

"IF YOU CAN'T GROW A PAIR, BUY OR BORROW A PAIR."

— COURAGE AS A BUSINESS SKILL, NOT A PERSONALITY TRAIT.



By Lana Potgieter,
Lighthouse
Leadership Coaching
& Development

What Is Courage?

Courage is the mental or moral strength to face fear, difficulty, or uncertainty without retreating. It's not the absence of fear — it's the decision to act despite fear. In leadership, courage is the willingness to take values-based action when it feels uncomfortable, unpopular, or uncertain. It's the quiet conviction to do what's right before it feels comfortable — the steady beam of clarity that cuts through the fog.

We're not talking the heroic, run-into-a-burning-building kind. I mean the unavoidable, everyday leadership courage — the 'I need to hire/fire/delegate/dump or address an issue or attitude' kind.

Because honestly, most business owners are not struggling with strategy. They know what to do! They're struggling with conversations and decisions; they're avoiding.

We hope that if we give it more time, it will get better or go away. We hope the hints of what we need will become actionable and obvious.

So, here's your new leadership motto: If you can't grow a pair, buy or borrow a pair. Because courage is not something you either have or don't have, it's something you build by doing and, better still, by "doing it afraid".

"Buy/borrow a pair" means lending courage, being *encouraged externally until your own courage can rise to the occasion.*

Where can I buy or borrow it?

Here are just three places you can buy or borrow courage from.

1. Borrow Courage from a **Decision Made Ahead of Time**. When you already know your non-negotiables, you can have a conversation rather than a negotiation. Standard Operating Procedures, Mission and Values (and what behaviors accompany them) are all great examples of decisions made in advance.

2. Borrow Courage **By Being Prepared**.

You know how, after an argument or stressful conversation, you think of all the things you "could've/should've said"? That happens because when you feel threatened, your brain goes into fight-or-flight, freeze, or fawn, and your thinking/common sense are blocked.

To avoid that, you need to think through the 'what ifs' —

What if it works?

What if it fails?

What happens if we do nothing?

What is the compact beyond the now?

What's the worst that can happen?

And when you have the answers — ask **WHAT ELSE, at least four times.**

Being prepared helps you keep your pre-frontal cortex (responsible for thinking and decisions) in charge and keeps your limbic system from derailing you with fight, flight, freeze, or fawn.

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COURAGE AS A BUSINESS SKILL

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3. Borrow Courage **From Your People** — your executive team, or shareholders, your coach, your peer circle, or an informal 'board of advisors' or mastermind group. They should have the courage to ask you the hard questions, call you on your B.S. and excuses, and hold you accountable for what you committed to do.
2. What support, preparation, or structure would make this 20 percent easier? (Examples: a script, a framework, accountability, rehearsing, clarity on expectations.)
3. Who can I 'borrow courage' from this week? A mentor, a peer, a coach, a trusted colleague, and an executive team.

Avoidance is expensive.

The moment we finally take action, we almost always say: 'Why did I wait so long? That wasn't nearly as bad as I thought.' Because courage isn't about being fearless, it's about being willing to be uncomfortable for a much better outcome.

So, here's your invitation this month: Think of one conversation, boundary, or decision you've been avoiding. Please write it down! (Commitment phobia has no place here.)

If you can't grow a pair, buy a pair. Borrow courage until it becomes part of who you are.

Borrowed Courage Reflection

1. What's one conversation, decision, or boundary I've been avoiding? Write it clearly. Name it so you can address it.

Action Step: Schedule the conversation this week. Courage grows by doing.

Call to Action

Want to build more ease, clarity, and courage in how you lead? Book a complimentary Leadership Clarity Session:

https://calendly.com/lana_light_leadership/light_discussion_discovery_call

About the Author: Lana Potgieter is an internationally recognized leadership coach and founder of Lighthouse Leadership Coaching & Development, with more than 20 years of experience. She partners with business owners and executive teams to build confident, accountable, growth-minded cultures. Lana helps leaders move from reactive 'lifeboat' management to intentional Lighthouse Leadership — leading with clarity, courage, and calm.