



Observe, Learn, Change & Let Go
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You are the definition of success! Your mind is in constant motion looking for new and more creative ways to excel. You wake up many mornings with new insights, solutions to yesterday's challenges.

You relish in change. It comes naturally to you as you don't want to be the same person today as you were a year ago. Your aim is to grow and learn and change to become all that you can be.

What about those around you who may not care as much as you do. Perhaps they are disillusioned. Something may be holding them back from reaching the levels of success that you enjoy.

They may be experiencing higher levels of stress or job dissatisfaction than is necessary. How can you help them flourish? Better yet, how can they help themselves?

Let's explore three real-life client case studies where one's job could have been saved or enhanced had the individual only: 1) observed what isn't going great, 2) taken time to learn from the situation, 3) changed something within themselves to improve outcomes and, 4) let go of whatever is holding them back.

These simple four steps—*observe, learn, change and let go* prevents stress, miscommunication and loss of valuable relationships.

Case Study One

Chief Technology Officer (CTO) Matthew comes out of most meetings frustrated. "They don't listen, they don't understand."

This lack of understanding was widespread. His Chief Executive Officer (CEO) never wants the details, just results. Fellow C-level associates are interested in their own department challenges, not his. Others throughout the organization rarely invite him for lunch or social activities. He felt isolated.

When asked if this was something new, it wasn't. In fact, Matthew had experienced this lack of intrigue and respect for his position in every job he's had. "What's wrong with them?"

CTO's across the board have three typical challenges.

- 1) No one understands or really wants to know all that goes into their complicated and technical job, they just want their needs met 'now'.
- 2) Professionals in the tech world often use different, seemingly foreign language than the rest of us. It takes patience on both sides to communicate effectively.
- 3) CTO's are typically introverts. They put more thought into what they say and do than extroverts who make up 50-74 percent of the population.

These three challenges are deeply frustrating to Matthew, who is on the verge of quitting his position. This frustration, for all involved, will gain momentum over time without intervention.

According to a LinkedIn June 29, 2018 study, the tech sector has the highest turnover rate at 13.2 percent out of every single business sector.

What do you think Matthew needs to observe, learn, change, and let go of?

Case Study Two

Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Becky spent our first eight sessions complaining about her boss. "If only he would change!"

He needed to change his work style of being too demanding; communication style of being too impatient; and his irritating voice, which was too loud and overbearing.

He needed to appreciate her skills more and promote her to better utilize her talents. Had she discussed any of this directly with her boss? No.

Becky reminisced constantly about her former 'the best boss ever', many years ago, when she was happiest in her work and most productive. She was heavily involved in her community, ran half-marathons and was overall more alive and far more successful with this boss.

I was fascinated by how challenging it was to get her to focus: 1) on herself, 2) on today, and, 3) not on any of her bosses, past or present.

Becky attributed every ounce of who she was in each of these positions to her boss. She took no responsibility, nor did she realize how her success and lack of current success depended completely on herself, not her boss.

What do you think Becky needs to observe, learn, change and let go of?

Case Study Three

My first conversation with business owner Robert was scheduled for twenty minutes. It lasted two hours with very little input from me. Fascinating.

Though I really liked him, through my natural curiosity of what makes people tick, I could see how coworkers were highly annoyed. How could one person be that eager to share his accomplishments while showing little interest in others?

Robert was charismatic. Customers were initially drawn to him. His team, however, wanted more from him. They wanted to feel seen, heard, and valued.

His team's work situation was not bad enough for them to quit. Not feeling acknowledged for their work, they simply weren't motivated to thrive.

What do you think Robert needs to observe, learn, change, and let go of?

Reading these three case stories from the comfort of your home or office, it may be easy for you to say: "Come on, be aware of your surroundings and what you've created. Make some changes now to benefit not only of yourself but your coworkers and company."

However, we've all been in stressful professional situations. It's seemingly impossible for us to stand back to really observe our role, let alone how to do something about it.

To you, it may be clear that:

Matthew needs to change his expectations and communication. His expectations are that his coworkers will suddenly become more appreciative of his expertise. This will not happen without Matthew making some changes, starting with showing more interest in their expertise and department's work.

Matthew needn't become an extrovert, rather honor his introvert style. Preparing in advance of important meetings and thinking through how he can best contribute.

Matthew chose to create one-to-one interactions to get to know his fellow workers, thus allowing them to get to know him. Lunches, lunchtime walks, or cocktails were an easy start. As he gets to know individuals on his team better, he will slowly let go of the past to build upon the future.

Becky will benefit from acknowledging who she's been at her peak and observe how 'she's' changed. What does she need to do in order to get back to feeling great about herself?

She chose to begin with the regular running workouts that have been missing for years. In time, as she gains confidence in herself, she will let go of the anger toward her boss and instead discuss how she and her boss can work more effectively together including her taking on more intriguing projects.

Robert needs to learn to be in the present moment and observe the effect his nonstop chatting has on his audience. Notice the nonverbal signs. Question himself, what does this person need at this moment? Perhaps they need to finish a sentence without being interrupted or to be asked more questions.

Robert thinks acknowledgment is patronizing, a waste of time as he doesn't need it. He knows his strengths, thus assumes his people know theirs and don't need his acknowledgment. Wrong. In paying more attention to what his people want everyone wins.

We all want to thrive in our professions and in life. We want others to do so as well. Let's make it happen not only for ourselves but for those whom we see struggling.

I challenge you to observe a bothersome professional scenario for which you or someone you care about is involved. Be honest.

What role do you (they) have, what do you (they) need to learn, change and let go of? These four steps are simple but not easy. They take patience, dedication, focus and a passion to experience greater success.

I'd love to hear from you. This article is the result of a request from a reader. If you have a topic that you'd like me, as your unofficial executive and leadership coach, to explore in a future CBN article please let me know.

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