

The Basics

Definition of Reality

reality |rē'alətē|

noun (pl. realities)

1 the world or the state of things as they actually exist, as opposed to an idealistic or notional idea of them.

Why We Are Here

The average person spends two hours per day in drama. When you look at optimizing your resources and redirecting this energy toward focusing on results, the payback could be enormous. Excuses and drama are getting in the way of producing positive business results.

According to a recent Gallup poll, what percentage of employees considers quitting their job daily?

- a. Less than 20 percent
- b. Nearly half
- c. Greater than 50 percent
- d. Other:

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If people were actually quitting at the rate that they *think* about quitting, we would be alarmed. Worse, they continue to go to work every day, showing up and collecting paychecks, while completely checked out emotionally. *Leaders sometimes* spend their time working on increasing the engagement of employees by trying to change the circumstances around them. *The truth is that leaders cannot change every circumstance to make people happy.*

Be very clear; each one of us is always co-creating our current and future realities.

Cy Wakeman

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Find Peace at Work

Refuse to Argue with Reality

Arguing about situations that are unlikely to change does not result in improved business results and is therefore wasted effort. It is a fight you are sure to lose, but only 100 percent of the time.

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The Reality-Based Leader's Bottom Line

Regardless of the circumstances facing you, ask yourself, "What can I do next to add the most value?"

Edit the Story

In order to restore peace in your life, you need to understand that the source of your suffering is not what happens to you, but the stories you make up about what happens to you.

Cy Wakeman

As you lead, watch for Three Common Stories:

- *Victim Stories*: “It’s not my fault.” These stories make us out to be innocent sufferers.
- *Villain Stories*: “It’s all your fault.” These tales emphasize others’ nasty qualities.
- *Helpless Stories*: “There’s nothing else I can do.” These stories convince us that we have no options for taking healthy action.

Edit Stories Exercise

Think of a situation that frustrated you or a direct report recently at work. Describe it here.

Next, write down your or his/her true thoughts, uncensored. What snarky things were you (he/she) thinking? What theory was this event proving to be true? What meaning was being assigned to this event? (“I always. . .,” “They never/always. . .,” “They should/shouldn’t. . .,” “It’s not right that. . .,” “This means that. . .”

Next, be clear about what is true. Go back through your original account and underline **ONLY** the statements that are actually true.

Amazing what we can create from a simple event isn’t it?

The Reality-Based Leader’s Bottom Line

When you find yourself upset, ask “What do I know for sure?”

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Depersonalize Feedback

Feedback Disparity Exercise

If someone's performance is hindering results, and quite frankly driving you mad, how likely is it that you would share that feedback with the person directly?

Highly Unlikely

Highly Likely

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Now . . . if your performance is hindering someone else's results and driving him or her mad, how likely is it that you want the person to share the information with you?

Highly Unlikely

Highly Likely

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Is there is a difference in your answers to the two questions? If so, why is that?

People generally think they would rather receive feedback than give feedback. However, constructive and helpful feedback should flow freely in all directions.

Let's be clear: lack of feedback is the root cause of all employee issues.

Cy Wakeman



One-on-One Meeting Agenda

If you have a small team, it is ideal to plan a quick one-on-one with each of your people once a week. The benefit of this is that you keep abreast of any issues as they arise, so they don't become bigger issues, and your people always know when their next scheduled one-on-one is, so they can save up any non-critical questions for the meeting. Here's an example of an agenda for such a meeting:

Name: _____

Week ending: _____

What has been the most challenging part of your week?

What has been the most rewarding part of your week?

Goals or planned actions for the week:

Progress on the goals or planned actions:

Issues to review:

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Resources needed:

Questions:

Critical Feedback to Share

1. Here is what you are doing that is helpful:

2. This is what you are doing that is hindering results:

Next week's goals or planned actions:

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The Reality-Based Leader's Bottom Line

Share with your employees regularly what they are doing that is helpful and what they are doing that hinders.

For more information on feedback, check out *What Did You Say? The Art of Giving and Receiving Feedback* by Charles Seashore.

Find Peace at Work: Call to Action

Refuse to argue with reality and ask, *“How can I help?”*

Edit your story and ask, *“What do I know for sure?”*

Depersonalize feedback and ask others, *“What do I do that’s helpful?”* and *“What do I do that hinders?”*

What insights did you have?

What action are you going to take based on those insights?

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