

Good morning everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht, with The Family Business Institute and our podcast Digging Deeper.

Today, I want to talk about an article I read in the Harvard Business Review about purpose in your business. And this particular article talked about what they call, The Progress Principle. So essentially, The Progress Principle talks about if an employee has good morale or bad morale, feels like they had a good day or bad day, is mostly based on if they've made progress during the course of their day, they feel good about what they've done and that improves their engagement, attitudes, everything else. And then, of course, the opposite is true also. So, the opposite of progress being, they encountered setbacks or got little done. And in the study, they looked at their tremendous opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of what they perceived to have happened during that day, how they feel about their job, their engagement, and everything else.

So, the management point to this really goes back to something they call, the power of small wins. To be able to identify, set some small goals, recognize the small wins so that people feel as if they made progress. And in fact, they will have made progress during the course of the day. And as a leader then there are several ways that you can contribute to that. So, as they did this study on the setback side, they recognize that there were certain things that were called inhibitors to the progress made that particular day. And then there were also what they call toxins. Those things that sort of poison the well of the work for that person. Whether it's the sour person in the cubicle next door, or they were headed down one road and their leadership changed them down another road, those sorts of things that kept them from achieving the progress they set out toward.

And then on the positive side, there's the catalysts and the nourishers. The catalyst may be the encouragement that they might get from a leader or even the direction, the clarity, those kinds of things. And the nourishers being those attaboys, good job, keep up the good work, how can I help you? Those sorts of things that tend to nourish the employee along their road to achieving that progress. So, think about the small wins and the small wins are oftentimes a good way to keep an entire organization feeling good about itself by recognizing those small wins, publicizing those small wins across the organization.

So, what they found is that, again, with the progress principle, those who felt like they were making progress, had a higher wellbeing, they had higher motivation, they had higher creative output. So, in a sense, unleashing the power of your people by being able to accomplish these small wins along the way.

And then again, one last note on the leadership side of this, think of yourself as a value-added leader. Your job is to serve. And by adding value to those folks who are trying to make progress, whether it's by helping them set their goals, organize their workday, or by just the nourishing and catalyst efforts that you give to them, those are important things and will help your folks appreciate their workplace more and do a better job.

Again, Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.