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HOW TO CHANGE PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION OF YOU AFTER PROMOTION

Welcome to The Highly Valued Leader podcast, where I make it simple for leaders at all levels to amplify their value. My name is Mel Savage, and I went from working in the mailroom at a small ad agency to making multiple six figures in senior management at McDonald's, to running my own multiple six-figure executive coaching business. I've had huge successes in my career and epic failures. All of it taught me the world-class leadership, mind, and skill sets that I simplify for my clients and share with you on this podcast. I'll help you reset your leadership style, demystify the politics, and help you become the highly valued leader everyone wants on their team. Get ready for the most honest, direct, and revolutionary leadership coaching you've ever heard. Let's simplify leadership together.

Hey, leaders. Welcome back to the podcast. Today, we're talking about something that I don't think people talk about a lot, and that is changing people's perception of you after you get promoted into leadership. Because just because you're promoted and everyone celebrates you and acknowledges that you've been promoted doesn't mean people necessarily know how to treat you differently or know what to expect in terms of how you want to be treated differently. And I don't even think you, as the new leader, know exactly what you're supposed to be doing or not doing at that point either. So, I think it's important to talk about today because there's not only the challenge of you setting yourself up for success in this new leadership role, which I talk about a lot, but also as part of that, how are you managing how other people are treating you? How are you helping them learn to treat you like a leader and learn what kinds of things to bring you now that you're in this role versus the kinds of things that they brought you before? So you're leading. And it's not that you're not being seen as a leader—it's just people don't necessarily know how to change how they have been treating you up until this point.

And it's tricky because people don't automatically shift just because your title changed. They're gonna keep coming to you the way that they always have unless you help them see you differently. And I think the challenge here too is that sometimes when people aren't treating us the way we think they should be treating us, we start to get annoyed. We start to have some bad behaviors. We start to have some perceptions of those people that aren't necessarily fair. So today I wanna talk to you about how you can help people see you differently in this new role. Okay, so this isn't about proving yourself to do more or anything like that.

It's really about how you can show up differently with those people so that you can train them to see you as the leader and treat you like the leader. So this has nothing to do with the kind of work that you do. It's more about how you respond and how you handle those situations when they're coming to you as they always have before. So how do you bring people along with you? So today what I wanna cover in this episode is I'm gonna walk you

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through how to reset people's perception of you after promotion. And I wanna give you four ways to consistently claim that leadership value, that leadership position with people so that they'll start treating you as the leader that you are trying to be or the leader that you are.

Now, before we start, before we dive in, I really do want to personally invite you to something that is really exciting that I've been putting together. And if you follow me either on the podcast or you're on my mailing list, you know exactly what I'm talking about. On Thursday, September 25th at 11:00 a.m. Eastern Time, I am hosting a free live training called *From Reliable Doer to Respected Leader.* Right, *From Reliable Doer to Respected Leader.* This is such a big transition in people's lives when they move from doer to leader that I really wanted to spend some time doing a specific training on it. So we're gonna spend about an hour, 60 minutes, and I'm gonna give you four big bucket strategies that every really busy, burnt-out, brand-new leader needs, especially if you're feeling stretched too thin, or you find yourself constantly saying yes, or you're not getting the recognition you deserve, or people aren't coming along for the ride with you, or you're not really sure what to do.

Like now that you're in this role, you're like how are the expectations changing for me? If any of those things are true for you, you can't miss this. I think this will be a really great training to help foundationally set the platform for you. And if you are not a new leader, but maybe you're like two or three years into being a leader and you're still kind of stuck in that doer capacity in some aspects of your role—like whether it's the project work that you're doing or how some leaders are treating you or how you are acting in certain situations. I mean, I have coached leaders who are already at the VP and EVP level, and they still have a lot of doer tendencies. So this isn't just for new leaders, but it is for people, for sure, who are in some sense of the transition from doer to respected leader.

Okay, so we're gonna be talking about things like how you delegate without fear the work won't get done right, or how you get your team to step up so that you're not the one holding everything together, and how you filter all the work that's coming to you so that you can protect your time, so that you can lead.

You're not just going from meeting to meeting to meeting all the time, and how to manage key relationships—with your peers, with your bosses, with your skip—like some of the key relationships that are so important to your success. How can you manage those relationships to your benefit? So if these are the kinds of things that you think would help you be a stronger leader, I want you to go to melsavage.com/lead-now.

So LEAD dash now. Register for the training. Save your spot. I wanna see you there. Do this for you. This is going to be one hour and it's really gonna help you. I, like, I know that you're gonna leave with something that's going to make you a better leader. So invest in yourself, take the time—you deserve it.

It's gonna save you time on the backend and on top of that, at the end of this training session, I'm also going to be giving anybody who registers exclusive early access to my six-month group coaching program called *Doer to Leader.* This program is designed for you if everything I've talked about is something you need to go deeper on. It is designed to really help you shift from being an overworked doer to a respected leader, and this is one of the hardest shifts people make in their career when they make that transition. And getting the support you need is so important. And on top of that, for the people who register for the training, I'm gonna give you a 72-hour enrollment bonus that I'm calling the *Burnout Intervention.*

Because I know that as a new leader, you are working your butt off. You're trying to do it all. You're trying to prove yourself. You're working all the hours, you have your eyes on everything. You're trying to make sure all the

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work that your team is doing is to a high level, and that is really, really overworking you and is starting to stress you out, and you're starting to burn out.

And maybe your performance isn't what it used to be because you are working so hard. So I wanna give you an intervention specifically around burnout. It's going to be a special bonus only for the people who enroll in those first 72 hours after the training, and it's only available to the people who come to the training—or rather register for the training—and it's going to be a special two-hour live coaching session where we talk about burnout specifically, and we answer your questions and bring you on to coach live. But even before that session, I'm gonna send you a few prep videos so that you can get your head in the right place and understand where your burnout is coming from. And I just don't wanna give you a two-hour session and then leave you hanging.

I'm gonna give you a 30-day journal to use to help you break that cycle of burnout and exhaustion before it breaks you. Okay, so this is your chance to really reset how you lead and set yourself up for success moving forward, particularly as we head into 2026. And when you register, you get access to sign up for the training program and get the *Burnout Intervention* bonus included when you sign up for the first 72 hours.

So all of that starts with you going to melsavage.com/lead-now. Register for the training. You're gonna get all the details of the training. You're gonna get details of the *Doer to Leader* program. You're gonna get details of the *Burnout Intervention,* and you can just flip me back an email and ask me any questions that you want.

So let's get back to how to change people's perception of you after you get promoted into leadership, which will be something that we'll be diving deeper into as we head into the *Doer to Leader* program. But let's talk about it a little bit right now. So you're in this leadership role. Maybe you've been there for a little while.

Maybe you're new to it, it doesn't matter, but you're leading the team. You're in the role. But when people—when some people need something or when they need, I don't know, a meeting organized or something delivered really quickly or the details on something—they are still coming to you. Like on one hand they're saying you need to get out of the weeds, but they still come to you with all the weedy stuff.

And it's not their fault necessarily, they're just being humans. It's kind of your job to help—one, decide who you wanna be, like how you're gonna be handling your role, and two, once you decide that, helping people treat you that way. Okay, so those are the two things—many things, but those are two of the things we'll be talking about in the program.

But to get you started today, I'm going to assume for the sake of this podcast that you have decided how you want to deliver value in this new role as a leader, and you've thought about how you want to step out of the weeds and step into this leadership capacity and what value looks like in that capacity.

So now that you've decided, how do you bring everybody along with you? Because when they keep treating you the old way, whether it's your boss or your skip, or your peers, or, indirect stakeholders, it is frustrating because you have worked your butt off to earn this role. You are a leader, but you also have to help people treat you like one.

It's just like I've—I've used this analogy so many times, but I, you know what? People are like animals. We're animals essentially, and I always think about how I train my dog. If I want my dog to do something differently, I

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have to help them create a new habit. That's the same thing we have to do with our hu—with human beings, whether it's our partner or our workmates, or our boss or our parents.

Like, it's the same thing. We have to teach people how to treat us, because the truth is people don't automatically, recalibrate their expectations just because my title has changed or your title has changed. They're gonna keep seeing you the way they always have. They don't mean to, but that's just the way the human brain is wired.

You have to actively guide them into this new chapter. And if you don't, I'm not saying they won't get there eventually, but it's gonna take longer, and you're gonna stay in that doer role longer because you're avoiding having the conversations or you're avoiding taking small steps. Okay, so I want you to think about this as part of your job as a leader.

That at this level, your job isn't to just deliver at a leadership level, it's also to manage the organization. It's to lead with clarity, lead with authority, lead with consistency, so that people can understand you in the new capacity—not just how you're being in meetings, but how you are communicating to them when they are still sort of stuck in their old patterns.

Okay, so I wanna give you four strategies that you can use to start helping people. And the very first strategy is you've gotta spot the patterns first. You have to notice who is still stuck in a pattern and what the pattern is. So start where people are still treating you like a doer—like who's bypassing your team and coming to you, who's defaulting to old habits. You have to have awareness, and not everyone's gonna have the same habits. There's gonna be certain people who are activating certain habits. So you have to be kind of customized in your approach where you're thinking so my boss is still doing this, and this peer is still doing that, and this client is still doing this, or whatever it is.

You know, just be clear about who is doing what. Is the same person always asking you for details or asking you to, I don't know, lead a meeting that's all about execution? Or go to certain places, go to certain meetings that you don't really need to be going to anymore, or take on projects, that normally you, as a leader, you wouldn't be taking on that sort of thing.

So I want you to sort of identify what the patterns are and who's bringing the patterns to you. Because if you don't see how people are treating you, you can't change it. So you have to just kind of keep your eyes open. Don't create problems where there aren't any. But as you're starting to see a pattern, identify it.

And by the way, a pattern isn't, they did this once. A pattern is they've done this multiple times. It's something that's happening, so let it go the first few times. Let's just see if it's a pattern. But if you're starting to see a pattern, then you can start to address it. How do you address it though?

That's one of the second strategies. First, you have to set a boundary on what you'll do and you won't do. I always want to remind you what a boundary is and what a boundary isn't. People can't treat me this way. People shouldn't be doing this. People shouldn't be doing that. I'm gonna tell them not to treat me this way.

That's not a boundary. A boundary is what you will do when other people do something. What you will do when other people do something. And the reason I'm defining it this way—and I'm gonna give you some examples—is because we cannot control other people. I don't care how many times you ask your boss to do something or not do something, you can't control whether they're gonna listen to you.

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Just like your kid, just like your partner, just like your report—sometimes you can't control other people. You can ask them for what you want, no problem. But don't think that just because you ask them, they're going to do it. Your boundaries are about when other people act a certain way or say something or don't do something, or don't say something or whatever, what are you gonna do?

That is what a boundary is. So you have to decide, as an example, like what you're gonna do. So as an example, when my boss comes to me and asks me to go to this executor meeting—I'm gonna call it this doer meeting, very general.—I am going to do, say to them, no problem, I'll send so-and-so. Or say to them great.

Why do you want me to go to the meeting versus someone else on the team? Or is it important to you that I go versus me delegating this to someone else? That sort of thing. Get curious about it, you know? So when my boss asks me to go to this meeting next time, I'm going to get curious and ask questions.

I'm going to tell them who I'm gonna send to that meeting. I'm going to dot, dot, dot. Like what's the right thing to do in that moment? If you say to yourself, I'm going to tell them that it's not my job to go to that meeting, and they should ask someone else and they should stop asking me—yes, I guess officially that is a boundary, but I don't think it's an effective one.

Your job is to help them, is to understand why they're asking you and redirect them, not get all like, hoity-toity about it. Is hoity-toity still a thing? I dunno. To get, aggressive about it or judgmental about it. It's just to start to shift people away from the old pattern and let them see that you're creating a new pattern.

Okay, so you just need to decide this old pattern is here. When this old pattern happens now with this person, here's how I'm going to handle it. So the first strategy, you just need to spot the patterns. The second strategy is you need to set some boundaries. Once you establish what the patterns are with who, how are you gonna handle it the next time this person comes to you executing the same pattern? And then your job, as I've said before, is to reset expectations with compassion. Not empathy—with compassion. And here's the difference that I think is between compassion and empathy. I like empathy. I love compassion. To me, compassion is like empathy on steroids.

Because empathy is you could feel what other people are feeling. Like you can really sort of be in their shoes in that moment, but to me, compassion is being able to feel what they feel, understand it, and make space for it—like allow it to be okay that they feel that way and that you understand how, why they feel that way and, and it's okay.

Like you're allowing for it, you're understanding of it. It's not just understanding them, it's understanding of the situation. Do you know what I mean? So I think that's what compassion really is. And I think when, in this particular case, when I say compassion versus empathy, I think compassion, what it does is like my boss is coming to me with this thing, and I understand why. Because, they're in a rush and they, they trust me to get it done, and this is what they've always done and it's not a problem that they're doing this. And I get that they have a human brain and they're just going by pattern, and it's actually my job to help them shift that pattern, not theirs.

That to me is empathy and compassion. You know, you're going beyond, 'cause a lot of people will go, well, they just promoted me. Why do they keep asking me to do this? Don't they know that's not my job anymore? That's not compassion, that's, that's judgment, that's entitlement. It's like the opposite of compassion. I wanna offer you: don't be annoyed that people have these patterns. Of course they do. Don't make it a problem. Take

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accountability for their patterns as a leader and then say well I can't change them, but I can influence them. People are creatures of habit. Has nothing to do with you. They're not even thinking about you.

They're thinking about themselves always. People are always thinking about themselves—and so are you. So in the spirit of thinking about yourself, be compassionate about them thinking about themselves and help redirect them. Let it be okay. People aren't resisting you, people aren't resisting that you're getting promoted. People aren't thinking, oh, they don't deserve to be promoted. They're just thinking, they just need help adjusting. They're just thinking like, I need the thing that I always needed. So if you want—if it becomes a problem and some of your very subtle adjustments, like I suggested before, like, oh, why do you need me there? How about I invite, give it to this person to do? Would you be comfortable with that? You know, seeking to understand a little bit what's going on with them—if that's not landing, you could sit down with the peer or the boss or whatever, you can have a conversation. You can let them know, look, now that I've been promoted to leader, this is what my goal is here. This is where I'm trying to move into. So here's how I'm gonna handle these situations moving forward. How do you feel about that? How would that work for you? What do you need from me to help you with that? You know, you could just have a managing expectations discussion. That's coming from a place of compassion and openness and wanting to make it work.

You're guiding people into this new version of you. You don't have to be like I've been promoted now and you need to treat me this way, and from now on, this is what I'm gonna do. Like it. You could use the same exact words, but if it's coming from an energy of entitlement, it's gonna land differently than if it's coming from an energy of compassion and openness and collaboration.

We wanna be in the openness and collaboration and compassion energy when we're having these conversations, and that requires you to be understanding, to understand that it's your job to get people to see you differently. It's not the title's job—like your job isn't over once you get promoted. It's just beginning.

My friend and I always say, welcome to the big leagues. This is it. We gotta do all the things we didn't know we had to do before. Once you get there, you had no expectation—like there's no way that you thought that you would have to do this, but you do. And then the fourth strategy is consistency, which is so hard to do because we think well, I told them, and they're not doing it. They're still not doing it. People will not change after one conversation. I want you to think about your dog or your child who have these underdeveloped brains. They need repetition. They need to see if you're serious. They're gonna test the boundaries.

And so will adults, because oftentimes we are operating with our lower brain. We're operating on habit. We're not always operating strategically or intentionally. You aren't. They aren't. This isn't out of malice, it's out of habit. It's your job to be intentional with this shift because you are the one who needs it.

It matters most to you, so you need to stay steady. You need to reinforce your leadership lane, gently nudging people in the right direction through curiosity and calm and compassion. And just keep being consistent with how you defer things to other people, how you ask questions, like over and over again.

Sit down, have another conversation at a one-on-one. You don't have to say, as we discussed before. No. You don't have to say that. You can say, hey, I wanna just revisit a conversation that we had about this. I think we're making great progress. You know, I wanna just keep saying that this is something I'm continuing to work on. I noticed last week this happened. Do you mind that I shifted it? Do you mind that I—and you just like, keep talking about it. The more you keep talking about it from an open, collaborative tone and message and intention, the

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more it's gonna come across that way. Even if your—let's say your boss came to you and said like, look, Mel, I know that you told me not to do this, but I really need you to do this thing for me. You can handle how you wanna handle it in the moment, but you can still come back after and say boss, let's talk about what happened this week when you needed me to do that thing.

I'm really trying to do this. How could we have handled that differently? How could I have handled that so that we could have avoided that in the future? I know that sometimes I just gotta roll up my sleeves, and I get that. And I'm not saying that I should have not done that thing—whatever it was they asked you to do—but let's think about how we would do it differently moving forward.

That's all. You know. It depends on the boss, how you're gonna frame it, but the idea being that just because it happened one way that's outside your boundary doesn't make it a bad thing. It's about how will we do it differently next time. That's all you wanna have the conversation about. Got it.

Needed to do it. No problem. Rolled up my sleeves. How will we do it differently next time? Or, next time, here's how I think I wanna handle that situation. You don't have to put it on them and say, what do you think you should do differently next time, boss? No, no, that's not their job. It's your job to say, here's how I'd like to do differently next time.

Or ask them like, if I had done this, how would you have felt about that? So that we can do it differently next time. That sort of thing. So I want you to think about the idea that humans need consistency. They will test your boundaries. Don't make it a problem. Don't be like, I've already told them once, or I've had this conversation three times with them.

Now you might have to have it 10 times. You might have to redirect people 10 times, whether it's through a conversation or a more gentle redirect— I'll give it to this person to do, or I'll ask this person, or I can't go to that meeting, but I'll send this person, whatever it is.

You might have to do that like 10 times with the same person. 20 times. Does not matter. This is about you, so you are the one who needs to do it. And the more consistent you are, the more credibility you're gonna build faster, the more you're gonna help people get there faster. You have to reinforce this every day with consistency.

So I guess my summary here is that, one, you doing this at all—helping people get there—doesn't happen with your title. It is work you have to do after you get the title. This is part of your accountability. It's not other people's job to start treating you differently. It's your job to know how you wanna be treated and help them get there.

With compassion, with openness, with understanding, with consistency. That's how you're gonna shift perceptions of you. And while you are doing this, the more compassionate you are, the more consistent you are, the more people are gonna see that, wow, like I can't believe how well they're handling this.

They are really leading this transition. Like if they can lead their transition into leadership like this, imagine what kind of leader they are. Like it just really does—it's just a well-rounded way of being as a leader with your people, with your bosses, with your peers, everyone. So before I go, I just wanna remind you: make sure you go to melsavage.com/lead-now. Sign up for the free training *From Reliable Doer to Respected Leader.* It's happening Thursday, September 25th at 11:00 a.m. Get your spot saved. There's going to be limited seating, so get your

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spot saved. Register so that you can qualify for early access to the *Doer to Leader* program, plus the *Burnout Intervention*.

All the details will be sent to you the minute you register, so you can actually know all the details behind what we're talking about here. All right. That's what I have for you this week, my friends. Have a great week. Talk to you soon. Bye for now.

Hey, if you want to simplify leadership while amplifying your value, then you need to get your hands on my free training. Head over to melsavage.com/simple for instant access to the training and get a taste of how I help my clients lead with ease and make more money in the process. I'll see you there.

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