#6 Creating A Healthy Workplace Culture with Tamara Littleton & Lisa Seagroatt

Vic ([00:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=0.71)):

Hello everyone and welcome to Comms In a Nutshell. In today's episode, we are going to be talking about all things, company culture, and how you can create a healthy workplace culture. So, LinkedIn research found that 66% of workers valued company culture above all else when job seeking, company culture can impact many things such as employee retention, employee engagement and your employee satisfaction. So today we are joined by Tamara and Lisa who are gonna be talking about their experiences with company culture and the steps that you can take to create a healthy workplace culture. So, to start both of you, do you wanna tell the listeners a little bit about yourselves, what you do and your experiences with company culture so far? Um, so Tamara do you wanna go first?

Tamara ([00:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=44.3)):

Yes, of course. So, Tamara Littleton, I, uh, founded and run The Social Element, which is gonna be 20 this year. I founded it back in 2002. So, um, the idea of starting a social media agency before social media started was an interesting time. Uh, and, and, uh, we help brands have a, uh, a genuine human connection with their consumers on social media. And we're working with some, uh, amazing brands like, uh, Oreo and Peloton, uh, ni Nissan and, uh, Visa and, and Dr. Pepper. And I've now built the company up to be around about 260 people. And it's a slightly different model because we're based all over the world. And I started it with a remote first approach back in the day, which, uh, is obviously very on trendy now everyone's doing it, but, uh, it was quite a big deal back then. And yeah, no happy to sort of talk about, uh, culture later, but I'll, I'll let Lisa introduce herself as well.

Lisa ([01:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=105.39)):

Oh, thanks, Tamara. It's funny, you should say that because us HR people have been banging on about agile remote home working for years, years, and suddenly in the last few years it's like, whoa, let's do this. Particularly the last two years. So yeah, I'm with you on that. Um, hi, I'm Lisa Seagroatt I am the founder of HR fit for purpose. Um, and we are essentially a, um, HR company that specializes in helping businesses really create a healthy workplace culture for their people. Um, and the reason I set up my business is I had a mental health breakdown, which was caused by bullying and stress at work. Um, and I'd been in a senior role for a long time, very happy. Um, but there were a few dynamics that changed at the top and then the whole organization just turned on its head, um, and almost destroyed itself.

Lisa ([02:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=162.32)):

Um, so, you know, and, and some, some of us in, in, in that tsunami. So, once I was well enough to get back on my feet and think, right, I've got to do something with 30 years’ worth of experience in, in HR. Um, um, and also to turn this negative into a positive to help other people. So we not only help businesses to, you know, create that sort of environment, but we do also work with individuals who have been affected by toxic workplace culture and, and how, you know, how best to try and mentor them really through that difficult time. Um, so yeah, that's me.

Vic ([03:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=202.95)):

Well, thank you very much for both of you. I'll let Scott take it away with the first question.

Scott ([03:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=207.39)):

Yep. Thank you very much. So, what elements do you think create a healthy workplace culture? Um, which is obviously very broad question, but we'll, we'll, we'll kick it off, um, Tamara you wanna go for that one?

Tamara ([03:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=220.84)):

Yeah, of course. So, I'm, uh, a full disclosure, I'm a big fan of disc training, which, uh, I know that some of your, uh, listeners will be aware of, but, uh, I was inspired by, um, a book by Patrick Lencioni, which is The Five Dysfunctions of a Team. And there's a manga version that you read. So, like just a cartoon one it's very easy to read. And, uh, and as a result of that and some, uh, other things we, we kind of invested heavily in, in disc training and what it means is that, um, you really look at your own individual, uh, personalities and, and how you sort of work with other people internally and, and externally. And essentially one, as you got through all of the training, the key, uh, sort of facets of a, of a healthy, uh, workplace are essentially, uh, trust, conflict, commitment, accountability, and results.

Tamara ([04:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=273.89)):

And I think, um, trust for me was such a huge thing. And, and going back to what I was saying about starting a company where, everyone works from home, there were lots of people who were just sort of saying, you know, how do you know that your team are actually, you know, working or whatever. And, and I think when you start the company, you have to start from a place of trust. And if you trust that your employees are gonna go do a good job, they will do a great job. And, and I think it's a completely different to sort of micromanaging. But, uh, the other thing is also, it's not just about that sort of facets, cuz that's quite a sort of, you know, it's a methodology and it's worked for us, but my main focus, I mean, I mentioned about how we help clients have that genuine human connection, that genuine human sort of concept is something that goes right through the agency. And it's really coming from about having a very inclusive workplace and I'm obsessed about, you know, having healthy conflict, having open communications and allowing people to bring their best self to work every day. And part of that is how you as the, the founder set up that environment so that it's inclusive and uh, and open as well.

Vic ([05:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=352.75)):

Yeah. For the people that don't know what disc training is. Can you give a little overview about that please?

Tamara ([05:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=358.86)):

Yes, of course. So you kind of, um, uh, work out is a bit like there are sort of other ones as well, like Myers Briggs type things. You, you identify your personality type. So, um, uh, it's down to, uh, dominance, eh, influence steadiness or conscientiousness. I think I've got that. Right. Um, and I'm an SI for example, which is a sort of steadiness and influence it's sort of a bit extrovert, but also very sort of team focused. Um, and you know, the dominant people are perhaps the sort to get stuff done really fast. Um, but don't always think about, um, uh, you know, their communication style or something it's really about understanding yourself and understanding everybody else. And it made such a difference because for example, in our exec team, um, there were sort of a high level of people who were high Ds and they were very much like, let's do this, let's do that.

Tamara ([06:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=416.31)):

Let's decide now, now, now, which is great for a dynamic exec team. But when there are a couple of people on the team who just sort of said, actually remember I'm an S and I would prefer to sort of think about this and sleep on it overnight and to allow people to sort of say that when they'd actually been worrying that the rest of the team were kind of, you know, driving decisions very quickly. So, so it's almost like changing your language and, and having the ability to sort of, um, yeah. Understand who you are and how you relate to everybody else.

Scott ([07:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=448.85)):

Yeah. Lisa, do you wanna kind of, um, tackle that question as well.

Lisa ([07:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=452.49)):

I understand what Tamaras talking about because when I was teaching HR, we, we used to do a lot around human dynamics in the workplace. So how all those different personalities go to make up your overall team? And it's really important to understand how different people kind of tick and how they work and how they communicate and stuff, because, you know, we are all very different. Um, so it's important also to pair up people that can work well together. So their skills are complementing one another, um, which is all part of that sort of dynamic that creates your workplace family, if you like. Um, but the other thing that Tamara was talking about in terms of her role, and certainly when I was managing staff and, you know, had a really good leader, is it, is it comes back leadership. It all starts from the top.

Lisa ([08:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=502.48)):

And, and we could probably talk all day about stuff that's been in the news lately about leadership styles and, and what our views or thoughts might be on, on those negative or positive, but healthy workplace culture starts with the leadership from the top setting, the tone for organization. And then, you know, that feeds down throughout the rest of the layers. Um, and for me, one of the really important things that I always spoke to my HR students about was communication. Because if we are not communicating people start to imagine things are happening or they, they get very, they can become very insecure if they don't, even if the, even if the stuff isn't good that you need to share, you need to communicate with people. Cause then you will get that engagement and they will understand, and they will contribute overall to what's going on good or bad, whatever you need to do in the organization to move forward. Um, so for me, you know, human dynamics, yes, absolutely essential that you kind of understand the different players around the table in the different levels they're working. Um, but setting the tone from the top and then good communication through throughout right way from the top to the bottom of the organization and back up again, that for me is absolutely crucial to achieving healthy workplace culture.

Vic ([09:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=585.64)):

Yeah. For people that kind of don't know where to start with communication, what would you say? How, how can they kind of get started and get that communication flowing in a way that's consistent and relevant to their people?

Lisa ([10:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=601.68)):

Okay. So the way I've always worked and the way I work with a lot of my clients is, you know, for example, when someone joins the organization, it's really important that they get a proper induction and then check in points to see how they're getting on. Cause that's the communication process to ensure they're settling in. Yeah. Then once we've got all of that set up and everyone's working as they should, we need to have regular check-ins with our people that we are managing as a manager. Right the way through the organization. And then that goes up to teams sort of meetings maybe once a month, depending on the size of your organization and or a weekly briefing from the CEO. If you're quite, you know, we were relatively small where I worked. So our CEO used to do a Monday morning briefing with the cup of coffee and some donuts, you know, just to kind of bring everyone around the table.

Lisa ([10:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=650.66)):

Um, so like, guys, these are the challenges for this week. This is, you know, we are putting a funding bid in or, or whatever, all that sort of thing. So, you know, you can structure it according to your organization and the size and the, and the requirement in terms of how often you communicate. But I think sometimes for me over communicating sometimes in the workplace is better than not communicating at all. So it, you know, there's different ways in which you can do it. Um, and with modern technology like we have now, there's no excuse for not telling people about what's going on quite obviously. So yeah, you can do what you want really, as long as you, you structure it according to the needs of your business. Um, and that, you know, you are not expecting too much of people to give up time, to go over the same stuff again, you just need it to be timely and relevant and keep it going.

Vic ([11:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=700.84)):

Perfect. Thank you. And I know you spoke about onboarding there and that relates to my next question. So what barriers or challenges are there when creating a healthy workplace culture and what advice would you give So Tamara, do you wanna take this one? Cause I know your business is remote first. So obviously that's something a lot of people struggle with is kind of like hybrid and remote and connecting people digitally. So how, how do you guys do that and how do you overcome that challenge?

Tamara ([12:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=727.34)):

Of course. And actually I'm going to sort of just echo what Lisa was saying, because it is about the communication. Yeah. You know, in, in many ways we, we were all kind of, well, a, a lot of people have been experiencing working from home or the hybrid working. So you, you kind of understand what some of the challenges are. And if you can imagine I've had those challenges for 20 years. So we've sort of worked some things out, but the pandemic has been very, very different because, uh, when people were working from home beforehand, uh, they had their sort of offices set up and everything, but then of course, during lockdowns, everyone else was with you, you know, you had like children and partners and cats and dogs suddenly in the room with you. Um, so it has been very different, but there's been a lot that I've learned over the years and, and communication is, is critical.

Tamara ([12:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=774.35)):

And it's almost like we've found, uh, ways of replicating those little water cooler moments. For example, you know, when, you know, often the sort of value of, of uh, connection is when people are outside of meeting, maybe they're just getting a coffee and they're just, you know, sharing information or, or kind of coming up with some creative ideas. You know, it's very rare that you come with your best creative idea in the middle of the meeting. It's often when you are outside of the meeting, you know, maybe you sort of like just, it sparks some ideas, but so we we've invested a lot in, you know, things like Google chat, where you have just open chat rooms, where people are sort of sharing. We've got one, as you can imagine, because we're a social media agency, we have one, that's all about social media, your memes, and what's happening on TikTok and the latest sort of news.

Tamara ([13:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=818.53)):

But that's also become a bit of a water cooler area where people are just sort of, you know, sharing more cultural moments and what's going on for them personally. So you have to bring that, uh, element in, but then we do do a things like, um, you know, regular town hall meetings that we do with the exec team where we are all on camera and we're sharing what's going on. And we I'm, I'm a big believer in sort of radical transparency where, so we're sharing exactly what's going on with the numbers, what our profit margins are. We share all of this and we have a sort of ask me anything type approach where we always allow people to sort of, you know, quiz what's going on. So, but you know, like Lisa was saying, you, there is no such thing as overcommunication sometimes I feel like I, but I've said this about 10 times, but honestly you have to say things 10 times and in different formats, if people miss emails, they might miss a little chat, could be, you know, making some food at the time or whatever.

Tamara ([14:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=874.29)):

Um, so you have to use the different platforms. Um, but I, I think some of it comes just down to pure respect as well. We've changed the way that we do meetings. I love doing video meetings, but I respect the fact that not everyone wants to right now. So we kind of, you know, we encourage people to, but we're not gonna punish them if they don't or anything. Um, and also just respect for people's time. Um, make meetings a bit shorter, allow for breaks between meetings. There's, there's so many sort of little things, but I, I think, sorry, I realize I'm sort of babbling on a bit, but I get quite passionate about the fact that with people working from home, there can be a sense of risen sort of paranoia that people are not having that sort of face ti uh, time in person that you can assume that you don't know what's going on. So you kind of have to really overcommunicate and, and just make people feel included.

Vic ([15:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=926.75)):

Do you think through, oh, Scott you go, Sorry.

Scott ([15:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=929.69)):

I was just going to task Tamara. Obviously, you know, if you are, if you are going to be 20 this year on the social, when you first started kind of, was it more difficult to communicate? You know, obviously, you know, we're sat out here in 2022 and there's, there's numerous ways messenger and, you know, video chat and all this kind of tech, how was it when you first started and was it kind of harder to communicate back in those early days being a remote first business?

Tamara ([15:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=957.22)):

Yeah. Well, I mean, this kind of environment is now a luxury with like really good video, uh, you know, good quality video calls. You didn't have that. I mean, we had Skype and you could do video calls, but the, you know, just things like wifi wasn't as good. So, you know, I, I definitely hired people when I'd never met them before. You know, I'd, I'd sort of spoken to them, uh, on email and had a call, but, uh, you know, it was further down the line that we sort of started getting really invested in video calls. And that's quite an interesting thing where you have to sort of take a real leap of faith and, and you haven't met someone and you're hiring them, but, but we also, we were doing a lot of hybrid right at the beginning, you know, I would make sure that I was flying out to America, bringing the team together. I'm a big believer of food and business matching together In a room. And, and I think, again, going back to where we are now, even if you can't get your teams to sort of meet regularly in an office at the least meeting up, um, occasionally and having some sort of, uh, food together in a chat, it almost boosts you for a, you know, for another month or something. Mm. So, so I think that hybrid thing is, is, is the way forward more.

Scott ([17:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1027.8)):

Mm.

Vic ([17:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1028.44)):

Yeah. I was going to ask if, cause obviously you are remote first, do your teams across different locations, do they tend like meet up outside of work and things, and obviously the communication hybrid kind of incentivizes people to meet up in person because obviously they know each other online. It's nice to have that human connection.

Tamara ([17:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1045.08)):

Definitely. We've got loads of people in Valencia in Spain and they sort of tend to sort of meet up we've we've ended up having little hubs and people catch up, but we also incentivize that from a monetary point of view. So I sort of always said that if someone was going to be visiting San Francisco and if they met up with some of the team, I would cover their, their sort of, uh, lunch or, or coffee or whatever, having, because I want people to connect in that way.

Vic ([17:49](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1069.25)):

Definitely. Yeah. And did you find during the pandemic that your communication tactics changed or did it basically remain the same because you kind of already had that strategy down or did communication ramp up a bit more?

Tamara ([18:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1083.47)):

Yeah, I can imagine that this is probably what a lot of companies did, but we, we did daily briefings and that really helped just to sort of check in with, with people. Um, I ended up having mine at the same time as Boris, but you know, about five o'clock.

Group ([18:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1105.57)):

[Inaudible]

Tamara ([18:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1106.11)):

We had all sorts of different time zones to contend with so five o'clock ended up quite a good time, but I would say I'd love Lisa's views on this, but we definitely shifted to more one to one meetings rather than, you know, we'd have like a, a big group one, but it was more important to check in with individuals. And we've carried on that approach actually of trying to reduce the amount of group meetings, only the really important ones, but having individual check-ins instead L Lisa, was that something that you've noticed as well?

Lisa ([18:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1134.13)):

Definitely. Yeah, definitely. I mean, I've always, I've always been a big advocate of that anyway, because when I managed a large team of people previously, because of the way we had appraisal and supervision and everything structured, the one to one meetings were a regular norm in the calendar. Um, but I think particularly over the last couple of years with the challenges that some people have been faced with, um, it's really, really important, I think to continue along that one to one route, because, you know, um, that's where lots of things come out in discussion that don't come out in a team meeting. Um, and that's where you get to know where perhaps some of those pain points are for individuals that might not be in the workplace. They might be outside of the workplace, but it will spill over into the workplace, um, because they need perhaps somewhere to get some support from or guide.

Lisa ([19:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1186.11)):

I dunno, it could be even they need to change their hours because they've got some caring responsibilities that have changed. There's so many different things that life has thrown at us in the last two years. And it's going to continue to do that as we go forward in the future. Um, so I think for me, I mean, I love, I'm a great lover of getting the team together, the, the whole thing over food, yep a hundred percent anyone asks me for coffee, I'm there, you know, because I think that's how you get to know people better. Cause it brings those barriers down. But the one to one environment with, with, you know, your manager or whoever's responsible for you in the workplace and that's safe space where you can talk about work and anything else that maybe is creating a bit of an issue for you.

Lisa ([20:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1231.93)):

Um, because what I have found in the past is we've fail to check in with people. We make assumptions about how they are in the workplace, or they're not conforming, they're not doing this. They're not doing that nine times outta 10. There is a good reason behind that. So we need to have that one to one to unpick that. And then, you know, that that's all around again, creating that healthy, open, transparent culture in terms of, yes, you are here to contribute and work for us. But actually we want to look after you as a person because let's face it without people, you don't have a business, they're your most valuable asset, so we should care for them.

Vic ([21:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1267.24)):

Exactly. And Lisa, I'll ask the same question. I think you've covered some bits there, but do you think there are any other barriers or challenges to creating a healthy workplace culture? And what advice would you give? So I know you've just spoke about creating that space where people feel they can be honest and open, but is there anything else that you want to add?

Lisa ([21:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1284.4)):

Yeah, I think coming back to something Tamara said earlier, the transparency bit now what often happens is, um, and you know, I'm not criticizing people for doing this because it's, it's just how it is in business sometimes, but they don't share some of those really critical things that they need to be talking about such as, you know, what's going on with profit and loss at the moment, how are we performing as a business or, or as an organization? Um, so you know, that transparency bit for me, definitely, um, having been very open about, well, we've just lost a bit, we're actually, we're going for another one, all that kind of stuff. Um, people immediately in my experience engage in those sort of discussions. They feel properly part of the team because you are not hiding anything from them. So the transparency bit is critical. Absolutely critical.

Vic ([22:15](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1335.21)):

Yeah. How would you get people in the workplace to kind of be transparent? I think,

Lisa ([22:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1341.54)):

I think again, it depends on your type of business and what suits the culture of your business. Yeah. Where, as in where you might decide to share particular pieces of information. I mean, you know, I referred to it earlier that we used to have these weekly Monday morning check-ins cup of coffee and a, and a donut, the minute you walk through the door. I mean, sometimes I couldn't face the donuts, but the coffee was always welcome. Um, but you know, in those discussions there would always be some sort of sharing around maybe the financials of the bit of the organization and what was going on if it was appropriate at that time. So I think you've got to pick your moment. Um, but it is about, I think really deciding what's the best fit for your business in terms of where you might, what platform you might use with your team to share stuff where, whether you feel they're actually gonna absorb what you've got to say. And generally Monday morning is quite a good time because, you know, the week hasn't started, so our brains are not ready to explode with all the stuff we've been doing in the week generally.

Vic ([23:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1405.22)):

Yeah. I do think discussions like that as well. It tends to kind of motivate everyone in the workforce as well. I know, like when we find out what bits we've got going on, it's like everyone feels part of working towards that same goal. So

Lisa ([23:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1418.93)):

Yeah, I think Friday is a good time to have a bit of a, maybe a review of the week and a bit of let's all checkout now and wind down a bit. But Monday is that time when we're gonna rev up and hopefully enthuse people to come on a journey for the next five days or however many they work. So I think, yeah, that the timing is quite in terms of that. I would definitely be talking about some of the more nitty gritty stuff at the beginning of the week and, and leave the nice stuff to the end of the week so that we can wind down for the weekend. Definitely.

Scott ([24:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1451.39)):

I guess it's how, if you don't address these kind of challenges, then what do you think kind of, you know, what would be the results and how is that gonna affect kind of, you know, your, your culture in the workplace?

Lisa ([24:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1464.13)):

Speaking from experience I can definitely say when you, I have this expression. "If you don't keep people in the, in the dark like mushrooms" okay. I've, I've used that when I've taught and my students have gone what is that? Cause you know, they're much younger than me. They've never heard it before, but anyway, that is an expression I've often used. So when you keep people in the dark and you are not transparent about stuff, that's going on, first of all, they start to feel very uncomfortable. Then they start to feel very threatened. Then they can start to imagine and make stuff up. That's not even going on. And then the rumour mill starts going. Um, and then everybody's starting to feel very sort of, oh, do I want to work here? Should I? So the productivity starts to go down the motivation, the engagement, all that stuff starts to slide away because people feel very uncomfortable being on that sort of shifting sand.

Lisa ([25:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1514.78)):

They, you know, at the end of the day, we all go to work because we have bills to pay. We've got mortgages, we've got lifestyles to support. That's why we get up in the morning. We go to work, to support our basic needs in life. So if we are not, if we are then worried about what's going on at work, because no one's telling us anything, but we can see something's going on, but no one's telling us that has a very detrimental effect on people's mental health and wellbeing. And, and you'll start to lose people. They'll go sick or they'll leave. It's as simple as that. Um, or they'll go sick and then they'll leave. So you'll have this churn factor that starts to kick in. And that's very, very expensive and disruptive and damaging for any business as well. And the colleagues around them because they're having to pick up to slack. So, you know, it's, that's what creates that kind of toxicity. If you like it it's a downward spiral in my view. Yeah, yeah, yeah,

Tamara ([26:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1568.39)):

Yeah. There was always this phrase that I heard, I have no idea where I heard it, but the, the, the fish rots from the head down. And it, and it's pretty horrible.

Lisa ([26:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1579.39)):

It's true. It's

Tamara ([26:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1581.11)):

Pretty horrible. But, um, but I think it is about that as, uh, leaders. It is about setting a good example and you know, I'll go back to what I was saying about, uh, respecting people's time. But I think, you know, especially when ev, everyone is doing so many sort of, uh, virtual meetings and video calls, um, that the leaders need to sort of set the tone by being present, not checking their mobile phone in the middle of meeting, not having side discussions with people on chat, um, cause everything matters. And I think it, it is about sort of setting that example of how you want that culture to be. And if you want a culture where people are respecting each other and being kind to other, um, and, uh, you know, generally sort of having fun or whatever, you, you have to set that example yourself. Um, and you know, people, people notice, people notice what leaders are doing. So I think it's, it's just something it's so sort of simple, but it's about, um, being present and being respectful.

Vic ([27:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1644.3)):

And how do you think you find the balance between creating a healthy, positive culture, but also allowing space for, cause obviously people are gonna have disagreements in the workplace. People are gonna have conflicting views. And I think sometimes people are worried about creating a bit of tension. So how, what can people create an environment where people do feel like they can disagree and have that conflict, but then still come away and the team's fine and everyone's working in harmony basically?

Tamara ([27:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1673.74)):

Yeah. I'm happy to, to talk about it, this cuz I I've been on what, what they say I've been on a journey myself because, um, I, I sort of, I would say that and in fact I was, um, I sort of spoke to the BBC recently, uh, about this story that there was about 10 years ago. Um, I would say that I was a bit obsessed about creating such a positive environment that I'd perhaps gone the other way. Um, and because personally I'm, I wasn't that fond of conflict to myself, uh, that I I'd sort of set up, you know, on knowingly set up an environment where people didn't feel that comfortable challenging me or the status quo that there was a sort of assumption that it all had to be very rosy and happy and positive and there's nothing wrong with being positive. I mean, I actually call myself the, uh, chief eternal optimist and a CEO.

Tamara ([28:46](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1726.82)):

And uh, you know, I like the fact that we do have a, you know, optimistic, positive culture, but I've had to do a lot of work on myself, including bringing in the disc training and working on sort of vulnerability and that it's okay to have, what's now called healthy conflict and we're in such a much better place as a result of that. But there a time where that some of my teams didn't feel comfortable challenging, uh, you know, what was going on and that, that can have, you know, that leads to, uh, bad decisions or no one flagging that there is a problem. So it was, it was an issue, as I said, about 10 years ago, it meant that I had to really take a deep hard look at myself and, and make some changes and invested in training, invested in, in sort of a lot of things. And as a result, I now welcome conflict and you know, but it's how you do it, you know? So when you have a team that you feel so, uh, that you've kind of done vulnerability training with them, you feel so trusting, um, and trusted that you can just say actually, you know what, I'm just gonna challenge that. And, and I love it. You know, we, we now make really positive decisions, but, uh, I think you have to be looking at the culture and be prepared to change. Definitely.

Scott ([30:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1803.35)):

When you, when you did that Tamara, I just was gonna say, was it a very quick change from kind of everyone not really wanting to say much to kind of, you know, was it almost an overnight thing for people actually being, oh, well actually, maybe I'll challenge this or was it, did it still take a kind of a, a fairly long amount of time for people to adapt to this kind of, you know, new, new culture, almost?

Tamara ([30:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1825.5)):

I would say it did take a couple of years actually, because we, we sort of brought in, well, in fact, um, there's a, a great one called, uh, Rachel Boothroyd, who was on my exec team and she helped bring in the training and she sort of, you know, uh, I think we, we read the book, we started doing the, the training and she's actually gone off and started her own company just doing disc training and, and it's kind of been nice, a nice sort of move for her, but, uh, it was, it took a long time because you, you have to sort of have these meetings. I mean, it sounds so weird, but we would have meetings where were, where there were basically tears because we were really opening up about, um, you know, different things and facets and going right back to our childhood and everything. You have to do that in order to build this trust. So it, it doesn't even, I can't even recognize how we were back then, because we're so open. Um, but it's not, it wasn't toxic in that way. It was just that it's perhaps we were holding back a bit, but now it's much more open and, uh, yeah. Vulnerable and a different style, but it, yeah, it took a couple of years and a lot of investments in our own time and energy to get there. Definitely but worth it.

Vic ([31:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1897.28)):

Yeah. I think as well, it's about hiring the right people as well, when you're creating a company culture and people that you, you know, are gonna gel well together and the skill set's gonna match and stuff and everything. And I, I was just wondering when you were remote, cause obviously you're remote first. How did you, how was that process of, am I picking the right person when everything was remote?

Tamara ([31:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1918.47)):

Yeah. Well, I think early on we, uh, we worked on the values of the agency and actually in our second iteration, I think 20 years and two sets of values is not a bad thing. The first time we introduced values, they were more from the exec team deciding on them and then sharing them. And in retrospect that wasn't the best way. And then the second time we actually involved the company. So they sort of like naturally bubbled up that these are the values that everyone ascribes to. And then, you know, we hire to those values and we reward to those values and they're part of people's performance elements. And, um, so I, I think that is key. So, uh, I, I think it, it then attracts certain people to the agency who, you know, connect with those values and, you know, we've done a lot around our, um, uh, diversity and inclusion and you know, it, it's all about trying to attract the, the right talent.

Tamara ([32:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1973.96)):

I would say that having people all over the world and having the model, you know, Lisa was saying, HR teams have been pushing this. It's amazing when you have that flexibility. And, uh, the ability to work everywhere we have the whole world as our talent pool. And people can, uh, because they're not going to an office. It means that people with a disability we've actually got a higher percentage of people with a disability in the agency. We have much better gender and ethnicity balance. And I think that flexibility just allows for the way that people want to live their lives now. So, you know, that whole model, I think really helps

Vic ([33:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2012.98)):

The world's your oyster basically. And Lisa, how do you find creating the balance between a positive and healthy workplace culture, but still allowing space for disagreements? What tips do you have for that?

Lisa ([33:47](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2027.29)):

You know, I've always, I've always embraced people. I've probably a little bit different maybe to how, where Tamara is coming from. I I've, I've always found myself dealing with conflict. It seems in my life. Um, I don't just mean in the workplace, so I've kind of embraced it because it's been normal for me to deal with very tricky situations. So when I went into, um, people management, then I kind of just got on with what was thrown at me really. Um, but always tried to ensure that, you know, you allow both sides to have their own say, and you are gonna have conflict because people are different. OK. So in a line manager or people manager position, I think it's really important to give them some training. For me, it came naturally. I was fortunate, but not everybody is in that space when they're managing people.

Lisa ([34:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2082.02)):

So it's good to give them some training to actually feel comfortable that you might have conflict in a team of people. Um, because we are not all gonna say yes to the same thing, cause we're all gonna be coming from a different place. Um, so, you know, having that open dialogue and allowing people to be able to speak freely and then finding resolution together is how I always worked. So, you know, and, and if you couldn't always agree to somebody else's view, always being really clear with them, why we can't go on that route and what the ramifications could be for the business or whatever in terms of explaining that. Cause often when we don't explain, that's when the conflict gets worse, comes back to communication again, I'm afraid, um, you know, being really clear and transparent about yes, your views, we recognize and respect your views, but unfortunately it doesn't quite fit because of this.

Lisa ([35:32](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2132.5)):

So when you're trying to bring people together and resolve that, that's always been my way of, of approaching it. So, you know, I've always been comfortable with conflict because healthy conflict is a good thing. It's a good thing to have. You don't want everybody just agreeing to everything because as Tamara just said, that's when you might get the odd, bad decision being made, you know, and, and then you've got the consequences of that further on that you've then gotta manage. Um, so for me, I, I just, you know, I, I encourage people to speak up and have their say in the workplace. Um, but what I've really advocate for is making sure that the people who are managing people are comfortable and able to manage conflict as, and when it occurs, cause it's going to, it's an, it's a normal human thing.

Vic ([36:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2179.07)):

Yeah, definitely. How would you define like healthy conflict and not healthy conflict in a workplace?

Lisa ([36:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2184.64)):

I think healthy conflicts is where, you know, you can have a, you can have a difference of opinion. You, you, you know, you, we, we all have different, maybe different religions, different views, different politics. That's okay. We can have a healthy debate about that kind of stuff. That's, that's fine. When it becomes unhealthy is when you start to get, you know, where you see people almost starting to dislike people because of their views. And then you've got this like little gang starting to build. Yeah. And this little pool of people that are open only maybe, um, antagonistic towards somebody else, just because they don't like their views, but they've got all their mates involved in it as well. They've brought them along. And that's when that starts to become a very unhealthy, toxic, um, conflict kind of environment. And, and that we don't want that. Um, and you know, and if you've got age HR people in your business, they, they are normally pretty good at spotting that and shutting that down. But, but it doesn't always get picked up on them early enough. And that's when it becomes very unhealthy.

Vic ([37:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2250)):

Yeah. Do you think there's tell tale signs of, like, I think we've gone through this question before, but how do you kind of notice that them things are occurring, or there's like cracks are appearing and then how can you overcome that before it kind of rears its head?

Lisa ([37:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2263.98)):

For me, I noticed like you, we would have like silo working going on, where, where you've got, you've got a team of people all working with the same organization and you've got two different cultures almost in the organization because you've got one manager leading one way and one leading another. So to give an example of that, where, where I was working some years ago, we had like a flexi-time scheme. So latest you could start was 10 and the latest you could leave was six. And I was, I was very sort of particular about that cause I used the flexi-time scheme. So I was, I suppose, leading by example, if you like as a consequence of that, um, you know, I stuck to, to what we had to do cause I thought it was important to lead by example. So my team did the same and another manager, same level as me coming in at half 10 quarter to 11, you know, not sticking to that scheme. Then there, then that team started to think, well, I'll come in at half 10 cuz they come in at half 10, so it's okay for them. It's okay for me. And then that starts to create cracks in the teams because they're almost rivaling with one another over a flexi-time scheme, for example, it's a silly example. But those are the kinds of little things that make a big difference in the workplace. If then if everything isn't running the same, cause people get resentful simple as that. And then they start to get the hump, you know,

Scott ([39:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2348.95)):

I think there's a lot of that at the minute especially with, uh, where some, um, businesses are returning to work and um, you know, kind of hybrid approaches being left to individual managers, um, yeah, in a couple of days for one team and maybe somebody, a different manager wants their team in for a lot longer. Um, so hopefully there's not too much of that, but I think I know talking to one of my friends, that's certainly an issue and that now, um, because as you say, you know, people working in silos and there's not sense of approach of how to Look at that going forward,

Lisa ([39:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2381.88)):

You know, at the end of the day, you know, if, if the CEOs stuck to stuck to that scheme, which our CEO did and really, and truly the CEO could probably do what they like in fact, but like they led by example, everybody else should be doing the same. And, and you know, but unfortunately we did have a number of things that were going on like that in, in the past. And, and it, it creates different camps for want of a better word, you know, and then it becomes a them and us situation. And that's very unhealthy, particularly if you've got split site working, two different centers, we, that really starts to build up a big melting pot of almost, you know, well toxicity if for want of a better word I'm afraid. Um, and then that creates a whole set of problems of its own.

Vic ([40:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2428.92)):

Yeah. So it's about kinda having them clear boundaries and rules, but obviously tailor it to individuals and then yes,

Lisa ([40:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2437.69)):

Absolutely.

Vic ([40:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2438.87)):

Yeah. It's not like everyone's gonna be wanting to come in at half 10 every day. Sometimes that'll be set days a week. So it's important to clarify that with individuals and then clear communication about that all then basically?

Lisa ([40:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2451.32)):

Absolutely spot on because at the end of the day, you know, I'm not saying we have to rigidly stick to policies and procedures people's circumstances might dictate differently. For example, there's so many people now that are caring for, you know, um, older people, for example, they've got older parents, you know, we know everybody's living longer, so which is wonderful, but it places a, quite a demand on a certain generation. So sometimes that might be that they need to come in that bit later, but let, let's just let people know that's why let's not, you know, just that transparency bit. So then people don't start to think, why is she always coming in at half 10 and I have to be in, but you know, and then it's the chat, chat, chat over the water cooler and it all goes a bit pear shapes, that kind of thing.

Vic ([41:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2496.37)):

Definitely. I think we've definitely got that. Me and Scott have that Oak where it's a very open place where kind of, I don't wanna say we're allowed to do what we want, but we, we are allowed we're free to go about our daily like personal duties. So like I'm trying to get on the property ladder. I'm allowed to go for a house viewing and yes, time of the day, it's hard at the moment

Tamara ([42:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2525.14)):

That comes back to what we were saying about trust. Absolutely. But if you are trusted to do a great job, it doesn't really matter if you choose to go and do yoga for an hour and then come back and do something else and then go and view a property or whatever, you're getting the job done. You're being a great member of the team. And if, um, and it's okay that people know what you are doing because they trust that you're gonna do a great job. Um, and that gets rid of that sort of pettiness. And I would also say that it's about, you know, um, having certain standards and sort of unwritten rules in the, in the, uh, company as well. So, um, that it's not okay to start shouting in a meeting or, and it's not okay to, you know, be really, uh, to, to sort of have difficult conversations just by email, like have a massive email thread.

Tamara ([42:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2572.65)):

Oh yes. When you're just, you know, so there are certain things that we've looked at that, you know, if the conversation starts going over several emails, just have a meeting and, and chat it through. Because again, you have to be careful with different tone of voice. And sometimes people have quite a direct manner that doesn't actually mean that they were trying to sort of be rude, but it was coming across as rude. So I think just an awareness of how language can appear in the written form and, and trying to sort of have more, uh, whether it's video or in-person discussions, you can just sort out so much when you actually have a proper conversation. So, so a lot of it is about not tolerating bad behavior because at the point that you do sort of let things slide, that becomes the culture.

Lisa ([43:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2618.09)):

That's right. Yeah.

Vic ([43:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2618.5)):

I definitely think as well, the trust thing is so important, cuz things like that, if someone's going for an hour of yoga, that could be the difference in making their day much more enjoyable. And it's about that employee experience. I think we've been seeing a lot of that recently with previous podcast episodes, research, that's kind of what it's all heading towards. Really people motivated by solely by money anymore. It's about being able to have that work life balance and trust and adding them little things into their day that make them able to do their job better.

Scott ([44:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2654.33)):

Yeah. It ties into employee wellbeing in a much broader sense, doesn't it? You, you know, that's all, all that trust and all this freedom to, you know,

Tamara ([44:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2662.04)):

We, we brought in a wellbeing officer and luckily we had, uh, that woman before the pandemic and oh my goodness, what a difference that she's made to the, to the company. Uh, it's so important to have to have someone who's that's their pure job is to look out for the wellbeing of everybody.

Vic ([44:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2678.2)):

Yeah. I've seen a lot of that actually. I think R and B, that Airbnb they've got an employee experience team now, so yeah. It's kind of opened up a whole new little pool of pool of jobs as well. Yeah. HR is definitely becoming prominent within the workplace. Definitely.

Lisa ([44:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2695)):

Which is good. It's good. In some ways, because, you know, in the past, HR did get a really bad press, you know, I've heard HR described as heart removed and all that kinda stuff. Um, so, you know, and, and also they were called welfare officer as when actually sometimes they didn't deal with welfare at all. So, um, you know, it's really, it's good to see them becoming more of a sort of strategic business partner these days operating at more of a board level if, if that's possible within the organization, because you know, they do know what's going on with the people and they need to feed their up. And if you've got welfare issues and wellbeing stuff that needs, you know, is absolutely critical that we support, um, people. And we are much more aware of that now than we ever used to be sort of 30, 40 years ago in the workplace. Um, I think that's fantastic for, for HR to be able to be involved in, in that kind of work where they can be, because you know, it, it's all about the people for me, people are your, as I said earlier, your, your most valuable asset and without them, you don't have a business. So if everyone's off sick, because we are not managing their mental health and wellbeing and effectively in work, um, then we've got a problem.

Tamara ([46:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2771.55)):

Yeah. We have a chief people officer for that exact reason. It's, it's at exec level because it, you know, it's a people business that I run and, and so I want my team to be help healthy, happy, and, and as I said, bringing their best self to work. So yeah, for me, I don't really understand why everyone doesn't have a chief people officer

Lisa ([46:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2790.67)):

Don't understand either, well they try and get by with a bodge it and leg it approach to HR and people, culture stuff. And it's like, no, it's not gonna work. It's a disaster

Scott ([46:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2804.8)):

As we are on Comms In A Nutshell at the end of every episode, we'd like to do this. So in a nutshell, what are three key elements to creating a good workplace culture and Tamara, do you wanna round up with that one?

Tamara ([46:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2818.73)):

I would say I'm just quickly going through everything I've said, I would say, uh, trust, respect, and, uh, transparency,

Scott ([47:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2826.63)):

Fab and Lisa. Yeah.

Lisa ([47:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2828.07)):

I'm afraid. It's transparency, trust, communication. Um, and you know, just a completely open environment as best as you can. I know that was four, but obviously Tamara and I are speaking from the same script, I think,

Vic ([47:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2846.65)):

Thank you so much for both of you coming on today, it's been an absolute pleasure having you on having a discussion and a chat. And I think there's a lot of insights that people can take away from this. And it's been, it's been a lovely conversation. So thank you very much.

Lisa ([47:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/zW83gr4T1-XcR-udstSHziDyn-y9Te_7F-A-HqT0Dsa0EluQrp5AAM4P__31DO6BVmZ4Heyjmo4oilhIqCXKIs-OEd8?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2860.6)):

Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you.