



Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, Episode 69
Leading and Working Remotely - Top Tips from Master Facilitator Michael Wilkinson
-- Produced By Suzie Price

Transcript

www.pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely

Suzie Price: “I had to shut down my phone because I actually, almost everyone is calling us.” That’s a comment from Zoom video communications CEO Eric Yuan when he was interviewed recently about the impact of the Coronavirus on his company, Zoom, which is a cloud-based, video conferencing company. He shared that they are having very, very high usage and every day the usage is almost at a new record. So we’re all there, we’re all experiencing virtual meetings, whether you are with Zoom or another online conferencing tool. But because of that I thought it would make sense to figure out how to make our virtual meetings and leading virtually, to get some tips and instruction around how to make that more productive. So I went to the master of all things related to facilitation and meetings, and that is Certified Master Facilitator and one of my Mentors, Michael Wilkinson, and asked him for his best tips for leaders and for teams and for working virtually, working remotely. So I can’t wait to share it with you. It’s great information. Michael, hit it.

Intro: Welcome to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast, a show designed for leaders, trainers and consultants who are responsible for employee selection and professional development. Each episode is packed full with insider tips, best practices, expert interviews and inspiration. Please welcome the host who is helping leaders, trainers and consultants everywhere, Suzie Price.

Suzie: Hi, my name is Suzie Price of Priceless Professional Development and you’re listening to the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast where we cover everything related to helping you and the employees in the organization you work in build a high commitment, low drama, wake up eager workforce. And I am the Managing Principal and Owner of Priceless Professional Development and we’ve worked with thousands of leaders across a multitude of industries. We work in insurance, technology, hospitality, higher education, construction, and many more. What we do is provide resources to help leaders engage with understand and effectively manage employees throughout the life cycle of the employee. So we work with helping with hiring, making sure we have a good job fit, and then onboarding, how do we work together, team building, how’s the team communicate and use their strengths, leadership development, succession planning, conflict resolution. We help in all of those areas and we also train and certify others to become experts in the tools that we use. We have a signature six-week certification program that allows for self-pacing or pre-planned core pacing to complete and test to become a Certified Professional DISC Analyst, Certified Professional Motivators Analyst and TriMetric Expert Analyst. And so if you are having time on your hands right now the certification, if that has been on your mind, this might be a good time to do that. You can go to pricelessprofessional.com/certification to get more information and you can give me a call any time about that, if you have any questions about that or any of the other work that we do. I am also the Executive Producer of the Wake Up Eager Workforce Podcast and here we provide tools and tips, expert interviews, everything related to the, every aspect of your employees stay



with you. We cover intrinsic, extrinsic and systemic topics and the directory for all of our episodes is at wakeupeagerworkforce.com and there you will see all of the episodes that we have.

Suzie: I want to share a tool with you right now. It's, I've definitely needed to dip into my reservoir of stress management and mind, body, spirit, and just making sure that I'm taking care of myself so that I can be there for my family and friends and for clients. And so I want you to do the same thing as well, to stay focused. And it's amazing how your mood can swing. I mean I can feel really down in one moment and then I go do some of the things that I know are good for my mind, body and spirit and I'm on a whole new energy space, alignment space, thinking space and I dip back up. And so to me it's normal and human to have the ups and downs, that is life, but what we want is to have tools and ideas and things that lift us up when we have those down moments so that we don't stay stuck there and we don't get stuck there. You know, I used to always say, and I'm sure I borrowed this from somebody else, but you know, we can have those valleys, but we don't want to pitch a tent and stay there, and the only way I know to get out of it is to think and do things related to lifting my spirit and my mind and my body. So last year I created tips every Wednesday about mind, body, spirit tips and I put all that in an eBook and it is available to you, you can go to it now at pricelessprofessional.com/wakeupeager. If you go there, you'll see that, the tip book and you can download it. There's nothing you have to sign in to get it, it's just there, I'm making it available. I will also have a link in the show notes today, which can be found pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely, on this topic of spirit lifting, mind, body, spirit, doing things good for yourself, good self-care. And I'll put a link to 11 different podcasts that we've done around stress management and mind, body, spirit type things. So I will share that in the show notes, so go to pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely and you'll be able to get access to that.

Suzie: So I'd love feedback about any episode that inspires you or gives you results or shows you something new. I'd love to hear it. If you reach out, I promise it will be seen and I'll get back to you. We have a feedback tool where I'd also love for you to, if you'd like, record a message of something you'd like to see shared on a future episode or record a message, if you don't mind me sharing, of your feedback. Also, I'm trying to collect what you are doing right now around tune in time, taking good care of yourself, around virtual meetings. What do you do to make yourself feel better under stress? And I'm going to start having that feature in the episodes going forward, around tune in time and always taking care of yourself. And I will highlight you and I will share your input in this easy way to do it, you go to wakeupeagerworkforce.com, wakeupeagerworkforce.com, look for the purple microphone. You can do it on your computer, you can do it on your, any mobile device that you're on, you basically click it and talk, that's it. And then they'll forward it to us and we'll be able to put it in the show. So basically wakeupeagerworkforce.com or on any of our show notes pages, look for the purple microphone, record and click, give me your feedback, share your input, share your ideas around working remotely, stress management and we will use that in future episodes and be able to mention you, okay? So record and that's all you do.

Suzie: At the end of this episode today when we go into the discussion I had with Michael Wilkinson about working remotely and leading remotely, I want you to stay tuned because I've

got some complimentary resources to share with you and some other tools that might be helpful as you are working remotely and around family, so I want to share that with you. Our episode today is episode number 69, it's *Leading and Working Remotely: Top Tips from Master Facilitator, Michael Wilkinson* and the show notes are at pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely. We're going to talk about the top three tips for leaders, what you should be thinking about doing and how you should be working with your team right now. So you're going to get a lot of his great tips about actions you should be taking, how you should be thinking. We are going to be talking about three top tips for virtual meetings, same kind of thing. What should you be thinking about? What should you be doing? What should you do in virtual meetings for your team? We're going to talk about his company Leadership Strategies. They, he'll talk about how they have gone remote and they had planned to do it in phases this year, to work remotely, but they've escalated that plan. And so that'll be interesting to you, I believe, it was to me, to learn more about what they're doing and how they're doing it. We are going to be talking about him, how is he doing, staying at home and what's been working, what's been a challenge. And then at the end he shares some great bottom line advice for you as a leader, for anybody that's holding a virtual session and to anybody who's struggling right now.

Suzie: So who is Michael Wilkinson? If you do not know him, he has been very influential in my life through his work and his training and the work that his company does. It basically provided insight that I needed in order to grow as a good consultant. I'm forever thankful for that. He is a Certified Master Facilitator, there aren't many of those in the world internationally and he is one of them. So I think the number is, there's only 39, but I don't know if that's correct. I think that's right, there's not very many, and he's one of them and he is excellent. He's written great books, the books that, all that I have enjoyed and appreciate it. But my favorite is *The Secrets of Facilitation*, but right behind that is *The Secrets to Masterful Meetings*. And he's also got *The Executive Guide to Facilitating Strategies: 8 Core Practices of Facilitated Leaders*. I interviewed him recently, actually a couple months ago about that book and I'll have links to it in the show notes if you go to pricelessprofessional.com/facilitation. We talk about the 8 core practices of being a facilitative leader. Particular to our topic today, a book he wrote with one of his colleagues is *Click: The Virtual Meetings Book*. He's a board member of the International Institute for Facilitation and he's a member of the International Facilitation Hall of Fame. Of course he is, he's so cool. So anyways, just excellent guy, excellent company, they're headquartered here out of Atlanta. They do all kinds of virtual training and private workshops for companies all over the world. They run a facilitator's database. 28,000 professionals have gone through their flagship course, which is the one that I found them through, which is *The Secrets to Facilitation* type work, so heavily steeped in what are the processes? How do you do this? How do you work remotely? How do you work with people in meetings? How do you work effectively? The show notes can be found at pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely. Let's go to the interview with Michael now.

Suzie: Hi Michael. Thank you for being here today.

Michael Wilkinson: Oh, Suzie it is my pleasure. You know, I love working with you. You do such a great job and we've got some interesting topics today.

Suzie: Yes, it's important in this time, so thanks for changing your schedule to actually be with us today to talk about a couple of areas that people should be focusing on right now and we're going to start with the leadership focus and with all the work that you do with leaders and with your facilitative leader book and program, I thought you'd have great insights to share about what leaders should be doing right now. And we want to think of it in the form of our science that we teach to so many, the Axiology is, what should they be thinking, what should they be doing and what should they be being? And that's the people aspect, with people like your top three tips. What do you say?

Michael: Well, let me go there. And so yeah, a great model, and so when we, given the way things are right now and what's happening with COVID-19, we say from a really strategy standpoint, "We need to step back and really ask some pretty serious questions." So the organization has to read this line success. And if you don't already have a strategic plan, you know the answer, you better get one. If you do have a strategic plan, it's time to redefine success. And that's really just 4 questions. One, what's most important right now? Which means, which initiatives should be put on hold? Which should be accelerated? So given this, how does it change the impact targets? How does it change our budgets? And then it flows down at the department level for each department; they've got to ask the same questions, then what's important right now? And then for each individual, what's important right now? So asking, answering that question right up, redefining success would be first tip. Two you've got to move on to the people, technology and processes and on the people side there's some tough decisions you've got to make. Need to decide who retains in their current role? Who needs to be repurposed for a different role because business has gone virtual? Who needs to be reduced to part time, or as you can imagine, sometimes you may have to let go of people. Which means if we're going to be living in this virtual environment for 3, 4, 5, 6 months, who knows, I know our President is saying it may be just 3 weeks, but whatever the duration is, what do you need? What systems do you need? What telephone access? What virtual tools and so on. And then the process is, and this is where it gets really, really hard, what processes can operate remotely and which can't? And how do you adapt given, and I'm going to go to the people side, right? How do you adapt to social interaction? So we're doing, we have put together guidelines for how do you operate virtually. We have 7 guidelines just as a sample because our organization has been studying going virtual for about a year and all we had to do was accelerate the plans we already had. And we'll talk more about what our organization is doing later. But it really is important to actually think through, what has to change? And of course all of this has to happen as quickly as possible, moving very quickly through it. So from those 3 in terms of as we, how do you have to think differently, you have to think about success? What are the tasks you have to do differently? Really you have to put the things in place that allowed you to operate virtually. And how do you think about your people differently? Yeah, tough decisions, as I said.

Suzie: You mentioned how to operate virtually and I think in one of your webinars you have some, you know, in facilitation in general we have guidelines. Maybe that'll come up when we talk about virtual meetings, but when you're talking about your guidelines for how to operate virtually, is there anything specific?

Michael: Let me go through a few, as we believe, if you're going to be successful working remotely, you know it is far easier to be distracted by things at home, way easier. And so you really, it starts with having a workspace that sets you up for success, quiet, distraction free and so on. Two, you really have to dedicate your full attention to your job duty. So if you're working at home, it means that you have to have the hours to do that where you're not taking care of personal needs. You're not in childcare; you're not dealing with unexpected vacation or what it might be. Likewise, one of the key ones that we use in our business is for interoffice meetings, video use is mandatory for all of our meetings. It helps, one with the personal interaction, of course it does. And you get better and faster communication cause you can read body language and so on, and actually it's more productive and you're holding yourselves accountable as you see one another focusing in the meeting. Just don't, want to put a fourth one in there that I think is really helpful for organizations that are going virtual, and this is the daily huddle, where each department holds a daily huddle where people get to say, "Hey, here's what was accomplished yesterday, here's what's going to be accomplished today and here are any blocks that are in the way," basically a semi-agile approach using that daily huddle to keep people focused and hold people accountable to what they're saying. So those key strategies, having a workspace, giving your full attention during the workday, video use for interim meetings and then the daily huddle, 4 key things I think can help any organization be productive, more productive during this time.

Suzie: Talk a little bit about people and we, you know we talked about how leaders need to be thinking about their people. Talk a little bit about some things that leaders should be doing right now to be with their people. I think it's, everybody's under stress and tension and you know, leaders may say, "Well, I've already communicated, you know, my sense is and understanding is you need to over communicate." What else would you add to that in regard to being a leader?

Michael: Absolutely. And you are so right. And that's a difficult time during this time because oftentimes leaders have to become doers during this time. I know I'm experiencing that myself, but your first principle is coming from Lancesione's work, communicate and then over communicate. It's not until your people are saying, "Okay, okay, we get it, we get it, we get it." Have you, can be sure you've communicated almost enough when you began hearing that. But along with that, we, as leaders, have to recognize that every person isn't effective working virtually, some people just don't have that ability to stay focused, remain focused, to not have other people around them. So you as a leader, you have to adapt to your people, situation leadership on steroids because people before you could just delegate to, some of them, you're going to have to do a lot more coaching because they're just not clear on how to get it done. Some people that you could coach before you may find you have to direct a lot more, virtually. And so where once before you could, you know, see them once a week or a couple of times a week or check in on them once a day, it becomes a lot more intense. For those organizations who have adapted productivity tools such as Slack as a way of having an instant messaging by department or by area, we use Slack regularly now and keeping it up on our desktops or on our phones to stay alerted to messages coming through. So managers have to recognize once more situation leadership on steroids, and you can imagine, Suzie, if you have a person who isn't effective working virtually and you have a manager who isn't an effective manager virtually, you put these things together and you have a lot of ineffectiveness. We, as leaders of leaders,



we have to coach our leaders on what they are doing to manage their virtual workforce. So it's a bigger job than it's ever been.

Suzie: Yes it is. Yes it is. So let's go to virtual meetings and coaching. You shared a little bit about how to work virtually, if you're in a virtual meeting, because I know you are an expert in all meetings, including virtual meetings, say you've got 5 people on the call or you got hundreds of people on the call, talk a little bit about things that they should be doing and thinking, being that will make them effective.

Michael: Oh, that's very cool. And let's use the model once more and let's start with the thinking. And I've had the pleasure of authoring with Richard Smith the book *Click: The Virtual Meetings Book*, as an ice tool for helping people think about an execute, plan, start, manage virtual meetings. Well, when you think about it, the real issue with virtual meetings, when it comes down to it, it's all about engagement. How do you keep people engaged? In some cases where you can't see them, you're only reacting to a voice. And so how did you keep them engaged and know that they stay engaged? That's the big question, that's how you have to think about virtual meetings differently, because it is a very different type of meeting. Some people even think that, "Well, because it's virtual, I don't have to prepare as much." Absolutely, just the opposite.

Suzie: Yeah.

Michael: Preparing for a virtual meeting is even more challenging and let's get to that. So that's the thinking. What's the doing, in a virtual meeting? Well, we know, let me just give a simple example, we talk about preparing for any meeting and virtual with it, the 6 P's, you've got to think through what's the purpose of my meeting? Why am I doing this meeting? Product. What do I want to come out of this meeting? When we're done, what do we want people to have in their hands? What do we want them to have in their heads? And then what do we want them to know that they didn't know before the meeting started? And what do we want them to have in their hearts? What do you want them to believe, that they may not have believed before the meeting started? So purpose, product; product with those 3 H's, head, hearts and hands, and then participants, who are the right people to be in the meeting? Probable issues. What are the key issues that we'll need to discuss by these participants so they can create the product to achieve the purpose and then process, what steps are we going to take them through and then place and that's the virtual platform. How am I gonna set up the virtual womb in order for them to be effective? It doesn't matter whether you're using WebEx, Go To Meeting, Zoom, Click meeting, whatever vehicle you find most helpful, we're saying you have to do prep work around that. So first key, the prep going through the 6 P's, second, which is really interesting on the execution side. Let's take it simple. Let's say what you want to do is brainstorm strategies for addressing the current situation. How are we going to work with our clients under this new environment? So it's just a simple brainstorm. So you may, in your usual preparation, you might go, "Okay, that's my agenda item, brainstorm strategies." Well now, we want to talk about the virtual details and that's what we say for every agenda item you have to add something called the virtual details. How are you going to execute this virtually? Well, of course one way to do it is

just ask people to speak out randomly what ideas they have, that's not quite as engaging and those who are, it makes it easy for people to check out. Differently you might say, "Well let's go around the horn alphabetically by first name and everyone share a strategy and I'll type them in and and you'll see them coming up on this your screen cause I'm going to share my screen." Okay. That could be what you're going to be doing, the virtual details for that. Well you might say, you know what, we're going to do a breakout loam. I'm going to break out the 4 groups and then have each group type into a shared document their section, Team 1 will set, type in their section, Team 2 their section of the shared document, Team 3 and Team 4, and then we'll do it sort of what we call rotating flip charts. We will have each team then review what the other teams have, write their comments in, and then we'll review it all together. So we'll use rotating flip charts, breakout groups for this. What I've just done is just ran through 3 different virtual details for how that particular item, brainstorming, can be done. So we'd say every agenda item, figure out the virtual details. You might have people writing on a whiteboard, you might be typing it in yourself; you may be using a shared document. It may be different ways of doing it, but decide in advance, what are the virtual details for each one of your agenda items. Again, so that's the task side, now we go to the people side, which is how do you keep them engaged? Ah, do you know the answer? Do you know when we teach our courses, we plan engagement activities every 20 to 30 minutes. I mean people say we have highly engaging, highly energetic training sessions.

Suzie: Yes you do. Yes, very high quality content. I've been a fan forever.

Michael: But when we go virtual...

Suzie: We've got to go tighter, probably.

Michael: So 20 to 30, exactly, it goes down to 10 to 15 every, 10 to 15 minutes, so that means, and we recommend you never have a meeting of virtual, seldom, if ever, have a virtual meeting more than an hour and a half. And between when we do virtual training, we have at least a half an hour break between each module. So we'll go an hour and a half, break for half an hour, go another hour and a half, break for lunch, hour and a half lunch, and then another hour and a half, break for half an hour, and then the final hour and a half. So we'll have 4 90-minute modules, if you will. Well, in a 90 minute module, remember engage you in every 10 to 15 minutes.

Suzie: Yeah.

Michael: Those are six engagements. You can cheat and say, well the beginning is one, the end is one. So I've got 4 patients that I've got to dig out.

Suzie: There you go.

Michael: Exactly. Yeah. From the people standpoint, if you're going to keep your people in, engaged, 10 to 15 minutes every, every 10 to 15 minutes, has a significant engagement



strategy and so we teach a dozen or more engagement strategies people can use in virtual meetings.

Suzie: Awesome. Let's talk about your company. Are you all, you mentioned that you'd been working on a remote or going virtual process that you've accelerated? I think I heard, so talk little bit about Leadership Strategies and your company, because I think others can learn from what you're doing. Are you working remotely? How's it going?

Michael: That's very good, so thanks for that. It's very interesting because we had decided back in July that we would consider working remotely and so we did a study of, we interviewed numerous companies, put together a report for our leadership team about going remote and the decision by the leadership team in December was, January through March we would prepare all the things we needed to prepare for going virtual in the second quarter, April through June we would be going one to two days a week as a virtual organization, from July through the end of the year we would move gradually from 3 days to 4 days to possibly, so 5 days a week being virtual. So we were going to be transferring from the beginning of the year to the end of the year to being a hundred percent virtual, well enter COVID-19 and all of a sudden all this planning we had been doing was immediately executed where we basically, in a matter of three days said, "Okay, what we are planning in April, we are starting now and let's make sure everything's in place and let's go." And the things that had to be in place that the Managing Director, that would be me, mandated be in place based on the plan, was that every team had to have been operating under the daily huddle and had to be operating under each persons identified, what they're weekly metrics would be, that would say whether or not they're being productive.

Suzie; Oh good. Yeah.

Michael: The deal is, so that's what had to be put in place. So we started, about a week ago now, on running virtually because we just had to put everything on steroids to make it work. And so it's been going very well. The most difficult challenge has been, actually the multiple touch points. I mean you will be getting Slack messages, text messages, phone calls, all day.

Suzie: Yeah.

Michael: So we are, I'm getting touched more than in the office.

Suzie: Isn't that interesting?

Michael: And quite frankly it's one of my direct reports, I am spending more time with him now than I was when we were face-to-face. So it's very, very interesting how that's working. The strategies have helped and it really has helped that we have planned it out in advance what we were going to be doing, so all we had to do was execute the plan that we have already laid out.

Suzie: So around the challenges, is there anything that you're going to do differently in regard to all the touch points or just...



Michael: My hope is that we will choose Slack as the primary communication vehicle. And, well, there are times when you have to talk to people face-to-face. We will still do that. But that the texting, will generally, hopefully we'll be on the decline. So the people will be using one tool for messaging.

Suzie: Yeah.

Michael: Because it makes it easier to message all the people you need to message when you're doing that, as long as everyone's on it.

Suzie: Right.

Michael: When you have stragglers, it becomes a little more difficult.

Suzie: Right. What has surprised you about the team and your company as you've gone virtual?

Michael: And as I mentioned before, the multiple touch points and that we are talking to some people more than, having more touches more than ever before. The other thing that's been a pleasant surprise is, with Slack, it allows you to have different channels. So the whole company is on a general channel and then the sales team is on their channel and marketing's on their channel and so on. And then we have cross channels around different topic areas, so website, website improvement, there's a team working on that cross-functional team so everyone has their channels. Well first thing in the morning, the general channel just lights up with all these greetings of "Good morning, you know, yesterday I did this and so on." The general is really being used as the water cooler.

Suzie: Yeah, or break room, yeah, yeah.

Michael: But everyone sees it. It's no longer just private conversations with everyone and so it's been pleasant that we have that going on, that the greeting and so on., very, very helpful.

Suzie: Yes. That's great. So let's talk about...

Michael: Great questions.

Suzie: Yeah? Good. Well it's great of you to take the time to be here and share, talk a little bit about how you have been, have you been holding in with a quote unquote unofficial quarantine here in Atlanta? Have you, and what are you planning on right now based on what we know?

Michael: Well, interestingly enough, I don't know if I should say this was the worst timing or the best timing. Friday I actually closed on a new place to live. Saturday I moved in, we spent all day moving and so in the last 4 days I have been unpacking boxes while running a business.



Suzie: Oh...

Michael: And so one is the new place, as you talk about it, if I'm going to be quarantined, it's a great place to be quarantined. So for those who know Atlanta, I am right across from Atlantic Station in one of the high rises, finally gone to condo living, I'm near the top floor of condo living. So it's lots of fun. So when the quarantine is over I'll get to walk everywhere, which, just cause everything's so close by in Atlantic Station, there is retail, living, working, etc.

Suzie; Yeah. Cool. That's great. Yeah.

Michael: So it's a lot of fun. It's been interesting being quarantined, but it's been a, with lots of work to do of course in moving into a new place.

Suzie; Yeah, you are super busy. What a time, like you said, good time, bad time, not sure which, but okay. So anything that's been hard or challenging, you did already mentioned about the moving, anything about being isolated or feeling isolated or anything?

Michael: Well, let me just again, on a personal note, you can imagine that you move into a new place and you have a punch list, 8, 9, 10 things that need to get done. And so as workers come back in, "Hey guys, here's the hand sanitizer right here, right here."

Suzie: Yes.

Michael: Yeah. Cause I don't want you touching anything. Just you know, let's go ahead and do all that so that, you know what?

Suzie: Yes.

Michael: It's interesting.

Suzie: So they have been coming to do work?

Michael: Yes, they are coming to fix things, as things go. So they're considered essential workers and so they're able to make it to work and get things done. It's a different life.

Suzie: Yes it is.

Michael: Yeah. It really is. And I'm looking forward to it, man. I am certainly of the opinion is, other countries have experienced 8 to 10 week turnaround. I'm not expecting to see much change until late June, early July. That's my own expectation. And companies certainly need to be, when they look at strategy projecting that, nearly all of 2020 will be very, very different.

Suzie: Yeah.



Michael: It will be an asterisk year for most of us. And so learning to adapt to that, do the things you have to do, because again, as you can imagine, the amount of pent up demand that will be in play September, October, November or the beginning of next year, just having to be prepared. So doing what you have to do to survive this because the pent demand that's going to be unleashed once this is over could be just overwhelming to folks.

Suzie: Yeah, definitely. So you might've already given your advice for our close here today, cause I want to honor your time, but if there's anything additional you want to say, last bit of advice to leaders and them managing their teams and organizations during this time.

Michael: There we go. And in fact, let's break that down then, so let's go leaders first and just, let's just say as based on what you heard leaders you, it really does have to start with reevaluating your strategy. How are we going to win during this time? And that's asking the tough questions. What do we need to start doing? What do we need to stop doing? What do we need to accelerate doing? You've got to ask those questions and get out of reacting mode. Really get on top of this. For professionals at all levels who are managing meetings and so on, recognize that virtual meetings in the past, prior to the last two months, has been something that people kind of did, now it's something we're forced to do. So while we're doing free webinars, we also are offering nearly all of our training now virtually, get educated, don't waste people's time in really poor virtual meetings. So there's a dozen techniques and tools that will make a difference if you know what to do, and how to do it. And then to everyone everywhere who is struggling with this living in this new world, this new environment, just remember as was every recession you have lived through, it doesn't last, this is for a period. And so we are, we haven't bottomed out yet, we're weeks away from that and so things are going to get worse before they get better, but know that they're going to get better, they're going to get better. So the decisions you make should be decisions based on, I know this is going to get better and so it's just going to take awhile.

Suzie: Yes.

Michael: A woman going through a 9-month pregnancy, I haven't done it, but I can only speak about what I've heard about, "Hey, that first trimester is really challenging for many, but you know it's going to get better and at the end the result will be even better."

Suzie: Yes.

Michael: So that's what we're seeing and that's what we're holding to, Suzie.

Suzie: Awesome. Thank you so much Michael for your time. We'll share links to your books and your different material with folks, meanwhile, just thanks for sharing, thanks for being you.

Michael: I appreciate it, Suzie. You do, again, a wonderful job and look for great success as we move through this.



Suzie: Yes, that's what we are saying. Thank you.

Michael: Thank you.

Suzie: I hope you enjoyed the interview. I so appreciate him taking the time. I reached out to him last minute a week ago and said, "Hey, do you want to do a podcast on this?" And I know he does not have a lot of time and I know you just heard he's moving, he's got his whole team being shifted and here he is, he took time to be with us today. So kudos to him and I would invite you to reach out to him. Some of the key things that I wanted to hit home on, everything he shares is helpful, but be with your people. If you can't do anything else, be with your people. Communicate, over communicate even if you don't want to communicate, communicate. And as he said, communicate until they say, "Okay, okay, I got it." People need to know you're there. If we're under stress, we don't always hear things. And then on top of that, sometimes we just don't even hear them, even when we're not under stress, things need to be communicated way more than most leaders or people think, you know, it's like, "I've already told them." Yeah, have another conversation, okay. So be with your people, communicate, communicate, communicate and then be with is listen, listen, listen. I've done quite a few episodes about listening and tuning in and the power of being with people, knowing that you're there. Set guidelines, so while you're being with people, give them a structure so they know how to be successful. We always talk about having a dashboard for your employees. But for virtual, working virtually set some guidelines and communicate them. This is what happens, you have certain expectations that they don't know what those expectations are, though they seem so obvious to you, they're not obvious to them or they have forgotten or they're under stress, you've got to set them up. And so I thought some of that he shared is, you know, video use is mandatory, having daily huddles where everybody steps in and says, "This what I accomplished yesterday, here's what I'll accomplish today, here's the blocks I'm running into." Those kinds of things, that kind of structure really helps people. And then the last other thing, I mean everything was so great that he shared of course, but adapt your style to people and their needs. And then I've got a little something I'm going to share with you about that, but I want to, before I close out this conversation about working remotely, I want to make sure you go check out Michael's book, which we will have in the show notes, *Click: The Virtual Meeting Book*, we'll have a link to that. Go to the show notes at pricelessprofessional.com/workingremotely, and also go to the other episode that I recorded with Michael, I think it was episode 60, pricelessprofessional.com/facilitativeleader, pricelessprofessional.com/facilitativeleader, lots of good insight in there. And we get into some stuff about him and what he does around waking up eager and so good combination of a very clear direction for leaders. And right now being a facilitative leader is bigger than ever because you're not standing over people you need to get the buy in, you should never really need to stand over people to get things done, but sometimes when people are present it gives them some more motivation or focus. So being a facilitative leader takes more skill and it really will help people long-term want to work with you, but you need to use and learn those skills about how to you influence people in a way to help them be effective. And how can you be more effective? So go good check out those materials. And once again, thank you to Michael and his team for being available to participate with us today.



Suzie: Want to tell you about a couple of complimentary things that I want to share with you, when Michael talked about adapting your style to people and their needs, we have something that we've just created and received from our partner, TTI Success Insights, it's a working from home report and it's designed to help you understand how to be an effective worker while working from home. It offers personalized tips based on your communication style and then how to work with the highs and lows of each of the other types of the 4 factors within the DISC model. So I will share that working home report with you at a complimentary basis, if you've not ever worked with us, but this is interesting to you, you can reach out to me with an email and tell me this is what you want, the working from home report at suzie@pricelessprofessional.com or you can go to our form, I've got an online form, has all my information there, pricelessprofessional.com/suzie, S-U-Z-I-E, so suzie, S-U-Z-I-E, @pricelessprofessional.com, or pricelessprofessional.com/suzie, for the form and it's the working from home report. If you are a current client, what I can do, you won't need to take another assessment, what I can do is take your reports that are in our system that you've already purchased and convert them to this short report. It's like, I don't know, probably six or eight pages and it might be something helpful to you, so I'll provide that to you, complimentary, just reach out.

Suzie: So that is some, a couple of things that I want to tell you about that are complimentary, if you have high school and college age students at home, if your teams or teens are home and they're bored, it could be a good time to help reveal their intrinsic genius. We have created a new partnership with Indigo Education Company and they have a student TriMetrix assessment and I can share that with you, if you go to pricelessprofessional.com/wakeupeagerindigo. \$50 apiece, these assessments, student TriMetrix assessment and they'll get the results immediately. And then I created a development page where it has all the tools and resources, it has a family guide for the family working through it. It has career decision information; it has college study or school study insights. It's geared only towards high school and college age students. Any net proceeds that we get from the sale of this assessment, we will be giving back to Indigo Education Company so that they can continue to work around the country and around the world, helping students understand their genius and their strengths and their well-being. So want you to know about that, if you go to [priceless professional.com/wakeupeagerindigo](http://pricelessprofessional.com/wakeupeagerindigo), I-N-D-I-G-O, you'll be able to check that out. You can see a sample report. Basically, it gives them their communication style, their motivators, and their top personal skills. But it gives it in a way for students and how to, there's videos and there's just all kinds of great information that they have created for schools and educators and teachers. So if you have a high school or college age student, go to [priceless professional.com/wakeupeagerindigo](http://pricelessprofessional.com/wakeupeagerindigo) and you'll see all that information.

Suzie: Of course you can always reach back out to me, pricelessprofessional.com/suzie, and I will help, S-U-Z-I-E. I hope that you are staying well and safe and sane. It's a tricky time for us all and just keep taking care of you so that you can be there for others. But you've got to put yourself first by taking the deep breathing, taking care of yourself mentally, physically, spiritually. The way you help others is for you to help yourself first and make sure that you're tank is full. So any way that we can help with that, with any of these resources, let us know. Just use these resources and go forth and be safe and well, love on your family and friends from a safe



distance and know that we are here throughout this pandemic. If we can be of service in some way, just let us know. Many blessings. Thank you.

Outro: This episode of the Wakeup Eager Workforce Podcast was brought to you by Priceless Professional Development. Thank you for tuning in. If you enjoyed today's show, head over to pricelessprofessional.com to gain access to more professional development resources.