



Roundtable Mentor,  
**Dilys D'Cruz**, Vice President  
& Head of Wealth at  
Meridian Credit Union,  
shared her strategies  
on how to get through  
periods of high pressure.

## Mentoring **MATTERS**

**Q**

*Lately, I've felt like I've been on a big losing streak at work. My part of the business is under a lot of pressure and we're struggling to meet our targets. I'm feeling really overwhelmed and exhausted and am starting to think that I'm not cut out for leadership. Should I find another role or stick it out?*

Wow. I can truly relate to this question. Been there. Many times.

Whether you are in a sales role or not, targets quite often look and feel like they are unachievable. It's hard not to get discouraged and question your leadership abilities when you are going through a rough patch. But, ironically, it's during these times that we grow the most as a leader.

*When you are struggling to meet targets self-doubt can take over. Self-doubt is insidious and, if left unchecked, keeps growing and eating away at your confidence, your morale and your ability to effectively lead your team.*

Here are some tips to steer you away from this trap:

**Find peers you can trust and lean on - inside and outside of work.**

If you don't have a few peers inside and outside of work who you can call on for feedback and advice, this is something to start working on. We can't always lean on our bosses for this coaching, nor would we want to. Our peers are in the trenches with us and have experienced the same thing. Guaranteed.

You need someone to help you 'see the forest for the trees', who you can open up with and be vulnerable. Often, we assume mentors should be those senior to us. But through the years, some of the best advice I have received is from a core group of peers. And, the best "coaching moments" I've had last no more than 15 minutes. "Drive by coaching" as my peers and I fondly refer to it.

And it goes without saying, you can offer the same support to your peers. Don't underestimate your ability to be a coach to others. Listening and empathy is what people need the most, combined with an objective perspective. Your role is to be a sounding board. As a former Executive Coach I have to say that we truly underestimate the strong benefits of peer coaching.

### **Don't carry the urgency yourself; engage your team.**

When results are lagging, a big mistake leaders make is to own the burden of results themselves.

This is the time to pull your team together and have them brainstorm as to how you can turn things around. You and your team need to share the urgency of the situation.

You will be surprised at the creativity and innovation that comes out of this. As a leader, the proudest moments I've had are watching my team rally around the urgency of results, own them and be driven to achieve them - for themselves and for the team.

### **Celebrate the small wins.**

The reality is that targets are not meant to be easily achievable. If you haven't already broken targets into achievable milestones, now's the time to do that. Consider how you will celebrate the achievement of milestones to keep the momentum with your team.

### **Find ways to decompress and let go.**

Whether it's physical activity, yoga, meditation or something else, find what works for you to decompress.

### **Understand that it is the most challenging times you face in your career that will contribute most to your growth as a leader.**

Rest assured that you will come out the other end and you will feel more empowered and stronger because you have achieved something much bigger than you ever thought possible.

And then... just when you take that breath and reflect on your success and resiliency, you will be handed your new targets (which of course will be even bigger than last year). You will look at them and say to yourself...."I've got this".



**Dilys D'Cruz** is currently Vice President & Head of Wealth at Meridian Credit Union with over 25 years of diverse success in financial services and a proven track record in sales leadership for very large teams.

Dilys is an inspirational leader known for innovative and strategic thinking and is a Certified Executive Coach with a commitment to continuous learning and a passion for people development and the advancement of women in leadership and business.



**Glain Roberts-McCabe** is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.