

-- Speaker 0 00:00:04 Make It Right. The manufacturing podcast.

Speaker 1 00:00:09 The other day, I was speaking to a colleague about some challenges she was facing in a new job. She's leading a new team and trying to get to know them and work with them as everybody's working remotely. Now she's a fun person and she is easy to work with. And I laughed when she said she just didn't think her natural charm was coming across via zoom. Now more than ever leadership and communication skills or lack thereof are coming through. And whether you like it or not getting this right, is going to be so important for your business now. And in the coming months, I'm <inaudible> last week on makeup, right? My guest was manufacturing, veteran and consultant Pete Winiarski. He recently released a book called virtual teams that thrive to help his clients and others manage under these new remote parameters. We covered a lot of ground at episode one 13, and this week we continue our conversation discussing this challenge of getting your communication, right? So you can successfully engage and serve your team and your customers. And I asked him, how do you know if you are getting it right? And here's what he had to say.

Speaker 0 00:01:19 You all, first of all, no assumptions. Right? You can't just think everyone's fine. I'm okay. So they must be okay. Um, recognize this is challenging. It's a little harder than it appears on the surface. And, you know, even for you, I mentioned that COVID brain phenomenon that I just read that article about. Um, you know, we're all experiencing that, you know, the part of the conclusion of that article was you may be more fatigued than normal and not know why this happened to me today. Oh goodness. Where does it come from? Right. And you know, in the old days you think, wow, I'm not sleeping well enough or whatever. No. I mean, you're, you're just, your brain is overtaxed in an unknown way. So that's the first thing. So, because you don't want to just assume everyone's all right. Now you have to check in and check in more frequently.

Speaker 0 00:02:13 And the trick here is without making them all one hour long meetings, right? You don't want to overburden everyone's calendars. Cause that that's another problem that you're actually trying to solve for is to create some open space in people's calendars. But I think basically, you know, let's talk about the customers in a second, but just rounding out with employees and your team members just create a forum and check in. Now, what we did way back in March is we started a daily team zoom call. And at first it was somewhat agenda list. And the first thing we talked about was how is everyone doing? And that was important for the first week or so, maybe even the first two weeks before we started to put some structure around it, we still check in and we, we still look each other in the eye smile. How was your weekend?

Speaker 0 00:03:09 Make sure that that element of we as social human beings, we still accomplish that. So that that's important. And then I will lead the way often if I'm not on my game, I'll share. I'll like guys, listen yesterday. I wasn't a hundred percent on, um, you know, I got irritated that, that, that one call that we had, um, that was a little bit on characteristics for me. I'm owning that. So I'll go out of my way to take personal responsibility, which is then inviting people to do the same thing. Or just checking in, listen, if I'm frustrated, I'm recognizing you might be how's everyone doing. And if there's a conversation that needs to be had, we opened the door for that.

Speaker 1 00:04:00 What do you do if you're the leader of a larger manufacturing company and you've got a lot of layers there and there are people on the factory floor and then there's the middle management and up, how do you hold this all together? Uh, so everybody is, is working in the proper way and enjoying what they're doing and not feeling isolated.

Speaker 0 00:04:23 Yeah. Well, it starts with you leading by example. And so in the little microcosm example, I gave you just a moment ago, you can still have you and your team. Let's say that, let's say that you are the site manager and you have 10 people who are, you know, various roles like supervisor or planner or purchasing manager or whatever. And you've got all of these people on your team. You can do what I just did with that team of 10 and encourage th --

-- em to do the same thing because people, again, they don't necessarily have a frame of reference or a point of reference for what it's like to navigate within a pandemic. So you've got a crisis going on and it's kind of a constant one, unfortunately for at least for a period of time. And so with that in mind to demonstrate, this is what calm, inclusive, collaborative, and caring leadership looks like.

Speaker 0 00:05:25 And the idea of crisis isn't even a word. It just disappears and becomes, this is how we're going to do what we have to do. Let's work together on this. Anything you need, shout, come see me, let's work it out and then go, um, then you can spot check and go down. So a lot of times that site manager, maybe they're not interacting much with folks on the shop floor. Now's the time to do it, make sure you know, and this is back to managing your time on your schedule. Actually put it in there that you're going to go spend two hours checking in with people today. And so that might be that you attend other people's meetings that they're holding. You just, you make sure that you visit people in their environment. Don't make them come to you, right? And, and just build this, this level of trust and caring and collaboration that is so critically missing in a lot of these cases,

Speaker 1 00:06:29 Kevin snuck, who I work with on this podcast, um, he has always said, it's very, very important for business leaders and business managers to reach out to their team members. And if you can't do it physically, the using the video or using zoom is the one way to reach them. And it shows that you're interested and that you care because we're social beings. We need that interaction. And we want to know, um, that our leader is leading and supporting us, right? And this is, this is the perfect way we have the technology to do it. And people should really be using it.

Speaker 0 00:07:08 Yeah. And Janet, in a way that you can look the other person in the eye and one on one meetings are powerful. So I care about you. This is your time. Now you're looking them in the eye. You have a smile on your face. You're having a conversation. This also means that don't have four other windows on your desktop open. Right? And you start, you're checking your schedule. And you're reading an email all while they're telling you about the project status. No, that's not fair. And they're going to see it. And they're going to know it, even if they, even, if you admit, listen, I just got a, I just got a distraction here. Let me just handle this real quick. That's appreciated. Cause we all have that, but don't pretend that you don't have that and try and pull it off in a multitasking way because now you're hurting the cause rather than helping it.

Speaker 1 00:08:01 You have an interesting story in the book where you talk about learning to work with. I think she's your executive assistant Renee. Tell that story because this is all about personalities, right? And everybody is different. And you have to understand people in order to make this sort of thing work, especially when you're doing it through some, you know, electronic interface.

Speaker 0 00:08:26 Yeah. Renee is a she's our chief of staff actually is what we call her, but she's just a fantastic resource on how to get stuff done and keep us on track. And, um, you know, what's interesting here is, uh, you know, I'm actually, I'm certified to deliver something called insights discovery, which is, you know, a psychological tool that helps you understand yourself better by taking and having profile and then sharing and reviewing with the other people on your team and starting to appreciate yourself better so that you can manage and lead and perform better as an individual, but then also appreciate the differences and what what's really interesting. And I thank you for bringing this up. Um, you know, I wrote about this example in the book, because if you can imagine a clock or a circle, um, each individual's profile ends up in a wheel position somewhere on that circle.

Speaker 0 00:09:33 And so Renee happens to be somewhere up around 12 o'clock and Pete, I am somewhere down around five o'clock, so not exactly opposite, but reasonably opposite. Um, it's not like we're at four o'clock and five o'clock or 12 o'clock and 10 o'clock. You know, we're not neighbors, you know, if the, if these are street addresses, we live across town from each other, not ne --

-- xt door. And so what that, the way that, that manifested itself was that we had, and this is in, in, in the, in person working environment, we had some communication challenges where I wanted to express something very quickly and just know that she's got it move on because I am a, you know, more big picture, extroverted type, um, thinking those are the, at some of, some of the attributes of my particular profile Renee's profile happens to be one where she wants to know the details.

Speaker 0 00:10:41 She wants to know why she wants the story behind each of the pieces. And my style is to it's self evident. Why do you need that? So, um, it's interesting because in, in the set up, I'm sure you see all my goodness, if there's a freight train, come in there, right at, you know, these guys are going to clash and, and you know, it wasn't a clash in a, in a bad way, but it was a, we both experienced frustration with, with, with one another. And once we stepped back and went through and looked at our profiles, we're like, Oh yeah. And you know, one of the interesting guideposts in, in the, the output of, of this material, the profile material is how to work with someone who's opposite you. Or when communicating with Renee, you need to be aware of these things. When, when communicating with Pete, you need to be aware of these things.

Speaker 0 00:11:41 And so we were able to start to close that gap a little bit. And here's the interesting thing that that's really important is individuals are individual and you do not want everyone to be identical. It one would make for a boring life and a boring world, but also the value that different team members can contribute. When there have varying points of view and varying points of experience and preferences, and things ends up adding to a better, more robust answer. And in the absence of having differences on the team, you would lose that. So there's incredible value to this.

Speaker 1 00:12:29 So for, for a business leader right now, who is trying to engage with his team on the various different levels, like one in one, et cetera, they have to be aware of the differences in each individual and understand themselves really well in order to sort of process what is happening in those calls, right?

Speaker 0 00:12:53 Yeah, that's exactly right. And you know, the, we have a framework, a model that we called our conscious leadership model that has basically two halves left. Half is conscious of self characteristics and the right half is conscious of other characteristics. And so you, as an individual leader, you have to really appreciate and understand you extremely well, including your strengths and weaknesses. What do you like? What do you, what are your preferences? What are you inclined towards? And what do you tend to not like, and want to resist? And so if you have great clarity in those areas, you can lead yourself better. It's incredibly difficult to lead other people. Well, if you're not first leading yourself well. And so that's where the conscious of others comes in. So now you practice lead self-leadership if you will. And then as you understand the different people on your team, that you are, you are now leading, you can make adjustments by recognizing this is how Janet really likes to perform. This is the environment she prefers. This is the type of language Janet uses. So I will modify and alter to fit that. Whereas the person next to you, Joe might be totally different. And if I tried to manage Joe in the same way, as, as I do Janet, it may not work out very well.

Speaker 1 00:14:27 And what do you say to the, to the person who says, Oh my goodness, there's so much going on. I just don't have time to figure out how everybody reacts to everything. Like, what do you say to somebody like that?

Speaker 0 00:14:40 We're right here with you. It's so it's, it's, it's our reality. And you know, if you recognize the value that you will get from your team when they are, when they're really cranking at the next level, or even two or three levels up from where they are right now, um, it's so worth it, right? So there's a, there is an investment, this is a little bit of performance investment. Now you make the investment right now in order to end up with a team that's just clicking at the next level.

Speaker 1 00:15:20 Well, and I guess too, because I mean, this is not one of those situations that I don't think we're ever going to --

-- run into again. I think, you know, we'll see this again. So the sooner you get this part of it figured out the further ahead you're going to be down the road.

Speaker 0 00:15:37 Oh, for sure.

Speaker 1 00:15:40 Pete, what are some key takeaways that you would leave with manufacturing leaders, big and small about, you know, how, how to move forward over the next couple of months?

Speaker 0 00:15:51 Well, number one, recognize that your customers are changing their buying patterns. And so that could be in your supply chain recognize that, um, or their supply chains, that supply chains are somewhat disrupted, right? Somewhere along the line, um, there's shortages or delays or something, you know, even Amazon prime, two day delivery, quote unquote shows up a week later, right? So there's there's problems in the supply chain, which is now leading the buyers to overbuy, right? This is the toilet paper syndrome. And so, um, people are over buying on supply to try and make up for a shortfall, which means they're using more cash there, which means they have less cash for discretionary spend. So they tend to be spending on only those necessities or things that they believe are a really high value with a, an excellent return on investment with confidence. They'd like, they need to know that with certainty.

Speaker 0 00:16:57 And so your customers now, if you're, if you're like B2B and you're sending your products somewhere next in the supply chain, they're behaving that way. Um, and B to C certainly consumers, we all know what it's like to be a consumer. Just look in the mirror at how you've behaved in the last few months and recognize that's what's happening. And so that's number one. So you it's really an opportunity for you to differentiate from your competitors, by looking at what else can you do a little bit differently? You don't necessarily have to reinvent yourself and innovate some brand new product or service you could, but you don't necessarily have to. It might be that you understand your customers so well, their current challenges and pain so well that you can just tweak what you're doing a little bit, present it slightly differently, perhaps with changes that are fundamentally just different enough to address those challenges that they're having. And you could find yourself, outpacing your competitors in a big way.

Speaker 1 00:18:13 I'm wondering too, you know, why people are going to go for the thing that they're comfortable with. So if you just adjust whatever they're comfortable with to just sorta tweak to meet whatever that real need is, you'll win there. But if you're going to try and introduce them to something brand new, they might go, I don't have time to even figure out what you're trying to sell me here.

Speaker 0 00:18:33 That's right. That's right. And, and that's where there's risk, you know? So, you know, in the old days you thought, wow, it's going to take us three years to develop this brand new big project anyway. Um, so you don't have that kind of time, right? Every time is compressed. So what can you get out there in the next month that can help them and support them?

Speaker 1 00:18:57 Are you suggesting to your, to your clients that they should be getting in touch? Like the leaders of those companies should be getting in touch with their customers and talking to them directly? Yes, absolutely. Business business owner to business owners, speaking to them and saying, you know, man, what are your pain points here? How can we help you?

Speaker 0 00:19:15 Yes, yes. And to the extent that's not possible, look for other proof, look for other data, you know, um, what are they doing now? You can look at the macro economic trends by digging into the various articles and things. This is where I like wow, covert brain who knew that was a thing a week ago. Um, you know, that just happens to be fresh in my mind because I read it like four days ago. Um, so that's a macro trend, but what are the specific things industry by industry, or even customer by customer and get into their heart and soul and mind and understand what decisions are they faced with right now. And how can you make those decisions easier for them?

Speaker 1 00:19:59 Well, it's going to be challenging for quite a long time. So, um, so the tips that you've provided in the book that it's got these tips for working from home and working remotely super valuable stuff, Pete, --

-- it really is. So thank you very much for being on the show.

Speaker 0 00:20:15 Oh, thank you, Janet. It's been a pleasure.

Speaker 1 00:20:17 You have written this book it's called virtual teams that thrive, which is now available. You also have a bestseller book called act now a daily action log for achieving your goals in 90 days, uh, Pete, you've got a podcast it's called business results radio, and you're always on Facebook sharing ideas. So a great resource for people. I hope I get a chance to talk to you again, Pete. I really enjoyed it.

Speaker 0 00:20:39 Excellent. Looking forward to it.

Speaker 1 00:20:41 Okay, Pete Winiarski is the founder and CEO of Win Enterprises, and if you want to read more about virtual that thrive

Speaker 2 00:20:48 Or pizza other books, you can find them on Amazon or through your independent bookstore. And that is our show this week. Thanks very much for listening. Check out our Twitter and LinkedIn feeds that are on our podcast page, subscribe and share the podcast with your friends and colleagues. You can do that through iTunes, Google play, Stitcher, Spotify, and YouTube. I remember that Make It Right as brought to you by Kevin Snook, he's a leadership advisor and author of the bestselling books make it right. Five steps to align your manufacturing business from the front line to the bottom line. I'm Janet Eastman as always. Thanks for listening to make it right. We'll see you next week.

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