



## Bounce back

*Resiliency is critical skill for business success*

**L**ife is filled with challenges. Our ability to cope and overcome hurdles is key to personal happiness and fulfillment.

Resiliency is the ability to persevere and successfully adapt when faced with adversity or difficulty.

On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how resilient are you?

On a scale from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest), how resilient is your organization?

Resilient people tend to overcome adversity, bounce back from setbacks and thrive under extreme, on-going pressure without acting in a dysfunctional or harmful manner.

Resilient people are inspiring because, in spite of great hardship, they persevere and ultimately achieve their goals. Through the struggle, resilient people know that if they push themselves beyond their comfort zone, they will succeed.

Resilient people are like all of us – they experience anxiety and doubt. But they are able to redirect their negative feelings in a self-serving, nourishing way. They don't personalize the moments of overwhelm, self-doubt or temporary defeat. They reassess their plan, make adjustments as needed and move forward.

In his book *"The Survivor Personality,"* Al Siebert, Ph.D., describes characteristics of resilient people. They:

### 1. Possess a childlike curiosity.

They are adults who enjoy themselves as children do. They ask a lot of questions and want to know how things work. They enjoy being a part of new developments and have a good time everywhere they go.

### 2. Constantly learn from experiences.

They rapidly assimilate new or unexpected experiences and extract learning to support future success. They ask themselves, "What did I learn?" "What clues did I miss or ignore?" or "Next time, I will . . ."

### 3. Adapt quickly.

Resilient people possess mental and emotional flexibility. They see what is and say, "How can I . . ." rather than "Now what?!" or "We're stuck!"

### 4. Possess high self-esteem.

According to Nathaniel Brandon,

"Through the struggle, resilient people know that if they push themselves beyond their comfort zone, they will succeed."

Ph.D., self-esteem has two components: a feeling of personal competence and a feeling of personal worth. In other words, "self-esteem is the sum of self-confidence and self-respect. It reflects your ability to cope with life's challenges (to understand and master your problems) and of your right to be happy (to respect and stand up for your interests and needs)."

It's the ability to express the entire range of feelings – anger, love, dislike, appreciation, grief – honestly and openly, and likewise, suppress those feelings when they believe it's important to do so.

### 5. Develop good friendships and loving relationships.

People who have a solid network of caring friends and family are more stress resistant than loners. Talking through situations with people you trust and who care about you diminishes the impact of difficulties.

### 6. Expect things to work out well.

Resilient people are deeply optimistic. They use personal values and standards to guide their decisions and actions. They

can operate with a high degree of ambiguity and uncertainty. As a result, they become a stable force during a period of chaos or crisis.

### 7. Have empathy.

They can see situations through the perspective of others, even antagonists. This wider lens allows them to see opportunities that others overlook. They also have a talent for developing creative solutions.

### 8. Rely on their intuition.

Resilient people accept their hunches

as valid, useful sources of information. They often ask themselves, “Why don’t I believe what I’m being told?” “What if I did this?” “What is my body telling me?” or “How do I feel about . . . ?”

## **9. Are good at self-defense.**

Resiliency allows them to see through “con games” and other forms of manipulation. They know when to speak their truth and hold their tongue. And they know when they should block and attack, avoid it altogether, or simply walk away. They have a talent for finding the right person – an ally or someone in the know – to educate, guide and support them.

## **10. Have a talent for serendipity.**

Simply stated, it’s the ability to transform misfortune into good fortune, and adversity into strength. A good indicator of exceptional mental health is when a person talking about a rough experience says, “I would never willingly go through anything like that again, but it was one of the best things that ever happened to me.”

Resiliency is not a genetically fixed trait, nor is it tied to our childhood, wealth

or social strata. Rather, it is a combination of emotional discipline, how we choose to view the world and most importantly, how we choose to interpret events.

The workplace today differs from the workplace of the past. Lean, customer-driven, adaptive organizations require employees to operate as part of self-managed work teams, adapt to change, be self-driven, achieve performance objectives and strive for continuous improvement. Fewer managers are available to provide coaching, counsel and support. Newly hired employees are expected to “get the job done.”

I believe that raising your organization’s resiliency quotient should be a prime directive for corporate training programs. Your employees’ ability to be flexible and adaptive, responsive to adversity, creative and critical thinkers, and having solid interpersonal skills are as important to corporate success as brand value. In fact, I believe that an increase in your corporate resiliency quotient will actually improve your customer’s total experience, which will lead to higher brand value. ■

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