

Ali Schultz: So I've heard you say in that list of three things under the job of the CEO, setting the vision, communicating the vision, building and maintaining the team, making sure everybody has the resources they need. There's also kind of this like this fourth piece that is also really important, which is self. Tending to yourself, taking care of yourself as a leader.

Jerry Colonna: Right.

Ali Schultz: This comes up, I think a lot with clients that, that I run into around, how do I organize my workflow? What meetings should I be in? How do I delegate? How do I think about personal time?

Jerry Colonna: Right. This is an important and powerful question, and you're right that it should be part of the job of a CEO kind of discussion. But, but here's where I see it fitting in. One of the most important unspoken unnamed parts of being a leader is modeling. And, uh, you know, one of the most telling questions that I wrote in the book, in my book that I often will ask teams to think about, and I'll ask people to think about. One of the questions that will often stun people into silence is, how would you feel if your child or your significant other came to work for your company? How would you feel if they worked under the structure and vision that everybody else is working for?

Jerry Colonna: And if you pause and you questioned and you're a little bit unsure about whether or not you'd be happy, then you need to go back to square one and talk about the vision and values of your company. And the reason why that this is a sense of self is that how I operate as a leader is watched carefully by everybody. So let's talk about something like Slack or email. Okay. I'm a rapid responder on email, probably one of the fastest anybody's ever encountered.

Jerry Colonna: But I have to be very careful, if I am overloading my team with a thousand email messages every weekend, or a hundred email messages every weekend, I'm inadvertently sending a message to that team about prioritization. Even though I may be doing it just so that I can feel less anxiety going into Monday morning, I'm just cleaning out my inbox, right?

Jerry Colonna: And so if we go back to prioritization and we go back to time management, if I'm doing a better job throughout the week, I'm not facing hundreds of unanswered emails on the weekend, which that only produces anxiety, which no matter how skilled a poker player, I think I am, is gonna come through and all those emails that I send to other people. And so what I'm framing here is that taking care of self is not self-care the way you might find, you know, in the, in, you know, uh, next to the bubble bath at Bed Bath and Beyond, this isn't like, oh, it's just, you know, take time for a massage every day. This is absolutely essential for your long-term resilience, but also for the resilience of that company.

Ali Schultz: But the CEO job then is so different compared to anything that anyone has probably ever done, unless they are like a serial CEO, right?

Jerry Colonna: Right.

Ali Schultz: Like they've done this before, and they've done it successfully. his isn't their first rodeo. And so I feel like there's a lot of places where a fresh CEO's gonna trip up around a lot of, a lot of things time management wise, but also delegating which can include their personal hangups around letting go of stuff or knowing what and when to delegate.

Jerry Colonna: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Ali Schultz: And I think, as the team grows and they're stepping back in out of the weeds, so to speak and the team is kind of stepping up as their, as a team is growing, how do they know then what is their work to do?

Jerry Colonna: Right.

Ali Schultz: How do they remain open and accessible to people? Bbut also get their own set of things done, because there are certain things, right, that the CEO like can do better than anyone else in the company. And it's not, you know-

Jerry Colonna: And should do.

Ali Schultz: ... and should do. Yeah. That's the thing. And that they should do, like fundraise hopefully.

Jerry Colonna: Right. Until they can outsource that to their CFO.

Ali Schultz: Exactly. Yeah.

Jerry Colonna: So there's a couple of things that I, I you've heard me say another context. So, so, but I'll, I'll say them here, 'cause I think that they apply. The first thing I like to advise people is, and this is going to feel shocking to people as I'd like you bored at four o'clock on Friday afternoon. Right?

Ali Schultz: Only four?

Jerry Colonna: Only four o'clock, 'cause earlier than that, it's too early. I know you'd rather have Fridays off. Um, but bored, like literally looking at you do to-do lists and going, yeah, I'm done, I'm done. Now when I say that to people that like, are you crazy? That's never gonna happen. And my answer to that is the other thing that you've heard me say, which is your job ultimately, is to build the machine that builds the products and services, not to build the products and services.

Jerry Colonna: Now, what do I mean by that? What I mean is our job as CEO is to take the resources that investors are gonna give us or the dollars, the profits that our customers supply us, and to turn that into more dollars. That's, that's the job. As I like to say, it's simple but hard. And the only way that that can be done with resilience throughout the entire organization, where people are not dysfunctional and hurting each other is to systematize things, is to create a machine, that just clicks along, [inaudible 00:24:31] where the gears are just running.

Jerry Colonna: And so when we build and maintain a strong team and give them what they need to succeed, and we have a clear expression of where we're going, our vision, our values, why do we do things? The result is that the team starts to coalesce and operate. Just like that word says, a team, where there's a fluidity at the risk of, of, uh, using a sports analogy. I think of the way Phil Jackson coached the Lakers decades ago, where there was, he literally use, would use mindfulness techniques. So that players on the court did not have to think where was my teammate, they just pass the ball. They literally just threw the ball. And it was caught by the right person, because they operated as one fluid dynamic team. That's what I mean by machine.

Jerry Colonna: Okay. When the CEO is spending time building the product or service, they're not spending time on the machine. So we take this all the way back to something as prosaic, as time management. Oh my God, there's no space in my calendar. And what I will often advise a client to do is color code every one of your meetings, is it vision? Is it team orientation? Is it resources?

Jerry Colonna: And if it's not any of those, ask yourself this question, do I really need to be doing this? And the chances are the answer to that is no. And if I'm doing it, if I'm stepping in and playing the role as director of product, for example, then that tells me that I had a gap in my system, and I better go out and, and recruit somebody as soon as possible to fill that role. So, because chances are very good that no matter how good you are, you're a generalist as the CEO.

Jerry Colonna: You're not a specific, uh, specialist. You're supposed to be hiring specialists who are the best at what, the best that you can afford, the best that you can recruit at the special domain responsibilities, right? When you take that approach, delegation becomes easy, right? This is why it took so long to just address the question of delegation. Everybody thinks delegation is merely a function of me not trusting the team-

Ali Schultz: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry Colonna: But the other side of that is I haven't built a proper machine. If I don't feel really that I can delegate, right. And then, and nobody has this right immediately. One of the most important things to do is to name when you're wearing the CEO hat

and when you're wearing another hat. So if you're stepping in and you're running sales, like I have a client who, who, uh, founded a company and then two years later hired a big name, head of sales to come in. And they were an unmitigated disaster. And it took them four quarters before he fired that CEO, that's the head of sales.

Jerry Colonna:

And he had to step in and run sales. But when he did that, he would say, okay, right now I'm VP of sales. And I will run this meeting as the VP of sales, but I'm interim head of sales. And as soon as I can, I'm given up that title because I got another job to do called CEO. The mistake is when the CEO starts doing those other jobs, then they're disrupting the machine building. So, that's the machine, and that's the answer to delegation.