AWARENESS IS POWER®
Insights for Business

Want To Effectively Build Trust And Boost Morale?

"The happier your people are, the better they are at what they do."

Despite being one of the oldest business clichés out there, the previous saying also remains a universal truth that many company managers want to achieve. Good morale tends to have a domino effect, and when the manager's morale is boosted, everyone else will become more productive. However, in terms of sales boosting, everybody is required to be enthusiastic regardless of whether or not the manager is also joyful, which is another sad but universal truth employees are aware of.

At any rate, morale and trust building throughout a workforce can be achievable through employee coaching. However, it's the kind of activity that must be done right in order to work; owners and managers alike should invest real commitment to this program in order to entice their workers to meet them halfway.

Are Your Employees Happy and is Morale High in Your Organization?

Disengaged Managers Are A Leading Cause Of Disengaged Employees!

In developing strategies for dealing with disengaged employees, one unspoken assumption is that "employee" means "front-line worker." Certainly if there is disengagement, then the problem does exist in the trenches, and must be addressed.

However, managers are also employees; and as such, they might also be disengaged. Worse yet, a disengaged manager is a leading cause of disengaged employees.

How could a manager be a disengaged employee? Is there not a daily rush of adrenaline thanks to the stimulating meetings, the high-stakes decisions, the varied responsibilities, and the unswerving loyalty from within the department?

First, is a manager an employee? Yes: an employee who reports to his or her own manager; an employee with duties, deliverables, and deadlines; and an employee whose job, by design, strongly influences the behaviour and attitudes of other employees.

Second, how could a manager become disengaged? Surely this person was fully engaged when promoted. Well, a manager may face frustration or overwork. The corporate goals may not be clear. There may be responsibility without authority; workload without budget; a need for new skills without the time for training. Or, a manager may be in an organization that does not support initiative or innovation.

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As a side note, the results of morale boosting can serve as morale boosters themselves to business executives and supervisors too, so the importance of keeping your employees happy should not be underestimated.

Morale and Trust Building Dos and Don'ts

The wisdom of consciously stimulating morale can easily be seen by the way profits flood whenever your employees feel satisfied and invigorated by their work. Good morale is easy to achieve when everyone is doing all right and everything is going well with your work at large. However, once your employees start making mistakes, your concern for their wellbeing immediately drops to keep the company's bottom line in order. Even though people do make mistakes, these taxing incidents can start a chain reaction of negativity that could impact worker morale as well as your positive cash flow.

During trying times like expensive mistakes and employee carelessness, it's understandable for the manager – whose whole job relies on adherence to corporate procedure and sales volume – to berate his errant employees, yell out his demands for better performance, and slam his fist on his desk for good measure. Then again, this impulse will probably just worsen the situation and give your employees the impression that you are not the perfect boss to work with, and they're better off going to greener and better pastures. You don't want to fix a mistake with a mistake; we're not asking you to coddle incompetence either, but there's a better way to address gaffes without turning your working environment into a hostile one.

Assessing the Importance of Effective Morale and Trust Building

If you really want your employees to build their trust in you as a boss or maintain a high morale, then anger isn't the solution. Outbursts can and will happen, but abusiveness and a workplace run by fear will just result in lower productivity and fewer people willing to work in your company in the long run.

Words that are said tend to have a life of their own, such that it could totally destroy the self-esteem of your workers. Don't make employees feel like working is a chore for them; competent and effective managers know how to inspire people to work for them without the need for intimidation or threats. Yes, workers do tend to try extra hard in response to the fear you've instilled in them by blowing up and berating them for their incompetence, but they'll only do so until the proverbial storm passes. This is a short term solution that will have a long term negative effect.

Profiles are an effective way to boost morale and build trust.

Using profiles and assessment to identify the behaviors and motivators of your employees will give you incredible insights and a clear direction to help you provide the ideal situation. These profiles will help you enhance communication, discover strengths and areas for improvement, build better teams, and help you understand what each person is motivated by. Once you have this assessment for each employee you can seek to provide the environment where motivation occurs… and thereby boosting morale and building a trusting workforce.

Sometimes it seems almost impossible to sustain that sort of motivation on people, especially when they have the option to leave. Granted, in today's economy, employees tend to be more loyal, but this is forced loyalty that hampers the true, quality potential of your workforce. You definitely don't want resentful workers working for you. Your employees are the lifeblood of your company, so diplomacy, tact, prudence, and the careful weighing of your words is a must in order to bolster performance and correct mistakes. By being fair but firm, you'll be able to build the trust and boost the morale of your entire workforce. Utilizing the proper profile and assessments will go a long way in shortening the learning curve and helping you build a highly productive workforce.

*Continued from page one – **Disengaged Managers***

All of these are well-recognized causes of employee disengagement. Nor is the manager a super-human. Yes, a manager may become disengaged.

Can a manager be responsible for causing employee disengagement?

Consider some of the questions in an Organizational Development survey: *"Does my organization celebrate accomplishments? Does my manager make people feel safe in speaking up, in dissenting, or in making suggestions? Do people in my department feel appreciated? Do I have or expect to receive the training I need to do my job?"* From the front-line employee's viewpoint, who is responsible here? The department manager is responsible.

Also, the manager is an employee who assigns priorities and allocates resources. The manager is in a position to energize the department, or to frustrate every person on staff. A disengaged manager lacks the energy and enthusiasm to train, motivate or develop their staff; to seek out new challenges, or to determine which employees can effectively be mentored to make the best of new opportunities. A disengaged manager cannot take the time to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each staff member, or to coach their development. Most of the remedies for disengagement among front-line employees require action by their managers – actions which are beyond the capabilities of a disengaged manager.

At the executive level, several remedial actions are indicated.

First – Determine your organization's current situation. Determine to what degree is employee disengagement a problem. Do managers share the malaise?

Second – Plan a specific course of action. Does the organization have clear goals, which are clearly communicated? Are there clear accountabilities and responsibilities, with the empowerment that these require? Are "development" and "training" given more than lip service?

Third – Implement these measures, and make them real for your management staff. Then they can make it real in their departments.

~ Written for us by our associate Gary Sorrell, Sorrell Associates, LLC. Copyright protected worldwide. All rights reserved.

"You can't operate a company by fear, because the way to eliminate fear is to avoid criticism. And the way to avoid criticism is to do nothing."
~ Steve Ross

"Wise are those who learn that the bottom line doesn't always have to be their top priority."
~ William Arthur Ward

One Minute Ideas

Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill

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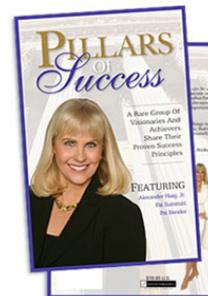
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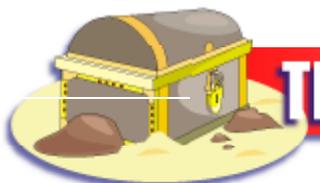

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