

Does your Leadership Development allow your Leaders to be Vulnerable?



Brené Brown spent years conducting thousands of interviews. What she found was that there is one core factor at the heart of all successful social connections: the ability to be vulnerable.

And that doesn't mean being weak; it means having the courage to be who you are, even if it means taking emotional risks.

What does that mean in reality? Things like calling sick colleagues, sharing your personal dreams, sharing your failures, asking for help, laughing at yourself...



(Normally we cut down a video to the most important minutes, but this talk is absolutely worth your time. Brené is embodying vulnerability on the stage, and there is no faster lesson to teach the positives than to watch her in action).

We leaders fear Vulnerability

We fear being raw because, as Brené Brown puts it, we fear we will be judged not worthy of connection. It's why we fear [public speaking](#) and walking into a room of strangers more than we fear *death*.

In our Leadership Development communities, we ask when and how our leaders allow themselves to be vulnerable. And even for our most forward-thinking, emotionally intelligent leaders, showing vulnerability is like pulling teeth. We have a 'mode' the moment we walk into the office. It's a daily necessity to put on masks. 'I need to show more discipline for the next hour', 'I need to be more of a teacher for this person' etc.

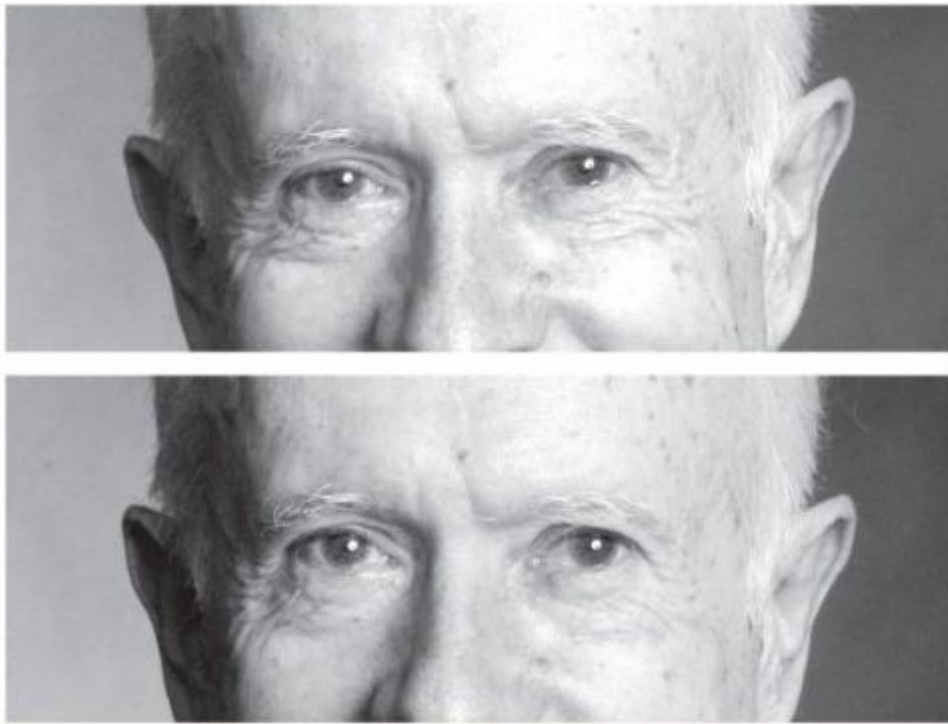
After all, leaders are expected to project strength and positivity at all times. And if they're being developed to ALWAYS lead by example, then projecting a confident, calm leader at all times will achieve a confident, calm working environment, right?

But Leadership *is* Connection

As Brené says, humans are wired to pick up on authenticity. Our brains are so good at it that we can do it subconsciously.

Here. This is a tool that our Leadership Development to show just that.

Which of these two pictures is a *real* smile, and which one is fake?



Yes, you got it right. It's the first one. The 'eyes crinkle', or 'Duchenne' smile, was discovered by the psychologist of the same name over 100 years ago.

As Brené explains in the video, you can't *just* switch off the negatives at work; doing so will make you distant in *all* regards, and your people will know about it. For true engagement

and loyalty, leaders have to learn to face that great fear and sometimes break through their professional distance.

Which means your Leadership Development will have to be capable of accommodating the honest conversations at the root of this lesson.

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<https://www.theleadershiphub.com/blog/does-your-leadership-development-allow-your-leaders-be-vulnerable>