

## Taking the Reins . . . Leaders Promote Teams

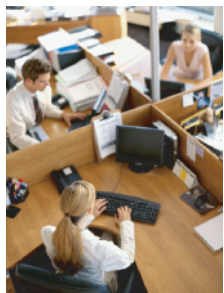
Most work in organizations is accomplished by well lead, cohesive teams. Teams don't just happen. Bringing a diverse group of people together, with different experiences, abilities, and education, is only the beginning. The one element that can draw them together and make them a cooperative and productive unit is shared commitments and goals. An effective team leader is needed.



So how can you use your leadership abilities to promote teams?

- ◆ Make sure every single individual on the team is known and appreciated by everyone else on the team. Ensure all feel valued and know they are contributing to the team's success.
- ◆ As we discussed in a previous article, make sure you are clearly communicating the vision, values and goals of the team, so everyone is pulling together. Communication includes listening, too. Listen to team members' thoughts and ideas...there will be some good ones.
- ◆ Know your people well so you can ensure each member is assigned tasks that use their abilities to the full. That includes you, the leader. If you are holding on to a "fun" task that would be better accomplished by someone else, give it up. Do what you do best, too.
- ◆ Be the glue that holds the team together, the one that people turn to for advice or encouragement or help with a decision. Be the one your people rely on for unity and motivation. You can do this by being an authentic leader, worthy of trust.
- ◆ When things are going well, call a meeting to discuss the excellent results you are having and to figure out how to keep the momentum alive. Use it as a time to sincerely say, "Well done!" Everyone will feel energized and even more committed to getting the work done.

As you grow your teamleading abilities, you will most effectively harness the power of the team. Success and the achievement of your goals will be much more likely when you are working together.



## Can Your Work Environment Affect Your Productivity?

Did you know that having someone in your line of sight, doing a different task than you are doing, can slow down your work? This is the result of a study done by Tim Welsh, a researcher in the Faculty of Kinesiology at the University of Calgary.

When we can see someone performing a task, our brain automatically wants to model that person's actions. This can have a significant impact on productivity. So what does this mean in practical terms?

Well, if you have any control over your work space, keep these results in mind. An open-concept office will keep you from feeling isolated and out of touch with your coworkers, which may be good for your well-being. It will also provide more opportunity for collaboration and cooperation with workmates. On the other hand, your own separate space will help you to concentrate and get your work done more efficiently.

Your own space and a communal space...the best of both worlds. Is it a possibility in your workplace?

## Employee Rewards

When the summer sun is streaming in the window and the breeze is blowing warm and fragrant, sitting in the office all day can be less than desirable. How can you and your people enjoy these lovely days and still get the work done?

Let's see...

- ◆ Provide an outdoor space, if possible, where employees can work. We have a garden area with internet and power access, so we can sit outside with our laptops when things are quieter.
- ◆ Perhaps let employees, in turn, leave an hour or two early on Friday afternoons, so they can head to the park or the beach or their own backyard.
- ◆ Surprise everyone with popsicles or ice cream
- ◆ Have a summer theme day, with summer tunes (the Beach Boys and Moorcheeba come to mind), sun hats and flip flops, a barbecue, and decorations.

Summer is short, at least around here, so try not to miss it.

## Quotes

"The basic building block of good teambuilding is for a leader to promote the feeling that every human being is unique and adds value."—*Unknown*

"None of us is as smart as all of us."—*Ken Blanchard*

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