



HOW DOUBLE INCREASED CLIENT SATISFACTION & RETAINED TOP TALENT BY IMPLEMENTING RADICAL CANDOR



“Because we’ve made it easier for clients to give us specific feedback we can take action on, we’ve increased overall satisfaction and retention over the last 12 months, and we’ve been able to reduce churn by five points over the last year.”

— Alice Default

Co-founder and CEO at Double

At a glance:

Industry: Executive Assistant Services

Location: Remote International & Brooklyn, N.Y.

Size: 15 full-time staff + 100s of EAs

Founded: 2018

Double, founded in 2018 by Alice Default and Christophe Lamperti, connects busy executives with experienced remote part-time assistants and delegation tools. The Double team believes adding the human element to productivity tools allows people to work together better.

Default, a Forbes 30 Under 30 honoree who successfully raised \$6M in funding for Double, looked to Radical Candor when looking to define the company’s culture.



The Challenge

First-Time Founder Who Had Never Managed a Team

Double founder Alice Default had never managed a team before starting her flexible executive assistant company. She was looking for a management model that would allow her to create a sustainable culture while scaling her in-demand business that has grown five times in revenue since it emerged from stealth in 2020 in the midst of a global pandemic.

"When I started as a manager, I looked at the previous bosses that I had. And to be completely honest, I didn't like any of their management styles. It was really tough because I didn't have any other examples to draw from."

Then, someone recommended she read *Radical Candor: Be a Kickass Boss Without Losing Your Humanity* by Kim Scott. The Radical Candor framework teaches people to give specific and sincere praise and kind and clear criticism without falling into problem areas like Obnoxious Aggression (being clear but not kind), Ruinous Empathy (being kind but not clear), or Manipulative Insincerity (being neither clear nor kind).

"Radical Candor gave me this framework where I can care about people and still be a good boss, and still push people to do better, and grow and learn. And so for me, the idea of finding this balance was super interesting."



The Solution

Radical Candor's Framework Allowed Double to Solicit Feedback Between Team Members and With Clients to Create Sustainable Relationships

As a startup with limited resources, having a high-performing team of people who also felt safe being themselves at work was important to Double from the beginning.

"We needed individuals to be able to perform at their best, but we also needed teams to trust each other to be able to perform together," says Default. "And especially with everyone being remote now — we have a hybrid workplace but most of the team is remote — building that trust is important."

Similar to Kim's "Bob Story" in *Radical Candor*, Default initially fell into a trap of Ruinous Empathy.

"I was sugarcoating my feedback. And after a while, I got frustrated because the work wasn't improving."

After six months, Default decided to have a Radically Candid conversation with her employee and she was surprised to find out the employee felt similarly and confided that the job wasn't the right fit for her. The two were able to part ways amicably, but Default acknowledged they each lost six months they'll never be able to recoup because they didn't have an honest conversation sooner.

"Radical Candor can be a gift you give to people, because sometimes it's just not the right fit. And that it really taught me a lesson," she says.

According to a study published in [Personnel Psychology](#), high-performing workers are 400-800% more productive than average workers. However, "[McKinsey Global Survey: War for Talent 2000](#)" noted that only 7% of companies are confident they can retain top talent.

Only 7% of companies are confident they can retain top talent.

MCKINSEY GLOBAL SURVEY: WAR FOR TALENT 2000

For a fast-growing company like Double, retaining its best performers is crucial to its success. Implementing Radical Candor has helped Double keep its dream team and grow at an astounding rate.

"One of our values is 'fix it when you see it.' And so it empowers everyone on the team to feel comfortable speaking up about issues, even if it's something that another team manages," Default says.

"It's a safe space where it's not, 'I hate this, you should change it,' it's like, 'I had this idea. And I care about the overall company performing better, and I think this could help.'"

For Double, being able to safely share feedback has strengthened the relationships on and between teams, as well as with clients.



The Results

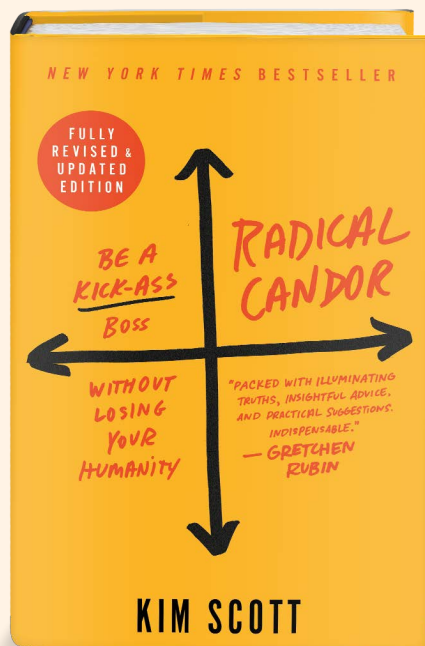
Accelerated Growth + Talent and Client Retention

OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

**Reduced churn
by 5 points.**

**Significantly increased
client satisfaction and
retention.**

After implementing Radical Candor with its core team of 18, Double sought to apply the feedback model to relationships between assistants and clients that focus on specific feedback, versus generic ratings, so they can take action where necessary.



"Since we've done that, we've significantly increased the number of people who answer satisfaction surveys, and we've increased overall satisfaction and retention over the last 12 months. I believe that facilitating feedback between clients and assistants is a big part of satisfaction, and we've been able to reduce churn by 5 points over the last year."

— Alice Default
Co-founder and CEO at Double