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2 SPEAKERS

Jill

Mike Jeacock

START OF TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:09] Jill

Hello. Hello. You're listening to the leadership podcast with me, Jill Saville.

[00:00:30] Jill

And today on the podcast, I have a very good friend of mine, I nearly said an old friend of mine, who is sitting in the U.K., I've not seen him for ages, so it's just lovely to sit and see him. He was just telling me about having his haircut in the garden. So it's Mike Jeacock. Mike and I met when we were at the Legal Aid Board. So maybe, Mike, you can introduce yourself.

[00:00:57] Mike Jeacock

My God, the Legal Aid Board, that's a long time ago. It soon became the Legal Services Commission, didn't it? So before that, I was kind of working in financial services. I was effectively doing the retail transformation programme for the Royal Bank of Scotland as it went through its massive transformation; The famous project Columbus and McKenzies. I was part of that team, which was quite exciting. So I guess without realising that was my first, real introduction to Transformation, Change, things of that sort. I'd worked in various departments in Royal Bank, the one I took most away from was eight years in the HR department, which interestingly, they sent me as a form of punishment because I refused under the management training programme to stay any longer doing corporate lending on the basis that I think I would have died there if it had gone on for much longer. People were promoted by moving one desk to the right and that was their ambition. So I guess I knew I wasn't cut out for Corporate Banking. So they sent me to HR, best thing I ever did as I started to learn about people. And I dare say as we go through this next 20/30 minutes, people will be high on the list.

[00:02:12] Mike Jeacock

And then I decided I wanted to go into the public sector, quite why I don't know. I think I'd taken a bang to the head at that particular time or somebody was very convincing. One of the consultants, I think it was Odgers that convinced me that I should go work with one of our favorite, one of my favorite leaders and I think one of yours, Steve Orchard, and I only worked for him for 15 or 16 months but what an experience, you know. The guy was legal aid through and through. He recognised the need for change. He recognised that some of the skills that hopefully I brought, not least a bit of personality and things like that, that it is okay to be a leader that cared. So he gave us a bit of head, really. And I think that's where you and I bumped into each other. We were kind of wrestling with these challenges. And of course, then Tony Blair's government came along with access to justice, which in some ways, I didn't recognise it, catapulted us into more change, a positive thing, I think, in that sense. But it was really, really interested.

[00:03:17] Jill

Let me just go back to Steve Orchard then, because leadership is our thing and my recollection of him was that you felt so safe. I can remember we were going through a huge change with the criminal contract or something like that, and nobody liked us and being in his office one day and er I was I was quite stressed about it and he said, look, I am going to go off and play golf, I can't remember where he came from, (Dorset said Mike) I'm going to spend the weekend. I'm going to play golf. I'm not going to think about it he said so don't you...and it gave you that permission to switch off.

[00:04:07] Mike Jeacock

Yeah. What reminds me of Steve's is, I used to go in.... you'd have a brew tea (a pot of tea) and a cup of tea....his feet would be up on the desk. I think in those days you might have been allowed to have a fag (a cigarette), maybe or maybe not. And some of the biggest decisions we ever made was with him sitting with his feet on the desk saying 'we're going to do that Mike, or you're going to do that. What support do you need from me?' which at that level of seniority was unusual at the time. It's unusual now. But he didn't know it and I didn't know, he was an enabling leader. He knocked down the barriers for you. He used to take me to see the Lord Chancellor. And the way he dealt with the Lord Chancellor was quite spectacular. I mean, he just didn't change, you know, just said that these are the rules of the game, this is what we should be doing. So that was what it was all about.

[00:04:57] Jill

That's true. When he was called in front of select committees, I mean, you would think he was just going out for lunch. [Yeah]... this calmness... and I think the legal aid board, whilst under him, we really thrived.

[00:05:14] Mike Jeacock

I was sorry I didn't work with him longer, if I'm being honest, because it was such a great opportunity. And I could sense I was learning.....and of course you only have to nip (go) next door and get your finances sorted out with Brian. I mean it wassuch...

[00:05:30] Jill

That's true, I'd forgotten him, yes.

[00:05:31] Mike Jeacock

Yeah, they were quite a double act the pair of them. So that was always a healthy relationship as well because Brian offered challenge as well. He was steeped in legal aid as well, which was always helpful. So you had plenty of experts. Then you had the up and coming people, people like Richard Collins, who was making his way. But what struck me about the public sector, it was my first experience, was just how good the staff are. And they get bad press. I never give them bad press.

[00:06:02] Mike Jeacock

But the leadership was different. I found the first three months, as you said 'what's the biggest difference- I said it was the difficulty in getting decisions. Not necessarily but in government there were things that slowed everything down, that was my learning curve for the three first three to six months, I'd have to say.

[00:06:20] Jill

Let me go on to Richard Collins then, because I worked with him for quite a while, and he also was somebody who enabled me to go off and do my own thing.

[00:06:33] Jill

You talk about coming from the private sector, and I can remember we all knew that you'd come from the private sector, but you never made us feel second best.

[00:06:42] Mike Jeacock

I think my challenges were and I guess the bank had started to move away from some financial services some five years earlier in that they celebrated technical experts, but they didn't necessarily make them people managers, understanding that often that was a mismatch, that if you wanted your best technical people, I found when I went into the public sector, lots of very technical people who weren't as comfortable managing people as they probably should have been. And that impacts on staff when you've got leaders who don't have those emotionally intelligent skills. They did care but they cared in terms of technical stuff. If you gave them a policy document to read or to go and do a one to one, I know what they'd be doing, they'd be doing the technical document! One of the lessons I learned early on was to say, 'how many one to ones have you cancelled this week?' and they used to look at me and say, 'well, five'. 'Oh, right, OK, why was that?' 'Well I'm too busy' and I'd say, 'well, you should be too busy doing the one to ones because that's where you'll get the most benefit'. And it didn't make me hugely popular with some people. But, you know, I've long since passed caring about that...I wasn't rude to people...I just said it....

[00:07:47] Mike Jeacock

Activity management was always big on my list. It's say 'What are you doing all day that will help you deliver the outcomes? And what do you think is important and what do, you know, your staff think is important? Do remember us doing 360s? My God, it was like a revolution that happened, you know,

[00:08:09] Jill

It was you mentioned H.R. and it's only more recently that I have really understood how far advanced our HR department was because there are many companies still only introducing what I thought was the norm in the nineties.

[00:08:29] Mike Jeacock

Well, one of the big takeaways for me from the days that Legal Aid was that you had to have your HR department as a business partner, not somebody there to just 'do people'. And actually, as soon as they understood that, they started to develop things around what the business required. And George, George Lepine who was in charge, was ahead of his time. And Lorraine.... was it Lorraine Jones? It might have been or maybe she was at SRA (Solicitors Regulatory Authority), I can't remember. They all blend in. But they were quite progressive in that. And, you know, I've just come back from six years in Jersey and much of the success is about how HR have adapted themselves as business partners. But I also did that for Facilities, I did that for Comms (Communications), I did that for anybody that had engagement.... finance.... instead of leaving them in their silos, you have to include them in the change programme. If they're not going through the change and transformation, how are they expected to feel the same things as the people who are working perhaps at the coalface? And it's really interesting, and I see loads of organisation toiling with this, because they don't focus on outcomes.... they're still handing out KPI and documents and hugely beautiful glossy documents on work, equality and diversity..... Equality, diversity is in the DNA of an organisation, it's not a policy that's handed out. 'Oh, look at us. We've now got a policy document that's well read'. Well, it's not...it's actually the action (that's important). When you go into business, it's the people at the end of the day. You probably realise I feel perhaps quite passionate about this...

[00:10:05] Jill

Yes...I can tell. And, er, as I said, I had no clue as to what we were going to talk about. I talked about you the other day in a group...

[00:10:14] Mike Jeacock

Ooh right

[00:10:14] Jill

...because today, I'm quite involved in mindset and the fact that we can choose our attitude. But once upon a time, I certainly wasn't and I let my emotions go with me. And I can remember you stood next to my desk and you'd be saying 'how are you Jill?' and I'd say 'Yeah, well, I'm not so good, but how are you?' And you say, 'well, I'm happy' and I'd say 'how can you be happy with everything turning to whatever?!' And you'd say, 'because I got up this morning and decided to be!'

[00:10:44] Mike Jeacock

Yeah. And I still do that every day now and I mean you might want something new and there are two or three of the things I've been able to attract that do exactly the same things every day. I spend 15 minutes every day just speaking to people, usually on the phone and simply saying thank you. It's worth..... you can't put a monetary value on it. Because the whole mantra for me now and you know what I'm going to say, I think, is that 'people don't care what you know until they know how much you care'[John Maxwell quote]. And I do that every day. How can you show people that you care about them? And that's in good times, bad times, when they need your help. Not always giving them solutions, although sometimes that's what you need to do, but actually just showing that you care. And I was talking to a group the other day, and we were saying that back in the day, and this is in the banking days before I went to legal aid, there was a big drive in the old bank on visible leadership and I always tell, and this a true story, and obviously they'd been to one of their meetings, probably a golf club in those days and probably got a round of golf, and somebody had told them that they needed to play more visible leadership. And I had a manager who, you know, we didn't know anything about, used to come and sit in his office, tea would be wheeled in, and the various customers. But every Tuesday between two and quarter past, after he was told this, he will come out of his office, walk around the office, never say anything to anybody and go back to his office.

[00:12:13] Mike Jeacock

So me, being the cheeky chappy that I was, I said to his secretary, 'we all know that it's between two and quarter past and it's Tuesday afternoon, because Mr X has walked around the office. And she said 'yeah, he's got a diary card that comes out and says..... And I said, 'Are you serious?' And she said, 'yeah, that's his response to visible leadership'. So, you can see the changes and how attitudes have changed. And I always thought with you your attitude was contagious. And that's kind of a good thing. If you can be positive and stuff, then people will respond. And if you need to put your arm around somebody, you need to put your arm around or.... And you need to be able to give them difficult messages. But.... It goes back to one of my first ever best managers in the bank who said to me 'treat people as you'd like to be treated yourself and you won't go far wrong, Mike'. And you know it's true. So, yeah, lots and lots of little things. But I do say thank you. Try it. If anybody is listening, try it every day, 15 minutes, you probably get through five or ten, twenty five a week, a hundred a month, twelve hundred a year just by saying thank you. Just see the impact it has and you'll have no difficulty finding reasons to say thank you to somebody.

[00:13:29] Jill

No, and thinking about Covid then. Thinking about everybody suddenly moving into this remote working space. What you just suggested may well be something to adopt. Would you say?

[00:13:47] Mike Jeacock

Yeah, I mean, Covid has been really interesting because in the first four months, I sat back and smiled to myself because they were saying this is about I.T. and the enabler and I've done remote management as you have and it is by far the most difficult thing ever to do. And one of the guys who rings me up when he's having a panic attack or a crisis said 'we're not connecting with the staff' so I said 'have you trained your managers on how to deal with remote management and what information are you providing them with?'. And he said No. So I said, well, why don't you start off by picking up the phone and phoning somebody that's on the lines working and say, how is it going? And you don't need to do anything for two days because it will go around like wild fire. It'll be better than any e-mail, but actually sit and talk to people. What are the difficulties? What would you like us to do better? And the number of businesses that just didn't go and look at remote management andwhen you've got a very proactive HR department, and we have got them out there, they recognise that. And as soon as it was getting the IT in place, it was about how do we support new manager? And in terms of wellbeing.... an organisation that's got a real agenda to well-being would have sorted out, because that's what it's about.

[00:15:08] Jill

That's true, I think that companies that already were very good at building trust and engagement, coped well in the remote sector. The companies that just wanted to see bums on seats and monitoring people, put in this surveillance technology.

[00:15:25] Mike Jeacock

Well I think it's the difference between an efficient process and an effective process, you know, getting the IT working is efficient. Being effective is about the people dealing with the issues that it throws up. And organisations are going to have a real challenge getting people back into that space where going back to the office... And there'll be people,,, you'll get a blend....any organization worth its salt will blend this and say, you know, because I still see too many people being recruited and they're not trusted. And I say to people, why would you do that? You know, if you've got a command and control and, you know, I hate command and control management, then you recruit the high level people, you bring them in and then you tell them what to do. They don't like it, then why would you do that? Why would you think that that's OK. And these people want to come and make a difference. And very often, what I call 'will do' people not 'can do' people. I mean, you want will do people on your team if you are going to make a difference. 'Can do' is a given. If you're recruiting anybody who can't do the job, then you've got a problem. When you've got 'will do'

people...with most of your staff 'will do' you'll see a massivedifference in an organisation because they'll pick up and run with it. And that's where enabling leadership is so easy. And it really is that easy. And I know people would probably say, well, it's not that easy, but it is that easy.

[00:16:51] Jill

I suppose it is 'that easy' ... personality comes in here, too, because your personality is such that you find it easy to make small talk, you find it easy to go around and find a topic that somebody is interested in. And I watched you do it a lot. But for some people, it isn't, it isn't so easy, as we mentioned earlier.

[00:17:14] Mike Jeacock

But why? Can I just challenge you back and I will challenge you back. So why are people in a leadership post if you're not sure that those are the skills that you're going to require? So I watch, I watch Coronation Street every week, I know Made in Chelsea characters. You know why? Because I like watching them and staff like me talking about them, you know. I know what's going on in The Housewives of Cheshire, mainly because one of them lives next door to me. So I do, I do kind of chat to people. And, you know, and again, I love Manchester United. You can always get people involved and talk about things and anything topical. I mean, it's not difficult. It really isn't difficult. And, you know, and I would argue and I would argue very strongly as you're probably gathering, that that you need to get the outcomes that you want from an organization.

[00:18:05] Jill

But the thing is that not everybody goes above and beyond. Not everybody goes further than they need to. And I'm going to, I might be embarrassing you here, but.... I remember I had not seen you for years, many years, and somebody in my new French family wanted to treat his brother for his twentyfirst, and he was mad on Man United, and I just thought, 'you know what? Mike Jeacock used to love Man United. I wonder if there's any way to get tickets?' So I contacted you. And not only did you give them your season ticket or whatever, because you had them, somebody met them and took them to the ground. And I have to say, my credibility in the French family here.... just went up because they now think that I can solveanything.

[00:19:01] Mike Jeacock

But I would play that back to you. I go back to what I said before. I care about our relationship and so if I can make that relationship back better by doing something you've asked me to do, and it wasn't a difficult ask, then I would say, why wouldn't I do that? And too many leaders don't even make the contact with people to know what they care about. I mean, Legal Aid was a good example. I remember there was an individual I won't name the person for fear of being sued. And everybody says, oh, that's just X, she's always like that or he's always like that. There were two of them. He's always like that. And I said, well, that's not acceptable, you know. But what can we do? I said, Well, who's the manager? So I sat down and we had a very interesting chat. And I said, you've got to challenge this because actually they're determining the outputs and the outcomes for an organisation. And actually, if you're doing proper management of performance, and there is a difference between management of performance and performance management, then you should be kind of doing that. I said to the manager, 'when was the last time you had a one to one' and he said 'oh, they don't like them?' and I said, 'and? And?!' So you can spot things.

[00:20:17] Mike Jeacock

And I learned very early on that good managers spot things. I mean, when I got my first assistant manager's job in the bank, I was going to change the world, me. And I used to work from 7 o'clock in the morning till 9 o'clock at night. All my staff were going home at five o'clock. My manager came in one day and he brought me a brick, a housebrick, and he put it on my desk. He said, There you go. I said, What do you mean? He said, Every time somebody brings you a problem, you pick it up and you put it in your haversack and you wonder why you're going home knackered, and your wife's probably complaining that you're never going home. You think that by you doing it, the team looks good. It doesn't, so pass the brick back. Every time you hear something, don't do it. And it was a magic lesson because all of a sudden I thought, well,.....and performance management, ...because I would have go performance managed. I thought 'if I do it and cover for the team, then I'll be all right'. And of course, I wasn't. So, ... I did learn

[00:21:16] Jill

And I've heard that in a different way. Don't take the monkey. I can't remember who wrote that...But somebody comes with the problem and it's a monkey of their shoulder. And if you're not careful, you've got it on yours.

[00:21:29] Mike Jeacock

But you can imagine me in a posh office with a brick on the desk. Is it a subliminal message? Well, actually, it probably was, if I'm being honest. But it's things like that. And you don't recall it then as good emotional intelligence because it wasn't the hot topic. But these are good, these were good people leaders.

[00:21:55] Jill

And the other thing, not only were you talking about mindset many decades ago, which I'm now into, you were also quoting John Maxwell, as you just have. Were you reading his books at the time or did you just see the quote?

[00:22:15] Mike Jeacock

Yeah, I made a decision in 1990, because it was 1990 I decided over the next five years I wanted to improve something. So rather than play at the edges, I thought, what am I going to do? And Emotional Intelligence was just starting to get some credence, so I had to read all those things, Good habits, Covey (7 Habits of highly Effective People by Stephen Covey) and people like that. I used to go webinars and my boss used to go (say), Mike why do you want to go to that? But actually I'm trying to learn. And the bank had just kind of gone into using profiling for things and I found that fascinating, certainly Emotional Intelligence. The best one (course) is when I was sent and we did animals (there were a variety of things) and it was animals and some other things. And I filled in the

questionnaire and I was with one of my best friends in the bank. We were actually in Scotland and we filled it in and they said come back after lunch and we'll give you the answers. When we got back in they were visibly excited. The people on stage were visibly excited and they said we need to....we were so keen to speak to you...we've been doing this for like three years and we've never had a panda in the audience! And my mate said, 'that'll be you' and of course, what was the next phrase? It was Mike Jeacock. Well who is he? And it's a panda because they were very rare then and they used to say there was a high and a low. And I wasn't between the high and the low I was right.....They said we've never seen anything like it. So what happened next? I was psychoanalysed for about 3 weeks afterwards! So just beware if your filling in these profiling forms. But I used to find that stuff fascinating. Try in your own ways and put them into practice.

[00:23:56] Jill

Yes

[00:23:59] Mike Jeacock

I do like people!

[00:23:59] Jill

Yes I know you like people, you don't have to persuade me

[00:24:00] Mike Jeacock

No but sometimes you work with some managers and you think 'you don't like people do you' in that sense. Sometimes it's as basic as that. And boards have got a lot to answer for, Jill. I think some boards are fantastic and they engage and they don't stand aloof. They they work to serve the organisation...as servants. But I've seen completely the opposite and it's just.... It's dysfunctional. So but that's another podcast for us to do.

[00:24:29] Jill

Well, I was just sat here thinking 'No, I'm not going to comment...'

[00:24:35] Mike Jeacock

No, don't go there but it is a hot thing. And I find it fascinating because I do ask some, as you know, cheeky questions on occasions and I think I sent you one the other day.....,And I've been talking to CEOs that are trying to do diversity & inclusion and failing miserably on many occasions. So they said, Mike, what would you ask me? So I said, if I was recruiting you, I'd say to you, if the organisation was a reflection of your behaviours towards equality & diversity, what would the organisation look like? And you want to hear the silence, the kind of 'I don't know'. I said, don't you think that it's kind of a bit of a statement? Because people do look up to you as the leader to role model stuff...and you get some inspirational stuff... You get some absolutely inspirational stuff. And I said, I can't add to that, just go do it. But that's about engagement because they still want to box equality & diversity off as women, men, black, white and it's not. It's much bigger than that ...it's much bigger. One of the best kept secrets in Jersey, which I still want to keep kept..was ...we were recruiting return-to-work parents, both male and female. What fantastic group of people, you know. We used to say, what hours do you want to do and they'd say, well, I can do twenty. Great, we'll take twenty hours off you because we know we'll get 25/26 hours off them. 'What, ...do I need to be in the office?' 'No'. And you just got this cadre of people who would eventually come back to the organisation if they chose. But they knew about the environment and it's things like that that for me means equality & diversity.

[00:26:14] Jill

And so you're talking there about flexibility of work, which I never realised being in the civil service, how lucky I was because I'd done full time, part time, three days, two days, and it wasn't seen as anything negative. Well, yes, it was seen as something that women did....and we were eternally grateful. But other than that, it was accepted even at senior levels. If they wanted to keep you, then they would allow you to do two days a week or whatever just to keep you. And yet I, I don't see that still...

[00:26:59] Mike Jeacock

I agree

[00:26:59] Jill

When people are talking about part time, and I'm saying.... if you remember, whenever we were inventing a job (not inventing a job) but there was a new role, some new work...

[00:27:09] Mike Jeacock

Drawing up a role description was the phrase that we used

[00:27:11] Jill

Oh sorry...And you look at it and you think, all of these jobs aren't 37/40 hours... they're not.

[00:27:17] Mike Jeacock

No

[00:27:17] Jill

And actually we only want somebody for 20 hours a week. But you're giving it a full role and I don't think enough thought was....

[00:27:27]

Well, two things. One, I couldn't agree more with you and I think it's more prevalent now than it ever was then. But you made an

interesting comment. You said allowed to, you know, that's not a negotiation with the person. If somebody can do 20 hours and that's four hours a day, five days a week, two days, 10 hours whatever you want to make it up, then that's the flexibility. And if you want to change it from a Tuesday to Thursday, you shouldn't seek permission to do that. And you come back to your earlier point. You have to trust these people simply because they're part timecontract.... You need to trust them. I mean, it never ceases to amaze me that organisations spend millions bringing in I.T. contractors and they don't trust them. They don't tell them what they really want. I mean I just kind of shake my head, but it's just mismanagement this stuff. And I would never think 'allow' would beand I'm not trying to pull you up... but flexibility works both ways, you know. If you needed them in a crisis, these people were there by your side often before you even asked them. They would be 'will do' people in my world. That would be a good example of a 'will do' person.

[00:28:34] Jill

There was a certain amount of 'allow', though, because you did have to apply for it. And one thing that I think this Covid has done is that, suddenly most people were at home, not just women. And I don't want to go back to what was normal. I'm hoping that people who actually work really well at home, can continue to work well at home. And the ones that want to go into the office can go there and it will no longer be along gender lines, which tended to be.

[00:29:06] Mike Jeacock

I agree, and I think if ever we've got an opportunity to think of excepting (changing from) promoting command and control management, this is the moment to do it. And let's have enabling leaders who recognise different people need different answers to things, different alternatives. But you need to be authentic with people because that's how you do build trust. If all of a sudden we send everybody back to the office and it will happen, I'm telling you it will happen, people will vote with their feet. They will, because they've suddenly discovered that they don't have to spend two hours on a train, if you're down south, to be with 300 people in a 200 people space. And that will change. And I think if you can find the right leaders and find the right processes, and I'm boring again, focus on outcomes, what do you want as an outcome for this, then you've got a head start. I'm not a big fan of the words 'new ways of working' or the 'new normal' because I don't think they knew what the old normal was. Never mind the new normal.

[00:30:10] Jill

I think you commented on a Simon Sinek video that I posted the other day. It's only 5 minutes. He's somebody that I really rate, he seems to make everything simple, talks so much sense...

[00:30:24] Mike Jeacock

Common sense. He speaks common sense...

[00:30:27] Jill

Yes, common sense which we're back to. But he said, why on earth do we call them soft skills? And, of course, as somebody who works in the soft skills area, I totally agree.

[00:30:38] Mike Jeacock

It's the hardest thing I've ever learned..... I could never understand why people call them soft skills. If they're that soft, why do so many people find them hard to do. That's all I think I said to you.

[00:30:47] Jill

The thing is, though, that wewe like soft skills because they're measurable and they're more quantifiable, whereas these soft skillsand going back to what I was talking about with the H.R. department, not only did they give us some kind of framework, I remember, they were talking about behaviours and we had a set of sentences and things... They gave us examples of what these behaviours looked like and certainly what these behaviors didn't look like. And at the time, I didn't appreciate just how good that was.

[00:31:23] Mike Jeacock

Well don't you remember the gasps of breath when we said that 50 percent of your reward is now based upon your behaviours, and 50 percent on what you would call the hard tasks. And people would ask, 'Mike, what does that mean?' and I'd say 'it means you're going to have to do some people stuff to get the right behaviors'. 'Don't you think I've got them already?' 'Well, no, not really. No. And we're trying to give you the opportunity.' Sometimes you just have to leave the organisation. One of the one of the biggest terrorists, and I use the word carefully in this sentence, came to me after six months and said, 'I didn't appreciate what you said about being people focused but can I just say that I've never enjoyed my job more. And you know, kind of, you're going to win then, don't you, really?' I said, what made the transition? Because I could see the impact it was having on other people. And I also could also started to see the impact of me being as I was, was having on people and it was never going to be acceptable. And, you know, those are wins for you.

[00:32:23] Jill

So human skills are really important. They're very hard to quantify and measure. Do you have any....tips? ..about how would you develop human skills?

[00:32:37] Mike Jeacock

Well, I think you've got to be comfortable with feedback. Somebody once said to me, and I didn't appreciate it again at the time, that feedback is the breakfast of champions. And I used to think 'bloody hell what does that mean?' and I was in a bit of a turmoil for probably a couple of hours. And then I started to think, you know he's right. I'm a big fan of 360. I'm a big fan of that kind of feedback. I'm a big fan of doing observation coaching. I will sit in with my people that I manage to watch them doing one-to-ones, not to pick holes in them (criticise) because, you know, just to help them improve if they were really struggling. Agenda setting....it's not about you speaking for 59 minutes of the hour and them doing one minute... stuff like that. I guess role modeling and kind of showing

people that softer skills can be achieved. 360 is very powerful. If it's used as a blunt instrument, then don't do it. That's my only caveat, because if it's just seen as a chance to vent and you've held a grudge against somebody for 20 years and this is your chance to vent, then don't do it. But you've got enough people clever enough to know what the right kind of commentaries are that are coming through. And start to look at that and stuff...and staff surveys....I like staff surveys, but not happy sheets, you know, in terms of..... And then when you've got the feedback, bring the people with you. At Jersey, some of our best ideas come from ...not to decry their jobs, the receptionists, the post people. They were brilliant because they knew all the things that were wrong really. And, you know, you should always take those commentaries on board so

[00:34:15] Jill

Involve people.....Feedback...

[00:34:18] Mike Jeacock

Communicate with people

[00:34:19] Jill

Difficult conversations as well.

[00:34:21] Mike Jeacock

Yeah. And there are lots of really good training courses on that....spotting mental health issues is a big thing. You need to be very aware of the pressures that people are working under, either personally, professionally or a combination of the two and just growing some of that sensitivity, you know, looking for the signs and..

[00:34:39] Jill

Yeah.....the question I have then is. What's the thing that makes you most proud or a couple of things, a couple of moments?

[00:34:51] Mike Jeacock

Wow, that's a big question. It'll sound very simplistic, but for me, it was really important. So, at the Solicitors Regulatory Authority, where I was the chief operating officer, I was there for seven years, they have an annual award for the star performer, which the staff all voted for. And an executive had never even made the top 20 list...

[00:35:16] Jill

...the short list...

[00:35:16] Mike Jeacock

And one year I won it and I was kind of gobsmacked (amazed) and the chief executive said, I don't know what to say about you, you know, and I said, 'you don't!' because I suppose in many ways it's the ultimate validation that the staff, because it was totally their vote, it wasn't executives. So for me, you know, that that meant quite a bit to me in terms of that, I guess the other highlight was dressing up as Pudsey Bear in Jersey for Children in Need (a UK charity) and actually walking around Jersey in the proper Pudsey outfit. We collected, 5,000 pounds. That's still remembered with some fondness in Jersey. But daft things like that. Those are the kind of things...

[00:35:54] Jill

Yeah....and you were just talking about being voted..because one of the things in that video of Simon Sinek was... all you've got to do is ask the team....the team knows who is the most trusted person, who the most reliable person is, and there you had a vote so that was brilliant. Thank you.

[00:36:16] Mike Jeacock

Yeah. So, I mean, it's things like that. It might seem to whoever's listening to this quite trite, but actually you asked me personally what were (my proudest moments) and those are the personal things. Yeah. I love teams doing very well. I celebrated at Jersey when they were Corporate Social Responsibility employer of the year. And this is a bloody regulator for Christ sake! We're supposed to??? people, but that was a kind of a celebration. The delight of people in terms of that, because people doit's a thank you thing at the end of the day, isn't it?

[00:36:47] Jill

So what's your vision then, or your wish for the future? You've just mentioned (CSR) and I don't want to divert you....you can talk about anything. But corporate social responsibility you mentioned, and I was thinking of sustainable companies, sustainable business and how the guy at Unilever, Paul Polman was it?.

[00:37:08] Mike Jeacock

Yeah...

[00:37:09] Jill

He left and the guy at Danone has just left. At first I thought there was a trend for more 'people over profit', but it seems to have stalled.

[00:37:24] Mike Jeacock

Yeah. Because I think people have got lofty aims... but my idea for(CSR)...the reason Jersey won is because I gave everybody 15 hours a year to do Corporate Social Responsibility. I gave them 15 hours. I said you can do things, you know, provided that you're not of doing stupid things. And people came together. We signed up with Mencap. They had an area that needed help. So people

cutting down trees and doing stuff. But the build up in team work..., I mean, some people had worked in the same building for five years and never spoken to anybody, you know, from the top floor. So it's great if you've got a leader doing it but actually, it's gathering in people, gathering the staff. That would be something I would kind of say is something I'd be happy to be associated with because it brought people out. I mean, I remember at Legal Aid somebody one of the guys there, they said that he wasn't well organised. So I sat and talked to him. He ran the bloody scout jamboree for the whole of Great Britain and they said he couldn't organise anything...I remember saying to his manager because he was in one of the regional offices and I said, '????' and he said, well, we're not sure he's good organising. I said, have you ever asked him what he does outside of work? He said, he's something to do with the scouts. I said, something to do with the scouts? He organises the jamboree for the whole (GB)....they were going to Japan I think...I must have a memory like something else. But he was taking, like, 700 scouts to Japan. I said, I think you should go and have a chat with him anyway. Sure enough, within 12/18 months, he was a great supervisor. Oh, it's things like that. And I know I'm smiling about it but it's memorable stuff, you know, just by asking.

[00:39:11] Jill

And that could take us into all kinds of things. Because I've seen some people thrive under one manager and be absolutely terrible under another, it's just how.

[00:39:24] Mike Jeacock

Well, yeah, you know, when I first walk into organisations, I'm sure it's the same for you.. and people are very happy to say, 'I've got 20 years experience'. And I used to say to them, have you got one year's experience you've used for the last 20 years? And they kind of look at you, because they've survived on something they did well, 20 years ago. And that's my...y that may seem an exaggeration, but it's not too much of an exaggeration.

[00:39:46] Jill

I've heard you said that before as well...

[00:39:50] Mike Jeacock

And it's always a good opener, so you know, tell us about your current experiences. Like what? Tell us what you're most happy about in the last 12 months, six months if you want. And you know, some of them toil with that. Yeah. So experience is a very interesting measure, shall we say.

[00:40:07] Jill

Absolutely. So I want to thank you for coming in and sharing your experience with us. It's certainly been a pleasure for me. And I'm sure that you've been talking about all kinds of issues that are still as relevant today as they were when we were going through them.

[00:40:24] Mike Jeacock

Yeah, that's the thing...you know...it might seem to you...but the same issues are still knocking about. It's about people, it's about being authentic. And as our favorite person says, it's about caring for people and if you can make ...do all those things well, then you've got a good chance of being an effective, a really effective leader, in my humble opinion.

[00:40:46] Jill

In your humble opinion. There's nothing much humble about you ...

[00:40:53] Mike Jeacock

Is this what...is this an interview that you were expecting? Or you didn't really know, did you?

[00:40:59] Jill

Well, I knew. Yeah, I knew roughly, because you and I have had various conversations. So I did know the things that you were passionate about. And I knew that there would be things that people would be interested in listening to. So, yeah. Thank you. You didn't disappoint Mike at all. Thank you so much for coming...

[00:41:16] Mike Jeacock

And have a lovely weekend. It's Friday. The sun is shining. Well I think it's Friday. I'm not sure because with lockdown they just blend into each other. Weekends aren't weekends any more they're just another day.

[00:41:30] Jill

That's true. And this podcast goes out on a Monday. So thanks for that...

[00:41:37] Mike Jeacock

This Monday?

[00:41:38] Jill

Next Monday.

[00:41:38] Mike Jeacock

Oh it's going on Monday? Well don't forget to send me....if you think it's any good, send me a copy. If not don't bother!

[00:41:42] Jill

Of course! Yeah, definitely. Thanks for coming on...

[00:41:46] Mike Jeacock

Thank you for the opportunity. It's been great to talk to you, great to catch up with you. And as I said in my note, you were a pleasure to work with, I'll pass the compliments back. And you've obviously got a passion for stuff very similar to mine. So more power to your elbow, or whatever else you're using to make a difference.

[00:42:04] Jill

That's lovely, thanks very much.

[00:42:06] Mike Jeacock

Ok, see you again soon. OK, bye bye.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



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