

Resilience

HBR Emotional Intelligence Series

Resilience is a hot topic in business today.

Resilience is one of the great puzzles of human nature, like creativity or the religious instinct.

More than education, more than experience,
more than training, it's the level of a person's
resilience that will determine who succeeds
and who fails.

Resilient people possess three characteristics :

- acceptance of reality
- a deep belief
- uncanny ability to improvise

The ability to see reality is closely linked to the second building block of resilience, the propensity to make meaning of terrible times.

This dynamic of meaning making is the way resilient people build bridges from present day hardships to a fuller better constructed future.

Resilient companies have strong value systems.

Resilience is neither ethically good or bad. Philip Morris, the cigarette company has a value called 'adult choice', we might choose to agree with it or not.

There are two ways to become resilient – one by talking to yourself and the second by retraining your mind.

We cannot print resilience the way countries print notes. Individuals have to use what is called 'positive currency', that is grounded in positive interactions, memories, events.

Feedback is crucial. That's obvious. It improves performance, develops talent, aligns expectations, solves problems.

Its equally obvious that feedback doesn't work in many organizations.

Only 36 % of managers complete appraisals thoroughly and on time. In a recent survey 55 % of employees said the latest review was unfair or inaccurate.

For the past 20 years , we have coached people on having difficult conversations, and we find that almost everyone from a trainee to a C suite struggles in receiving feedback.

The skills needed to receive feedback well are distinct and learnable. They include being able to identify and manage the emotions triggered by the feedback and extract value from criticism even when its poorly delivered.

What makes receiving feedback so hard? The process strikes at the tension between two core human needs – the need to learn and grow and the need to be accepted the way you are.

Getting better at receiving feedback depends on the truth triggers (ability to accept the content of the feedback), by relationship triggers (the credibility of the feedback giver) and identity triggers (relationship with yourself)

6 steps to being a getter receiver of feedback

1. Know your tendencies
2. Disentangle the 'what' from the 'who'
3. Sort towards coaching
4. Unpack the feedback
5. Ask just for one thing
6. Engage in small experiments

In our survey of 450 CEO successions, we found only 35 % of ousted CEOs came back into active roles within two years of departure.

When you face a career set back, you must decide how to fight back.

When you face a career set back, you must recruit others into battle, friends and acquaintances play an important role.

When you face a career set back, you must regain your heroic status.

When a hero CEO, or leader, or manager stumbles, the constituents have to reconcile two conflicting images of the person, the larger than life presence the hero/heroine once commanded and the hero/heroines new fallen state.

Resilience is about how you recharge, not how you endure.