



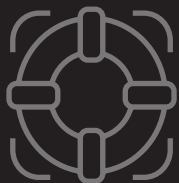
RICHARD HOLT
LEARNING FROM THE BAD EXAMPLE

LEADERSHIP MOMENTS PODCAST TRANSCRIPT



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EPISODE 1



**RICHARD HOLT - LEARNING FROM THE BAD EXAMPLE
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MURRAY: Welcome to my podcast. I'm Murray Wright and this is Leadership Moments, real people stories about the people and the moments that have influenced and shaped their leadership.

So we're just talking with Richard Holt GM of Accor Darling Harbour and I've asked the question, what is Richard's defining leadership moment?

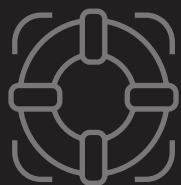
RICHARD: I'm going to cheat and have two. My first was actually the first hotel I ever worked at and the general manager there who I always said if I got into a position of management and responsibility I would do absolutely everything he didn't. So he was the anti role model. Examples of things that I'm talking about there were, you only ever knew how you're going if no one said anything to you. If you were going well, that was. If you weren't going well, that was made abundantly clear, but if you were going really well, the fact that no one was saying anything to you was about the only indicator. That was one example. He just really didn't connect with his people. He didn't motivate. He didn't really give any feedback. So that was the first defining experience around leadership.

MURRAY: You're never going to be like that.

RICHARD: Yeah. As I said, the anti role model. The second in a very positive light was when I first joined Accor. The general manager who employed me into the company was a real believer in autonomy, giving you parameters and letting you work out how to do it. So he never micro managed. He never told me how to do something. He asked me what he needed. He asked if I was clear on that. He asked if I needed anything around it, but he let me do it. And I found that giving your people the benefit of the doubt that they are capable in the first instance and supporting them around that has much better results than doing it any other way. Yes, you go back and check behind that, but no, he was absolutely in terms of that, giving people that responsibility and autonomy, and also the recognition after it happens was a real positive influence.

MURRAY: And what would you say is the focus of your leadership?

RICHARD: Maintaining our leading position. We've had an exceptional year last year. I don't think we've got an issue around intent or motivation, but keeping that momentum and staying ahead will be our challenge for this year. So my focus on the leadership side is making sure my guys are energized. They've had a bit of a break.



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They've had the time to step out of the business, refresh and recharge so we can really get back and service that issue. So checking in with the guys and understanding where they're at and what they need to help get the results again this year.

MURRAY: And if you... just one last question. Thinking if you stood in the position of your executive team, what would they see as their challenge for the year?

RICHARD: Twofold... taking that performance where we had it from last year. There are different dynamics that are in play this year. It's more challenging this year I think to do it again and secondly, we are not getting distracted, but there is the whole dynamic of the shift from an old and leased hotel into a management hotel scenario and getting to know our new owner in a closer working relationship and them getting to know us. Because effectively when we cross over, we really don't have a lot of history if any with the new owner in terms of our performance the same way we did with our previous owner (inaudible 04:01). So a new staff issue.

MURRAY: Thank you.

Thanks for listening. Great to be reminded that even when working with poor leaders there's still opportunity to learn and of course, the importance of giving people recognition.

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Either call +61 407 262 475 or via the [website](#).
Look forward to hearing from you.