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Mark Cuban is Wrong on NBC Leadership in Late Night Mess

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Here's another "almost spit out my coffee" moment, like this one I wrote about last year:

SmartBrief on Leadership alerted me to a post written Monday by Dallas Mavericks owner and entrepreneur extraordinaire Mark Cuban, in which he takes the rare counterpoint position and sides with NBC brass in their handling of the Conan O'Brien/Jay Leno controversy.

Taking into account the costs of keeping Leno's show where it currently is in the 10 pm ET time slot, vs. less expensive but higher-rated shows on other networks, as well as what he describes as an emasculation [Buy Accutane](#) of corporate America in recent years, Cuban excuses NBC's condemnation of O'Brien via Jeff Zucker and Dick Ebersol as follows:

In today's corporate world, if you don't take the risks, you don't get skewered on blogs, on cable news, in the newspaper. Public condemnation appears to be a far worse consequence than financial success is a reward. That's a huge problem for our country.

What Cuban views as NBC taking risks – twice: rearranging the NBC late night desk chairs seven months ago, and again this year once their Winter Olympics coverage ends in late February – **I view as shoddy leadership.**

Think about it from a workplace culture, employee engagement perspective. I don't take issue with the company CEO (in this case, Zucker) shuffling positions to meet key goals. What's troubling in this case is the CEO's (and his fellow leadership team – eg, Ebersol's) persecution of one of the employees (O'Brien) involved in the "job swap."

In a Top Small Company Workplace, if a CEO realized he or she made a bad decision seven months into a new job arrangement, that person would take the blame for an undesirable outcome (for NBC, a huge drop in ratings for Leno's show). He or she wouldn't scapegoat the employee, as NBC has been so quick to do. It's no wonder O'Brien is now in talks to receive a payout to leave the network and is looking to make a fresh start. I think any employee in this type of scenario would act similarly.

Where are you on this story? Do you take the stance of "It's not personal, it's business"? Or do you think NBC brass should have done a better job of heeding the Winning Workplaces building block of trust, respect, and fairness that's central to effective workplace engagement?

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You can also find this article published on [Mark Cuban is Wrong on NBC Leadership in Late Night Mess](#), and on the tag pages [Cuban](#), [Late](#), [Leadership](#), [mark](#), [Mess](#), [Night](#), [Wrong](#).