

Podcast Transcription

The Management Trilogy: Crisis Management – Leading with Valor

Hey, everyone. You're ready to dive in. Today, we are getting tactical. We're talking crisis management, but not just, you know, from any old standpoint. Um, we're really going deep on something called the Management Trilogy, and I'm so excited to have you here to break it down. Yeah, I think it's gonna be a fascinating deep dive.

What's so interesting about the Management Trilogy is that it's not just about reacting when everything's on fire. It really is about proactively building a leadership style, a framework for thinking about leadership that can handle anything. And the best part is that, at least for this deep dive, we are getting the inside scoop.

Right. Straight from the source. We're talking about Brian Ward, who's the CEO of Affinity Consulting and Training. Yeah. He's the one who literally created the management trilogy. He's really the architect of this whole framework. Exactly. Right. And I think if we think about this framework in a broader context, it's really about acknowledging Leadership, effective leadership, isn't a one size fits all endeavor.

That's so true. You need different approaches. Yeah. Or different situations. Okay, so let's unpack this whole management trilogy idea. Absolutely. Because I love, I love thinking of it as like having different tools in your leadership tool belt. Precisely. So you've got daily management. I love it. Which is all about leading with your values and making sure things are running smoothly day to day.

Then you've got strategic management. This is where you're really leading with vision, looking ahead, shaping the future. And then of course the one we're really going to be focusing on today, crisis management. Which is leading with valor when, well, the unexpected hits the fan. Yeah, and that is a good point you bring up about crisis management.

And as anyone who's been through any sort of crisis knows, Big or small, that leading with valor piece is so crucial. Oh, it's a zen thing. Because it's not just about putting out fires. It's about navigating the chaos. It's about making the hard calls when they matter the absolute most. And you're not always going to have all the information, right?

Right. So, being able to adapt, be agile. Yeah, and I think that's why understanding this really nuanced piece of crisis management is just so important for anyone in a leadership role. I think so too. And I think you're going to find it. Oh, I was just going to say, yeah. So to be super clear for everyone listening to this deep dive, we are focusing on crisis management as a part of this broader thing that is the management trilogy.

Yes. Um, and we're going to, you know, really uncover what is unique about this approach and why it's essential for navigating those make or break moments as a leader. And for

anybody out there who's, You know, probably dealt with their own share of unexpected challenges every day. I think you're really going to find some insights here that will resonate with your own experiences.

For sure. Absolutely. So we're talking crisis management. And I think one of the things that I've always kind of struggled with is, like, not all crises are created equal. No. Right. It's not just like a one size fits all kind of Definitely not. And, and, you know, thinking back to the work of Otto Lerbinger, who really was a pioneer in crisis communication, um, he categorized crises into 10 types.

Oh, interesting. And understanding which type you're facing is really job number one, because it drastically changes how you respond. It's almost like crisis management needs, like, its own cheat codes or something. It really does. Right. Like, depending on what you're dealing with Yeah. Like a different way to approach it.

Just like in a video game, right? That's exact. Recognizing what type of challenge you're up against gives you a huge advantage. So let's maybe look at a few of Lerbinger's crisis categories that really kind of highlight the need for that tailored approach. So first up, picture this. Okay. I'm ready. I'm picturing it.

A major software glitch. Oh boy. And not just like a, a minor bug, but a full blown system meltdown. Oh no. That freezes online transactions for an entire online retailer. Oh, that's an actual nightmare, especially in this day and age where it seems like everyone buys everything online. That is a crisis. Talk about a PR nightmare too.

Right. Yeah. That's going to demand a very, very different response than say, a product recall. Oh, for sure. Probably. Totally different. A popular children's toy. Oh no. Is found to have, um, a manufacturing defect that poses a safety hazard. Yeah, those always make me so nervous. Those, like, you know. Of course.

But when they have those recalls, it's just like, oh gosh, like, is my kid gonna get hurt? Absolutely. There is a very real human cost there. Yeah. So speed and transparency are paramount. Yeah. You gotta act fast. For sure. Get the word out. Pull that product and reassure parents that you are taking it seriously.

Totally, totally. Now, contrast that with what Lerbinger calls a confrontation crisis. Okay. Think about those, uh, tense employee strikes. Yeah. We see those sometimes. Yeah. Where workers are feeling like their voices aren't being heard. It's interesting because, like, that's a whole different ballgame, you know, when you're dealing with internal versus external.

Stakeholders. And you see a lot of that today with, um, you know, the, the employee activism that we're seeing in the news. Totally. Yeah. It's very much, it's a different world than it used to be. Exactly. So you're not just managing a product. Right. You're not just

managing a system. You're managing complex human emotions, public perception, and potentially, you know, long term reputational damage as well.

Yeah, for sure. It's almost like you have to think about those things in tandem. You do. Almost like simultaneously. And then there's the kind of crisis that I think keeps a lot of CEOs. Yeah. Up at night. Yeah. What Lervinger calls the organizational misdeeds. Mm hmm. This is where a company. Knowingly cuts corners, maybe on safety protocols or ethical sourcing, and it blows up in their face.

And we've seen that happen so many times. We have. It's just like, it's that reminder that a crisis isn't always like, An accident, right? It's sometimes it's, it's a result of some bad decisions. It can be the result of poor judgment, ethical lapses, a culture that puts profits above people, above everything else.

Right. And then one final category that I want to touch on, um, from Lerbinger's work, rumors. Ooh, that's a good one. Because we live in an age now where misinformation It's like wildfire. can spread like wildfire online. It is. I mean, tell me about it. I'm on the internet all day. Before you can even issue a press release, um, you know, that rumor mill can just spin completely out of control.

It's scary. And it seems like, you know, is Lerberger was getting at? Oh, absolutely. That is scary. In a hyper connected world, a false rumor can be absolutely devastating. For sure, for sure. To a company. So it's interesting that we're like spending all this time talking about the different crisis types.

Yeah. Because I feel like, you know, at a certain point it can feel a little theoretical, right? Sure, sure. But, but it seems like it's really important for a reason. I think so, and here's why. Understanding the nature of the beast is the absolute most crucial first step in effectively managing it, right? You can't just slap a band aid on every crisis and expect it to work.

So, a cookie cutter approach to crisis management just won't cut it. Each type of crisis demands a specific set of actions, communication strategies, and leadership skills. So it's like, to use, like, a medical analogy, it's like, you need to know, like, what the diagnosis is before you can even begin to, like, figure out the treatment plan.

Precisely. You know? Yeah. And that's where the Management Trilogy, with its emphasis on adapting your leadership style to the situation at hand, becomes so incredibly valuable. So we've talked about this idea of the Management Trilogy giving us these two different Different leadership, I guess, modes, right?

And we've seen how different these crisis situations can be. But how do you actually bridge that gap? Like, how does, how does the trilogy actually equip someone to handle those

real world situations that are It's always messier than what you read about in a textbook. Right. And that's where it gets exciting.

Okay. Because remember how we said that crisis management is about leading with valor? Yeah. Well, a big part of valor is having the emotional intelligence to stay steady, to make good decisions when everything around you feels like it's going haywire. Okay. So it's that whole like grace under pressure thing that, you know, to be honest, I don't think always comes naturally.

For most of us, it does not come naturally at all. Right. Right. And that's where Everything D I S C, um, comes into play, and specifically their Agile EQ and Productive Conflict solutions, which really complement the Management Trilogy in a powerful way. Okay, so tell me more about this. So think of Agile EQ as like a crash course in mastering your emotions when the stakes are high.

Okay, so not just like knowing what you're feeling, but actually being able to use that knowledge to make better decisions in those high pressure moments. Yeah. Okay. Absolutely. So it helps you understand how your emotions are actually impacting your behavior in those really high stress situations. So give me an example of that.

So let's say you are dealing with that major cybersecurity breach. Okay. Yeah. We talked about earlier, right? Sensitive data has been compromised. Yep. Customers are freaking out. Right, rightfully so. The press is hounding you for answers. Yep. It's easy to get swept up in all that panic. Oh my gosh. That's right.

That would be me hitting refresh on Twitter every two seconds. Every five seconds. Just like, oh, what are they saying about us now? But AgileEQ, It gives you those tools to actually pause, take a breath, and assess the situation clearly before you react. That's so hard though. It's so hard. In the moment.

It's true. To like, take a step back. Yeah, it's about making those calm, informed decisions. Yeah. Even when your gut is screaming at you to completely freak out. So instead of like, you know, firing off that angry email that you probably shouldn't send. You're like, okay, let me just like take a beat and actually process what's happening here before I respond.

Yeah, because in a crisis, those split second decisions can have major consequences. Oh, for sure. Right. And Agile EQ isn't just about, you know, being a good leader to yourself. It's about leading your team. Right. Because they're looking to you. Exactly. Kind of set the tone. Set the tone. For how to respond to this whole thing.

And they're going to be going through their own emotional roller coasters too. Yeah, 100%. So, being able to empathize with them. And honestly, a crisis, I feel like, can really, like, make or break a team. Absolutely. You know, like, it really can, It reveals, It reveals a lot about the culture. The cracks in the foundation.

Yes, exactly. So, building that trust and helping your team support each other, even when it's tough. Cause at the end of the day, you're all in this together. You are. Right? Like, to weather the storm, we'll need everybody. Absolutely, and I think that's a great point to bring up productive conflict. Okay.

Because, let's face it, even the most cohesive teams, Bye. They're going to disagree, right? Oh, yeah. Especially when you're stressed out. Absolutely. And especially in the middle of a crisis. Yeah. When the pressure's on. And the stakes are so high. Exactly. So, productive conflict provides this really, I think, helpful framework for addressing those disagreements constructively.

As opposed to just You know, letting them explode and derail everything. Derail the whole effort. Yeah. It's about shifting from that, I'm right, you're wrong mentality. Right. To, okay, how can we solve this together? So it's interesting because it seems like You know, when we're talking about all these things, like, it all comes back, added layer of emotional intelligence and self awareness.

Self awareness, social awareness. Yes. It's not just what you say. It's how you say it. It's how you listen to what other people are saying to you. You've hit the nail on the head. I mean, those skills, that empathy, that ability to really understand and navigate the human dynamic. Which you're always, like, The messiest part, they're messy, but they're also the most important part for sure.

Right? And that's what elevates the management trilogy beyond just a set of tools or models. Yeah, it's about understanding that at the heart of every crisis, every challenge. Yeah. And I'd love that you said that because it really, at the end of the day, I think what we're saying is it's not just about, you know, saving the bottom line, right?

It's about leading with compassion, leading with understanding, um, and, and remembering that. Yeah. Everyone on your team is a human being going through something, especially when you're in a crisis. Yes. Absolutely. It's about recognizing that, you know, sometimes the best way to navigate a crisis is by supporting the people at the heart of it.

A hundred percent. And with that, I think that's a really good place to kind of start to wrap up this deep dive into crisis management through the lens of the Management Trilogy. Yeah. And I think, you know, if we're taking away anything from this conversation. Yeah. You know, it's not just about managing the crisis itself.

Yeah. It's about managing ourselves. Absolutely. It's about managing each other throughout the process. So true. And ultimately, it's about leading with that, uh, valor that we talked about, which is, Yeah. You know, that really unique blend of, like, courage, empathy, and emotional intelligence. That's the magic formula.

Yeah. And for everyone listening, we want to hear from you. Absolutely. How has the management trilogy, and specifically this crisis management element of it, resonated with your own experiences? What are your go to strategies for leading with valor when things get really, really tough? Because at the end of the day, every crisis, no matter how difficult, it offers us an opportunity to grow, to learn, and honestly, to come out on the other side as stronger leaders. Absolutely. So thank you all so much for joining us on this deep dive into crisis management. It's been a pleasure. And until next time, everyone, stay curious, stay informed, and most importantly, stay resilient.