

Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members  
Episode Transcript



LEAD  
YOUR  
TEAM

*for Female  
Entrepreneurs*

*with*  
KRIS PLACHY

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 white halter-neck top with a geometric pattern. On the left side, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'LEAD YOUR TEAM' in a large, bold, serif font, 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.

## Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members

### Episode Transcript

Hey, I'm Kris Plachy, host of the Lead Your Team Podcast. Running a million-dollar business is not easy. 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.

Well, hello and welcome. This is another episode that I referred to last week. There were a couple of tiny observations I wanted to share with you. So today we're going to talk about arguing.

I want to start by telling you a story. Several years ago, I was leading a workshop and I was talking to a woman in the class who had a new boss. This was a workshop for supervisors. She had a new boss, and her new boss had new expectations. And frankly, it sounded like her new boss had done a really good job explaining her expectations and defining what she was looking for.

So this woman that was in my workshop didn't like her new expectations, and thought they were unreasonable. I asked her, "Well, how's everybody else doing?" Because there were about five or six other people on her team who had to do the same kind of work. I said, "How's everybody else doing?"

And she said, "Well, they're doing fine. They're all hitting the goal." I said, "Well, I don't think the goal is unreasonable then, if other people are able to achieve it."

Well, she got pretty mad at me. Because, of course, she thought I was taking the side of the boss. I wasn't. I was just coaching her and trying to help her gain some self-awareness.

We go to lunch and I'm sitting at my table, my little desk where I was teaching. And one of the other women in the class who was a friend of hers, came over to the table. She was a really tall person and sort of imposing. She came up to me and she said, "Are you saying that what her boss did was right?"

I said, "No, I'm not saying that at all. I'm just asking her to pay attention to what her story is about her boss. Maybe those expectations are reasonable. What if she changed her mind? Maybe that's possible."

Well, this woman, I looked at her and I thought, "Oh dear, she's upset." I looked at her from my sitting position; she was standing. I said, "Are we in an argument?" She was not amused. But I didn't realize she was in an argument with me. I wasn't. I didn't know we were in an argument.

So I stood up and I said, "I have no skin in this game. I don't care. I'm not going to have an argument with you about it. This is ridiculous. I'm out." And she went out to lunch. We had a

## Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members Episode Transcript

rough rest of the afternoon. I think she sat there with her arms crossed, because she just wanted to fight me. She wanted to argue and prove herself. I'm like, "I got nothing."

Now, this is true. I've been coaching leaders for years and I have had managers and leaders get in fights with their employees. Lots of them.

And of course, I have such a different perspective because I was raised by a single mom. You didn't fight in my house. You talked. "Can we talk about this? Can we have a conversation?" It was very, "Can we talk?" It was always, "Oh God, no, I don't want to talk." I actually would rather have been yelled at. That's what I thought at the time.

Then I have family members though, who are from New York. You go into their house and everybody just yells at each other. ...! They're just loud and yelling all the time.

So much of your perspective about how to communicate comes from your family of origin. It just comes from your experience. Then we make assumptions that other people share that; and they don't. Your job first as a leader is to have the understanding that other people don't think about things the same way I do.

I have a lot of clients who say, "Well, if I have to talk to her about her performance, that's very confrontational." And I'm like, "No, it's not, it's a conversation." But to someone else, because of their life experience, it is confrontational to them. Which, of course, changes how they show up.

But arguing; the way that I define arguing is when we are elevated, our voices are escalated. Our body language is escalated. We are not giggling and having fun. We are yelling, insulting, chastising. Then maybe even passive-aggressiving. Then walking away. Arguing. Okay?

Just so we have a common understanding of what an argument is, is when both of us are like, ...! We're not just duking it out over an idea, we're arguing over right and wrong. And we are doing so in a way that is just not constructive.

I believe as a leader, there is no place for you to participate in that. Ever. Let me tell you why, then we can decide if you like my ideas or not.

When you're in a leadership role, you automatically carry the biggest stick. You can see this is true in so many places; people forget this. Leaders forget they already command authority just because of their role, their title.

That's not just true of CEOs, women who run their own company. That's true of a teacher in a classroom, a principal at a school, a parent, a lifeguard at the pool. Whoever's in charge already

## Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members

### Episode Transcript

has a big stick. You're already in the room, more predominantly, energetically with your role, with your title than others. So let's keep that in mind.

When you argue, you're lowering the vibration of a conversation. You're pulling it down into a place where it's not constructive. As a leader, that isn't useful for you. One of the things I say is, "It's not a good look. It's not a good look."

So if someone were to come in to you and be pretty cross with you: "Hey, Kris, I can't believe that you ...!" Whatever they say, they're cross, they're upset, they're mad, they're poking. They're picking at me.

I do not indulge or engage that. Because that's not the tenor of conversation that I believe creates a constructive culture. So I don't indulge it. If someone were to walk in to my office and do that and be cross and attacking, I would encourage them that maybe now is not the best time for this conversation. And we can talk about it later. I'm not indulging it. It's not going to solve anything, that kind of communication. Yelling, insulting.

That for me is how we first of all establish in our culture, the way that we're going to communicate. And if you are the arguer, this is a big thing to pay attention to.

Because there are some of you listening to this who I know pick fights. You may not even know you're doing it. But you're already the most powerful person in the room if you're the boss, if you own the company. You don't have to fight with people.

If you are that unmanaged; if your emotion is that unstructured, unmanaged for you, that is not when you talk to your team. Feel a little lecture-y. I don't mean to be.

But I just want to remind you, you don't have to talk to people when you're really upset. It's okay. Take a breath; walk away. All it takes is one blow-up to really fracture a relationship with somebody on your team. It's not worth it for that momentary release of yelling.

I think if this is a challenge for you, then we really want to work on how you're managing your emotions. Because what that means when someone just blows up, gets angry; that just tells me there's a lack of awareness and a lack of an ability to manage their emotions. Which doesn't mean that you're broken or wrong. It just means it's a skill you haven't developed yet. And that's a critical leadership skill.

I taught my people in my lab this month emotional triggers for female entrepreneurs: how to deal with it. When you are triggered and you become angry, what is your procedure going to be when that happens? That's part of what I help my clients with. Because you need one, if you don't want to be known as that person. Having a culture that is about arguing is not constructive for the team. I think it's a top talent detractor.

## Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members

### Episode Transcript

Now, if you have someone on the team who's an arguer, we got to manage that, too. That's a behavior. We need to run that through your values, your expectations, and help them understand that this approach to communication is a no-go here. And we need to help them understand what's going to happen if they try it again.

"If you come in hot and bothered, or if you elevate and escalate a conversation, I will not participate in it with you. I'm not indulging arguing. I will be happy to have a conversation with you, but not one that's based in pure emotion and poor management of myself. Absolutely not."

Is it okay to feel anger? Yeah. There's nothing wrong with the emotion of anger. We have to feel all of these emotions, you guys. We don't suppress emotions, but you don't have to work out your anger with other people.

Because I don't know if you're like me ... I'll never forget one time. I was at a soccer game. One of these kids, my daughter was a keeper, is a keeper. She's a soccer goalie. She's little, she was 10. And she got knocked down. She went to get the ball and this girl kicked her in the face or something terrible. It was awful. She was little, little girl.

The parents on the other team were chastising and insulting my daughter and laughing about it. And literally, I had that moment where I saw red and I lost my mind. I'm like, "Oh, it's a good thing I don't have a machete in my pockets because I would have just charged the parent soccer line. I was so mad and I was screaming at the [inaudible 00:10:15] of my husband's ... "I think you should go to the car." I did.

So we all know anger happens. Listen to me. It just doesn't have any place at work. I tell my people too, "Whatever that is that you do with your husband at home, please don't do that here at work. That whole passive-aggressive, silent treatment thing. We don't do that here."

I don't have anybody that does that, but I have. This is a playground for emotionally mature adults. But we have to model that. And there will be people who won't know how to deal with that.

Again, if this is you, you really lose your cool, I would love to help you with that. Because it's fixable. What bothers me for you about that is it takes away from your value and your gorgeousness as a leader, and as a woman and your vision. Because it sticks; your anger sticks with me. It doesn't go away if I'm your team member. Then it changes my behavior.

Being angry with people and arguing with people can often be a subtle form of manipulating their behavior so that they won't ever do something again, to make you angry out of their own fear. It's not a useful leadership technique.

## Ep #109: Arguing with Team Members Episode Transcript

I really do believe that most people who get very angry and argue, they don't realize the impact. They don't know what they're doing. They also don't know how to change it. Because like I said, a lot of this comes from how you were able to be seen and heard as a child.

I'm not a psychotherapist. I'm not. But if you yelled in your family when you were a kid, it's likely part of your communication style. Or the opposite: You completely cower when people yell. So there's no place for arguing at work, and that starts with you.

If you have this issue in your business, I would first just ask you to talk about it with yourself. Get some coaching, get a plan in place for how you're going to manage yourself. Then you might want to extend that conversation to the team.

Just say, "Look, I know this has been a dynamic year, and that's going to change. I don't want to do this anymore, and here's why, and here's how we're going to fix it." Tell the truth. Okay?

So we are building the interest list. We're getting pretty close, y'all, to opening up enrollment for the How to CEO Program for April. I would love to meet you, work with you, help you do all the things.

We have an incredible lineup of guest experts, as usual. It's a game-changing program. If you go to [howtoceoregister.com](http://howtoceoregister.com), we have a lot of information there for you: client testimonials, things you can find out.

But we're really proud of what we're doing here, and of the community that we're creating of amazing women who are leading businesses. And doing so authentically with their own voice, but still having the kinds of structures in place that help them lead and manage people better.

Okay? I hope to see you in April. Have a good rest of the day.

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](http://howtoceolive.com) to learn more about our very exciting, very exclusive program, just for female entrepreneurs. We'll see you there.