



Princeton HR Insight LLC
A multi-faceted complement to in-house resourcing

CULTIVATING RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

Mar 2024

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CULTIVATING RESILIENT LEADERSHIP

Resilience, characterized by the ability to swiftly overcome adversities, spans personal challenges (e.g., a stretch role, balancing raising kids with careers, caring for elders, dealing with acts of social injustice, managing a health crisis, getting divorced) or societal upheavals (e.g., economic downturn, pandemic, a natural disaster, mass shooting).

In recent years, the challenges people are managing in the workplace have notably shifted.

The period between 2020 and 2021 witnessed a global struggle to adapt to the multifaceted impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on family, health, the economy, politics, and society. It took until well into 2022 for many companies to settle into their post-pandemic 'new normal.' At which time, many faced a surge in turnover as part of the [Great Resignation](#). Finally, in late 2023 to early 2024, companies began initiating substantial transformations at a higher rate than they had been able to since before the pandemic—mergers, new go-to-market strategies, IT implementations—posing challenges amid routine responsibilities, constrained budgets, and new team dynamics.



RESILIENCY AS A SKILL



Resilience can be honed through reflection and intentional growth. In his article titled "[Resilient Leadership](#)," Matt Gavin at Harvard Business School emphasizes **self-reflection** and **assessment** as pivotal in leadership resilience, necessitating a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development.

Observations of resilient leaders showcase distinct traits such as exceptional **confidence** levels, **strong networks** for knowledge sharing, great **time management** including prioritization and delegation, focus on **energy-boosting activities**, and proficiency in breaking complex changes into **manageable steps**. These traits are further reinforced by Hogan CEO Scott Gregory as seen in Forbes article, "[Why We Need Resilient Leaders to Tackle the Future](#)," by Karen Greenbaum.



Leaders have an opportunity to learn the skills needed to overcome adversity themselves and also build organizational resilience by role modeling for others.

RESILIENCY AS A SKILL



Exceptional Confidence Levels

- This confidence often stems from their self-awareness, past experiences, and a deep understanding of one's capabilities. It enables leaders to make decisive choices, navigate uncertainties with poise, and inspire trust within their teams. Their confidence acts as a stabilizing force during challenges, encouraging others to follow suit.



Strong Networks for Knowledge Sharing

- It is important for leaders to recognize the value of collaboration and maintain robust networks, actively seek out diverse perspectives, and foster environments where knowledge sharing is encouraged. Their networks then serve as a reservoir of insights, enabling them to access information, best practices, and advice when needed.



Great Time Management including Prioritization and Delegation

- Resilient leaders possess exceptional time management skills. They excel in prioritizing tasks effectively, understanding the importance of allocating time to critical matters while delegating responsibilities judiciously. This skill allows them to focus on high-impact initiatives while empowering their teams to take ownership, minimize micromanagement, and foster a culture of accountability and efficiency.



Focus on Energy-Boosting Activities

- Resilient leaders understand the significance of maintaining personal energy levels. They prioritize activities that replenish and sustain their energy, recognizing that leading through challenging times demands emotional and mental capacity.



Proficiency in Breaking Complex Changes into Manageable Steps

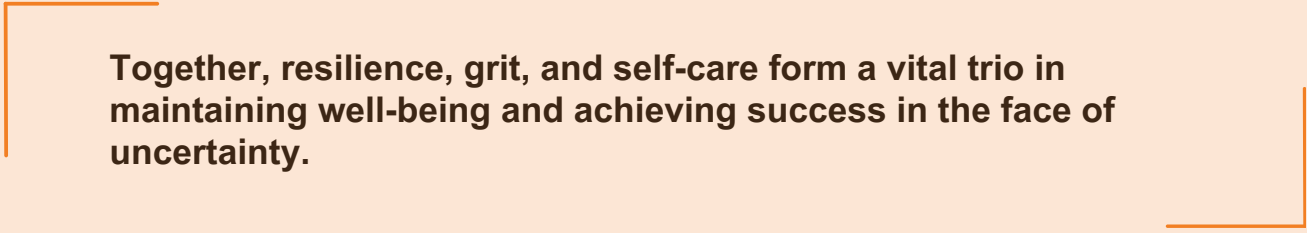
- The ability to break down complex problems into manageable, actionable steps alleviates feelings of being overwhelmed within themselves and their teams. This fosters a sense of progress and accomplishment with each milestone achieved.

CREATING THE SPACE TO GROW SKILLS NEEDED FOR RESILIENCY



Resilience, while essential, can only thrive in a supportive environment conducive to maintaining balance and prioritizing self-care. Leadership consultant, Friné Carbonell, emphasized that without these elements, the very characteristics that underpin resilience may inadvertently contribute to burnout. In Harvard Business Review's analysis of *Grit* by Angela Duckworth, talks about the tenacity to persist through challenges, complements resilience by providing the strength needed to persevere. While resilience encourages learning from setbacks, grit empowers individuals to push through obstacles with determination. Both traits are indispensable for success and can be nurtured through a growth mindset, which emphasizes adaptability and continuous improvement.

Together, resilience, grit, and self-care form a vital trio in maintaining well-being and achieving success in the face of uncertainty.



HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



In our quest to better understand the multifaceted nature of resilience, we embarked on a series of interviews with individuals from diverse backgrounds. These interviews aimed to explore how resilience manifests itself in different contexts, shedding light on the strategies and factors that contribute to rising above adversity.

Our discussions covered a wide range of topics, from the experiences of armed service members and athletes to marginalized communities to an international perspective on resilience. We delved into the nuances of resilience within the non-profit sector and examined how organizations navigate periods of growth and change. Additionally, we explored the role of values-centered communities in facing challenges.

The interconnectedness of resilience across diverse domains emphasizes the universal importance of adaptive coping strategies and a forward-thinking outlook in overcoming challenges.



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HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON RESILIENCE - *WITH ALLISON BARNES*

The international perspective on resilience is inherently complex due to cultural nuances, including communication styles and socioeconomic factors, significantly influencing how resilience is understood and applied across different societies. Leaders in countries like the United States, where individualism is emphasized, may approach resilience differently from their counterparts in regions where community support is integral to achieving resilience goals. Despite these variations, there are universal elements, such as the individual mindset and the willingness to seek assistance, that transcend cultural boundaries.

Socioeconomic backgrounds can play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' perceptions of resilience and determining their approach to developing resilient characteristics. Individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds may possess greater resources and tend to focus on long-term solutions, while those from less privileged backgrounds may prioritize short-term stability. For multinational corporations operating in diverse cultural landscapes, it is imperative to consider the cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of their leaders.



HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



RESILIENCY IN DIVERSE POPULATIONS - *WITH CARMEN HUGHES*

Insights from this interview shed light on resilience within marginalized communities facing micro-aggressions or small acts of aggression. The necessity of resilience in such contexts, where individuals often confront relentless challenges, may demand a different approach. Coping mechanisms, such as extending the benefit of the doubt and seeking solidarity with peers who share similar experiences, emerge as vital strategies for navigating these intricate dynamics. Furthermore, the significance of organizational allyship and the cultivation of inclusive learning cultures cannot be overstated in bolstering the resilience of diverse populations. While individual empowerment is crucial, it is equally essential to recognize the collective nature of resilience-building endeavors. Consequently, companies that prioritize the establishment of supportive environments fostering a sense of community and empowerment enable individuals to collectively confront and surmount challenges.



HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



RESILIENCE IN NON-PROFIT SECTOR - *WITH MICHELE STOWE*

Resilience within the non-profit sector is deeply rooted in the principles of organizational sustainability and community support. A [survey](#) of 100 non-profit C-Suite leaders conducted by SkyRocket Coaching, suggests that leaders who actively engage in strategic planning, prioritize deep listening, and foster meaningful partnerships are better positioned to enhance organizational resilience. However, navigating the unique challenges inherent in the non-profit space, such as political conflicts and the need for long-term change strategies, can pose significant obstacles to effective resilience-building efforts.



Despite these challenges, compassionate leadership, and the implementation of supportive structures, such as mentorship programs, serve as valuable avenues for fostering resilience among emerging leaders within non-profit organizations. By investing in the professional development and well-being of their team members, non-profit leaders can cultivate a culture of resilience that permeates throughout the organization.

Non-profits must also recognize the importance of fostering resilience within the broader communities they serve. By addressing systemic challenges and empowering individuals and communities to overcome adversity, non-profit organizations can play a vital role in promoting resilience on both individual and societal levels.

HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH AND CHANGE - *WITH PAULA ZIMMERMAN*

Organizational resilience during periods of growth and change hinges on several key factors, including trust, psychological safety, and effective conflict management within teams. Leadership plays a pivotal role in fostering resilient cultures through proactive relationship-building, trust cultivation, and promoting inclusivity.

A leader who invests in fostering strong relationships with team members before conflict arises establishes a foundation of trust and support that can be crucial during challenging times. By demonstrating solidarity with their team during periods of adversity, leaders can foster a sense of unity and resilience among team members. Resilient leaders not only inspire their teams but also devise strategies to navigate obstacles and ensure that their team feels supported throughout the journey.



HOW CONTEXT SHAPES RESILIENCY



ATHLETES AND THE MILITARY -

WITH BRYAN PRICE

Athletes in sports and members of the military must be resilient to succeed. Athletes consistently face failure as they battle injuries, hostile crowds, and, of course, the opposition. In the military, the enemy always has a say, sometimes making resilience a matter of life or death. Notably, both domains emphasize the importance of controlling controllable factors. For example, an athlete cannot dictate their playing time; perhaps the coach benches them. While they cannot influence the coach's decision, they can control their effort to improve. Moreover, they can support teammates who are on the field, demonstrating their teamwork and commitment. This shows an athlete embracing a growth mindset, which also resonates within professional business settings. Moreover, the interviewee underscores the role of leaders in fostering resilience, particularly through providing perspective and guidance during challenging times.

Central to the discussion is the equation:

$$E + R = O$$

event + response = outcome

Event + response = outcome," underscores the pivotal role of one's response to external events in shaping outcomes.

PERSONAL FAITH ANGLE ON RESILIENCE -

WITH ANN MOKRIS

By integrating values-centered communities (spiritual, yoga, affinity groups, other), individuals can cultivate a robust foundation for resilience that empowers them to overcome obstacles and thrive in the face of adversity. While the discussion on athletes and military noted controlling controllable factors, this approach often places a significant emphasis on letting go of what one cannot control, then drawing strength from supportive communities formed around shared values.

CONCLUSION



Resilient leadership is indispensable in navigating challenges and fostering organizational success. Keys to success include:

- Reflection and intentional growth
- Skills and characteristics including:
 - Exceptional confidence levels
 - Strong networks for knowledge sharing
 - Great time management including prioritization and delegation
 - Focus on energy-boosting activities
 - Proficiency in breaking complex changes into manageable steps
- Considering context for additional nuances

As we continue to navigate an ever-changing world, resilient leadership remains a cornerstone of progress and success.

At Princeton HR Insight, we are dedicated to guiding leaders on this journey. Through assessments, coaching, and development programs, our aim is to empower leaders to leverage strengths and address challenges head-on. We firmly believe that nurturing resiliency in leaders cultivates organizations that thrive amidst change and adversity.

SOURCES



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Interviewees:

- **Allison Barnes**, Executive Coach and Leadership Consultant, Zest Global Consulting | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Friné Carbonell**, Leadership Consultant | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Carmen E. Hughes**, Founder & CEO, Edelweise Consulting | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Ann Mokris**, Executive Coach, Ann Mokris LLC | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Bryan Price**, Founder, Top Mental Game | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Michele Stowe**, Founder and Executive Coach, SkyRocket Coaching | [LinkedIn](#)
- **Paula Zimmerman**, Principal Consultant, ProSonder Solutions | [LinkedIn](#)

Authenticity

Empathy Humility

Consistently open to engaging and communicating

Proactive Resilient Leaders

Adaptability **Reflection and Assessment** Effective

High Emotional Intelligence

Continuously learning and growing

Purpose Driven

Transparency

Agile

Far from reserved

Thrive during change and uncertainty

Calm under pressure