

Hey, it is election day. And guess what we're talking about on the Chris Locurto show? Not the election. Actually, we are going to be talking about something that's even more important to you, and that is stuff that you can control. That is coming up next.

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. We hope you are having a fantastic day or hopefully it's a good day. I don't know. You might be standing out at the polls listening to this right now. Maybe you've had a good day, who knows, in 24 hours, maybe it'll be a good day for you. Maybe it won't. Here's the deal: we're going to focus on stuff today, that's going to take you beyond the election. That's going to take you beyond casting your vote. Hopefully you are getting off your duff and voting, because guess what? You need to. Business owners, business leaders, hopefully you are giving your team the opportunity to get that out there as well and cast their vote. Today we are talking about something else. What we're talking about is, well, let me start with this. For most of us, life has changed.

Now who knows, it may come back decently to normal, but the truth is, it's probably never going to get back to the way that it was, right? We've all been stretched. A lot of changes happened. A lot of us have found better ways of doing the things that we're doing. And some folks have unfortunately struggled through a lot of this time. The deal is, life has changed. Life has changed for business. Business doesn't look the same. But here's the key, business needs to stay in business. "Well, no duh Chris, that's obvious." No, listen to what I'm saying here. That means that everything that we're doing when it comes to our business, needs to operate with excellence. Everything needs to be done with excellence. And while you hear the term excellence, you might think to yourself, well, we do stuff with excellence.

We've been doing stuff with excellence. We're going to kind of talk through some things today that might surprise you as you take a look at where you currently are. Where things currently are in your business, the way things have been operating since COVID because the crazy thing is, a lot of things have changed, right? And for a lot of folks, we're seeing that excellence is actually waning a little bit. So we're going to talk about that today, with all of the fear and uncertainty that's going on in our world right now, you might be focused on new plans. You might be focused on new strategies. You might be focused on what are you going to do as soon as that calendar turns? What are the new things that you're putting in place? But here's the deal. There are core concepts and principles that never change.

They're not new. It's not brand new. I'm not teaching anything brand spanking new on the show today. But I am going to walk you through something that is probably way more important than that new plan that you have. Because if you're not doing this, I'm pretty sure that new plan is not going to work out the way you think it is. One of our core values here is excellence and yes, some of you out there going well, good. It should be. And some of you are going well that's a corporate core value. Listen. Most of our core values are not corporate sounding. God is our core value. Grace is our core value. Understand that everybody has a root system and honor that, is a core value. Lean in others direction when it comes to personality styles is a core value, there's two corporate sounding ones that stick, that are musts in this business. Integrity and excellence.

And we're talking about one of those today, and that is excellence. Why? Because believe it or not, while you're trying to plan out 2021, while you're trying to plan out strategies, while you're trying put things in place during this time of global pandemic craziness, in this time of the election, who knows what's going to happen tomorrow? Who knows what's going to happen in the next couple of weeks, right? As you're trying to plan for this, there's something that you cannot fall back on, and that is your level of excellence. So here's the deal; for a lot of people, it is human nature to want to relax their standards. Now I'm not saying that's everybody, a lot of you listening to this show, you are excellent. You operate with excellence, but you might have some people on your team that don't. And here's the other thing you have to focus on.

If you're a business leader who is not making sure your team is being excellent, then there's a good chance that you're letting down your guard, which is allowing other people inside of your team or inside of your business, to relax that standard of excellence. But let's be honest, not a ton of people are excellent by nature. You probably, know these people, unfortunately some of them may be on your team. You know exactly what I'm talking about. Not everybody is excellent. And the truth is, not everybody has been trained on how to be excellent, have been taught on how to be excellent. May not have come from excellent cultures. So it's kind of, you hate to say it. You can kind of understand when somebody has not been taught the importance of being excellent or trained on how to be excellent, that there's times that they're going to relax their standards.

I mean, seriously, take a look at what's going on right now in the world. We have people working remotely. What is it-the, you know, business on top and party on the bottom. We have people remotely on their zoom calls, and they've got a nice shirt up top, and down below they're wearing PJ's. Folks, you know you probably have done that yourself. I am not going to lie. I may have had a zoom call or two where I had a polo shirt on top and sweats down below. That that was in the first week of COVID. It happens, right? "Now, we're just talking about a zoom call, Chris, how does that mean that my team is going to relax in their standards of excellence or anything?" Here's the question. Are you and every single team member on your team committed to excellence no matter what?

Ask yourself that question. Start with you. Are you committed to excellence? No matter what? If the answer is yes. Great. If the answer is no, well, okay, we're going to have to do something about that. Here's where it gets tough. What about the rest of your team? What about everybody that's working for you, with you, under you, next to you, above you? Is everybody else committed to excellence no matter what happens? Whether the election doesn't go the way that you want it to, whether this crazy pandemic doesn't subside right after the election? What if things continue going in these ridiculous ways, are people still committed to excellence? Are you and your team fully committed to excellence no matter what happens? You need to be, you should be. So maybe you already know that you're struggling with excellence. And we're going to be talking about that today on the show. So we're going to come back and talk about that, but before we do, since you are a leader, one of the best ways to make sure that you are leading with excellence is to have high levels of quality communication. And guys, you are not going to get there if you do not understand how to speak to each other personality styles, to lean in each other's directions. So check this out and we're going to come back talking about excellence right after this.

Folks, if you've been listening to me for any length of time, then you know the number one issue when it comes to business, when it comes to family, when it comes to friendships, is having a lack of high quality communication. To make sure that you are absolutely winning in every aspect of your life, it all starts with having great communication. The best way to get that communication is to understand your personality style, and to understand the personality style of the folks that you're spending the most time with. Whether it be at work, whether it be at home. The best way to do that is to go to [chrislocurto.com/store](http://chrislocurto.com/store) and get your personality profile and personality profiles for your team today. Get it for your family members today. As you go through that profile, you will begin to see the greatest ways to communicate, go to [chrislocurto.com/store](http://chrislocurto.com/store) today.

So folks, there's a lot of talk right now about the things that we don't have control over, and let's be honest. You're probably thinking about that specifically again today on election day, right? There's a whole lot of stuff that we don't control. And for those of you that are leaders, you're wondering what it's going to look like on your team next week, or by the end of this week. For those of you that are business owners, you're wondering what business is going to look like. Here's the deal. There are things that we can control. You can control every aspect of your thinking process. You can control every aspect of your decision making process, your communication, your execution. You can control every aspect of your culture if you are making it important enough, if you're making it a priority, why am I telling you this?

Because there are external forces that you can't control. You can't control the outcome of this election. You can't control the outcome of this virus. So focus on the things that you can control, and be incredibly excellent with those. Be very excellent with everything that is inside of your team. So if you're going to be excellent, the first place you have to start, there's no ifs, ands, or buts about this. You must model excellence. You have to be excellent. You have to show your team what excellence looks like. You have to show, even if you're leading up, you have to be excellent. If you're going to expect excellence. So let me say it another way. You cannot expect excellence if you're not willing to be excellent, because the truth is this, your team is watching you. Your team sees how you operate. Your team sees if you're being excellent right now, or if you're slacking off, believe it or not, your team knows whether or not you're wearing sweats on your zoom call.

Okay, well maybe they don't. But, they do know when you're not holding up to the same excellent standards. When things shifted and things changed, one of the first things we did in our business is step in and say, guys, first off, we're not going to be fearful. We're not going to operate in fear. And we're going to do what our mission says. We're going to take care of people, right? We're going to worship God. And we're going to love on people. We're going to help them. We're going to bust it. Then as things started to change, we took a look at the changes and said, okay, we're going to continue to be excellent. We're just going to shuffle some things around. You're not going to be in your normal role because your role may not be needed right now, but we're going to find something else for you to do.

But as you do it, you remain excellent. So the first place that you have to start is with you. If you're going to have excellence on your team, if you're going to have excellence in your business, then folks, you have to model that excellence. You can't expect people to be excellent if you're not being excellent. And so here's what I want to kind of give you a gut punch on. What

are the things that you are doing that are excellent, feel free to think through that. Feel free to jot those down, take a look at the areas that in your, in your team and your leadership right now, you're being excellent. But then here's what I want you to do. Where are you not? Where have you slacked off? Where have you backed off of being excellent? Where are you allowing team members not to be excellent?

Where are you not holding people accountable? Are there team members that, you know, you need to have a tough conversation with and you're avoiding it at all costs? Is it because you're afraid? Is it because you just don't want to do it? Is it because you don't like conflict? Whatever it is, are there people in situations that you need to do something about? And listen to me, I understand. I know where you are, right? When COVID hit us, we took a good kick in the teeth when we couldn't do one of our biggest live events. And so what did we do with team members? We shuffled them around. We kept them on payroll. We kept paying them. We shuffled them around. We put them in other areas and then said, listen, this isn't your norm, but you still got to bust it. You still have to do this.

You still have to make this happen. You've got to learn it. You've got to do whatever. We'll train, we'll help. But our goal is, keep everybody paid. We keep moving forward, right? This is out of your norm. So you may have experienced that. You may have experienced that maybe you have less work, and you're finding that people are not doing as much, right? You may have felt like, well, you know, we're still able to pay them, but we're allowing them to get away with 75% work, 50%. I don't know what it is. But here's what I want you to ask yourself; what are you avoiding right now? What are you as a leader, always start with you as the leader. What are you as a leader not being excellent about right now? Are there people that you're not pushing towards excellence? Are there people you're not leading?

Are there situations where people don't have a leader over them right now because you're not doing anything about it? Are you being too lenient? Are you choosing not to communicate well? "Well, I mean, everybody knows what's going on. We don't have too deep dive into these situations. We don't have to." No. Focus on communication, high levels of communication, right? Make sure that you're being excellent with your communication. But where is yours right now? How are you communicating with your team? Where are you on holding people accountable to the core values of the business? If taking care of your clients as one of your top core values, and you find people slacking, what are you doing about it? What about how they take care of the internal client, right? The other team members. So here's the thing I'm trying to say.

Start with looking at the things that you are being excellent on. That's great. That's fantastic. We all need that pat on the back, but then we want to move on over to, where am I slacking? What am I not doing? Where am I leaving holes in my leadership, when it comes to excellence? And then ask the question, why? It may be different on everyone. But what you're probably going to discover is, it could be that you've just slacked on your laurels, right? You've rested on your laurels. That you're enjoying the time down and you're enjoying not running 90 to nothing. It could be that your fear of conflict is absolutely grabbing you by the throat. It could be that you don't even know what's going on. You haven't recognized it until I mentioned it. Whatever it is, take a look at what you're lacking, where you're slacking, and then answer the question: why? What is holding me back?

And then I want you to make a list. I want you to make a list of every single thing you need to do to change that. What are the areas you need to be excellent in? Are we handling our clients incredibly well? Are we serving them well? Are we serving our team members well? Are we following all of our processes that we have in place? Do we have the right processes? Are we holding people accountable? That's your job, leader. It's your job to make your team successful, not the other way around. How are you going to do that? Making sure that you're setting them up for excellence. Making sure that you're holding them accountable to the very things that you expect in their role. Now, it's also possible that right now you're stuck in the leadership crazy cycle.

It's possible that you're doing so many things that you're running in so many different directions, that you're wearing so many different hats, that you don't have time to lead your team to excellence. Then we go back to those assumptions. "Well, I'm really busy and I see work happening so surely excellence is happening out there." That is a big mistake. That is not what you should be focused on. First off your identity, you've heard me say this a thousand times, your identity and your worth is not in you doing tasks as a leader. You have people- if you don't have people, then you wouldn't be a leader. You have people on your team to execute stuff. You have people that are fantastic at doing tasks. Your job is to set them up for success. Your job is to help them be excellent in doing the very tasks that you should not be doing in the first place.

So here's what you have to ask yourself. If you're stuck in the leadership crazy cycle, why? Is it because of your fear of delegation? Is it because you don't believe your team is excellent enough? If not, and you don't feel like you can task them the things on your plate so that you can lead them well, then we have other questions we have to ask. Why are they on your team? Have you as a leader, actually tried delegating properly? Not, "Hey, here's this thing I need you to do. Is it done yet? Is it done yet? Hey, let me take that back." So what is holding you back? If you are not operating with excellence, if you are fearful, if you are staying away from conflict, whatever the thing is that you're doing, that's keeping you from leading your team to excellence that's got to get solved. We have to fix that, right? You have to take responsibility as the leader, to get everybody back to excellence. If you're struggling with excellence as a leader, or you want help maintaining it, then you need to hear about our Next Level Mastermind program. So check this out, and we're going to talk more about this when we come right back.

Hey, Joel Fortner here, I'm the vice president of leadership development on Chris's team. And I oversee our Next Level Mastermind program. Next Level Mastermind lays out a clear path to success for you and your business. It shows you how to make the right decisions, solve complex problems, and lead more effectively. This is why collectively, our clients saw on average a 46% increase in net profit over the last 12 months. I know business is tough, and we build a system around you, and give you the tools to help you win. To learn more, visit us at [chrislocurto.com/mastermind](http://chrislocurto.com/mastermind). Again, that is [chrislocurto.com/mastermind](http://chrislocurto.com/mastermind).

So we know that we need to be excellent. We know that we need our team to be excellent. Once again, we can't control all those things that are going on outside of us. We can't control the election. We can't control COVID. But one thing we can do is lead our team really, really well. So what do we do? Where do we start? The first place to start is you have to take inventory of what's going on on your team. You have to know what is going on, where people

are being excellent. So you can get in there and reward the daylights out of them, and where people are not being excellent, so you can get in there and lead them, and guide them, and possibly have tough conversations with them, right? So there's an old story about Sam Walton, the owner of Sam's and Walmart, where he used to get up in the morning, once in a great while, he'd go down to the distribution center super early in the morning, find a driver, jump on the truck and tell him, don't you touch that radio until we get to your destination.

Then he'd say, where are we going? And the driver would tell them, hey, we're going all the way over here. And he would spend the whole time on that ride, just asking that driver questions. "How did you experience the distribution center?" "How did you experience it when you got to the store?" You know, all kinds of stuff, gaining information on what that driver who's on the front lines, saw. How he experienced this company, how he experienced team members, leadership, what it's like to be on the road, everything. How they're taking care of. He would spend time gaining perspective from the truck driver, oddly enough, at some point, somebody would figure out, "Hey, Sam, didn't make it into the office. Oh, crud, he's gotta be on a truck." And they would go ballistic trying to find out who's not answering, because they know the one truck that doesn't answer, Sam's on that truck.

And they try to warn the store ahead of time. And so the truck would pull up into the store, and you would see on the dock there would be all of their managers lined up. And Sam would walk right past them and say, "I will talk to you later." I'll meet in the conference room or whatever it was. I can't remember where they would meet, but I'll meet with you guys later. And then he would go to the people that are stocking the shelves. He would go to the cashiers. He would go to all the different folks in that store, and gain all kinds of perspective. And then, he would meet with leadership. And he would sit down with leadership with all of the stuff that he had discovered, and it was either going to be a great meeting, or it was going to be a tough meeting, right?

You have to understand what's happening on your team. Oh, by the way, he would also talk to customers in line. "What was your experience like today?" "How did the cashier do?" "What was it like getting this stuff?" "Did we have everything you needed?" "Were you able to get around the store and find all these things?" Then he would sit down and he'd go over the leadership what he discovered. You've got to find this out. Right now is the best time. Take a hard look at what's going on on your team. Gain perspective from your team members, gain perspective from the folks that are on the front lines, find out what they're dealing with. Find out from your customers what it's like to buy something from you, to get a service from you. Find out from your lower level leaders.

What is it like to be a leader inside of this business? What are you experiencing right now? Walk it all the way up until you have all the perspective that you need to know how to lead excellence, to know what needs to be fixed, what needs to be solved, what things don't have processes, dig in, and gain as much perspective on your business as you possibly can. And then we start to put together a strategy. What does it look like? What needs to be fixed, who needs to be talked to, who needs to be led well, whose task saturated and shouldn't be, which leaders are stuck in a leadership crazy cycle and should not be, who doesn't have leadership, who has the title of leadership and doesn't know how to lead? What areas of our business do we not have

accountability? Which team members don't have accountability, which processes don't have accountability?

All of these things need to be solved so that you can make your team and your business excellent. Once you have that, we need to put together a strategy of getting back to being excellent. But, what we need to look at now is, where is your accountability? Do you have people, that are walking in the same shoes that you are, people that are on your level of leadership, that are holding you up, that are pushing on you to do things better, that are guiding and directing in the areas that you're struggling with, people that your giving feedback to as well, helping them grow in their leadership, you've got to have that level of accountability so that you can continue to grow and stretch yourself. So put people around you that will help you to become a better leader. Put people around you that are going to call you out and say, "Hey, listen, I've noticed you're not following through on this, this, and this.

What are you going to do about that?" Put people around you that you can go, "Hey, I literally don't have the answer to this. I don't even know what to do. What would you do in my situation?" So that you can then, put together a plan of getting back to excellence if right now you're not operating with excellence. As you're putting together that plan, here's what I want you to be thinking about. With all the information that you now have, with all the stuff that you see, where people are not being excellent, where your leadership team is not being excellent, where you're not being excellent. How is that showing up on your bottom line? How is that showing up in your top line? How's that showing up in morale? What is that doing to your current culture? Or the culture you desire? As you look at the effects that it's having on your business, allow that to be a driver to make your business great again.

Yes, I did just say that. Yes, that did just come out, ask not what your team can do for you folks, ask what you can do for your team. Okay. There, there you go. There's there's my presidential stumping here. Seriously, take a hard look at what it's doing to your business, and allow that to motivate you. To dig in, and do the very next most important thing, and that is communicate excellence. You've got to model it. We've already talked about that. You've got to teach it, show your team what it looks like to be excellent. You got to call it out where it's not happening. You got to communicate what it looks like to be excellent. As you do this, what you'll start to see, especially in a time worm. If your business has struggled through the crisis, you know, struggled through this pandemic, then guess what, what you'll start to see is, there is a ton of capacity on your team.

There's a ton of stuff that you can do to push your team forward, to push your business forward. There's probably a good amount of money that you're leaving on the table, because if your team is not being excellent, then I can promise you, you're not getting the best out of your team, which means that you're absolutely leaving money on the table, and you're spending more money in salary than you should be. So allow these things to be drivers for you, not to go and crush skulls, if you need to have tough conversations, you got to do it, but make sure you guide your team back to excellence. Help them to see it. Help them to know what it looks like, help them to accomplish it. Make sure that your day is not completely overloaded with tasks so that you can get out there and lead people to excellence. Everything I'm telling you today is a choice. Like we said from the beginning, there are certain things that are out of your control.

Don't worry about it. Do what you can, get your butt out there and vote, make sure that you're voting on the things that are important to you. Those are things that you can do. But all of the things that are outside of your control, don't stress about it. Focus on the things that you can control; being excellent in business, being excellent in leadership, being excellent as a team member is a choice. And if you choose that, and if you choose to lead that, then your business will be looking excellent as well. Well, folks, hopefully this has helped you today as always take this information, change leadership, change your business, change your life. And if the election hasn't destroyed the whole planet, join us on the next episode.