





# hello

Welcome to the March issue of IMPACT.

This month we've been thinking a lot about the power of autonomy and empowerment, how to tackle those unexpected moments with your team and how we are all brand ambassadors.

We also share another of our monthly IMPACT HACKS (quick, practical tips for great impact), this time on self leadership.

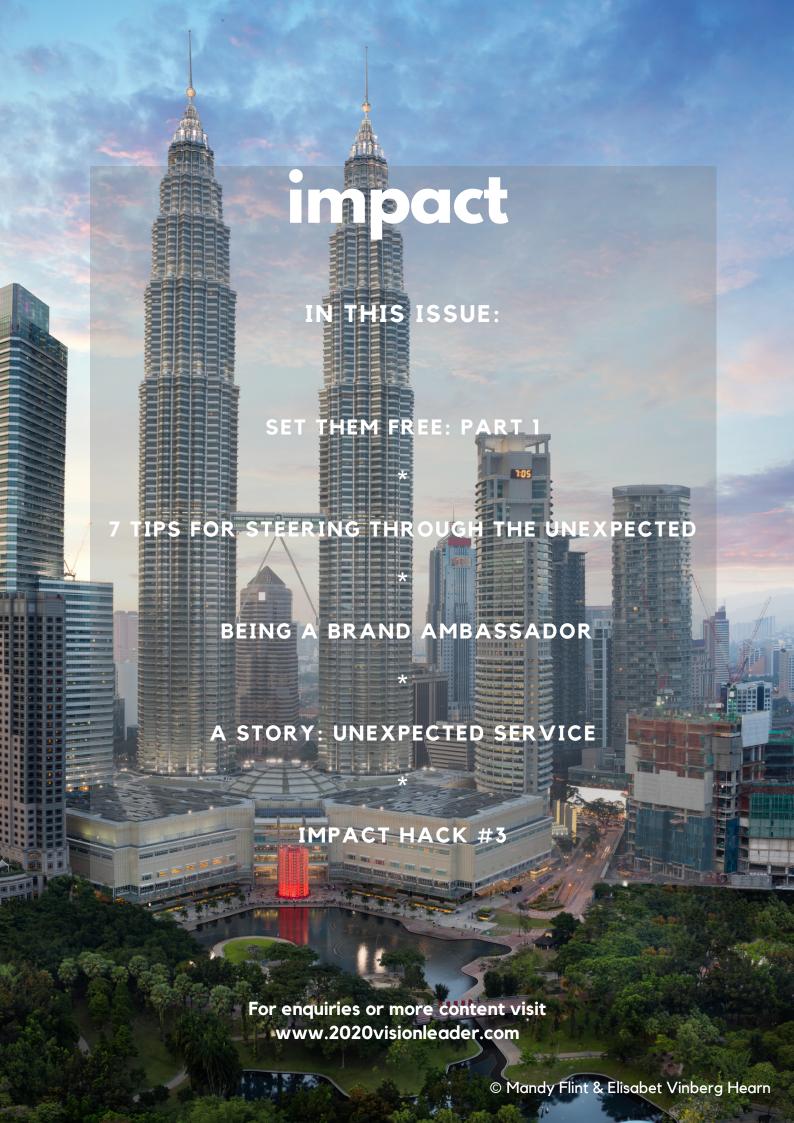
And there's a story about receiving unexpected customer service.

Enjoy the read!

Please share your thoughts on the topics by connecting via <a href="https://www.2020visionleader.com">www.2020visionleader.com</a>.

Thanks for reading

Mandy Flint & Elisabet Vinberg Hearn



# SET THEM FREE



It's time to empower employees to excel

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

In the mid to late 90's we started to eagerly study companies that were outstanding at creating employee engagement, which lead to customer loyalty, which lead to financial payback - which could be invested back into employees.

High on that list were for example the Ritz-Carlton hotel group and the low-cost carrier Southwest Airlines.

A lot can be said about companies that have been successful at this.

One common denominator that it often comes down to is to EMPOWER your employees. This can sound like just a buzzword but it's a necessity to release people's ability to make a difference, to not unnecessarily weigh them down with processes and procedures.

#### **AUTONOMY**

As Daniel H Pink so brilliantly outlined in his book 'DRIVE: The surprising truth about what motivates us', intrinsic motivation (internally driven motivation, as opposed to external 'carrot and stick' motivation) is among a couple of other factors driven by autonomy.

And this makes a lot of sense. When we can act with a sense of autonomy we feel in control of our situation, we feel empowered and spurred on to do our very best. We have been trusted to take responsibility, come up with solutions and this inspires to step forward and do our best.

No one wants to be told what to do. This is as true for children as adults. We want to be given the freedom to make the right choices. When we are trusted, that's what happens.

### SERVICE FROM THE HEART

We recently heard a brilliant story of customer care from Southwest Airlines. A woman was on a plane about to take off when it turned around, went back to the gate where she was asked to disembark the plane and and go talk to the information desk. When she got there she was told that her son (in another city than the one she was in or the one she was going to) had been in an accident and was in hospital. Needless to say this was a very distressing message to get. But she was very grateful for the support the airline gave her. They certainly didn't need to but they got her onto a plane to take her to where her son was, they called her afterwards to check on how her son was doing. Seriously, wow!

...continued

# "YOUR MISSION STATEMENT MAY BE ON THE WALL, BUT YOUR CORE VALUES ARE DISPLAYED IN THE ATTITUDES OF YOUR EMPLOYEES"

Elle Clarke

This was clearly not just someone following procedures, this was the result of a person (or several people) thinking for themselves about trying to help a customer who was thrown into a difficult situation. They were empowered to do what was right. Talk about excellent customer experience.

# KNOWLEDGE WORK NEEDS EMPOWERMENT

Jobs are increasingly knowledge jobs, where we are hired to think for a living, there is not just one way of doing things so our ability to think critically and creatively is a necessity. And there is no way we can have processes and procedures for every single possible scenario we may encounter.

This is why we must create a culture of empowerment where each person is given the the freedom to perform the job the best way they can. We must know and trust people to do the right thing.

# REMOTE WORK REQUIRES EMPOWERMENT

Add to that the fact that more people are working remotely than ever before. Technology has enabled us to allow for work to be done from anywhere and at any time. Some people work best early in the day, some later in the day. Assuming the job is not time constrained for service hours for example, then why shouldn't we help everyone do their best job their way.

# EMPOWERMENT, NOT ABANDONMENT

A small word of caution though - in a remote workplace in particular, empowerment mustn't slip into a sense of abandonment. With greater empowerment, our conversations with our team and team members can and need to focus more on knowledge and experience exchange, and creating new solutions that help fulfil our shared purpose.

Simply put, we just can't afford to not empower those we work with. We need their motivation, their inspiration, their ideas and creativity - and their drive to do the right thing.

We'll continue exploring this topic in the April issue of IMPACT, so stay tuned.

# "THE KEY ELEMENT OF ENGAGEMENT IS TRUST; BUILDING TRUST REQUIRES COMPANIES TO PROVIDE WORKERS WITH AS MUCH AUTONOMY AND FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE."

## **Matt Charney**





Smooth sailing is rare — we are always surrounded by some degree of change.

But at times it's more choppy than usual; more uncertain than the norm.

Leading your team well in those circumstances is more important than ever. Team members may feel worried, angry or frustrated and not perform to their best. So what can you do when you find yourself in turbulent times?

Here are some practical solutions:

### **MEET REGULARLY**

Have regular quick check-ins — face-toface, on video call or phone. Make people feel that they are not alone, that you support each other. Listen. Care. Have fun together and make time for laughter and casual conversations too.

#### **FIND ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

Uncertainty and turbulence create questions. What will this mean for us? How will we resolve this? How will I be affected?

Make sure you create frequent opportunities to talk as a team, so you understand concerns and hopes — and where possible, provide answers.

Follow these four principles of dealing with questions transparently:

- Answer the question.
- If you don't know an answer, say so (don't waffle).
- If you cannot answer the question now, make a commitment for when you will, and honour it.
- If you know the answer but cannot say currently, say so and make a commitment to share the information when you can.

### **FOCUS ON STRENGTHS**

Everyone in a team contributes in their unique way. Give each other feedback based on individual strengths and attributes. When people are able to use their strengths, they are more energised, which is a vital resource when faced with uncertainty, as it can give a real boost of innovation and determination.

### **FOCUS ON YOUR PURPOSE**

Remind the team of their purpose and how important their role is within the organisation. Stay focused on that purpose and get on with the task at hand. It's easy to slow down when faced with uncertainty. Keep the team moving forward. Adjust goals, plans and tasks if needed, making sure the team keeps progressing. Don't waste time in the 'uncertainty void'. Show that it's okay to make mistakes. Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn (from what went wrong). Use the disruption as a way for the team and its members to develop.

### WHAT COULD GO RIGHT?

There is never just one way of looking at a situation. You probably know people who have expressed that some of the best things that have happened

....continued

impact | march 2021

to them have come as a result of (unwanted) change. Help your team to reframe a situation by exploring what it could bring from an optimistic standpoint. Ask team members to share the moments when they've experienced a good result during a time of uncertainty or change. Use a crisis to pull the team together.

#### **BALANCE BAD WITH GOOD NEWS**

When things are turbulent, the news we encounter is typically not very positive, and endless exposure to bad news has an effect on people. It's hard to stay optimistic when all you read and hear is on the negative side.

There is always more good news than is immediately noticeable. Make a point of finding the good news and sharing it with your team — and encourage them to do the same.

A company that 'banned' bad news from the workplace during the 2008 financial recession found that it increased performance. People were of course allowed to read what they wanted to outside of work, but they decided that it wasn't the focus they wanted people to have while at work.

The results? Higher productivity, employee engagement and sales.

#### **CELEBRATE SUCCESS**

To celebrate successes is always important, but particularly so when facing turbulence. That's when the pat on the back and sense of achievement can really make a difference. Celebrate the milestones and encourage continued effort. Be proud of your team — and show it.

\*

And remember that you do not need to have all the answers. No one does. Involve. Engage. Ask. Listen. Share. And you'll find the answers together.

# "IF THERE'S ONE THING THAT'S CERTAIN IN BUSINESS, IT'S UNCERTAINTY"

# Stephen Covey



# BEING A BRAND AMBASSADOR

How everyone is a powerful carrier of their personal, team and company brand

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

What you say online has a major impact on your business - here's how to make the right noises.

Just like individuals, teams and even countries, an organisation has a reputation. And that reputation is created over time, through words, actions and behaviours. But it's not set in stone, a reputation can quickly be tarnished and even ruined.

A reputation cannot be taken for granted. In fact, it should of course be taken very seriously. It can take us a long time; years, months, even decades to build a strong, consistent and powerful one. We can have a good, strong reputation but only a few negative actions and behaviours that others feel uncomfortable. make disappointed or angry can quickly damage that reputation and trust. And once trust is damaged, it can take a long time to repair it.

We all have our own reputation; individually, as a team and as an organisation. Whether we choose to work on it or not, we will have one.

It's therefore highly relevant to ask: What is our reputation? and What do we want it to be? or What does it need to be? This could and should be part of an organisation's strategic leadership dialogues and considerations.

A great reputation can travel ahead of us and it can open doors, just like a bad reputation can close the same doors.

If you think of a company right now, that you are familiar with, you would have a view of them, right? You would have a perception of their brand, their way of working, even their culture; what it's like to work there or what it's like to work with them. It all comes down to the consistency in actions and behaviours, the promises kept and those relationships that have built the brand and reputation over time.

A few examples: When you think cars and safety, you may for example think of Volvo. When you think innovative design, you may think of Apple. When you think of a family fun, you may think of Disney. They are all well-known examples of powerful brand experiences built up over time.

### THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way to keep in touch with clients, business partners and other stakeholders and can be an effective way to build interest and opinion but it needs to be carefully navigated. A comment, an imprint can last forever. In that way social media is very honest, we can't erase our tracks. Even if a post or comment is deleted, it may already have been copied by someone and shared. On the other hand, if we are thoughtful and respectful about it, we shouldn't have

...continued

# "YOU ARE NOT A DROP IN THE OCEAN. YOU ARE THE ENTIRE OCEAN IN A DROP"

Rumi

impact | march 2021

Famous public figures tweeting is an example of this. Things said in the heat of the moment are creating ripples that are hard to assess the complete impact of over time, and they affect and create a reputation, good or bad. Some time for reflection and impulse-control is key when using social media. So yes, reputation matters and should be taken seriously.

What organisational reputation are you creating right now? Take control of it. Think of how you, as a representative of your organisation, not just represent yourself but you also represent the organisation when you engage with the world around. Think of yourself as ONE online person, it doesn't matter if you are acting in your personal or your professional life, if it's going on online, it could be seen by more people than those intended.

You may not be able to dictate this for others (unless you have specific organisational social media conduct codes in place) but you can always take responsibility for your own social media activities and messages and what you role model for those around you.

Unless you work in politics, be careful with how you comment on political issues as this can quickly turn into slinging matches which can backfire into the workspace. Think of yourself as your own, your team's, your organisation's Brand Ambassador. Without a good, strong reputation, it's hard to get others to trust you and work with you — which in turn makes it hard to deliver great results.

Don't let yourself be dragged into slinging matches online unless you want to take the risk of damaging the brand - your own AND your employer's.

#### **FIVE QUICK REFLECTION EXERCISES**

Here are 5 quick reflection exercises to review and manage a strong, positive, consistent brand and reputation online:

#### **NUMBER ONE**

What does your organisation want to be known for, what do you want others to see about you? That you are collaborative, responsible, knowledgeable? Or something else? Whatever it is, engage your team in discussion and agreement on how to achieve that, keeping in mind that reputation is greatly influenced by how you do something, not just what you do. It needs to be authentic.

#### **NUMBER TWO**

What messages do you want to put out there? Are there any key words that should be used?

....continued

# "DON'T SAY ANYTHING ONLINE THAT YOU WOULDN'T WANT PLASTERED ON A BILLBOARD WITH YOUR FACE ON IT"

# Erin Bury



Should you share research, industry data, new products and services? Should you engage with customers, potential customers, other stakeholders?

#### **NUMBER THREE**

When actively interacting others online, take responsibility not just for your actions, but maybe even more importantly, your reactions. Don't let responses become automatic, use the moment between trigger and response to carefully choose how you will respond to the words and actions of others. Every moment counts. Think about how your response will impact the other party and how it will influence their perception of you and organisation.

#### **NUMBER FOUR**

What professional social media apps are you using? What is your LinkedIn profile looking like? Do you have a representative photo? Is there enough information about what you do and how you represent your organisation? Add depth and personality to your profile by asking for recommendations and endorsements.

#### **NUMBER FIVE**

What personal social media apps are you using? What are you sharing there? Would you be happy for anyone to see that? Are you on Twitter? If so, even if you put an "Opinions are my own" caption, this may not be enough to fully manage the impact you have and how it reflects on the organisation you work for.

This is especially true when you are a leader — you always represent the company you work for, and your actions are not just seen by external audiences but also internal ones.

\*

Yes, we are all Brand Ambassadors (for our personal brand, for our team's and for our organisation's). What impact do YOU want to have in that role? the highlyinterconnected and transparent online world of social media, we are all able to express whatever we like online, but it begs the question: do we really need to? Choose your imprint with care. We are all more impactful than we think.

# "IT TAKES 20 YEARS TO BUILD A REPUTATION AND FIVE MINUTES TO RUIN IT. IF YOU THINK ABOUT THAT, YOU'LL DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY"

# Warren Buffett





JR was on his way to the airport to catch a flight to Singapore. As he got to the airport he realized that he had left his laptop behind. He tried to keep calm and called a friend with a key to his house and asked him if he could possibly get the bag for him and make a dash for the airport. Luckily his friend answered and was close by so was able to support him in this. Time was tight though and JR hoped that traffic wouldn't be an issue.

He looked over to the security area and his heart sank as he saw the long queues — there was no way he would be able to wait out his friend and then join the long queues. He looked around and spotted the airline service desk and headed over there. He was met by a smiling woman who asked how she could help. He explained and she could see that he was trying to hide his stress.

"I can help" she said. When do you think your friend will be here? And what's his name?

"He's Pete and he should be here in 15 minutes, I hope"

"OK, this is what we'll do. I'll wait for him by the entrance and you go and join the queue. I will come and find you either in the queue or by the gate. It will be OK."

JR couldn't believe it, what service! He thanked her profusely and took off. Half an hour later, as he had just passed through security, she caught up with him and handed over the laptop with a smile.

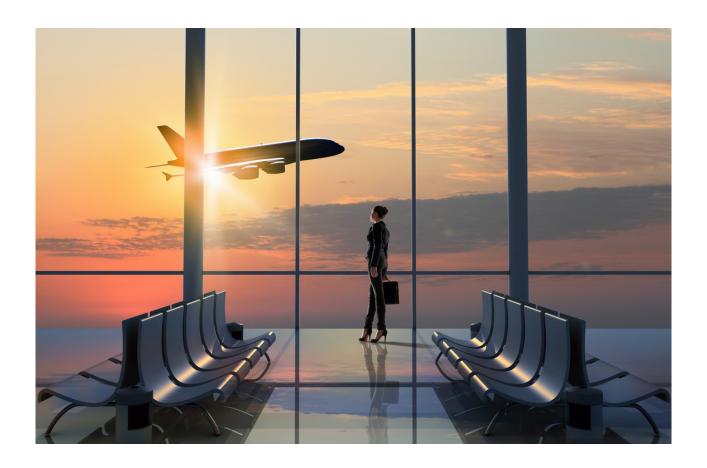
JR nearly gave her a hug, that's how relieved he was. "Thank you!" he exclaimed. "I can't thank you enough!"

"My pleasure, sir. That's my job, I'm glad I could help." And he could see that she meant it.

I'm flying this airline again, that's for sure, JR thought as he hurried towards the gate.

# "A BRAND IS NO LONGER WHAT WE TELL THE CUSTOMER IT IS – IT IS WHAT CUSTOMERS TELL EACH OTHER IT IS."

Scott Cook



### **ANALYSIS**

Great customer experience leaves us feeling seen, heard, important. When we can see that someone cares about our issue and decides to help regardless whether it's their direct responsibility or not, we know that we made the right decision in buying their product and service.

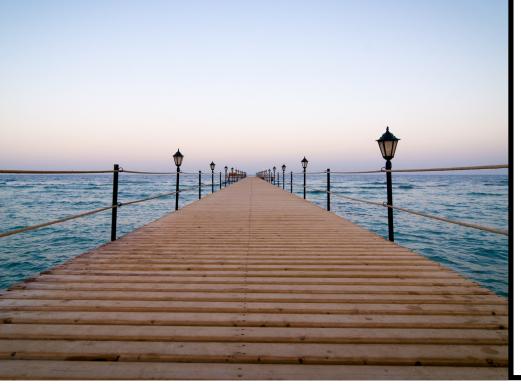
This kind of customer experience is sometimes not consistent though and the opportunity lies in reflecting on the kind of impact we want to have on our customers, so that it can become part of the overall customer experience strategy. And as this story shows, it needs to still be and feel authentic to have real impact.

Even those that don't have direct impact on the customer ultimately contributes to the customer experience. Everyone tends to be more important in this arena than they are first aware of. It's an opportunity for us all to think about what the customers want, need and expect and what role we play in that experience.

# "THE MORE ADVOCATES YOU HAVE, THE FEWER ADS YOU HAVE TO BUY."

### Dharmesh Shah

This story and abbreviated analysis is an excerpt from "The Leader's Guide to Impact", Financial Times Publishing 2019



# IMPACT HACK #3 SELF LEADERSHIP

5 proven hacks for dialling up your impact with yourself

BY MANDY FLINT & ELISABET VINBERG HEARN

All impact starts from within.

Your ability to impact others will be a reflection of what's going on for you. And remote working may have added new challenges and opportunities for your self leadership. Are you stressed, angry and frustrated? Then your impact will suffer. Are you energised and at ease? Then your impact will flourish. Yes, all great leadership starts from within. Here are 5 quick impact hacks, to lead yourself with and to impact:

### **KNOW YOURSELF**

Reflect on what your drivers are; what motivates and energises you, what stresses you, when are you at your best? What really matters to you, what's your personal purpose? And how can you use those insights to make the best choices and become the best leader of you?

### **CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS**

What we focus on becomes our reality.
Choose your thoughts with care. Choose thoughts that help you look at a situation with hope and confidence. Make a habit of repeating those thoughts, and really taking them in, to start the day right or prepare for a meeting.

### FIND PEACE OF MIND

Take time for some stillness each day.

Meditate for a few minutes (there are some great apps out there which are a quick and easy way to do this) to give your mind a rest (from thinking).

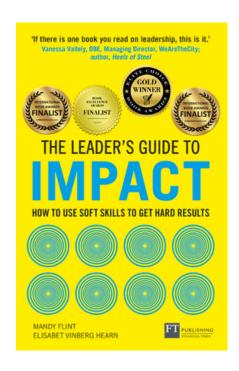
### PRACTICE RESPONSE-ABILITY

Never ever make yourself a victim in a situation. Whatever happens, take personal responsibility by choosing your response and looking for what you can do. Focus on what you can influence rather than what is outside of your control.

### **RELAX AND RECHARGE**

Ensure you are not always 'on'. Take time to relax and recharge each week. No one can run on empty. Take time for activities that relax and/or recharge you. Exercise. Rest. Cook. Sing. Read. Talk. Laugh.

# CHECK OUT OUR AWARD-WINNING BOOKS ON LEADERSHIP



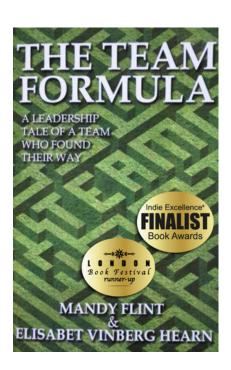
# "A COMPELLING READ FOR THESE DISRUPTIVE TIMES"

Amazon reader review



# "THIS BOOK IS A 21ST CENTURY GUIDE ON HOW TO BUILD A WORLD-CLASS TEAM"

Amazon reader review



# "IT IS THE BEST BUSINESS BOOK I HAVE READ THIS YEAR, HANDS DOWN"

Amazon reader review

"BOOKS ARE THE QUIETEST AND MOST CONSTANT OF FRIENDS; THEY ARE THE MOST ACCESSIBLE AND WISEST OF COUNSELORS, AND THE MOST PATIENT OF TEACHERS."

Charles W Eliot

