B2+ · SPEAKING PACK · STUDENT WORKSHEET

Leadership After a Setback

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Name: _____ Date: _____

1. Vocabulary: complete with the words in the box

Box: setback · resilience · pick your battles · back down · scrutiny · burnout · overconfidence · step down

1. Losing the client was a _____, but we learned from it.

2. After the restructuring, the team showed real _____.

3. You can't win every argument. You have to _____.

4. As a director, every decision is under _____.

5. Working 70-hour weeks left him close to _____.

6. Years of success led to _____: he stopped listening.

7. She refused to _____ on the safety rules.

8. After 15 years, he decided to _____ and let someone new lead.

2. Discussion questions

1. How do you decide which workplace battles are worth fighting?

2. How should a leader behave in public after a failure?

3. Is backing down always weak, or can it be the smartest move?

4. How has your visibility changed as you've become more senior?

5. How can a leader make sure they still get honest feedback?

6. When should a leader step down, and how?

7. Is office politics good, bad or simply unavoidable?

3. Case study: the rejected proposal

You spent six months on a proposal that the executive committee rejected. A colleague who opposed it is now presenting a similar idea as his own, and your team is worried.

What do you say to your team in the next 48 hours? Do you fight, back down or wait? What would tell you it's time to move on?

4. Useful language

"This isn't the result we wanted, but..." · "Let's take a step back and look at what we learned." · "I understand the concern, but I'd like to stand by..." · "What am I not seeing here?"

Answer key

1. Vocabulary

setback · resilience · pick your battles · scrutiny · burnout · overconfidence · back down · step down