

Five Steps To Improving Grit And Resilience

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Determination – the ability to deal with setbacks and devise strategies for overcoming obstacles – has long been a valued characteristic in employees. And it's set to become even more important as political and economic uncertainty generate even more challenges.

Fortunately, although perseverance, or 'grit' as it's referred to in psychological circles, might seem like an elusive trait that you either do or don't have, it's actually an attribute we can all develop – not least because it's directly linked to our willingness to embrace failure.

Instead of getting crumpled by setbacks, people with high levels of grit are prepared to fail. Rather than beating themselves up when something doesn't go to plan, or staying in their comfort zone to avoid failure, they have a mindset that allows them to embrace setbacks as part of a learning process.

By equipping your employees with that mindset, you can not only make them more successful but you can also boost their mental health by ensuring they don't suffer the low self-esteem, stress and anxiety issues that can result from putting too much pressure on themselves to get things right first time. Here are five ways to increase your workforce's grit and determination:

1. Ride the ups and downs

Political uncertainty and a volatile economic climate mean there's a lot of uncertainty in the world. Employers can help to make this less scary by reassuring employees who are taking on new roles, or trying to find their way in new markets, that it's okay to ride the ups and downs. Some things will go well, others not so well. What matters isn't finding ways to adapt perfectly, but learning as you go along. Somewhat ironically, it's only by giving employees permission to fail from time-to-time that you can give them the confidence needed to succeed.

2. Connect to the bigger picture

When employees understand the purpose of what they're doing, it increases their passion and determination to succeed. If someone thinks they're just building a wall, they will naturally be much less motivated and determined to do a great job than if they're aware that every carefully laid brick is helping

to create a great cathedral. So, if you want to cultivate grit – drive, determination, passion and courage – find a way of enabling employees to link what they're doing to the overall mission of the business.

3. Focus on strengths

We're naturally more motivated, energised and successful when we focus on what we enjoy and excel at than when we try to force ourselves to do tasks we don't enjoy. Instead of allowing employees to continually waste time and effort on tasks they struggle to do and dislike doing, one of the best ways to increase their determination is to assess their strengths, using one of the many psychometric tools now available, and focus their efforts on tasks that allow them to play to those strengths.

4. Help to cope with setbacks

Determined people don't expect things to be easy or successful first time round on every occasion. Instead, they anticipate obstacles and have strategies in place for dealing with setbacks. If starting a new role, they consider what could go wrong and think about what support they might need to get through in advance. At the same time, even the most persevering employees can't pre-empt every challenge, so it's good to promote any organisational support, such as an employee assistance programme, they can turn to for emotional and practical support.

5. Boost resilience

People with grit know how to overcome setbacks, get up and dust themselves down before starting again. The only reason this is possible is because they also operate high levels of self-care, and are constantly mindful of how well they're coping with difficulties so that they can tap into extra support and recharge when needed. Resilience training that is specifically focused on developing a growth mindset can help employees to identify where their unique limits are and how to psychologically recharge.

For more information about how our resilience training can help employees and managers to build strengths to cope with challenges and change, please contact your Validium customer relationship manager.

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