

BEING HUMAN

The infinite potential of how we work, lead, and live.



beyond success



Welcome again, let's do this!

BY MIRJANA BOZNOVSKA

Let's talk about what's really happening in our workplaces beneath the performance metrics, team meetings and leadership dynamics. **Most people think they leave their personal life at the door when they come to work. They don't.** What we bring into workplaces isn't just skills, experience, and qualifications. We bring beliefs, emotional conditioning and protective patterns.

Most of which formed long before work began. And without realising it, they shape how we...

- *communicate & relate*
- *respond under pressure*
- *lead ourselves & others*

*That's the part we rarely talk about. Because being human at work is more than Friday drinks, wellbeing days, and team lunches. **It's recognising the patterns we carry and developing the human needs that enable us to live our best life and do our best work.***

The workplace doesn't create the pattern. It reveals it...and invites us to grow beyond it.

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THE PATTERNS BENEATH THE WORK

WHAT WE LEARNED

Most workplace behaviours don't start at work. They start much earlier. Long before job titles, meetings, deadlines, and performance reviews, we were learning something else:

What felt safe.

What earned approval.

What kept the peace.

What got us noticed.

What protected us from rejection.

“The workplace doesn't create the pattern. It reveals it... and invites us to grow beyond it.”

WHAT WE CARRY

And without realising it... many of those patterns still shape how we show up today. And most of us have never stopped long enough to question them. So we label it:

“Just the way I am.”

“Just how work is.”

“Just part of leadership.”

But often it's an old protective pattern playing out in a modern workplace.

YOU MAY SEE YOURSELF HERE

- If speaking up created tension, you may avoid conflict now.
- If achievement earned approval, you may overwork to feel enough now.
- If criticism felt unsafe, feedback may feel personal now.
- If you expected rejection, you may overthink simple interactions now.
- If you carried people's emotions, you may still put yourself last now.
- If belonging felt conditional, you may struggle to say no or yes now.



“These aren't personality flaws. They're learned patterns. And most of us have never stopped long enough to question them.”



SELF-AWARENESS

This isn't about blame. Most people were doing the best they could with what they knew. This is about awareness. Because once you recognise the pattern, you can grow beyond it.



SELF-ACCEPTANCE

You can't lead authentically, while fighting yourself internally. It starts with fully accepting yourself. Because when the mask drops, the performance stops, and authentic leadership begins.



The Meaning You Gave It

Sometimes it's not the feedback.
It's the meaning you gave it.

Sometimes it's not the meeting.
It's the feeling of not being seen.

Sometimes it's not the silence.
It's the fear of being overlooked.

Sometimes it's not the workload.
It's the pressure to prove your worth.

And without realising it, many people spend their working lives:

- proving their worth
- chasing validation
- people pleasing
- overperforming
- fearing criticism
- abandoning themselves to feel accepted

But something changes when you recognise the pattern instead of repeating it.



Survival says

"I need to prove my worth."

"I need validation to feel enough."

"I have to keep everyone happy."

"My value comes from performance."

"Feedback means I've failed."

"I need to be accepted to belong."



Self-Worth says

"My worth is inherent."

"I am enough without validation."

"I'm not responsible for everyone."

"My value exists beyond performance."

"Feedback helps me grow, not shrink."

"I belong without earning acceptance."

Workplace boundaries often sound like this:

- "I don't need to respond immediately."
- "I don't need to defend myself."
- "I don't need to get it perfect."
- "I don't need to overexplain myself."
- "I can pause before reacting."
- "I can clarify before assuming."
- "I can disagree respectfully."
- "I can receive feedback openly."
- "I can say no without guilt."
- "I can ask for help/support."



Boundaries Within Your Own Mind

The boundary nobody talks about is the one with your own mind.

- *Not replaying the conversation all day.*
- *Not overanalysing what you should have said.*
- *Not rewriting messages to be liked/understood.*
- *Not needing to dominate or have the last word.*
- *Not carrying one difficult moment into your entire day, week... or weekend.*

That loop is exhausting. And it's optional.

Most people think boundaries are about controlling other people. But often the strongest boundary is how you protect your:

- energy
 - attention
 - peace
 - and self-worth
- at work.

“When you realise people’s behaviour often reflects what’s happening within them, you stop taking everything personally. And that creates space for understanding.”

A Simple Human Reset

Before reacting, ask yourself:

“Am I responding out of pressure... or out of self-respect?”

That one pause can change:

- the conversation
- the energy in the room
- and how you experience work.

Because the more you stop performing for acceptance... the easier it becomes to show up authentically.



AUTHENTICITY AT WORK SHAPES the human experience

“The more connected people are to themselves... the more authenticity replaces performance.”

ARE YOU PERFORMING?

Most people don't realise how much energy goes into pretending:

- that you're confident
- that you have it all together
- that you don't need support
- that you're unaffected

And for a while... that performance may even work. But over time, it becomes exhausting.

HUMAN NEEDS FUEL AUTHENTICITY.

People show up more authentically when three human needs are supported:

- **Autonomy** → personal buy-in.
- **Relatedness** → trust & belonging.
- **Competence** → contribution & impact.

Not temporarily. Sustainably.

People stop performing for acceptance and start showing up more present, more authentic, and more human at work.

SHIFT THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

When people feel safe to be themselves, something shifts. They:

OPTIMISE: how they think, feel, show up.

NETWORK: through trust, shared values.

ELEVATE: how they work, lead, contribute.

And that creates:

- psychological safety
- healthier workplaces
- Sustainable performance
- People-First leadership.



AUTONOMY

I trust myself.

- "I can say no or yes without guilt."
- "I don't need to overexplain myself."
- "I can choose how I respond."

RELATEDNESS

I authentically belong.

- "I can connect without people pleasing."
- "I can listen without fixing everything."
- "I can disagree without losing connection."

COMPETENCE

My value is inherent.

- "I contribute without proving myself."
- "I can receive feedback without shrinking."
- "I don't need to dominate to influence."



A Simple Human Reset

Intention creates change.

Autonomy:

Embody Courage

"I will show up as myself, not perform for acceptance."

Relatedness:

Embody Openness

"I will create genuine connection, not perform to belong."

Competence:

Embody Expansive Thinking

"I will contribute authentically, not perform for worth."

The human experience at work doesn't change through policy.

It changes when each person chooses courage, openness, and expansive thinking.

That's how culture shifts from survival to growth.

Real Work Examples— Supporting Human Needs At Work

Pressure—Self-Trust → Autonomy

Limiting: "If I say no, I'll disappoint people."

You overcommit, ignoring your own capacity.

Growth: "I can honour my limits without guilt."

Human Reset: Pause before responding. Ask.

"Am I responding from pressure or self-respect?"

Leader Support:

Create environments that foster autonomy by:

- respecting boundaries, over burnout.
- encouraging honest conversations.
- modelling healthy limits yourself.

Conflict—Protection → Relatedness

Limiting: "If we disagree, the connection is at risk."

You stay silent or people please to keep the peace.

Growth: "Real connection can survive honesty."

Human Reset: Replace defensiveness with curiosity. Ask.

"What might be happening beneath this reaction?"

Leader Support:

Create environments that foster connection by:

- actively listening without defensiveness.
- encouraging different perspectives.
- creating space for open communication.

Performance—Authenticity → Competence

Limiting: "My value comes from proving myself."

You overwork or dominate to feel competent.

Growth: "My worth doesn't depend on performance."

Human Reset: Observe your interactions. Ask.

"Am I trying to prove myself or be genuine?"

Leader Support:

Create environments that foster competence by:

- recognising contribution, not just output.
- encouraging questions and curiosity.
- making it safe to contribute without perfection.



BEING HUMAN

a People-First invitation

Imagine if your leadership genuinely supported the human need for:

- autonomy
- connection
- and competence.

What would shift:

- in how your people show up?
- in how your team connects and collaborates?
- in the culture you create every day?

What would shift in your own experience of work, leadership, and life?



“When people feel safe to be human at work, the experience of work changes. Until next time, let your humanity lead.”

— MIRJANA