



Lite Bite

Courage or compliance



Lite Bite

CourageousWorkplaces works with Leaders and Communities to inspire, assess, advise, develop and implement courageous workplaces.

Contact Details



+ 44 (0) 845 862 1767 or
enquiries@courageousworkplaces.com



www.courageousworkplaces.com



What does courage mean to you?

What has Julian Assange, Liu Xiaobo, Erin Brockovich and Mahatma Gandhi got in common? The founder of Wikileaks, the Chinese dissident, the consumer advocate and the peace activist have all put their reputations and lives on the line for something they believe in.

Speaking out, having a voice and making a difference are all aspects of what it means to be courageous and yet how many employees, managers and leaders ever feel they should be courageous at work? Why is it that the corporate world has no real courageous heroes? Could it be that most employees want to just survive, keep their job and leave their heroism for home?

However, courage is not always about headline heroism, more often it is unseen by others. When courage is encouraged then the individual and personal acts of courage will collectively inform and shape an organisation's culture, values and working practices. Surely in this time of turbulence within the marketplace, new opportunities constantly emerging, the uncertainty about the future, the lack of job security, the need for greater flexibility and creativity suggests that courage is becoming a critical 21st century behaviour?

What we at Courageous Workplaces have been able to demonstrate is that when organisations are courageous enough to trust their employees to 'do the right thing' they are rewarded by the generosity, integrity and flexibility of their workforce.

Whilst not every courageous act will attract public accolades, notoriety or acclaim they are never the less the fertile seedbed from which courageous workplaces will emerge. Now is the time to invest in planting and nurturing those courageous seeds as they take time to flourish and the business marketplace is not getting any easier.

If

'If' is such a powerful word. It can mean so many different things: it can imply regrets ("If only I"), possibilities ("If I do") and challenges ("If this happens, then I ..."). In other words, the word 'If' shows you have choices and for us at Courageous Workplaces one of the key differences between courage and compliance is the choices we all make and the actions we take in this very moment.

Do you think you could do more in the role you are presently doing yet feel that you're holding back? Would you like to make a greater impact and have a stronger voice? How ready are you to take risks, try new things despite the fear of rejection? Are you willing to put your neck on the line to be heard, to challenge, to break the mould?

If you answered yes, you are not alone as doing meaningful work can be so satisfying and rewarding yet so few people seem able to achieve this goal.

Outlined on the following are just a few ideas about why courage in the workplace is important and what you can start doing differently today to be more courageous.

Business benefits of a courageous workplace

Courageous workplaces benefit all organisations. There are both short-term and longer-term benefits from increasing the courage of employees.

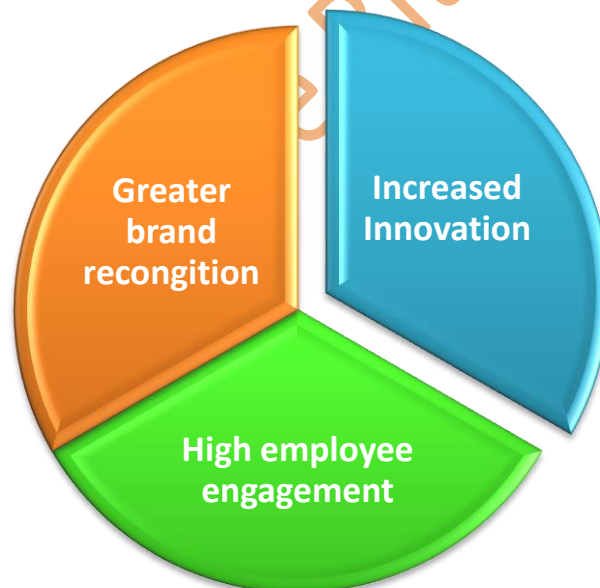
However, organisations often arrive at the 'gates of workplace courage' during times of great change i.e. when undertaking a significant acquisition or merger, where survival is uncertain or where a radical change in strategy or business model is required. Such organisations are required to transform themselves and where there is uncertainty about the future, success is built on understanding the shared values, seeking and trusting all relevant information, agreeing and working towards new opportunities.

A courageous workforce believes in the organisation and what it stands for. Employees are therefore prepared to take personal risks in following the leadership team and owning a new future.

Where an organisation or team is not facing the immediate need to transform, i.e. they might be seeking to gain or retain competitive advantages or wanting to be more innovative or customer focused, building a courageous workforce is a long term strategy to engage employees in order to become more flexible and responsive, more willing to share and be creative and more willing to work for the greater good.

The benefits of courageous workplaces are considered to include;

- Courageous workplaces have a clear and consistent set of values and purpose. Greater brand recognition comes because employees are typically prouder of their organisation and more publicly willing to support it.
- Brand recognition can be measured through customer surveys and by reduced hiring costs, customer satisfaction levels and reduced marketing costs.



- Workplaces that encourage employees to try new ideas, make mistakes and understand risks are courageous workplaces. Consistent innovation occurs when employees are willing to bring different views and work together to create new products and services, even if that involves 'starting again'.
- Increased innovation can be measured by the number of new products, number of disruptive innovations, level of intrapreneurship and organisational flexibility.

- Employee engagement is concerned with employees who put discretionary effort into their work beyond the minimum required to get the job done. Highly engaged employees feel connected with their colleagues and feel valued, respected and involved by the wider organisation, care about doing a good job and ensuring that the organisation is successful.
- Engaged organisations have strong and authentic values based on trust, fairness, mutual respect and two way communications.
- Employee engagement can be measured by increased employee productivity, decreased employee turnover, increased customer satisfaction and reduced health and safety issues.



Interested in becoming a Courageous Leader?

Do you think you could do more in the role you are presently doing yet feel that you're holding back? Would you like to make a greater impact and have a stronger voice? If you answered yes, you are not alone as doing meaningful work can be so satisfying and rewarding yet so few people seem able to achieve this goal.

The basics of Courageous (Self) Leadership

We all have the capability to be good leaders. We already influence others by the examples we constantly set - good and bad - through our actions and our words or by the lack of them.

- In the long term we cannot change what others choose to call us. All we can influence are the words and actions we choose to take. Leadership therefore comes from within.
- Most people do not face great opportunities to demonstrate their leadership – they simply show it through their everyday actions. Being a leader is an ongoing process.

If we believe that leadership encompasses the everyday things we say and do, then leadership is about whom I am as much as what I do. Being a leader is not an act to be 'turned on' in specific instances – it is a way of living and behaving.

- A leader's greatest power is their personal enduring vision and their values. Leadership techniques simply amplify vision and values but cannot be a substitute for a lack of them.

Courageous self leadership is built on a foundation of personal traits;

- Values driven behaviour
- Holds multiple value sets
- Persistence
- Exceeds conformity
- Serves the greater good

Great leaders take charge of their life, are able to detach themselves from everything except their core values and only seek to control what is controllable. Their proactive and optimistic attitude takes a wide perspective yet listens to their own instinct. Great leaders learn by reflection, accepting both mistakes and successes, attempting daunting challenges by breaking them into manageable pieces.

If you'd like to know more about workplace courage and how you can build a courageous workplace, contact CourageousWorkplaces on 0845 862 1767 or enquiries@courageousworkplaces.com

About CourageousWorkplaces

At CourageousWorkplaces we work with Leaders and Communities to inspire, assess, advise, develop and implement courageous workplaces. We take academic theory and make it a practical reality to help you unlock your organisation's potential.

Our reach is global and we work with clients from a wide range of profit and non-profit organisations in every sector.