

Ep #90: Cautionary Tips When Hiring Employees
from Corporate Cultures
Episode Transcript

The image is a podcast cover with a teal background. On the right side, there is a portrait of a woman with blonde hair, smiling, wearing a light-colored, patterned halter top. On the left side, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'LEAD YOUR TEAM' in large, bold, serif capital letters, followed by 'for Female Entrepreneurs' in a smaller, italicized serif font. Below the portrait, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'with KRIS PLACHY' in a serif font, with 'with' in italics. There are thin teal horizontal lines above and below the main title text.

LEAD
YOUR
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*for Female
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with
KRIS PLACHY

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Hey, I'm Kris Plachy, host of the Lead Your Team podcast. Running a million-dollar business is not easy, and whether you're just getting started with building your team, or you've been at this for a while, I'm going to bring you honest, specific, and clear practices you can use right now today to improve how well you lead your team. Let's go ahead and get started.

Hello, hello. Welcome, welcome to this week's episode of the podcast, Lead Your Team with Kris Plachy. I'm so glad that you're here. I want to talk with you this week about, I think ... I don't know. This is something I talk with my clients about a lot, so I'm not sure if this is going to be a yeah kind of topic or if there might be some people who listen to this who get kind of annoyed with me kind of topic. But I do think it's an important thing to talk about, so we're going to do it.

What I want to talk about is what I have observed in myself and in my clients as they hire employees for their businesses who either have worked in entrepreneurial cultures, or if they have worked in corporate cultures. And of course, I am speaking in general observations, not in this is for sure for everyone all the time. It's more like, "Hey, maybe just pay attention."

I want to give you a little heads-up. As an entrepreneur, since you're the one that I direct this podcast to, as you're making your decisions about who to hire and who to bring into your business, I want you to have this in your mind so that you're thoughtful in the interview initial process when you bring people into your culture, into your company.

Okay, so entrepreneurs, let's just talk about entrepreneurs in general. Entrepreneurs are typically, any one of them I've known, to a fault, they are workers. You work. You get it done. You make sure it happens. You finish. Initiative is not something you look for. It's not something you hope to have. It's baked in you. Problem-solving, same. There's nobody coming to save you. You have to solve problems. And the other thing is urgency, timing, knowing that things matter in terms of the response, the results, the delivery. All of that is part of how we make things happen.

I just bought something that I, of course, found on Facebook, and there are these, they're called safe lights. I'll give them a shout out. I think that's what they're called, safe lights. They are these super cute, really thin strands of light that you can use to wrap around a tree or ... I'm sorry, they're called StarBright lights. I want to make sure I'm giving the right shout-out, StarBright lights. So they're just super cute and for Christmas is coming and I love to decorate, so I totally fell into the hole. And I went through the whole process of filled out all of the details for the order, and then got distracted. My doorbell rang. We had some things happen, and so I put the phone down and then I thought, "Well, I'll come back to it if I really want it."

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I'm not even kidding. Six minutes later, my phone rang and it was the StarBright lights people saying, "Hey, we noticed that you didn't buy your lights and we wanted to give you one more offer and if you buy them with me right now, I'll give me 10 more percent off." Come on. That's pretty intense. That's pretty good.

I had already read that the company is owned by, it's a small family business, as far as at least what they said. I'm going to go with it. That they are, that's what they wrote up about them. And so I thought, "Well, of course, that's kind of cool, a little entrepreneurial thing." And they're getting it done, that's what they want to do in the world, and I was impressed. So that, to me, it's a spirit, it's an energy that exists in entrepreneurs that doesn't make you better people, it's just how you're created and so that's why you're all already be inclined to take the risk of starting a business.

When we look at corporate environments, they're different. It doesn't mean that people who work in companies aren't hard workers. Don't try really hard. Don't focus on results. Don't want to deliver amazing success. Aren't ambitious. Don't have initiative. None of that. I come from a corporate background. I worked in a startup culture for years that turned into more of a bureaucratic company, corporate culture. I know the difference between the nimbleness of being a young startup company, and then the layered, bureaucratic slowness of corporate culture, which I have found for myself just didn't suit me.

I found it exhausting and I was terribly impatient all the time and thought it was futile, and then other people, of course, really enjoy that. They thrive in it. So as we hire people, and this is where I've seen this happen the most is when my clients have gone from that initial team. Let's call it six to 10 people, and then they want to start to hire people into more senior roles. And that doesn't mean C-suite chief level, but more like director or even vice presidenty role. I mean, we call each other anything we want, but that role where people are managing people and processes, not just processes.

And so a lot of times when you start posting jobs like director of marketing, director of social media, director of operations, director of sales, you're going to start to then attract more candidates who might have experience in more corporate settings. And a lot of the times the conversations I've had with clients through this process is a lot of these candidates are incredibly impressive. They have really impressive experience. They come from impressive companies. They have substantial accolades and training and accomplishments and education. All the things.

And so as we're trying to think about our grownup version of our business, a lot of us think, "Oh, well this includes really upskilling and up leveling the people we hire." And that's not necessarily not true. It's just that that alone does not qualify them to do your work well in your

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company. And what I have seen happen a lot is we have hired folks with these very impressive backgrounds and very talented people. These are not untalented people, but they enter into this entrepreneurial culture and they can't do it. They flail. They can't deliver. They can't keep up. They find it overly demanding. They get frustrated with the change, the rapid pace of change. The inability to have a lot of resources available to them.

And really there's a lack of ability to transition from that strategic position to the tactical one. And one of my clients said it best that, "Everybody in my company, no matter what they do, has to be able to be a producer." They have to be able to deliver at the production level at whatever your business is in addition to running the whole part of that team, running that part of the business. So when you think about, and for some of you this is really relevant and some of you, it isn't.

Now, the flip is also true. For those of you who run companies who might be listening to me and you worked with a two, three, four, 8 million, 100 people business, and you hire people with entrepreneurial experience, that can be a crash and burn. Because entrepreneurs are like, "What, why is this a problem? I took initiative. I got it done." A lot of people are like, "No, you needed to do involve Rhonda, Nancy, Dave, John, Luke, Mark, whoever from all these other departments before you made that decision."

So the telltale signs, I think that you have to pay attention to is that entrepreneurs are producers. We roll up our sleeves. When we want something done, we do it now. We focus on the work and results and we have an efficiency quotient that is off the chart. We see management as a means of results, as achieving results.

On the flip side, someone who comes from a much more robust corporate culture is used to delegating, is used to having meetings. To chat, to discuss, to talk through things. They want to set up processes, which may involve a lot of different people. Conversations are often defer to the person who's in charge. So, "Oh, well, that's, so-and-so, so she'll take care of it." And a lot of times the management role is a means of reviewing things, discussing them, versus getting them done and achieving them. And I know that it's very subtle, and so a lot of my clients will hire people that they're super excited about, and then it's not working and they don't understand why. Because, of course, these folks are so talented and they're so lovely, but they can't assimilate.

It's as simple as people who come in, work and shut off their computer and they're unavailable. Entrepreneurs don't know what to do with that. This is not what they're used to. Now, unfortunately, I think a lot of entrepreneurs aren't clear about what they expect and that gets you in trouble because then people really do think your expectations are unreasonable. And we've talked about that in previous podcasts. But I do think your understanding of how, in a

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larger company, decisions are not usually at the tip of your finger for the people who you hire. They're not usually emboldened to just decide and take action, because there's all these other factors that have to be considered. That you have to talk to different departments and divisions to get approvals.

And whereas for entrepreneurs, you're the director of marketing, make a decision and get it done today. Why is it not done? And then the other thing that we hear is, "Your expectations are unreasonable. I don't have enough support. I don't have enough people. I don't have enough." And again, entrepreneurs listen to that and think, right, because you're a person. There's you and your three people on your team. What are you doing? I need you to be a producer just as much as you would be the delegator. And so that's a thing and so I just have watched so many people not survive in entrepreneurial cultures.

So this bears importance for you in how you really get clear about what your values are. I just was doing this last weekend how to CEO. My clients are right now really working on their compelling reason and their vision and values. And one of the women that is in my program said, "I just want people roll up their sleeves and get to work."

I said, "Yeah, that's a value. Is it written in your values, because I didn't hear it?" And if that's what you expect, you have to tell people that because someone who's been used to, "Well, I don't really roll up my sleeves. I delegate the work to the people who roll up their sleeves and I go home at the end of the day." That's great if it works for them. Again, I don't disparage that. I just, it doesn't work in your culture. You have to be really clear because I think ... And then the last thing I'll say about this is the efficiency of your time, and I know I referenced this, but I know how much you are capable of getting done in a day.

I know how focused you are because I hear it from my clients how frustrating it is to watch how so many people don't really maximize all their time. And that's, again, because if people have worked in a company. They come to work, they go get their coffee. Maybe they wander around say, "Hi." They don't really just come to work, sit down, do it. They bring their coffee or they drink it in the car. Most people don't do that. There's so much time wasted inside corporate cultures. It's a problem.

I actually think it's a huge issue that companies should be paying much more attention to because you are effectively paying for what can be done, what kind of results can be achieved. I think people could be achieving a lot more if they were directed. But in your window, you don't have a lot of resources. In your work, you don't have tons of available free time for people to just not do stuff. So again, they come into your company and they're like, "I can't get over how much gets done here in a day. I can't keep up." And that's probably in some of their cases true. And again, that's not their fault. It's just, it's a difference. It's such a difference.

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So as you're hiring these more senior roles ... Although I would even say I've noticed this in assistants who are used to working in a bigger corporate business and then an assistant who works for an entrepreneur and hasn't worked for an entrepreneur before. Totally different ball game. You've got to really think about, "Okay, am I clear on my values? Have I been really clear in the job description? Have I been incredibly clear in the interview? Have I asked questions through that interview process that are really, really going to help reveal their perspective, their philosophy, their belief system about work? And have I even created a trial, a process that I put people through that shows me, helps demonstrate this?"

And if it makes sense for people to come into your office and spend a half day with you, I would do it. More you can try people on the better. A lack of experience in working in an entrepreneurial culture does not preclude people from working for you. I wouldn't say that, but I would say that proceed with every intention of ferreting through things that you take for granted in how you think about and do your job every day and what you expect of people.

We're going to hire people and it's not going to work out. That's just a deal. It's how it works. I just want to try and help you prevent too much of that, because I know it's hard on your spirit and it's hard on everybody else. So just because they have sexy experience and a really great resume and really cool companies they worked for does not mean they can come into your business and create magic. Fair enough? Okay. Thanks for tuning in. Talk to you again next time.

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One more thing before you go. In a world of digital courses and online content, I like to work with my clients live because I know that when you have someone you can work with, ask questions of and meet with, you're so much more likely to get the success that you want. So head on over to howtoceolive.com to learn more about our very exciting, very exclusive program just for female entrepreneurs. We'll see you there.