

Is it Wrong to Stop the Show? | 092

What does it mean to be wrong, right versus wrong? I want to explore this today and I am going to share a little bit of news in this podcast a little bit later on.

Welcome to Lean Leadership for Ops Managers, the podcast for leaders in Ops Management who want to spark improvement, foster engagement, and boost problem solving - AND still get their day job done. Here's your host, Leadership Trainer, Lean Enthusiast, and Spy Thriller Junkie, Jamie V. Parker.

[00:00:41] But what I want to do today is walk you through some stories of some things that have been happening and things that have been on my mind. And I want to start with a conversation that I was having with a group of women. And these are all women who are thought leaders, who have have meaningful opinions to share and are looking to be able to improve their abilities to share and to be more confident in sharing and influence others and challenge others.

And we were talking about what makes us hesitant to post or to share, whether that's like posting on LinkedIn or sharing something on this podcast or whatever avenues, writing a blog, whatever, whatever avenues we use. What is it that makes us hesitant? What is it like? We're like, Ooh, I don't know if I should say that. I don't know if I should share that, you know.

And so for one of my examples of this is, you know, I have this kind of fear or not really fear, but like a hesitancy of speaking about things that I don't really know well about. Right. And, you know, I am, as an individual, my personality, the way I am wired, the way that I was created, is that I am a details person. I'm a fact finder. I like research. And by the way, I love that part about myself. I don't want to change that part. I don't want to be like, oh, free flowing and not care and just miss over and skip over all the details.

[00:02:04] Like, I'm not trying to be like that when it comes to this. What will happen is maybe there's a topic that, you know that I care about and I kind of have I feel this need to go out and do all the research because I don't want to share something that's inaccurate. I don't want to like reshare something from a source that's not credible. And so and especially if that, if that like kind of drove some of my opinion, then I think it is relevant, right? So that's just one example of what we were talking about.

And one of the women shared one of her hesitancy around like not like wanting to be braggy. Right. And so she noticed when she was doing her reflection, she noticed that she would hold back and she would

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only, you know, only with certain groups which she share, you know, kind of some celebratory ones. And it was really interesting. You know, this woman, her daughter is competed in track and field in one of the track and field races or or competitions. Right. Is she is actually ranked eighth in the country. Right. That is unbelievable. Massive, like huge celebration, not just for the accomplishment, not just for the athletic ability, but also for what it takes to be able to perform at that level.

[00:03:24] You know, you know, the character it takes and the effort and the energy and the discipline and what the actions are required. Right. All of that that it takes to be able to do that. And she was kind of holding back and wasn't really openly celebrating that with some of her acquaintances. And so that was an example which by the way, we're celebrating, but that was one of the examples and I resonated with that as well.

You know, I do value humility and I am turned off by, you know, really audacious, like self aggrandizing. Like I'm just so amazing, right? Like I just I'm turned off by that. Like, I don't I don't care for it. I don't like it. But there's a difference between humility and making ourselves smaller because we don't share. And so that's another area where I'm like, Oh yeah, I've got some work to do there as well.

And that's why I don't share very often, you know, wins and successes publicly in this type of forum or you know, even like so just as an example, you know, going to speaking at a conference and then afterwards being told that I'm the highest ranked speaker of everybody, including their keynotes, and then going back a second year and doing it again, right kind of thing that I wouldn't really share because I'd be like, Oh yeah, that's kind of braggy, but I am proud of that, and I am proud of how I've progressed as a speaker and really excited recently to be able to share the stage with some other folks that I really respect.

[00:04:57] I went to I'm not going to share the company name for confidentiality, but I went to a company that was it was a private right. It was their operations leadership meeting. So not talking conference stuff. Right. We're talking hey, company's getting all of their operations leaders together and you know, for their three day conference leadership conference and the there were three keynotes and they included Galen Emanuel and David Marquet and me.

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And I just felt really honored to share that stage with them and to be in that group and also loved the process of partnering with them to help kind of custom some of the customized, some of that message for them. But while I was there, I was able to actually hear David Marquet speak, and he was talking, you know, about intent based leadership. And that was a really good reminder of things I've heard him talk about before. You know. But he also was talking about kind of raising problems, this idea of being wrong and being able take that risk of being wrong. But how the language of wrong, you know, is is creating this place where we can't. Right.

[00:06:02] And it's really a lot of this this I talk about problem raising, right. We have to have problem raising before we can have problem solving. And how do we have the psychological safety? And, you know, David Marquet demonstrated this with a video clip and it's from Faye Dunaway and Warren Beatty. I think it was the Oscars where they like said the wrong best picture name or something. Right.

And I got to tell you, I'm not a pop culture person like I. I have zero interest or knowledge of pop culture or things that are happening. Like I just don't know. People will be like music, movies, any of that kind of stuff. So people will be like, Oh, do you know who this is? My friends do this to make fun of me. Like the song will play and I'm like, I have no idea. He's like, Oh, it's the Beatles or It's Beyonce. I'm like, Yeah, sorry. I didn't know. You know, I don't know who's India is. I don't know who Tom Holland is. I've heard the names, but I couldn't tell you.

So I definitely don't watch award shows of any kind. Right. And I do vaguely remember hearing about it, but I had never watched it. I never seen this clip before. I'd never watched it. I didn't go read the news clips about it, nothing. So this was a brand new thing for me. Okay.

So here was the scenario. Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway were presenting Best Picture and two of the contenders, or whatever you nominees, I guess, were La La Land and Moonlight. Emma Stone had won best actress for La La Land, right. Like She had that had just happened prior to this. Warren Beatty opens the envelope and he looks at the card. Now, just so you know, what the card says is it says best actress Emma Stone la la land.

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That's what the card says, they're doing, you know, best picture. So he looks at the card and he has a weird look on his face. He opens the envelope further and shakes it like looking for another card, it looks like. He kind of turns looks at again has this look face like kind of, no, this isn't right. He shakes it or he looks over. He's like he kind of looks over at Faye Dunaway, like, I don't, you know. He starts to say, and the winner of Best Picture is and then he stops himself and then he does a little bit more hesitation.

Faye Dunaway Kind of like, let's go say it, right? Kind of. She does some hand motions. And so he he turns the card to her to show her and she says, La la land. Right. She reads La la land off the card. And so the question was and this is what David Marquet said, hey, so what's the probability that. Like, what's the probability that Warren Beatty thought there was a was an issue? And like, everybody's like, oh, for sure he knew that was wrong.

[00:08:56] Like, you could see it all over his face and his body language. What David was teaching about was how they use the use of how he would recommended and use uses the use of probability. So instead of having somebody say like it's either 100% or 0%, like allowing them to say a probability, like I'm about 80% sure that something might be wrong or I'm 20% sure.

So when somebody makes a statement, they say, Well, with what probability do you think it allows them? It gives them the space to to not have to, like, make a commitment or to go all the way right. During this process at our table groups, one of the things we were talking about is, so why? What would have contributed to Warren Beatty not stopping the show and confirming. Right, what were all the factors that could have contributed?

And by far, like one of the most common things we were hearing is and what I said, the very first thing I said is, well, he didn't want to be wrong. He didn't want to be wrong. And this is the part that has stuck with me during this whole, you know, four weeks since then is what does being wrong mean? Like, if he had stopped the show, checked with the producers and the card were right and he was and he did, in fact, need to read La La Land.

[00:10:18] Was he wrong to stop the show, right? Like, was he wrong because the envelope was right or was correct and it just made it so interesting, right? So even if the envelope were correct, is it wrong to

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stop the show if you're not sure? And like, how does this play in to our work environments where we have teams out there making product and delivering service and they're going to see things that they think might be wrong. And are they able and safe and have the environment to stop the show?

Now I know like our process folks like our process listeners are going to jump in and talk about all the processes and all of that. But I want to talk about this more from the culture and leadership space. Right. What would it take to create an environment where people will risk being wrong, or do we need to change that language? And that's part of what David Marquet was talking about. Right? David Marquet shared about the probability and I've never used the probability approach before, so it's something I'm going to explore after hearing that I would use. Well, I don't know. But I think that or I'm not sure, but I'm concerned that. So that's how I would kind of hedge in that type of situation and how I would coach hedging.

[00:11:38] But I'm definitely going explore this whole idea of probability. So that's that's definitely part of it, right? And what else and what else would it take to create an environment where people are willing to stop the show when they think something's wrong, even if it's not, even if it turns out to be not?

And how do we get to that point, if that's a risk, if that if that's a problem in our in our environment? And so how do we have problem raising so that we can have problem solving? Right. How do we not just skip over the problem raising part? And there's you know, there's lots of things to it.

I know one of the things that I work with leaders a lot on is transitioning from command and control managers to more coaching based and intentional leadership. And so some of the activities are to stop giving all the answers, to start asking good questions, and then to listen for impact.

And this brings us to my news. All right. I told you I was going to share some news today. Up until now, I have been a solopreneur, meaning that I am the consultant for my company and I have brought in contractors every now and then for trainings when we've had big classes and things like that. But really I'm doing the work and then, you know, having a support team. And so recently I have hired my first consultants.

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[00:13:04] So now I am growing a team and it's a, you know, includes Leah, who's our support team as well as consultants. Soon you will be able to hear from Stephanie and Crystal and Bobby and different folks who are joining the team. But here's what's happened, is that I have started to catch myself jumping in and giving answers first.

Now, remember, I teach folks how to shift from telling command and control, telling to asking and listening. Right. This is this is part of the core offering that I teach folks to do. And here I am catching myself to do this. Now, of course, these consultants are new to the company. It's a brand new role. So, sure, there's going to be more telling. There's going to be more. I'm going to do more directing. I'm going to do more sharing and I'm going to do more teaching than I might do with a tenured consultant who's been around. Right.

Like a year from now, I will do less teaching just because they're more tenured and experienced in their role. But even with that, I still am catching myself, jumping in and giving answers first. Right. So there have been times in the last couple of weeks where I've caught myself mid-sentence. Sometimes I didn't realize it until after the fact. Right. It's like I'm reflecting back. I'm like, Oh my goodness, I did it again. And I guarantee you, there are some times where I didn't catch it at all.

[00:14:28] And I think this is normal and I want to normalize this leadership development and growth in behavior change in habit building and skill building and all of that is a process that takes time and repetition and consistency. So we have that anyways. On top of this, there's been a change, right? We have this change point. So there are some situations where I excel at this. I'm a fantastic coach based leader and it's you know, it's not something that I have to, like, really dig and work at in certain situations because I've had a ton of practice at that.

But now we have this change point where before I was the solopreneur, I did have the answers. I was the person answering the questions. I was the person giving my opinion. I was the person sharing what I thought next steps were. I was the person doing all of that. And now we have this change. And now I don't have to be the only one. I don't need to be the only one. We have people hired specifically to do this.

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And what this means is that I now have an opportunity for more practice. I now have an opportunity to shift myself in these conversations from being the solo consultant to being a consultant on a team, from being the answers and the teller, to being able to step back and ask my team what they think.

[00:15:55] And so this is a great opportunity for growth for me. It's a great opportunity to practice in more situations. And what I want to normalize is that you can develop a skill and still build on that skill, expand that skill when you experience change points or in new situations.

And so as you're learning different interactions with people, how to be an effective leader and how do you interact with people, I want you to embrace this. And I say this because operations executives, right. Those COOs, VP's, when you're listening, maybe your managers are in a similar situation, maybe the beginning of or the middle of a similar transition. A change point from command and control to coaching, a change point from giving answers to giving space for others to answer and to learn from that. A change point from doing the problem solving to developing the problem solving in others.

And so what do your managers need to help them through that transition? And it doesn't make them bad. If they're in a transition, it means this is a perfect opportunity to support them through that transition. We talked a little bit about being wrong. We talked about probability. We talked about being able to shift to more coaching and stop giving the answers and start asking good questions and listening and how that can be a transition. And if you want help, you can go to my website and schedule a call.

[00:17:23] But I also want to bring this back to the greater context. In your organization. What do people include in their definition of wrong? And how does that differ from what you want it to be based off of this conversation or anything else you're bringing to the table? What does it mean in your organization to be wrong? What would you want people to do? Can people stop the show? And what do your leaders need to do to create the environment where that can happen?

So that's what I want you to explore as your next step. Whether you really resonating with this whole idea of wrong and the story of Warren Beatty and the envelope and, you know, like this fear of, oh, my goodness, what do I do? Do I stop the show? Do I not? And how that relates to your work environment or

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resonate more with this transition of saying, hey, I can still have the skill but still need to practice it more or have a change point or need to expand it.

And it's okay to be in a transition and to be working on myself or to have my leaders and my managers that are on my team to be working on themselves and figure out how do we support them to make that transition. Whichever part resonates with you, I want you to explore that deeper, and I'd love to hear what you think. Until next time.