



PETRA PEOPLE

5 STEPS TO HANDLE BAD NEWS IN THE WORKPLACE
AND MOVE ON



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

Every company has its good days and its bad days. And how an organization deals with challenges is just as important as how it celebrates its victories. Maybe your quarterly earnings have come in below expectations or a long-admired senior manager has decided to leave the firm. Perhaps your team has not been performing at A-level or maybe you've just had to terminate members of your team. In many cases, bad news will stoke the rumor mill, cause teams to splinter and lead to further negative effects on your business. As a business leader, you want to relay the news to your team quickly and in a way that doesn't have any additional repercussions or hurt your company culture. But how do you do that?

Here are five steps to help you and your team manage bad news and move on in a positive way.

TALK ABOUT IT

Sounds simple, right? Well, it's not. Unfortunately, open and clear communication does not come naturally to all leaders. So you've got to be intentional about it. If you know something bad is going to happen (or has already happened), gather your team in a room as soon as possible to talk about the news. Opening up the conversation is only step one, but it's the most important step.

BE TRANSPARENT AND DON'T SUGARCOAT YOUR NEWS

It's no use gathering your team to share news if you're going to hold back information. When times are tough, trust can be the first thing to erode if people feel they're not being told the whole truth. Ensure that when you gather your team to talk, everything is on the table and there are no secrets. And, remember: Bad news is bad news, and there's no use trying to spin it positive. Doing so will seem disingenuous and have the opposite effect that you want. You've got to be genuine.

HEAR FROM EVERYBODY

The opinion of a senior vice president should have no more weight than that of your front-desk receptionist. If you want to have a team, you've got to be willing to hear from each one of them and address any questions or concerns. This will reinforce that "we're all in this together" and that you're open to differing opinions. Whether you can answer every question or address every issue is not important, but listening to each person is crucial.

DETERMINE A PATH FORWARD

It's not enough to get things out on the table. You've got to be able to move forward in a deliberate way. Once everyone has been heard, make a plan for how things are going to proceed. Maybe you develop a way that each team member can contribute to bringing in new business or in recruiting A-players. Whether the task is small or large, be sure you make a plan to address any underlying problems that may have caused the issue in the first place. Get buy-in from your team and then go about executing that plan.

AGREE THAT WHEN IT'S OVER, IT'S OVER

Bad news can't be allowed to float in the air forever. Once you've set aside the time to discuss the news and made a plan to address any problems, you've got to put any negativity behind you and move forward in a positive way. So, ask everyone in the room to agree that you're going to discuss the issue fully, hear everyone out, determine a course of action to move forward...and then agree together that you will move on.

Bad news can have lasting reverberations throughout an organization if it's not handled correctly. Whispers in the hallway will persist, and even your most dedicated employees might start updating their resumes for fear that they're on a sinking ship. Don't let that happen. If you take the time necessary to address problems and truly move on, it's possible for a team to enter a room fractured and exit the room whole.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at www.petracoach.com for more business and leadership insight.

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342 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 203, Franklin, TN 37067 | 888.330.1020
www.petracoach.com | www.facebook.com/petracoach

