

Leading Through Change: The Mindset Shift Banks Need Right Now

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The banking industry is on the brink of a generational shift in leadership. Many CEOs plan to retire in the next few years, leaving banks to grapple with more than just filling roles; the real work lies in preparing new leaders for a rapidly evolving industry. Change is no longer something to merely “manage.” It’s something we need to lean into, and the best chance of success lies in readying leaders who can meet it head-on.

Leading Boldly

The bottom line: Great leaders don’t wait for stability or sit around hoping conditions improve. They dive in, driving the organization forward with purpose. If you’re leading a bank today, waiting for things to settle is a luxury you can’t afford. Bold, forward-thinking leadership creates a culture where innovation isn’t just accepted—it’s expected. Leaders who embrace this mindset will leave a legacy that outlasts their tenure and set the stage for a seamless transition.

Building a Culture of “Yes, We Can”

Your team is watching your every move. If you tackle challenges with a can-do attitude, they’ll mirror that energy. Show them that change isn’t an inconvenience; it’s an opportunity for growth. Soon enough, you’ll have a culture that thrives on adaptability. The next generation of leaders needs to be able to think critically and act confidently. This culture isn’t just about continuity; it’s about fostering a resilient, forward-looking organization that isn’t afraid to take on what’s next.

Collaboration Beats Silos

It’s no secret that banks have long relied on siloed departments to operate. But in today’s climate, collaboration isn’t just nice to have; it’s essential. Break down those walls. Encourage transparent, cross-departmental communication, where teams share successes and challenges. This openness is what enables an organization to adapt quickly, respond to shifting demands, and tap into the collective expertise of its people. When teams work together, it becomes much easier for new leaders to step in without losing momentum or vision.

Empowering Leadership Through Trust

Your managers and directors aren’t there to take orders—they’re there to lead. If you find yourself micromanaging, you’re holding back the very people who will shape the bank’s future. True empowerment means allowing them to make decisions and grow

from mistakes. Trust is the foundation of a culture where people feel confident to push boundaries and think big. When leaders are given the freedom to experiment, they’re not only prepared to take on more responsibility; they’re excited about it. And that sense of excitement is contagious.

The Balance of Resilience and Empathy

Let’s be honest: banking isn’t for the faint of heart. It’s high-stakes and high-pressure, which means resilience is a must. But so is empathy. If your team feels like they’re just cogs in the machine, you’re missing out on one of the most powerful tools in your arsenal—human connection.

Empathy doesn’t mean going soft; it means recognizing that your people are human. It means listening, valuing their input, and understanding their challenges. When your team feels supported, they’re more willing to push through the tough times. And when the time comes for new leadership, they’ll be more than ready to step up, inspired by a leadership style that balances strength with humanity.

Setting the Tone for the Future

The tone you set today will shape your bank’s future. Your team takes its cues from you. If you’re bold, they’ll be bold; if you’re adaptive, they’ll follow suit. Succession isn’t just about passing the torch—it’s about embedding a mindset and a set of values that carry forward. By modeling adaptability and resilience, you’re not only preparing your team to handle change, but also instilling a leadership standard for future generations.

Leaving a Legacy of Strength and Vision

In an industry that’s constantly evolving, there’s no “perfect” time to act. Great leaders don’t wait; they create opportunities. Be the catalyst who sparks collaboration, the empathetic leader who builds trust, and the visionary who empowers others. As you guide your bank through this period of transition, remember that you’re not just filling seats—you’re building a legacy that will define the bank’s future for years to come. 🌀

