

Netflix vs. Blockbuster: Striving for Resiliency

With fierce competition and a rapid pace of change, resilience is critical to survival and growth for organizations today. But, what does it mean to be resilient and how can organizations support a resilient culture?

“Resilience is bouncing back. It’s when something bad happens and we bounce back,” says Dr. Sandro Galea, MD, MPH, DrPH. Galea was named one of TIME magazine’s epidemiology innovators and is a professor and dean at the Boston University School of Public Health where he studies resiliency.

Galea says to truly understand resilience, we have to understand that resilience is a path, but not the only path. When people experience stress or trauma, they can react in a number of different ways. There can be chronic dysfunction, resistance, relapsing and remitting, delayed dysfunction or resilience.

(re·sil·ience): The ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens / an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

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Let’s examine the well-chronicled comparison between Blockbuster and Netflix. Both faced industry-altering disruptions. Netflix transitioned within a decade from a traditional movie-by-mail business to streaming media. It’s since gone on to reinvent itself once again into a content creator. Today, releasing more original series and films than any other network or cable channel. Blockbuster, on the other hand, peaked in 2004 with more than 8,000 stores and tens of thousands of employees. As streaming media went mainstream, Blockbuster failed to keep up with the change and in 2010 filed for bankruptcy protection.

Resiliency for organizations and for individuals is clearly the desired path. The question is: How can we increase the likelihood of getting there? For organizations, resiliency demands a group of workers who are highly engaged, flexible and agile. Building a resilient culture is complex.

Steelcase worked with global research firm Ipsos to conduct a first-of-its-kind study to investigate how the work environment may be able to support employee engagement. The Steelcase Global Report: Engagement and the Global Workplace studied 20 of the most important global economies and found one-third of people are disengaged at work. The report also showed a positive correlation between workplace satisfaction and employee engagement. People who were happier with their work environment were more engaged at work.

Chris Congdon, director of global research communications at Steelcase, describes a resilient work environment as being based on two key principles: thinking about people and thinking about place. The workplace can help address people's emotions, physical health and their ability to think and solve problems. A range of spaces allows people to do different modes of work throughout the day and get into a natural rhythm. They may need a private area to do heads down work or rest and rejuvenate or they may need a collaborative area for a team meeting or a social space to promote innovation.

Space should evolve and change just like in nature allowing people choice and control over their work environment. An ecosystem of spaces allows people to do their best work no matter what kind of work they need to do.

"The world's more diverse on how it approaches problems," says Bruce Smith, director of global design at Steelcase. "It's more than just aesthetic. It's about how we work, where we work and when we work. We need to help create spaces that have longevity and other spaces that can change and adapt."

Buildings are a big expense for organizations. But, the spaces within buildings are smaller and allow a level of fluidity and resiliency. Smith says spaces and products are being designed to be adaptive to multiple types of use.

In his research, Galea suggests we can drive resilience by paying attention to the individual and the community. By improving conditions, we can lower stress and tensions and offer people a greater opportunity to be resilient. The Steelcase Global Report's findings back up that concept. It reveals people are most engaged at work if they feel their organization cares about them.

Business leaders can show they care in a very tangible, real way by providing employees with choice and control over where and how they work. A resilient workplace can help do just that. For more on how to create a resilient workspace that addresses employee engagement, download The Steelcase Global Report and read "[The Resilient Workplace: How the Physical Environment Can Help.](#)"

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Rebecca, an Emmy-winning journalist, reports on global research impacting the places where people work, learn and heal. Over her career, Rebecca spent 17 years covering local and national news events on television and a variety of digital platforms. She directed a digital news group in Kansas City for three years before becoming news director in Grand Rapids, Michigan for more than five years. Prior to Steelcase, Rebecca worked with one of the four largest media groups in the United States to coordinate news coverage among 48 newsrooms from the east to west coast.

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