

Ep #122: How to Know If You Should Promote Them
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 photograph 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 title 'LEAD YOUR TEAM' in large, bold, black serif font, followed by 'for Female Entrepreneurs' in a smaller, italicized serif font. Below the photograph, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'with KRIS PLACHY' in a serif font, with 'with' in italics.

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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.

Hey there, welcome. I'm so glad that you're here today. We're going to talk about in this podcast, how to know if it's time to promote someone. I've had this come up with quite a few of my clients lately so I thought, why not? Let's talk about it. So, first of all, I kind of want to treat this a little bit as a do's and don'ts, so we'll think about it that way because promoting people can feel like a very easy way to give someone what they want, and you get a lot more in the business that you think you want without it having to be hard. And in my life experience, I have found that when I try to do things that aren't hard, I try and find the easier way to make something happen, it usually backfires, and it doesn't work for me. I just want some litmus test for you to have when you're considering promoting someone.

Let's say you have a team. I know most of my clients average about 10 to 15 people on a team. I appreciate some of you listening may have 3 and some of you may have 400, so anywhere in there. But when you have someone on the team that you have identified as a potential to grow into whatever that next level is, I think there are some key elements that you want to have in place that don't overcomplicate things, but at least give you a little more direction. Let's use an example. Let's use the example that I hear a lot for female entrepreneurs which is, I want to promote my assistant, my virtual assistant, my personal assistant, my executive assistant to my operations director. You hired an assistant for a reason, so all things being equal, what I would hope you would have had is a job description, with a clear result, a clear set of objectives, and clear responsibilities, all dialed in, and then you hold them accountable to delivering on the expectations of the position.

What we set up in How to CEO is all of this part, plus your vision, and your values, and your expectations for behavior, so that everything's put together. So that when you're evaluating somebody's performance, if you're evaluating a virtual assistant's success, you are evaluating her or him based on the criteria you have established. The don't on the other side of that is, what I see a lot of people do, which is, "Oh, I love my virtual assistant. They're so helpful, they just do such a great job. It's amazing. I really just want to promote them. I need additional help and I think they could do it." And you haven't even evaluated what they're doing based on any substantial criteria. It's just more like it's working and you like it, and it feels good, and you like them, and they like you. And everything's great.

Listen, that could work out really well for you. I'm not suggesting it's a doomed failure, I'm just saying, when you only use how you feel as the litmus for whether or not you're going to advance someone's career with you, that may not work out. If you're getting a hunch like, "Ooh, I think I might want to give this person more opportunity in my business," let's first make

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sure that they have a clear job description, clear goals, and there's some sort of measurement process that you've been following. Again, it does not have to be super formal, just so we can kind of substantiate that they actually really know how to do the things that you're telling yourself that they're really good at. You've got to get your brain out of the way here. If you like someone, we get in the way, we justify, we make excuses. And what you have to remember is, if somebody is in a lower level position and they make some mistakes, those mistakes just get more impactful at the higher levels in your company.

And there are one-off mistakes, which of course, all of us make. So none of us are perfect. And then there's also sort of chronic mistakes, that are really rooted in some ability issues. Maybe there's a sloppiness, or a lack of attention to detail, or they miss deadlines, or they missay things, they don't have the right information, they don't understand something very well and they keep repeating the same issue. That only gets blown up in a bigger role, it doesn't get better. We don't improve the marriage by having the child. If the marriage isn't doing well, it doesn't get better when you add a baby. If the person in the job is kind of screwing something up, it doesn't get better when you promote them. You follow me? Okay. Let's just make sure we have that clear, all right, that they have aligned to your vision and your values, and your expectations, and the job, they're really consistent.

Then, when you start having fantasy about, "Ooh, I'm going to promote this person to my operations director," now what we need to do is write the operations director job description. First, what is this job? Now, if you're like, again, most of my clients, this next promotion is also going to be about taking things off your plate. We're moving you more into the CEO role so that means we have to transition elements of what you've been doing onto another role. That's a good, that's part of the growth process. We need to do that. But we have to do that very intentionally. So what is it that this now, this VA, isn't going to become the bigger VA ops person? We're going to put this person in a new role. What is it? What's the key result? What are the key objectives? What are the day-to-day responsibilities? Will this role have management responsibility?

A director of operations will, theoretically. What are the requirements and skill for someone in a director of ops role? So I've said this a lot, but this is a challenge that a lot of my clients have. And I've watched happen over and over again is, if we use the metaphor that your team is playing a game, what we tend to do is we look at the team we have, and then we decide what game we want to play. And we put the players that we have on the team in the positions and so we design a game around the players. And I want you to think about it differently. I want you to think, "Okay, what game am I playing? And how do I win that game? And so then what types of players do I need on the team to win that game?" That's a very different way to think. So in your brain, you're like, "Oh, I have this great person."

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And maybe they're telling you, "Oh, I'm ready for the next step. I'd like to get promoted. I'd like you to get a raise. I'd like to make more of an impression on your business and help you more," all these things, they tell you all this. So you're like, "Oh, well, cool. Well, I don't want to miss out and I don't want to lose them, so I'd better promote them," but then you just promote them without a lot of direction. And it's now just sort of glorified role. And now we've actually put them into a job that they may not be qualified for. And that only starts to show up when your company builds itself out. And now you have a director of operations who has to manage other people and they don't know how to do it, but that's on you, because you promoted them. You have to be very thoughtful when you want to make promotion.

First of all, about then what is this next role? The don't here is don't just promote someone without any clear job description, get that really dialed. And then you'll have to interview them. You have to interview them against the role they will go in, just as you would anyone else. And I would always interview other people too, just to make sure. Now, how do we know that someone is ready to promote is, from their perspective, it's very simple if it's the right job. So we have to do the experience alignment, the skill alignment, the competency alignment. Can they do the job you want to put them in? You have to go through that process. It is not just a, "Yay, yeah. I'll change your title and I'll give you a raise." We don't do that. But how are you really know if they're ready, so let's say they meet all the criteria.

And you're like, "Yeah, no, I wrote the job description. They have what they need. I interviewed them, I talked to them about it, I had them did a project. I had them show me that they could do the job." You did all of it. How do we know if the person's ready? How do we know if someone's ready internally to promote? It's a very simple answer, they have a track record of success, consistent. They don't have dippy do performance, they don't have drama, they are not emotionally up and down, they don't call in sick, they don't come in late. They get along with the team, they align with the culture, they're a good fit for your business and you, and everyone else. And they have a track record of success. They demonstrate consistent results, whatever that is. I was just talking to my twins who are both 16 and they want to get jobs.

And so we were making their resumes and they thought that's dumb. I've never really had a job, how do I make a resume? We were having this whole conversation and I was explaining to them, employers at your age, this isn't about having tons of work experience, this is about demonstrating a track record of success. Your athletic accomplishments, your academic accomplishments, things that you've done that already prove to the world the way that you think and behave. Because we know that past results, past success, consistent, predicates future results, because mostly success is not skill-based, it's based on your brain, and it's based on your mindset. And if you are somebody who is used to succeeding, you are the person I want in my team.

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If you have been in this business and you've already shown me that you phone it in, you're great, you're nice, you do good work sometimes, kind of, maybe 70% of the time, but you're not consistent, I'm not promoting that because that only gets more highlighted at a higher level in your company. So you have to check for alignment and skillset, all the pieces that I've talked about, but then, we've got to do that values check, that alignment culturally, and make sure that you're really promoting people in your business who demonstrate that because that's going to set the tone for everyone else in your company about who gets promoted. Is it the person who's really good at what they do, but they're kind of a jerk, or they're inconsistent, or they're hard to get along with. Or is it the person who's good at what they do, but they're lovely and they're fun, and everybody likes working with them and they're supportive, and they get results.

Who you promote speaks volumes about who you are and what you value. So that is my biggest advice for when it comes to promotion. Make sure the job they're in is clear, make sure you've really been tracking their results, that you're not just promoting people because you like them or because they want more money. And if you want to create a role, create the role, create the job description. And that's the kind of stuff, if you need help with that, that's why you should be in How to CEO with me because that's where we're going to do all of this amazing work together. So you do all that, then you put them through the process, you interview them, you have them do a project, you help them do something that demonstrates it, and then we really calibrate their ability to do the job. And then we make sure that we assess their attitude, their mindset.

And then when it comes to a salary, you pay people based on the role they're going in, not based on what they're making now. So you have to treat that role like, "Okay, what would I pay a director of operations?" You decide that. It's not based on, "Well, I paid this person \$25 an hour, so I'll pay them 30 to do this." No. What would you pay a director of operations? Make that decision and then make them an offer, and they may or may not accept it. But that's how we have to treat this like a process, like everything else. So I hope that's helpful. I'd certainly always love to know.

And I wanted to tell you all, I've been wanting to do this, and I just haven't. So I would love for you, if you're inclined, to write a review for iTunes or whatever podcast service you listen to this program on. Your reviews make a huge difference to how many people see our podcasts. And we don't normally ask for you to do them, but I would love it if you would.

And then if you do a review, if you want to take a screenshot of that review on iTunes or wherever. You can even share it on Instagram, if you want and tag me @krisplachycoach, or you can email it to us at hello@krisplachy.com. I'm going to send you a beautiful, embossed How to CEO white journal. It's beautiful, it's really, really pretty. We can only mail them in the US, sorry guys. But I would love if you would do that, send that to us, and we will get you a

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journal just for you, and just for thanking you for the testimonial and the review. And just make sure you tell us you did it because we oftentimes can't tell who people are in their reviews because it's your username or what have you. So you have to notify us, and that way we will absolutely get you that journal.

Thank you for tuning in. Also, if you're ready, go to howtoceoregister.com, check out what we're doing this month. Super fun. So many great things always going on with us. So I'd love nothing more than to meet you, see you in person, and do all we can to support you. Thanks for tuning in today.

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.