



EPISODE 32: HOW EFFECTIVE LEADERS HANDLE CRITICISM, PART 1

EPISODE NOTES

Thank you for joining the *Craig Groeschel Leadership Podcast*!

If you're a leader in just about any field, you're going to have people second-guessing you, tearing you down, and picking you apart. The more you succeed, the more critics you'll have. Dealing with criticism is a part of leadership. It's that simple. No matter how hard you try, you'll never be able to avoid all criticism—and you shouldn't! But learning to handle that criticism is incredibly crucial to your success as a leader.

While you cannot avoid all criticism, you can minimize some of it by leading thoughtfully.

That's what we'll talk about in this episode. Let's begin by looking at four practical ways to minimize criticism.

- 1. Build a positive culture, starting with yourself.** As the leader, you set the tone. Lead from a posture of positivity. When people catch you speaking about others, err on the side of positivity. Believe the best about people.
- 2. Create an avenue for helpful feedback.** Build a culture that demands helpful feedback and discourages unhelpful criticism. Create an environment where people don't just point out problems, they find solutions.
- 3. Lead with the "why" before the "what."** People are more likely to resist change when they don't like it or don't understand it. When you lead something new, you're going to have three groups of people who react to it: critics, bystanders, and advocates. The critics will be the loudest, but they won't always represent the largest group.

"Leading with 'why' disarms critics, educates bystanders, and empowers advocates." – @craiggroeschel

4. **Be wise in how you live.** Leaders are held to a higher standard. Avoid shortcuts and live above reproach. Be hyper-selective about what you say, when you say it, and how you say it.

“Your **ability** may get you to the top, but your **character** is what keeps you there.” – *@craiggroeschel*

In our next episode, we'll talk about understanding your critics and how you respond to what they have to say.

Remember, you don't have to know it all to be a great leader! Be yourself. People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Here's an exercise you can do to grow as a leader—ask your team these questions:

1. Where do you see unnecessary negativity in your culture? What can you do to fix it?
2. What tools can you implement to get feedback early to help you eliminate critical errors in the future?
3. Is there anything you are doing in your personal or professional life that, if it were discovered, would compromise your reputation and ability to lead? If so, what are you going to do about it?

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