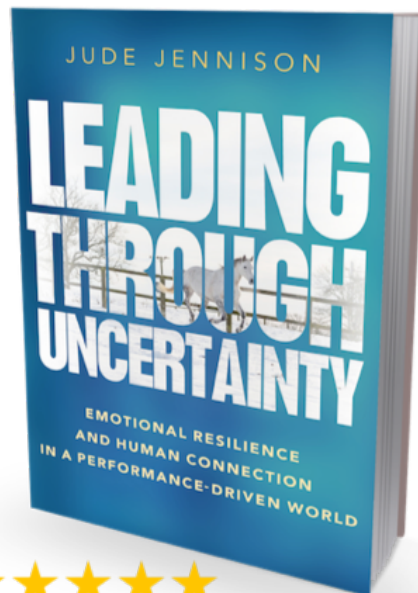


# 9 Top Tips to Lead through Uncertainty

How to lead disruptive change with emotional  
resilience and human connection

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## 9 Top Tips to Lead through Uncertainty

Disruptive change creates uncertainty and we resist it because it is uncomfortable. Uncertainty generates a range of emotions, polarises opinions and can lead to relationships breaking down. It requires great skill and flexibility to lead through uncertainty.

It is also an opportunity for leaders and teams to do meaningful work that makes a difference.

As part of my research into uncertainty, I held a round table discussion with a group of thought leaders from different backgrounds and sectors to identify the skills needed to lead through uncertainty. I tested the findings by interviewing CEOs and senior leaders on their experiences, as well as drawing on my own and clients' experiences.

The following skills were identified as the ones we forget to use in uncertainty. By using these skills, you can improve relationships, align better with others and increase understanding and collaboration.

### 1. Manage emotions

**In uncertainty**, emotions run high but people tend to suppress them because we make emotion wrong. Views become polarised in uncertainty leading to an increase in fear, anxiety, stress and conflict.

#### Top tips:

Notice your emotion and be curious about what is causing it.

Notice the emotions of others.

Ask people what they need to support them.

Allow negative emotions to pass without suppressing them.

### 2. Create a framework

**In uncertainty**, people worry about what is not known and catastrophise about what might happen. Levels of anxiety increase in the desire to find definitive answers.

#### Top tips:

Focus on what is known.

Provide clarity and direction for yourself and your team and be honest when you don't have the answers.

Stay open to possibilities and opportunities.

Prepare for different potential outcomes and be flexible as new insights emerge.

### 3. Co-create the future

**In uncertainty**, people become polarised as they try to create certainty and have rigid opinions about what is not known.

#### Top tips:

Encourage exploration, collaboration and experimentation.

Be willing to slow down and explore the here and now.

Let go of the past and create the future from the known and include all the voices in the system.

### 4. Listening and dialogue

**In uncertainty**, fear, polarisation and stress cause people to speed up and stop listening. Differences of opinion can lead to conflict and break trust.

#### Top tips:

Pay attention to what is unsaid, to the values and beliefs that underpin how people behave.

Seek to understand the experience of others as it may differ from your own.

Understand other perspectives and be willing to change your mind.

#### 5. **Connection and support**

**In uncertainty**, we often disconnect at times of polarisation as a desire to create safety. We avoid people who think differently from us. There is a tendency to connect with those who think and behave like you.

##### **Top tips:**

Reach out to those whose approach may differ and may challenge you and your thinking.

Notice where people disconnect, give them space to do so when they hit overwhelm and help them re-engage.

Ask for help when you need it.

#### 6. **Build trust**

**In uncertainty**, trust is often broken when people resist change and when views are polarised. There is a tendency to mistrust anyone with a different opinion, leading to disconnection and a dispersed team.

##### **Top tips:**

Trust that disconnection and resistance are part of the process in uncertainty and find ways to help people feel safe to share their experience.

Trust that everyone is doing their best and make space for differences of opinion.

#### 7. **Stay with discomfort of uncertainty**

**In uncertainty**, we have a tendency to move away when it gets uncomfortable or we push through discomfort with intense action.

##### **Top tips:**

Be willing to stay in the heated discussions and help others stay engaged.

Take time out when you need it but stay engaged with the team.

Create space for people to disconnect to reduce their overwhelm.

Encourage them to re-engage as soon as their stress reduces so they feel valued.

#### 8. **Be human**

**In uncertainty**, we are often under pressure and lead from stress behaviour. Blame, judgment and criticism tend to increase as people disagree with polarised approaches.

##### **Top tips:**

Recognise how your emotions impact your behaviour and that of others in the team.

Look after yourself and take time out when you need to. This might be as simple as taking a deep breath in the middle of a meeting to stay grounded.

Do whatever serves you and the team.

Above all, be kind, always.

#### 9. **Lead from your heart and soul**

**In uncertainty**, people get triggered by how others respond differently. You may avoid trying something new that is not guaranteed success, but there can be no guarantee in uncertainty.

##### **Top tips:**

Have the courage to step into the unknown wholeheartedly and with enthusiasm.

Be willing to fail, recover and try again and encourage others to do the same.

## Summary

At its worst, uncertainty can cause anxiety, polarisation and disconnection. Leaders and teams can avoid this by coming together and seeking to understand and support each other.

At its best, uncertainty creates an opportunity to improve on the status quo. It encourages deeper connection and understanding. Leaders can grow. Teams can align. When people are heard, understood and valued, their commitment to the team and the cause increases.

Uncertainty is created by disruptive change and is an opportunity for leaders and teams to come together and make a difference in the world.

## About Jude



Jude Jennison is a courageous, inspiring and astute business woman. A free thinker and a maverick, she is known for her profound and life-changing workshops, masterclasses and talks. Challenging, compassionate, eccentric, surprising and ahead of the curve. She joins the dots that nobody sees.

An expert in Leading through uncertainty, Jude inspires leaders to create more human connection in a high-performance culture at a time of substantial change and uncertainty. She helps senior leadership teams align so they can lead change with courage and confidence in uncertainty.

Jude is author of the book 'Leading through uncertainty', host of the podcast, and creator of the online course and masterclasses of the same title.

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- 1.5 hour online masterclasses for organisations and teams
- Self-paced online course
- Online coaching
- Leading through uncertainty podcast
- Leading through uncertainty book
- Coaching with horses
- Team alignment programmes with horses

**Access these resources online at:**

[www.judejennison.com/help/leadingthroughuncertainty](http://www.judejennison.com/help/leadingthroughuncertainty)