Radical Candor Reduces New Leader Learning Curve & Provides High-Level Path to Being a Great Manager at Gather

"Radical Candor has had a significant impact on our team. It's encouraged our managers to step outside of their comfort zones, engage in healthy debates and think about feedback in a different light. It's helped us open all lines of communication between managers and direct reports, and implementing the concepts in Radical Candor has been a positive experience for everyone."

— Nicholas Miller
Co-Founder and CEO of Gather Technologies

At a glance:

Industry: Tech/Event Management
Location: Atlanta, Georgia
Size: >100 employees
Founded: 2013 / Merged With Tripleseat 2020

Gather is the leading event management software for restaurants and venues enabling hospitality companies of all sizes to manage and grow successful events businesses.

From private-equity backed growth concepts to James Beard award-winning restaurants, Gather is trusted to serve as the anchor between management, events teams and their customers.

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! The Challenge
Ensuring Managers & Direct Reports Have a
Shared Language to Communicate Quickly & Clearly

As an event-management company, things at Gather move extremely quickly. Having a shared communication model is paramount to the organization's success.

"Everyone needs to know where they stand at any given moment — meaning managers don't have time to skirt around the issues. It's essential that they're always aligned with their direct reports," says Gather Co-founder and CEO Nicholas Miller.

Gather promotes from within, which means a lot of first-time managers who need to get up to speed and learn to develop a shared language with their direct reports.
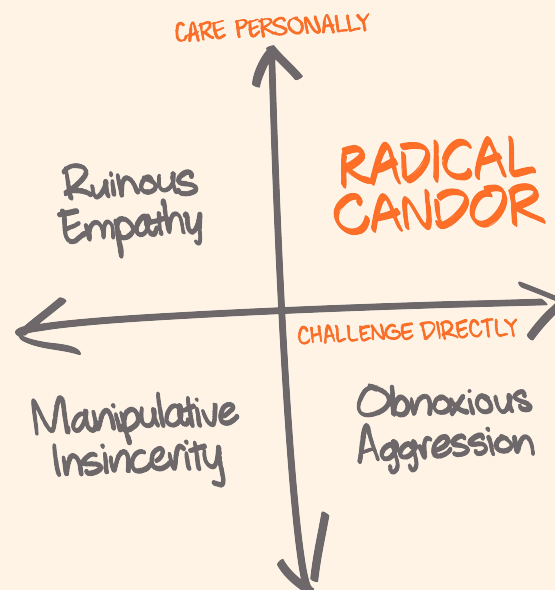
In addition, feedback is only given during performance reviews, which doesn't give employees the opportunity to correct problems or repeat success.

★ The Solution
Adopting the Radical Candor Feedback Framework

Gather adopted Radical Candor's feedback framework as a communication strategy.

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"We've been able to bring new managers up to speed more effectively with a framework for educating them on how to develop relationships with direct reports. Radical Candor has provided a great high-level way to think about being a great manager at Gather," Miller says.

"We encourage our managers to empower their teams to 'get it right,' not 'be right,' and invest in building meaningful relationships with their direct reports."

One of Gather's managers felt like he was struggling to communicate effectively with his direct reports — he didn't feel like he was having open, honest conversations. What's more, he suspected his communication style could be to blame.

He started using the Radical Candor framework — Care Personally and Challenge Directly — and actively began soliciting feedback from his team members during 1:1 meetings.
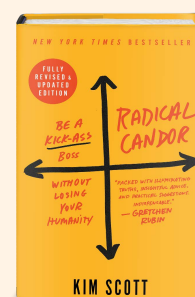
This led to a greater understanding of his team, stronger relationships with direct reports and, ultimately, a better functioning team.

AFTER IMPLEMENTING RADICAL CANDOR

People are actively soliciting feedback from one another and building stronger relationships, which has led to higher functioning teams.

"We also promote Radical Candor's approach of criticize in private and praise in public. Though it may seem like common sense, it's not always obvious that critical feedback should always be a private discussion.

And it's also a great reminder to focus not just on the things our team can do better, but the things they're doing well today. Too much focus on improvements is certainly something I've been guilty of!"

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The Results
Stronger Relationships + Better Performing Teams

AFTER IMPLEMENTING RADICAL CANDOR

People give immediate feedback, which has led to more successful performance reviews.

Radical Candor has had a significant impact on relationships between managers and their direct reports at Gather.

> *"I noticed a new direct report of mine didn't seem to love getting direct feedback from me.*
>
> *To create an open relationship, I asked him to share feedback on how I was doing after every single meeting we were both a part of, including one-on-ones, and then actively solicited it.*
>
> *Slowly, the dialogue evolved into two-way feedback. Now we have more frequent and explicit conversations about feedback than I do with any of my other direct reports!"*
>
> *— Gather Co-founder and CEO Nicholas Miller*

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