



people  
make the  
difference

## People Make The Difference whitepaper

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### **Failure is a Great Option**

Many of us tend to back away when the possibility of failure rears its head; failure is not fun, it can hurt our ego, pride and confidence and it can make us feel as though we're going backward rather than forward. After we discussed failure in the article "Are business leaders scared to fail?" in September last year, it became clear that failure is feared by many but, as we all know too well, failure is inevitable and despite all our efforts, we can't stop it from showing up when we least want it around.

Some leaders, in an attempt to inspire, can mistakenly say phrases such as "failure is not an option" to their team – many think that it's all willpower; by simply refusing to recognise failure as an option, they won't fail! Unfortunately this is not the case and, aside from being clichéd, unrealistic and overused, these kind of phrases can be damaging to the team morale.

Refusing to accept failure can breed fear and anxiety within your team and make them scared to take risks and try new things. A team that is scared into playing it safe will be stagnant, unwilling and unable to explore new territory.

### **Welcoming Failure**

It's unnatural to encourage failure but making it normal can help your team to be more realistic. Failure is a standard part of any business or venture, so welcoming and even expecting it can help you approach failure courageously so you don't find yourself defeated by those failures.

## **Acknowledge it hurts**

Failure can hurt pride and even knock confidence. That is natural - whatever you are setting out to do you start with inspiration, motivation and a vision of success. So acknowledge the disappointment, but then reframe.

When you fail, you have two options in front of you; you can either give up or try again. Giving up may be the easier option, but if you're ready to dust yourself off and try again, there are some simple action points you can implement to turn your failures into stepping stones on your way to success.

Some suggestions:

- Get feedback from your team, everyone has different perspectives, along with their different strengths and weaknesses. Finding out what they think the problem is can help deliver a well-rounded picture of what went wrong.
- Once you've identified the potential problem, get ready to try again, eliminating that variable. Think of it as a science experiment, you've not failed, you're just testing out your hypothesis, finding all the ways that don't work.
- Going forward, always have a Plan B to help your team get out of any hot water you find yourselves in.

It's important to not let failures discourage your team from moving forward, it's much better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing at all.

*If you're ready to harness failures to move towards success, People Make the Difference can help you with training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach On Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit [peoplemakethedifference.com.au](http://peoplemakethedifference.com.au)*