

Celebrating the human condition at work TRANSCRIPT

7/26/2026

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Welcome to Victory Leadership, where good leadership leads to victory. Here we help emerging and established leaders win through clarity, confidence and growth. Let's get started.

Hello and welcome to the leadership pit stop, where we help emerging and established leaders win through clarity, confidence and growth. I'm Earl Airy with Victory Leadership, and over the past two episodes, we explored artificial intelligence from a leadership perspective.

In episode 21, we talked about the AI conversation your team may already be having without you. And we said that AI can accelerate the work, but only leadership can create the clarity, trust, skill, and judgment needed to use it well.

Then we talked about the human advantage in the age of AI in episode 22. And we asked, if AI gives us back time, how do we reinvest that time into work that only humans can do?

So today, we're going to continue that journey. Because if AI reduces friction, speeds up routine tasks, and gives us back some time, leaders have an important decision to make.

Will that time simply become more pressure, more tasks, more output? Or more meetings and demands? Or will that time be reinvested into the human condition that makes people thrive?

So Today's episode, episode 23 is titled Celebrating the human condition at work. How support, recognition and appreciation help people bring their best forward.

And I want to introduce a victory leadership practitioner model that I've been thinking through called posra. So p O S R a perceived organizational support, Recognition, appreciation.

Or in simpler language, we're talking about support, seeing the work, and valuing the person. So as we pull in today's leadership pit stop, let's think about a few things. Here's today's green flag moment.

We're ready to get back on the track and get into the race. And as we start our first lap, we're heading towards the green flag. Consider this as we start.

People do not only need the tools to do the work, that's pretty obvious, but they do need support to succeed. Recognition for what they can contribute, and appreciation for who they are. That matters even more in a technology laden environment.

Our workplace is continuously receiving more and more technology as time goes forward. And it's not stopping. Because faster work does not always mean better work. And more output doesn't always mean more meaning.

If leaders want people to bring their best forward, they need to create conditions where people can say, I am supported. My contribution is seen. I am appreciated as a person.

And that's the heart of the paza model. So, in short, it's about support, recognition, and appreciation. And it may become one way that leaders can celebrate the human condition at work.

Let's connect this to our present previous conversation. In the last episode, we asked, if AI gives us back time, then how do we reinvest that time into the work that only humans can do?

What is the human positive contribution? That it's just us, we're the only ones that can do it. And that's a question that should not disappear.

It should be something that we're continuously asking ourselves. Because one of the risks of AI adoption is that every recovered minute becomes another productivity demand.

It's like finding a couple extra dollars in your pocket and then you got to go spend it instead of save it. So think of it as leveraging it to save by developing meeting summaries that took less time.

Well, if that happens, then great, let's schedule another meeting. Or that there's a first draft that we created faster. Great, let's produce more content. Or perhaps the administrative work became easier.

Great, add more administrative work. Now productivity matters. I'm not going to say that we should think about scaling back productivity, because that is a stewardship move.

We should be productive. Inefficiency does matter, but the responsible use of time also matters.

Because if we only look at it one way, where leaders think about recovered capacity, then we may miss a deeper opportunity. AI may help create space, but the leadership is what decides what that space becomes.

It can become more pressure or more presence, more output, or more development, surveillance, or support. Is it just space to create more activity or to create more meaning?

Today, I want to suggest that some of that capacity should be reinvested into the support, recognition, and appreciation people need and can thrive on, because those are deeply human leadership practices and they are sorely needed. As I mentioned, that PASRA stands for Perceived Organization Support Recognition Appreciation.

Now, this is not being presented as a formally validated research model.

I'm offering it as a Victory Leadership Practitioner model that draws from important evidence informed concepts in organizational and leadership development. So let's define each part.

Perceived organizational Support asks, do employees feel the organization values their contribution and cares about their well being? Recognition asks, is the employee's work, effort, progress, or performance being seen? And then finally, appreciation.

Appreciation asks, does the person feel valued beyond just the output they produce? Do they feel valued as a contributing member of the team? As a person, those three ideas are related, but they're not the same.

Support helps people succeed, recognition helps people feel seen, and appreciation helps people feel significant.

When all three are present, people are more likely to experience the workplace as a place where their contribution matter and their humanity is honored. Let's begin with Perceived organizational support. And there's that word perceived.

Perceived is, you can think of it as someone's truth for right now, or the truth that they believe based on their experiences and information that they have.

And that is a very important distinction because of course, there's the perception and there's the truth and there's a gap, and we want to narrow that as much as possible. And so if there is a perception that there is a benefit, leaders may believe that they're supporting people.

Organizations may say that they care about their employees, and I don't doubt that they do.

However, the real question becomes, do employees experience the support or do they perceive it, do they feel it in a way where the work is structured, communicated, resource, and led? And this is why that line matters. Leaders do not get credit for support. Employees cannot experience. Support has to become visible.

It may show up through clear expectations, useful tools, manageable workloads, training, coaching, psychological safety development opportunities, removal of unnecessary barriers, and follow through. And the list goes on and on.

If employees are being asked to deliver, but they do not have the tool, time, clarity, authority, or support to succeed, the organization may be communicating something very different from what is intended. Support answers the employee's question, do I have what I need? And does this organization care about how I am doing when I try?

Do I have the tools necessary to be successful at what I'm being asked to do? And that is foundational, especially during change, especially during times of uncertainty. And those two always seem to go hand in hand.

And also when there is technology that is changing the way that we work. The second part of the PASRA is recognition. And recognition asks, is the work being seen?

Recognition matters because people want to know that their efforts are not invisible. They want to know that their contribution is connected to something meaningful.

Recognition can name progress, performance, effort, improvement, problem solving, quality, consistency, and again, another list that can just go on and on. Recognition says, I saw what you did. That contribution mattered. This behavior is worth repeating.

When recognition is specific, it reinforces that the organization values these elements. When it is fair, it can strengthen trust. And when it is timely, it helps people connect their action to the impact.

But recognition must be thoughtful. If the recognition is vague, then that attribute may fade quickly. If the recognition is unfair, it may create resentment.

And if the recognition only goes to the loudest, most visible person, then it may unintentionally teach others that quiet contributions don't matter. So leaders need to not only ask, are we recognizing people? They should also ask, what are we recognizing? Who gets recognized? Who may get overlooked?

And does our recognition reinforce the behaviors and the values we say matter? Recognition is not just celebration. It is leadership, communication. And the third part of PASRA is appreciation.

Appreciation goes deeper than recognition. Recognition offers focuses on the work. Appreciation says, I am grateful for what you bring. You matter.

Here I see the care, judgment, patience, persistence, creativity, courage, or presence that you contribute. That is different than just saying good job. Now, there's nothing wrong with saying good job. It's helpful, it can be encouraging.

But appreciation can carry a different emotional weight. It helps affirm the person's value. It helps people feel seen beyond the output. And that matters because people are not machines.

They do not only want their work measured, they want their contribution understood. They want their efforts to matter. And they want their humanity to be honored. So let's return to Renee.

Renee was introduced in the last two episodes and she has become our guide through this AI leadership conversation. First, her team was quietly divided around AI.

There was curiosity, there was cautiousness, there was some people who were experimenting behind the scenes. There were those that were afraid

of it, and there were those who just did not have enough clear information to make a decision or proceed.

But Renee did not start with the tool. She started with the work.

After a small responsible AI experiment helped the team recover some meeting summary time, development and administrative follow up, Renee asked a better question. If AI gives us time back, how do we reinvest that time into work only humans can do?

And that was a question that helped to change the conversation.

The team began thinking about better coaching, better customer conversations, process improvement, mentoring, and other stronger human connected training choices. Now Renee sees the next opportunity. So this is a, this is a growth process. And the team has gained some time back.

The work is moving a little more smoothly. It's faster, sure, but that expediency is not the victory. So Renee decides to use some of that recovered capacity to practice the PASRA model.

She begins with support. In one on one conversation, she asks,.

What is making your work harder than it needs to be? What do you need to do your work well? Where do you feel clear and where do you feel stuck? What barrier could I help remove? Then Renee practices recognition. She says to one team member, I.

Caught how you helped the team understand the new process. You took something that felt confusing and made it easier for others to follow. She says to another team member, I. Noticed that you caught a quality issue before it reached the customer that protected trust.

And then to yet another team member,. She shared, I observed the patience you showed while helping a newer employee learn the system that helped them feel less isolated and alone.

Then Renee practiced appreciation. By this time, she does not assume everyone receives appreciation the same way or even close. And that becomes an important issue.

Renee learns that appreciation is not a one size fits all. One team member values words of affirmation. They may need to hear that appreciation clearly.

And specifically another team member may value quality time. They feel appreciated when Renee slows down, listens coaches and gives focused attention. And another may feel appreciated through acts of service.

And when the workload is heavy, practical help communicates more clearly than words alone ever could. Another thrives with public recognition. They feel encouraged when their contribution is celebrated in front of the team.

And that preference of those who want private acknowledgement because the public attention is uncomfortable. But a sincere one on one message can mean a lot.

And if this sounds familiar, there is an adaptation from the appreciation, the language of appreciation in the workplace. So there's some additional information about that in the show notes if you would like to get your own copy. It's available wherever books are sold.

Highly recommend that read. So Renee, she realizes something important. That appreciation is not only about the leader's intention.

It's also about the employee's experience, how they are experiencing the environment around them. And that's why leaders do not get full credit for appreciation. That does not resonate. And that's not meant to be a criticism.

It's a call to emotional intelligence. Leaders must learn how people fully experience appreciation. Because a message can be more sincere and it can still miss the person.

You can practice it, you can deliver it, but if it doesn't resonate or connect, then it's a mess. It's a missed pitch. Because the leader can mean well and still communicate in a way it doesn't land.

So now the question becomes how do you best experience appreciation? And that is a question that the leader would ask their team.

And this is a prime opportunity to discuss it through a one on one or some type of connection where this information is discussed, discovered. Because that may be one of the most useful questions that a leader can ask members of their of their team. Now I want to add another piece.

Sometimes support, recognition and appreciation are offered in sensitive moments. A leader may need to encourage someone who is discouraged. They may need to recognize growth after a difficult season.

They also may need to offer support when someone is struggling or appreciate a person who is as they're helping them see a path forward. Those conversations can touch an individual's sense of self worth.

They can touch confidence, the identity, the competency, or the belonging and when those areas are touched, people may become more protective. It can be sensitive. And when they feel that those are being poked, you know, is it. Is it a poke? Or, you know, or is it being.

Or is it a, you know, a satisfying itch that's being scratched? Because if they're being poked, they may wonder, am I being judged? Am I being corrected? Did I do something wrong? Is this really support or is this criticism dressed up nicely?

And that's why intent matters. Sometimes leaders believe that the strength of their perspective will carry the message. They think if I explain this clearly enough, they will understand.

But in emotionally sensitive conversations, clarity alone may not be enough. People need to understand why the conversation is happening. They need to understand the care behind it.

So before offering support, recognition, or appreciation, leaders may need to frame the conversation with sincere intent. A leader might say, I want to.

Share this because I care about your growth and success. My intent is not to lecture you or point out where you fell short. I may not say this perfectly, but I want you to hear the care behind it.

Now, that statement can change the way the message is received. It lowers defensiveness. It protects dignity. And it helps a person hear the message through the lens of care rather than criticism.

When the topic is sensitive, sincerity may matter more than eloquence. People may forgive imperfect wording when they can trust the care behind the message. Now, there's an important balance here.

Good intent does not erase impact. The leader cannot simply say, I meant well. Ignore how the message landed. That would not be in an emotionally intelligent leadership.

The goal is not to hide behind the intent.

The goal is to communicate intent with humility, deliver the message with care, and remain open to correction if it does not land the way that it was intended. A simple sequence can help. Intent, message, meaning, check. First, intent. Here's why I'm sharing this. Second, the message. Here's what I noticed.

What support can I offer or what can I appreciate? Third is the meaning. Here's why it matters to you, the team, the customer, or the work. And fourth, check. How did that land? How did it come across?

Did it come across the way that I intended? Is there a better way for me to support or appreciate you?

And that last step matters because communication is not complete when the words leave the leader's mouth. Communication is complete when the message is shared and received. So back to the practical tool and how you may be able to put it to use this week.

Put it to use right away, and I call it the pasra. Check in. Choose one person and ask three questions. Support. What do you need to do your work well?

Listen for tools, training, clarity, decision, authority, workflow, barriers, emotional support, or coaching. Because this question helps you to understand whether the support is actually being experienced. Recognition.

What contribution, progress or effort deserves to be named? Don't wait for only major wins. Remember, recognize, growth. Recognize consistency, courage, patience, problem solving, service.

Recognize the quiet contributions that otherwise may go unnoticed. And appreciation. How do you best experience appreciation?

This might be a question that leaders unintentionally skip and think of it maybe in the same light as recognition, but it might be a question that determines whether the appreciation actually resonates. People need words. They need time, help, opportunity, encouragement. Some need to know that the work connects to the purpose.

And when you know how someone receives appreciation, you can lead more humanly. And here's what pasura may sound like in practice. Let me give you an example. So instead of saying thanks for your hard work, a leader may say I.

Want to say something because I genuinely appreciate how you have been showing up during this transition. I noticed that you took time to help others understand the new workflow even while you were still learning parts of it yourself.

That helped reduce confusion for the team. I appreciate the patience and generosity you brought to that moment. How can I better support you? As we continue adjusting,.

Notice the structure, the intent, the message, the meaning. Support, appreciation. That is much more meaningful than a generic thank you. It doesn't have to be long, but it does have to be sincere.

And this is what I mean by celebrating the human condition at work. It's not about pretending work is always easy because it's not.

And it's not about ignoring performance expectations expectations because if you can't measure it, you can't manage it. And this is not about replacing accountability with compliments because accountability is bi directional.

It's about recognizing that people are human before their employees. They need clarity, tools, support, feedback. They need recognition, appreciation. They need meaning.

They need to know that the organization cares about their output, that the organization cares about them.

Especially important in a technology driven workplace that may separate us and not allow the total presence of humans to connect in a way that helps to resonate. So not everything should be a text message. Not everything should be a teams chat. Not everything should be, you know, an email.

Everything shouldn't be in a Slack channel. There are times when it's best to make the phone call. There are times when it's best to do the video chat.

And best of all, when possible, the actual presence is showing up right in front of them because AI can help Accelerate the work. But people still feel the need to be supported, seen and appreciated. And if AI gives us that time back, that's great. That is. That is a gift.

But leaders must decide whether that time becomes more pressure or more humanity. So here is the Ask for the week. Choose one person. Have one pasra. Check in. Ask something along the lines of what do you need to do your work well?

What contribution, progress or effort deserves to be named? How do you best experience appreciation? Then before you share your message, make your intent clear.

Say what you're you know, say, you know, let them know why you're having a conversation. You know, inform them. Then say what your goal. Your goal is to support, not to criticize. And then say that you care about their growth and success.

You want to see and help them become the best versions of themselves. Then just speak plainly. You don't have to use perfect words, just as long as they're sincere ones. Support them in a way that they experience.

Recognize contributions in a way that is specific and appreciate them in a way that resonates. That is a practical way to celebrate the human condition at work. So let's bring this home. The workplace is changing.

It's been changing since we began working. AI is changing the way people think about tasks, time and productivity. But technology should not cause leaders to forget humanity.

In fact, it should challenge leaders to become more intentional about humanity. Because people do not only need the tools to do the work, they need support to succeed.

They need recognition for what they contribute, and they need appreciation for who they are. And when the message is sensitive, they need understanding in the care behind the words. Support helps people succeed.

The recognition helps people feel seen, and appreciation helps people feel significant. I sound like a broken record, but that's how it sticks. And sincere intent helps the message land with care. That's pasra.

That is human centered leadership. And that is one way leaders can help people become the best versions of themselves. So thank you for spending some time with me.

And don't forget that good leadership leads to victory. I will see you in the winner's circle. Have a good day everyone. Take care.

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