk about you as the leader. If you are going to solve this problem, here are some things that you've got to do. The first thing you have to do, is you have to take care of you. What do I mean by that? I am not talking about being selfish. I'm not talking about all the crap that you're hearing out there by a lot of thought leaders about, "Oh, you've got to self-care and take care..." You definitely need to take care of yourself, but not to the point where you become this selfish, self-centered, self focused person. If you're listening to that message, turn that crap off.

There's a bunch of that going on out there. It sounds really good. And virtuous, that you're so important to all these other people that you've got to start focusing on you like at great extents. Crap. Turn that off. You do need to self-manage. You do need to self-manage you. Don't allow fear to get in the way. You've got to start looking at, recognizing, and addressing the very fear that you're experiencing. Guys, right now there is so much fear going on in our country and our world, where people are losing their minds being afraid of stuff without even having good facts about them. Like literally, this is what's called ideological subversion, that there is lies that are pushed so hard for so long, that facts no longer matter. You just operate off of emotion. Well, guess what? You may be experiencing in your leadership fear that is nothing but-you're not making good decisions because of your emotions.

You have to self manage that. When you see the fear, you got to recognize it. You've got to call it out. What is the thing that I'm afraid of? Right? So think of the fears that I mentioned before the commercial break, right? If you have these fears, I want you to ask yourself a question. Is that an emotional fear or an intellectual fear? Pretty simple. Pretty easy to point out. What does an intellectual fear look like? If somebody is coming at you with an ax run in the other direction, unless you've got something better than an ax, right? Leave that situation pretty darn quickly. That's an intellectual fear. Hey, this is probably going to hurt. That's a bad place to be in, go. What is an emotional fear? All of those things that you build up inside that may happen, that could happen.

All of the lies that you tell yourself, all the negative self-talk that goes on in your brain, about what could possibly, maybe somehow, maybe in a pinch, possibly happen if I go address this thing. You know that those fears are emotional. Are you recognizing them? And if you are, what are you doing about it? You've got to self-manage your emotions. So what do you do? You call it out. That is something I don't have facts on. I don't have anything to base that on. Or even if I do, that doesn't mean that that's going to happen. And here's what I like to ask. So what if it does? Many times as I'm leading a leader through a process and they're just struggling with fear, like, "Well Chris, you know, it's easy to say, but what if this happens?" And I'll say, "What if it does?"

And like, "Well it will be terrible." "Why?" "Well, well, huh, maybe it won't be that terrible." And literally, as we walk through this process, and they start to think from a logical sense, what they discover is the 'what if' isn't anywhere near as bad as they thought it was. So you've got to start self-managing your emotions. Do not allow yourself to go ballistic with fear, telling yourself all these lies, thinking through all of this stuff in such a negative situation. First thing you've got to do. Number two, you have to examine the process. Do you have accountability? Do you have KRA's in place? Do you have KPI's in place? Do you have expectations? And my gosh, do you have consequences for the choices that are being made? Folks, choices and consequences, choices and consequences. Choose bad choices, get bad consequences, choose good choices, get good consequences.

It's literally as simple as that. Parents listen to me. If you feel like you have to be the bad person all the time, there's a reason. Because you're being the bad person. Because instead of putting the choice back on your child and saying, "Hey, if you choose not to clean your room, you get this consequence." Here's what we normally do: "Clean your room. I told you to clean your room, you better get your butt in there and clean the room. If you don't clean that room, I'm going to get really upset." And you find yourself having to be upset and whatever the next explosion is. Here's the deal. It's so much easier to handle when you go, "Hey, I want you to go clean your room. Hey, I noticed you're not cleaning your room. If you choose to not do that, then you're choosing a consequence, and it's going to be whatever I decide to give you, or it's going to be this thing over here, or it's we're not going to the movies, (which we're probably not going dealing with COVID anyways.) you know, you get this consequence that goes with that." And then when they continue to not, when they choose, that's very important. You gotta use the word, choose not to clean the room, give them the consequence. But here's a great thing. You don't have to be a bad person. "Oh buddy. I'm so sorry. You chose to continue to not clean your room. No, that means you chose the consequence." "Well, that's not fair. No, it's totally fair. Don't be mad at me. You're the one who chose it. You could have chosen to clean your room, but you chose not to. So because you chose not to. Here's your consequence." Folks. It's the same thing with the adult child that you're leading. That's in your business. "Hey, if you choose to keep

talking to people that way, you're going to get this consequence over here. Hey, if you choose to keep blowing up at our clients, you're going to get this consequence over here. Hey, if you choose to keep not taking responsibility for your actions, you're going to get this over here. Hey, if you choose to keep showing up late with every excuse under the sun, you're going to get this consequence over here." You need to have consequences. So examine your process. Number three, take the high road. Your goal is to help the team member, right? Your goal should be. Maybe it's not right now. Maybe you're just trying to douse the fire. Your goal should be to help the team member grow and heal, right?

That is a virtuous goal. That is something you should be focusing on. How do I help this person overcome the struggles that they have? How do I help this person overcome what they're dealing with? You can't do it if you hide, you can't do it if you're fearful, you can't do it if you're worried about the consequences being so incredibly horrible, you can only do it when you have a heart to help that person become better. So check your heart. Where are you on helping this person be better at their role, be a better person, to solve these problems inside of their lives? So with all of that, one of the skills you've got to sharpen is your ability to gain perspective. Now, listen, this is going to be your greatest asset as a leader. When it comes to solving problems, it'll give you the ability to make better decisions.

But to gain perspective, you've got to ask some questions. You've got to ask questions about your team members. Like number one, what are they doing exactly on a day to day basis? What are they doing? What's the problem that they're creating? Write this stuff down, sit down and ask yourself the question. What's the struggle? What's the problem? What am I experiencing? What are other team members experiencing? Write those things down. Don't just assume, don't just block it out of your mind. Sit down, and write down the problems. What are they doing? And on top of that, I don't just mean the problem. Write down what are they doing for work? You might think again, if you think this is such a linchpin person, ask yourself the question. What does their day look like? What does it structured like? What does their work look like?

Maybe what you'll discover is they're only working part of the day, because they're creating problems for the rest of the day, or maybe they're slacking or, or, or. So write down number one, what are they doing exactly? Get that information down. Number two, how is the team experiencing them? I want you to put that down. What does that look like? How are the clients experiencing them? So how is the team experience them, how the client's experiencing them. Right? Now this is something you want to be a little bit more careful about, our goal isn't to send up flags that we've got a problem inside of our business, but there are really, if you just think about it quickly, you can ask some questions to certain people to see how things are working. "Hey, I noticed you're working with so-and-so on this project over there, how's it going?"

"Yeah. How, how are you? How's your communication? How are you doing communicating to them, and how are they doing communicating to you? What experience, any struggles, anything?" It doesn't take you long to think about how you can get through this process and get really good information. And pay attention. If you watch somebody really holding back, or you can watch their body language and see that it may be uncomfortable, then dig in. "Hey, I noticed that when I asked that question, it seemed as though the answer was a little tough. Is there something I should know?" You can ask some of that stuff. Number three, what are their positive impacts on the business? And what are their negative impacts on the business? I want you to write these side by side. And I want you to not go off of memory.

Don't go off of something that you remember from a year ago, they were really positive about this thing. I want you to write down what you know they're doing right now. What are the positive impacts they're having on the business today right now? But then I want you to write down all the negatives, man, this is tough, right? Well, actually you probably could fly through that list pretty fast. Get all of those impacts out, as many positives as you can, as many negatives as you can. Number four, what processes are missing in my business that is necessary for them to succeed? This is probably going to be one of your most difficult things to answer, right? Because you may not recognize it at first. You may have to stop and think through it. So here's what I want you to do.

I want you to ask yourself the question, what's the thing that's going to change or fix this problem? Obviously I've given you a bunch of pieces. You need accountability, right? You need to be able to use choices and consequences. You need to be able to understand exactly what's wrong. You need to be able to not be fearful. You need to be able to get in there and actually deal with the problem. You've got to call them out, and you have to hold them accountable, hold them accountable to their actions, hold them accountable to their decisions, hold them accountable to their KRA's, hold them accountable to the way that they treat people. All of those pieces are important. What's missing? What, what of all of those and more, do you not have in your business that would help them to succeed? And when I say succeed, I mean heal, grow, get over this. Get this problem out of their life. What pieces are missing? List all those things down. What you're going to discover, here's why this is so tough. A lot of them are going to point at you, right? A lot of them are going to point at you not holding people accountable, which they should. Let it hurt. Let it be something that you recognize. Do not be afraid to see this. Do not be afraid to write these down. This is what you want to see. Guys, this is how we do stuff here. When we see the problem, we tackle the problem. We don't sit back and beat ourselves up and think negative self-talk, and lose all kinds of worth. "Oh my gosh. I'm such a horrible person because I should be doing this and I'm not doing it." That's a waste of time.

That's a waste of time. If you choose to be a victim, you're going to be a victim. If you choose to live in negative self-talk, you're going to live a negative self talk. So don't waste time on that. Write down what is necessary, what is missing. And that's where we're going to start to tackle those pieces as well. Number five, how can I hold them accountable to the process and the culture? So what does accountability look like? Now this is where you're going to have to put a stake in the ground. If you do this, if you choose to do this, this is your consequence here. If you choose, let's say it's a writeup. Let's say it's a discussion. If you continue to choose, you get a write up. If you continue to do that, it's a formal writeup in your file.

If you continue to do that, we're going to put you on a work program where you have 30 days, 15 days, one week, whatever, to solve this problem, it better get done and quickly. Maybe you have one day, I don't know, but we're going to put you on a work program. If you can't get it done in that timeframe, I'm going to have to fire you. You're going to have to sit down and decide. I'm not telling you that to put that exact process in place, but that is very close to what we use around here. So here's the deal. You're going to have to put a stake in the ground. This is the way that I'm going to lead this. "But Chris what happens if I end up having to fire that person?" Great question. What happens if you end up having to fire that person? You should by this point already know, you should know the effect.

You should know how positive they're being, how negative they're being. You should be able to see all this, but here's a bigger question. If somebody goes through all of those processes and refuses to change, and you don't do something about it, what do you scream to the rest of your team? "I do not live by these standards. I'm not going to live by this accountability, and the people in it that actually are fighting for the culture are not worth it to me." Sometimes you have to make an example. And really, seriously, that by that time, if you've put a good process in place, if they're still not choosing not to solve to fix themselves, it's not even an example. It's you doing the right thing. So what are they doing? How the team, how are the clients experiencing them? What are their positives?

What are their negative impacts on the business? What processes are missing that are necessary for them to succeed? And how can I hold them accountable to the process for the culture? Right? So in conclusion, what do we do if a team member absolutely refuses to grow and change? Then at some point you're going to have to let them go. At some point, the ultimate consequence going to have to be that you let that person go. I was doing an event years ago. We were actually at a resort, um, out of the country, and I'm doing this event and, and this guy comes up to me and he says, "Well, I just fired my son." And I went, "Whoa." And I had talked to him the day before, you know, talking through some of the things that we were explaining.

He goes, "I just fired my son." I'm like, "Whoa, Whoa, you just fired your son from here over the phone?" He goes, "Yup." And I'm like, "Dude, that's not cool." And he goes, "No, man, it

has needed to happen for the longest time." I'm like, "Did you need to do it from here?" And he's like, "I really did. I feel like I really had to do this. It was the best thing for him. It's the best thing for me." He goes, "I had to call his mother, you know, my wife, and talk about it with her. And she was scared at first, but she knew it was the right thing to do." And I was like, "Dang." So, listen, I don't suggest that. But really, if you have gotten to that place in life, or you've allowed this to go on for so long, step up and fix the problem.

And most likely what that means is if you've done everything I've talked about, then most likely you're at the place where you're going to need to let this person go. So what do we do around here to help our team members succeed? We communicate, we give clear expectations. We let them know, listen, this is a phenomenal environment that you're in right now. We communicate like crazy. This is a teaching environment. My gosh, it's funny, if I calculated the actual hours that my team isn't working, because they're listening to teaching, you know, whether it's in staff meetings or devos, or just on the spot, it's amazing. Right? But here's the deal. I have a team that does incredible work. They get a lot done because they live in a culture. People are always complimenting. We had Steph's mom came in just the other day and she's like, "Oh my gosh, all she talks about is how great this culture is and how spoiled she is here."

And here's the deal. You take care of your people. Then they do a great job. But guess what happens when they're not? We address it. The great thing is we almost never, I mean, it's rare. It actually happens from time to time that we have to walk somebody down that path of accountability. But usually we're able to sit somebody down and go, "Hey, here's the thing." And they go, "Yep, you're right. I'm going to go fix that. I'm going to go work on that." Usually it's one conversation and we get it done. Do we fail? Of course we fail. Folks. Our whole business is based on me failing a lot and learning how to fix those failures so I can help you. We've we fail a lot. The great thing is we learn how to fix those things. We learn how to lead a great culture.

We learn how to give people choices and consequences. And by doing all that, you treat people with dignity and guess what you create? Champions. People who want to come in every day and bust it because the thing they're doing is greater than themselves, and they enjoy it. So if you do those things, and I promise you, you will help your team succeed. You will help your stress levels go incredibly far down. You'll be amazed at how far your stress levels drop and you will help your team to see that you care more about them and the culture, than allowing somebody to respond like that. Now, listen, if you're struggling with leading your team, let us help you lead at a higher level. Sign up for my free digital video series, Creating a Culture of Champions. Folks. I personally guide you for 10 days to get clarity on the culture you desire and lead your team to embrace it. So it's not hard to do. Go to [chrislocurto.com/culturelesson](http://chrislocurto.com/culturelesson). Just one word, [chrislocurto.com/culturelesson](http://chrislocurto.com/culturelesson). And that will help you to put that in place today. Well, hopefully this has helped you today. If you

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