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Leadership at all levels: Lindsay LaNore

**Ripping off the Band-Aid**

**Regardless of the job you do,** there are times when you realize that you’ve delayed starting a task, finishing a project or just plain moving ahead. It happens for so many reasons. But often, when you sit back and look at all the scenarios in which you have found yourself on pause, you realize it’s you that’s holding you back.

If you’ve ever dealt with a small child with a grazed knee, you’ll know it can be hard to get them to remove the Band-Aid, even days after they fell off the swing. Yet, you know if you let them keep it on for too long, the wound might fester.

Grown-ups aren’t all that different. The fear of removing a metaphorical Band-Aid can stop us from moving forward. And that hesitancy can have a ripple effect on everyone around us.

Good leaders must be comfortable with the uncomfortable. We are our own authors. If you’re not ripping off the Band-Aid, it’s stuck, and so are you. Ask yourself these questions:

**What will happen if I don’t confront the issue?** Will it fester? Most likely, it will. Whether you’re anxious or just procrastinating, it’s only going to get worse if you don’t deal with it.

**What’s the worst thing that will happen if I rip off the Band-Aid?** What’s the worst thing that will happen if I don’t? Compare the two. Most of the time, after completing a long-delayed task, you feel relief, and there’s a clear payoff. Plus, you’re more likely to confront other issues you’ve delayed dealing with. Are there any payoffs from not completing the task? Probably not.

**What would completing this task or project mean for your life?** What was the original goal behind it? Thinking of the purpose may help motivate you to finish it, so visualize it complete. If it seems daunting, break the project into smaller tasks and set a timer or due date.

Now, think about your team, your peers and even your board of directors. At times, they might be resistant to new ideas, whether it’s modifying a process, approving a policy change or introducing new technology. They might be fearful of losing control or making mistakes. Lead by example, and acknowledge that change can be painful and that mistakes will happen. They always do. Keep everyone moving forward.

You can use this concept for looking at all kinds of transformation, whether it’s technology, customer demands, regulations, financial risk, examiner expectations or workforces. For some, rapid evolution can be nerve-racking, but think about changes that have already happened. The banking industry is constantly ripping off Band-Aids and continuing to evolve. That’s half the fun!

There is always something to be gained by being decisive. At the very least, you’ve taken something off your to-do list. At best, you’ve made a positive change for yourself and your organization. So, rip off the Band-Aid and go for it.

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