



YOUR SWEETSPOT

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CAREER INSIGHTS AND STRATEGIES

GO AHEAD AND PIVOT – IT’S A DANCE YOU CAN MASTER

“Okay, I hear you, but how do I pivot?” was the question my client asked as we talked about the changes she needed to make in her leadership behavior.

change in terms of pivoting, but the term suggest that the idea of require that they change “who verb, pivot means “to turn on more effectively to a situation making a “mental turn” to



Consider how you respond middle of something. You encourage the person to share

continue to work on a spreadsheet. Under these circumstances, does that person have your undivided attention? Are *you* able to gather the facts that will result in the most informed decision? In this case, the pivot is to either stop what you are doing and provide your full attention, or ask the person to return at a time when you can listen and give the best counsel.

Before that moment I hadn’t thought of behavior it is a term I now use often. My client’s responses to pivoting is easy to act on. Maybe because it doesn’t they are” but how they respond in the moment. As a an exact spot.” If we think in terms of responding (from a coaching perspective), pivoting involves *intentionally* act in one way versus another.

when someone enters your office while you are in the understand that they need an answer now, so you what’s on their mind, while *you* finish an email or

Imagine that you are faced with a challenge while working on a project. You are the subject matter expert and people count on you to have the answers in matters such as these. Your natural tendency might be to simply figure it out, *no matter how long it takes*. After all you don’t want people to think that you are not up to the task or that you don’t know what you are doing. On the other hand, the pivot might be to consider the value of thought partnership and collaboration. Seeking out the perspective of others creates a synergy that often leads to higher quality outcomes. It is an opportunity to share your perspective, demonstrate your business acumen, and exhibit your ability to listen and engage others in the exchange of ideas.

Think about a time when you responded to a situation in a way that did not reflect you well. Maybe you were stressed out or tired. You raised your voice, were dismissive, or insensitive to the feelings of a direct report, colleague, friend or family member. What would the pivot look like here? Perhaps instead of thinking “he’ll get over it” or “she knows I didn’t mean it” or “they know how I get when I’m stressed out” - the pivot is a demonstration of vulnerability. That sounds like, “I’m sorry, I’m having a bad day, but I should not have taken it out on you” or “I apologize, I was being insensitive, how can I support you?” or even, “My behavior was inappropriate, I apologize. I’d like to work on mending the relationship. Can we start with lunch?”

Sometimes the pivot is an easy one, it simply requires mindfulness. Other times the pivot is more challenging, it requires putting the ego aside and demonstrating vulnerability. As you think about the value of pivoting you might want to ask yourself these questions:

1. How do I want to show-up?
2. How will one action over another impact my brand?
3. How do I want people to experience me?

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Regardless of how we see ourselves, we are only as effective as *others believe* we are. Those beliefs are formed by their experiences with us and how we make others feel when they interact with us. The pivot allows us to mindfully respond to one situation at a time in a way that is authentic and meaningful for us and those with whom we interact. How will you pivot?

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