

MANAGEMENT

# TIPS



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## INTRODUCTION

As you move up within the organizational ranks and take on a leadership role, you will find out that the fundamental skills that you had before becoming a leader will no longer suffice. There are so many facets to leadership, and you will be wearing many hats: a communicator, a motivator, a pacifist, a coach, a director, an engager, and lastly, a learner. You may have taken on a bigger role since you are managing a number of people, but the learning never stops. You need to learn new skill sets and unlearn obsolete methodologies, in order to improve and hone your leadership skills so you can build a successful team.



This e-book will help you do just that. It is full of concise and clear advice that will help you manage diversity and inclusion in your workplace, and

## INTRODUCTION

help you create positive group dynamics that will turn an ordinary team into a winning one. You will learn how to make your team more cohesive, and dispel any old-school mythologies that should be disregarded when managing a team. It will also help you establish clear goals for your team that will help provide clarity and a sense of purpose.



This e-book will teach you how to manage like a pro, so you can confidently lead your team and help propel your company forward. By the end of this e-book, you will have learned how to develop, motivate, and inspire people, building a high performing team, so that they will perform at their best.

## SECRETS TO CREATING A MINDSET FOR MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

Building a strong team starts with the leader, and the leader must have the right mindset. What separates a great manager from an average one? Aside from having the industry knowledge and skill set, management success is also about knowing how to work hand-in-hand with the people under you. Here are several secrets to creating the mindset that you should have in order to build a strong team.



- ***View your team as a community.*** Some managers still hold age-old belief that their people are mere cogs in a well-oiled machine that can be easily replaced at the drop of a hat. Managers, however, must see their people as an investment into the success of their business. Build up the team you have and encourage team camaraderie.
- ***Business is an ecosystem.*** Instead of viewing employees as workers who must do what you say and deliver, shift to viewing your team as an ecosystem where every member has a contribution that will add to the prosperity and growth of the team. Become aware of strengths and weaknesses in your team and how they can balance each other. In order for a team to thrive in a business ecosystem, each individual should work harmoniously and co-exist with each other, including you the manager.
- ***Serve, don't control.*** Management is all about being in charge, not being in control. You set the standards and lay the framework for success, then let your team fulfill it. You want to be less controlling, and instead create the environment for success to thrive. Do not encourage the habit of employees who wait to be told what to do and need to be prompted before taking action. Instead, encourage



initiative and pro-activeness among your employees so that they will learn to seek out for themselves what needs to be done in order to do their job best.

- ***Employees are people too.*** By treating your employees the way you do other people in your life outside of work, they will respond in kind. Of course there is a level of professionalism, but building a relationship with members of your team is crucial. This will increase their productivity, cooperation, and receptiveness to your leadership.
- ***Motivate through vision, not fear.*** Incorporate positivity and affirmative thinking in the workplace, instead of sowing fear just to motivate your employees. Scare tactics rarely work, but if you share a vision for the future of the team, your employees will have a clear set of goals, become confident of their skills, and be more optimistic.
- ***Change equals growth—not pain.*** Change need not be painful—whether it is a new competition, or perhaps a new CRM technology, you should learn to adapt to changes instead of clinging to your old ways. The world is ever-changing, and change is inevitable. You need to embrace changes as part and parcel of your working life. Your staff will be able to see this in you and as a result, they will be more welcoming, instead of disagreeable, over the changes that will be implemented in the office.
- ***Use technology for empowerment, not automation.*** Take advantage of the latest in technology in order to improve and streamline your existing business processes. By doing so, you will be



## SECRETS TO CREATING A MINDSET FOR MANAGEMENT SUCCESS

able to work smarter, and not longer. You need to be up to date with recent advancements to stay competitive. You want your team to have confidence in your knowledge of the market.

- ***Work should be.*** Don't forget to have fun. Make the office environment pleasant work in. Avoid being too serious and formal all the time. Don't be that manager whom your employees tiptoe around. Make your employees comfortable and at ease with your presence by being approachable and fun to be with.

By implementing these underlying beliefs into your managing style, you and your staff will have a more productive and positive experience in the office. You will be able to make a positive impact on the lives of your team, which will help them become better at what they do.



## BASIC ACTIONS EVERY MANAGER NEEDS TO PRACTICE

Now that you know the secret principles to build your team, let's look at the basics to building a team. There are a lot of management styles you can use when leading your team, whether authoritative or participative, loud or quiet, extroverted or introverted. But some parts of management remain the same, regardless of the kind of management style you have. Here are the 5 best practices that you need to implement in order to improve your relationship with your employees and increase their productivity.

- Communicate.** Create a culture of transparency, straightforwardness, leadership. Aside from holding team meetings, set aside time for one-on-one coaching with each member in order to discuss performance, goals, and issues.



- **Motivate.** You need to empower your people by making them feel important in what they do. Give them a say in how they do their work. Offer opportunities for advancements and give out incentives (it does not even have to be monetary) to top performers. By keeping them continuously motivated, they are more likely to buy into your leadership. Nobody likes a leader who only tells them when they do something wrong, so encourage and inspire. You then will keep more employees, and reduce turnover.





## BASIC ACTIONS EVERY MANAGER NEEDS TO PRACTICE

- **Develop.** It is important to groom employees into future leadership roles even before they get the chance to actually lead. Aside from delegating, you can also implement a training program, help your team members with their career plans, and have a succession plan in place for the key positions in your team. Provide effusive praise for a job well done, and constructive criticism when there's room for improvement.
- **Discipline.** Discipline is one of the most unpleasant tasks of a manager, but it needs to be done. When disciplining a staff member, avoid forceful, threatening language as this is rarely instructive and will only harbor ill feelings on the part of the recipient. Don't scold a team member out in the open; deliver the discipline in private instead. Inform the staff member why he is being disciplined, and give the person enough time to correct the behavior. The goal here is to instruct and to correct, and not to punish the employee. Think growth.
- **Delegate.** Some managers make the mistake of trying to do everything on their own. But you need to learn to delegate so you can free up your time to focus on your more important tasks that you can't delegate. Doing so also allows you to help your people develop their own capabilities. By giving your team extra responsibilities, you



## BASIC ACTIONS EVERY MANAGER NEEDS TO PRACTICE

will help to build their confidence and skill set. Before delegating a task, you need to clarify to the person what needs to be done, make sure they understand, give them the freedom to do it and then check the work and provide feedback. Sure they may not get it first time, and can be more work than doing it yourself, but as they develop, you can greatly reduce your work load.

### ***Common Mistakes in Leadership***

Being aggressive in your management stance will only decrease the morale of your team, instead of boosting it, which is what we all want. Develop your interpersonal skills by listening to what your team has to say. Avoid poor communication by providing clear goals and a clear vision of what you want your team to achieve.

At the end of the day, you are a leader, so you must lead by example. By learning these basic tenets of leadership, you will earn the respect of the people working under you, and will have more productive results.



## PITFALLS IN LEADERSHIP

Now before we get into more detail about team building, it is important to know what not to do. Not only do you have to learn to manage your people, there are also common pitfalls leaders' face that may get in the way of your team's success. In order to keep a thriving and disciplined team, you need to identify if you have these shortcomings, and work to improve them:

- ***Incompetence.*** An incompetent leader is someone who lacks interpersonal skills, destroys the existing camaraderie of a team, and prevents its members from speaking their minds, resulting in lowered team morale and reduced productivity levels. With an incompetent leader to man the ship, stress is a normal experience within the team, as everything is done at the last minute due to poor planning and lack of vision and insight. An incompetent leader also uses fear and punishment as motivational factors instead of using encouragement and rewards.
- ***Rigidity.*** People are more comfortable doing something they have already done in the past, rather than exploring a new option. This could lead to a rigid leadership, which is repeatedly doing the same thing and applying the same management style to diverse and completely different situations. This type of leadership becomes a problem becomes the manager becomes inflexible. A great leader should be able to use multiple approaches and be able to adjust to the diverse personalities of the team and the different problems the team may encounter.
- ***Intemperate.*** An intemperate leader lacks self-control and will crumble in times of difficulty. He cannot keep his emotions in check and gets emotional during stressful situations. He may take things

## PITFALLS IN LEADERSHIP

personally and may not be objective and rational enough when making decisions that could impact the team. On the other hand, a temperate leader maintains his composure and calmly handles the issues that the team is facing.



- **Corrupt.** Power and authority can corrupt a leader. Admittedly, management is a politically charged role, but this does not mean that you need to be corrupted by all the politics involved. A corrupt leader will hoard resources and power to gain more control and improve his status within the organization. This is dangerous because a corrupt leader could corrupt followers too.
- **Callous.** A callous leadership is being insensitive to the culture, values, and beliefs of a diverse team. You expect the team to react the same way you do and do as they are told. You are not open to criticisms of your leadership; instead, you dismiss these reactions as the other person's problem. Your team members tiptoe around you, and they do not speak up even when asked for fear of rejection and repercussions.

## PITFALLS IN LEADERSHIP

- ***Insular.*** An insular leadership is the feeling of superiority over other people, and being closed-minded to other ideas. It is the “me-versus-them” mentality that only one view can be correct, and that correct view is, of course, the leaders.

By correcting these damaging leadership qualities, you can continue on the path to successful team building. Let's take a look now at how to effectively lead through your team.



## DON'T JUST LEAD YOUR TEAM, LEAD THROUGH YOUR TEAM

Sitting back and allowing your team to do their job won't benefit them nor help them grow. On the same token, sitting back and sending out orders is not a sustainable leadership tactic. As a team leader, it is your job to motivate and inspire your team to not only to do better in their work, but also to become better people. Here are a few of the things you can do to lead through your team to greatness:

- ***Create a mutual sense of purpose.*** In order for a team to perform their best, each member must be aware of what the goal is, and the team should collectively work towards this goal. To achieve this, come up with clearly defined goals that are aligned with the company's overall strategy and share it with the team. Make them feel as though they are part of something bigger than themselves, and that what they do actually helps to make the world a better place to live in. It is not about following you and your goals, it is about following the vision; the team goal.
- ***Create tangible goals.*** When setting goals for your team, make sure they are realistic. Don't set the bar too high that your team might be discouraged, but not too easy that they become complacent. Create short- and long-term goals for the team to achieve, and give ample time for the team to reach them; otherwise, this will result in inferior work as your staff scramble to meet the deadline.





## DON'T JUST LEAD YOUR TEAM, LEAD THROUGH YOUR TEAM

- **Members become a team.** When working with a team, you get to work with people who have different beliefs, skills, and personalities. Conflict then becomes inevitable, so you need to learn to work your way through the group dynamics and encourage each member to work together so that your team becomes cohesive. Establish a set standard of behaviors in which each member of the team must abide, including you of course. As your team develops, this standard will minimize the conflict that might arise



because of differences. These could be treating each other with respect, no lewd comments, zero tolerance for discrimination, etc.

- **The team holds each other accountable.** Each member must learn that the results of their work are the sum of each other's efforts. They must also be reminded that their output is interdependent, meaning that the quality of one person's work will affect the whole team. You can come up with team-based rewards and incentives so that each member will be motivated to support a member who is not performing up to par. Give your employees the ability to track their progress and analyze their performance, so they will know how they are performing compared to the other teams and the rest of the organization.

## DON'T JUST LEAD YOUR TEAM, LEAD THROUGH YOUR TEAM

- ***Not just because the boss expects it.*** Keep your employees engaged so that they will care more about their work instead of seeing it as just a way to earn money. Make them feel that their contribution is highly valued, that what they are doing is actually making a difference. By making them see the bigger picture, they will do their work willingly, not just because it is expected of them.

You see management is not about telling a team what to do, it is about building up a team that wants to do what you want them to do. This can only happen by leading through your team, setting team goals, having each team member actively participate and facilitating a feeling of accountability in each team member, not only to you, but to other members.

### ***GREAT TEAM BUILDING OPPORTUNITY***

*"I decided to take my CSR office group on a team building field trip and this seemed like it would be a lot fun as well as would be a team building exercise to make everyone work together. All of the girls had a blast trying to save the world. I can't even put into words how fun this experience was! Everyone worked together and had a blast in the process. We came back to the office raving about it. The owner was so excited about our excitement that he is going to allow other groups from the office to go. I would recommend this experience to anyone who is looking for a team building exercise or for anyone who wants to get a group of friends together to get out and do something fun and different. I will most certainly be returning to try some of the other rooms!"*

Michelle L.

## DISPELLING THE BIGGEST MOTIVATIONAL MYTHS

As a team leader, you need to keep your team members motivated about their jobs and the roles they play within the team. This is one of the biggest challenges of being a team leader. By combining the skills and knowledge of your people with their enthusiasm and energy, your team can accomplish anything. Having a motivated workforce working under you will result in high levels of productivity. Motivated team members will also be proactive when it comes to recommending improvements that will streamline your business processes. Motivation also reduces the attrition rate within the team, as there will be less turnover and fewer replacements as employees opt to continue working with you.

There are many motivational methods that old-fashioned management teams employ, but some of these are outdated theories that need to be abandoned in favor of the most current methodologies that actually work. Here are some of the biggest motivational myths you need to avoid when motivating your team:

- ***One person can motivate another.*** To succeed in the workplace, your staff will need to be at their best. You can only help them at a certain point because this is something they need to do on their own. So how can you help them motivate themselves? You need to create a working environment that will empower them. Allow them to have a say in how they do their jobs, and continuously ask for their input. By having their inner drive pointed in the right direction, everything will simply fall into place.

MOTIVATION

## DISPELLING THE BIGGEST MOTIVATIONAL MYTHS

- ***Money and fear make great motivators.*** Another old-school approach to employee motivation is the “carrot and stick” methodology, where rewards and penalties are used to obtain the desired results from the employee. The carrot represents money and non-monetary incentives while the stick represents fear and punishment. This gives off immediate results, but it will only be good for the short term. Over time, motivating by fear will backfire in t
- ***What motivates me, will motivate others.*** What motivates employees to do great work? The usual suspects such as fear and punishment no longer seem to work. As we have shifted to a global economy, it turns out that what drives employees have shifted, too. What may have worked for you when you were still an entry-level employee, may not necessarily work for the people who are working under you. Getting to know your employees is the only way to find out what motivates them.

### ***Steps to Truly Motivate your Team***

Strive to create a team culture that is open and trusting. By openness, you should be constantly on the lookout for new ideas from your team. Encourage suggestions and initiative. Mistakes should not be punished, but rather, they should be an opportunity for learning.

Don't be afraid to shake things up every once in a while. Doing the same thing every day can become monotonous. You can inject a little variety by assigning different tasks to your people to keep them on their toes.

## DISPELLING THE BIGGEST MOTIVATIONAL MYTHS

As a team leader, nothing is more rewarding than helping other people reach their full potential. Motivating your team members will take a lot more than implementing age-old myths that may have worked in the old days, but are not necessarily true today. Once you have figured out how to motivate your individual team members, it is important to create a positive group dynamic as well.

### *Great team building experience!*

"I did the Infection room with a group of teachers from my school as part of our in-service. We had a fantastic time and I feel it really helped bring our group together. Can't wait to go again!"



## QUALITIES OF A POSITIVE GROUP DYNAMIC

Group dynamics is a term coined by social psychologist Kurt Lewin. According to Lewin, people will take on distinctive roles and personalities which will affect other members, and the team as a whole. Managing group dynamics is one of the most challenging aspects of leadership. Since no two persons are alike, a one-size-fits-all management style will simply not work out. While you need to implement different management styles depending on the kind of people you have on your team, these four aspects of leadership remain constant in order to maintain peace and harmony within a group dynamic:

- **Constructive.** Knowing we are all different in how we perceive the world and being accepting of these differences is the key to having a constructive relationship with your team. Don't allow coaching time to be a one-sided conversation; allow the recipient of the feedback to speak out his mind and articulate his thoughts. There is a learning opportunity in the feedback you receive.
- **Productive.** Develop a culture of accountability, prioritization, delegation, and collaboration within the team, so each member will know what to do and what to prioritize within a day. Public accountability will motivate each member to work harder to ensure all tasks are accomplished for the day. For complicated tasks, streamline business processes or develop your own standard procedures in order to make your team members' lives easier. Eliminate the "can I run this by you quickly" or "can I talk to you for a minute" meetings. Instead, designate weekly team meetings that have a goal-oriented agenda.



## QUALITIES OF A POSITIVE GROUP DYNAMIC

- ***Mutual understanding.*** Implement an open-door policy where your members will not hesitate to approach you if they have an issue with something. A clear set of guidelines and an open line of communication, lead to a mutual understanding between you and your team. Once your members know that you are open to feedback, they are more likely to come to you whenever there is an issue within the ranks. This means you can put out fires and discourage gossip before they even become full-blown conflicts. There is nothing worse than being disconnected from your team.
- ***Corrective.*** No one likes to criticize and be criticized in the workplace, but this is something that needs to be done. You need to be constructive when you provide negative criticism—avoid laying all the blame on the person, and put a positive spin on it. When providing constructive criticism, give your people enough time to work on what was said, and be sure to follow up. If you have given enough time to the person and it still didn't work out, then you might want to reassign team roles and place the problematic person in a role where he will thrive more.

### ***Challenges to Positive Group Dynamics***

Now that we know what makes a good group dynamic, let's look at what challenges good dynamics.

- ***Bad communication.*** Miscommunication can be prevented by simply giving each member a clear set of goals to accomplish, and by not allowing personal issues get in the way of accomplishing them.

## QUALITIES OF A POSITIVE GROUP DYNAMIC

- **Groupthink.** Groupthink is agreeing with the majority of a team to avoid conflict and discussion. Conflict and confrontation can be healthy if they will result in previously unthought-of ideas that can help the company. To prevent groupthink, encourage each member to participate during discussions and allow them to speak their minds.
- **Lack of focus.** Single-tasking is the new multi-tasking. If your employees are juggling way too many tasks, assign them only one project at a time to help them focus.

By implementing these tips, you can develop each individual in your team so that they become better team players, at facilitate a positive group dynamic. To better understand your team members, it is important to understand what different personality types you are working with. Now let's look at managing different personality types.



## A GUIDE TO MANAGING DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSONALITIES

As a manager, you probably know by now that having a one-size-fits-all management style will not work because you will encounter all sorts of personalities when working with a diverse organization. The more you understand about the types of personalities your people have, the easier it will be to manage, lead, engage, and inspire them.

A management approach that motivates a team member may have the completely opposite effect on another. You will learn which personalities gel with other types of personalities, so you will know who to throw in together for a task. You will know which personalities clash with other types of personalities, so you will know enough not to put them together in a project.

By understanding your team's multi-faceted personalities, you will know what motivates your team members and what makes them tick, so that you can create the most productive and engaging working environment for them to work in.

### ***Diversity in Personalities is Important***

A team that is made up of different positive personalities can complement each another resulting in increased productivity levels. The leader keeps everyone on their toes. The facilitator ensures that everything is on track. The silent contributor ensures that the project is being done precisely according to specifications. The devil's advocate takes risks and explores other options while a follower knows the rules of diplomacy and how to get along with the strong personalities in a team. A leader will not be able to

## A GUIDE TO MANAGING DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSONALITIES

work without a follower, and a facilitator will not be able to work without an enabler.

If you remove any of these personalities in the mix, your team may not work as productively as possible. On the other hand, there are also negative personalities that can take away from your team, and which will require managing on the part of the team leader. Understanding the personalities of those around you is critical to the success of your team. By being aware of these personality types, you will have the knowledge to balance your team and bring them to greater heights.



### ***Positive Personalities***

- **Leader.** A leader is a person who influences and helps the team achieve its goal. This person is passionate and enthusiastic about the work the team does and is a constant source of inspiration and motivation to other members of the team. He is not afraid to get down and dirty. He is also decisive and is regularly called upon by other team members to make decisions that will have an impact on the team.

# POSITIVE PERSONALITIES

- ***Follower.*** A follower provides support to the leadership within the team. This person is the fuel that drives the engine of a leader. He is not just a passive bystander—he is also an active participant and a great collaborator within the team. During times of conflict, he is a known pacifist.
- ***Facilitator.*** The facilitator, also known as the moderator, is a neutral arbiter who identifies the issues and problems that need solving within the team. This person intervenes in an unbiased manner and improves the effectiveness of the team's workflow processes.
- ***Silent Contributor.*** The silent contributor complements and works really with the most extrovert members of the team. This person is a good listener and works best when left to his own devices. The silent contributor is also persistent, focused, methodical, and analytical.
- ***Devil's Advocate.*** In an effort to eliminate discord and reach a consensus right away, a team has a tendency to groupthink. The role of the devil's advocate calls for being critical—that means asking all of the challenging and dissenting questions in order to discover any potential flaws in a proposed decision.

### ***Negative Personalities***

## A GUIDE TO MANAGING DIFFERENT TYPES OF PERSONALITIES

- **Aggressive.** When dealing with aggressive team members, don't take the bait because this will only trigger more aggression from them. Take all emotion out of the equation, but do acknowledge what they are trying to say in order to defuse tension. This lessens their aggression and makes them more open to other ideas from the team.
- **Deceptive.** People who have deceptive personalities are the complete opposite of the aggressive types. Whereas the latter are very direct, the former are not confrontational. They would appear to be overtly nice but instead, they would actually do their dirty work behind the scenes and attack from a distance. An example is the "yes" person. Dealing with these kind of people can be difficult, so you need to put your foot down. These people need to be called out on their behavior.
- **Passive.** People who have passive personalities are meek, hesitant, and self-deprecating. They also have a tendency to put others' opinions first while belittling their own. This is unhealthy behavior that should not be encouraged. As a leader, it is up to you to empower them and build up their confidence.
- **Destructive.** These personalities can make the workplace unsafe and unsecured. Examples are alcoholics, substance abusers, and sociopaths. You simply cannot afford to have these kinds of destructive behaviors within your team. If it comes to the point where the performance of the team is suffering, it may be time to think of an exit strategy for these kinds of personalities.



### ***Tips to Managing Negative Personalities***

If you have personalities on your team that are difficult to work with and are creating conflicts within the group, you should think twice before letting them go. After all, good people are hard to find and even harder to train. It will be better to try and make the difficult person work more effectively within your company. Getting the most out of every member of your team can be a challenge. In order to achieve this, you need to understand the personalities of your own employees. Knowing how your team members will react and adapt to different situations will give you a better grasp as to where and what kind of roles to put them in where you know they will thrive and will be primed for success.



Understanding personality types is an indispensable part of being a great team manager as this will help you cultivate healthier working relationships. There are bound to be differences between the people on your team, which is where managing diversity comes into play. Here are some keys to overcoming and embracing diversity which exists within teams.

## KEYS TO OVERCOMING DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR TEAM

Diversity used to be seen as a negative attribute that can impede a team's success in the workplace, but no more. Having a diverse group of individuals within a team can actually improve its performance. Diversity allows members to become better at communication, and helps them to be more respectful to other team members. Diversity also allows you as a team leader to recognize and develop the unique abilities each member has, and to utilize these strengths to achieve your team's goals.

### ***Types of Diversity within a Team***

There is more than one type of diversity, let's take a look at two distinct types:

Personal diversity – Personal diversity includes varying attributes such as age, sex, religious beliefs, race, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds, which we will expand on below. As a leader, you need to promote a culture of acceptance within the team. Each member should learn to accept people for who they are regardless of where they came from and what the color of their skin is.

- ***Gender.*** To ensure gender diversity, a team should be represented by an equal proportion of men and women, where they get equal treatment and acceptance from all team members.
- ***Race.*** Racial diversity is not just ensuring that all races are well-presented within a team or an organization; it is also making sure

## KEYS TO OVERCOMING DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR TEAM

that the employees who come from different racial backgrounds feel comfortable and at ease while working.

- **Cultural.** Cultural diversity is having a group of diverse employees who come from different cultural backgrounds. A team that is culturally diverse is a team that acknowledges, affirms, and celebrates every culture's differences, belief systems, value orientations, and traditions.
- **Age.** Age diversity is accepting, hiring, and treating people fairly regardless of what their age is within a business environment.
- **Sexual orientation.** Diversity in this regard means hiring the best candidates regardless of their sexual orientation, whether they are straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual.
- **Disabilities.** Disability diversity is the acceptance of people regardless of their physical or mental impairment.

Skill diversity – Developing the diversified set of skills that your team has will serve as a catalyst for higher productivity and increased creative output. Having different skill sets allow your team to be more adaptable, flexible, and competitive when it comes to changes, which is useful because of the ever-changing and ever-growing needs of the global marketplace.

### ***Keys to Team Cohesion***

## KEYS TO OVERCOMING DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR TEAM

How do you ensure cohesion within your team in the face of different types of diversity?

- **Communication.** Having a diverse workforce means acknowledging the differences and uniqueness of each member. Hence, you need to become more flexible when disseminating and receiving information. Find the best way to communicate with each of your team members. Some members will find one-on-one coaching sessions more productive while others are happy with a short email exchange. As long as the message is clearly and accurately conveyed to the recipient, you may use your members' preferred communication methodology to your advantage. By doing so, they become more receptive to the content of your message.



### *Great for Team Building*

*"It also allowed us to bond and communicate casually and equally, hopefully opening a fluid line of communication between the office and field. Overall I enjoyed the experience, developing better relationships with my team members."*

- **Commitment.**  
In order to make your diverse team more committed to achieving your goals, you need to learn to appreciate them all the more for who they are as an individual, and not just as a worker. Create an atmosphere that inspires trust and encourages inclusion despite differences. If possible, incorporate values that encourage diversity within the company's (and the team's) core values. Encourage and

## KEYS TO OVERCOMING DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR TEAM

embody equal-opportunity policies and inclusive workplace practices. Constantly review the policies that you implement in your team and see if there's anything that might serve as a barrier to diversity.

- ***Common Goal.*** By assigning people with completely different personalities and backgrounds to work on a common goal, they will be forced to have a continuous interaction with each other. As workers get to know each other better despite their differences, understanding and tolerance automatically follow.
- ***Put yourself in their shoes.*** Empathy is all about making and discovering opportunities for collaboration. The catalyst for diversity management is having an open, two-way communication and by making a concerted effort to listen and collaborate regardless of who people are and what they represent.
- ***Motivation.*** By treating all of your team members equally, you increase their motivation to go to work.
- ***Build confidence.*** People react negatively when forced to interact with someone they perceive as different from them. Build their confidence by being open with your people. They should see you as a person they can talk to about their problems, instead of being a mere "title" or a "job designation." Develop authentic relationships with them so that you can connect with the realities they have to face in and outside of the workplace.

## KEYS TO OVERCOMING DIVERSITY WITHIN YOUR TEAM

- ***Create a collaborative environment.*** Adopt a culture of collaboration within the team in order to create a more productive workplace.

Diversity management is more than just hiring talent from different backgrounds; it is also about keeping the diverse talent engaged within the company despite conflicts and differences. The workforce is growing more diverse than ever and we all need to accept our differences to minimize conflicts and communication breakdowns. Learning to collaborate with all kinds of people, regardless of who they are and where they come from, will create a harmonious working environment for your team.





## STEPS TO TEAM COHESION FOR MANAGERS

Team cohesion goes beyond diversity. Cohesiveness is the ability of a team to be united in pursuit of a common goal. A team that is cohesive respects the diversity of everyone on the team and is committed to achieving the goals in the most efficient way possible. Members of a cohesive team hold themselves accountable to team tasks even if these were not assigned to them. Here are some tips In order to make your team more cohesive:

- ***Establish a goal.*** Setting goals is important for the long-term success of your team. Having a defined set of goals will help team members focus and allocate their time and resources efficiently while working towards the common goal. Make the goal SMART: specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-bound. To prevent burnout, don't go overboard with the goals you assign to the team. Because of workplace diversity, get to know your team beforehand and recognize each member's strengths and weaknesses. Assign each member a goal in which you know they will thrive at.
- ***Facilitate a conducive work environment.*** Have space in the office where members can relax, unwind, and have some form of social interaction with other members of the team. Be spontaneous and have fun with your staff. You don't always have to be the serious type. Have a few laughs (or a few drinks) and talk with them about something that is not related to work, such as their hobbies or their families. Implement tasks that allow them to move around the office so that they won't be tied to their desk all day. Giving them plenty of opportunities to interact with each other will make the team more cohesive.

## STEPS TO TEAM COHESION FOR MANAGERS

- ***Set expectations.*** You need to be clear on the goals that you want your team to achieve by asking them clarifying questions such as “Is everything clear?” or “Do you need help doing that task?” Clarify the role that each member plays, and see if you have assigned a specific task to the right person. Maybe another person can do it better? Setting expectations gives clarity and direction on what needs to be done. It also provides a benchmark for your team so that they can determine their progress and find out if they are hitting the mark you have set for them.
- ***Train staff.*** A structured training program increases job satisfaction and makes your team members feel valued at their job. It also increases product knowledge and improves their skill set, allowing them to work together more cohesively with each other.
- ***Get out of the way.*** Know when to interfere, but also know when to leave them at it. Spoon-feeding, frequently checking in, and micromanaging is not healthy for your team. It fosters too much dependency on your leadership, and it also gives off the impression that you are not confident of the ability of your staff to get things done.

Cohesion is an important aspect that determines the productivity of a team. Having a cohesive team means that every member has accountability towards the success or failure of the team. With ownership comes the internal drive to deliver. Now let's take a closer look at the key component of cohesion, communication.

## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN A TEAM

Regardless of the role each member plays in a team, effective communication is vital to the team's survival and success. As a team leader, you need to impart your message to each member in a clear and effective way to avoid misunderstandings. Having an effective communication within the team also builds trust and relationship. Once your team understands your goals and the tasks that need to be accomplished, they work smoothly and efficiently because they know what to do beforehand.

### ***Why Does Communication Break Down?***

Many factors can contribute to communication breakdown. There's information overload, where team members get inundated and overwhelmed with too much information. The result is that some information might be overlooked or fall through the cracks. Unfair deadlines can also lead to miscommunication. In a haste to meet deadlines, communication can sometimes be shortened, leaving room for misinterpretation. Distraction and noise can also be a factor. Physical things such as loud music, poor lighting, and uncomfortable seats can also interfere with communication.

### ***Results of a Break in Communication***

Communication breakdown and simple differences in opinion may result in serious workplace conflict that could get in the way of things. If work is not up to standard as a result of miscommunication, this may cause resentment and stress. Lack of direction, as well as the inability to predict and anticipate outcomes can also exist due to a breakdown in communication.

## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN A TEAM

### ***Elements of an Effective Communication System***

To prevent a break in communication, keep these 4 elements in mind.

- ***Focus on accessible information.*** Produce information in such a way that everyone in your team can easily access and read it. Use a clear, hard-to-misinterpret language so that your team can understand you. Avoid highfalutin words and jargons, if possible. You also have the option of broadcasting your messages in alternative formats. Aside from text messages, emails, and memos, you can also verbally remind your staff to make things even more clear.
- ***Use information from credible sources.*** When communicating to your team members, use company websites, newsletters, brochures, and memos from management to make it more official-sounding. They will be more likely to listen once they know that the information you have to share came from credible sources.
- ***Provide opportunities for informal communication.*** If you are too formal and serious when communicating with your team, you come across as stuffy and boring. You can use informal language when communicating and still remain professional. By doing so, it promotes spontaneity and flexibility and keeps the mood light in the workplace.

## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN A TEAM

- ***Document decisions in planning for communication.*** When implementing a communication strategy, you need to put it into writing in order to make it official. There is always a tendency to forget suggestions or feedback, so it is always a good idea to document these things.

### ***Provide Training on Communication Techniques***

Impress on your team the importance of listening when it comes to communication. Team meetings are an exercise in futility if nobody cares to listen. Train your team to avoid making assumptions; instead, teach them not to be scared of asking questions or clarifications.

You should put a premium on the communication skills of your team members. In order for your team to work cohesively, you should show the way, not only by setting a good example for your staff to follow—but also by teaching others to do the same. By doing so, you can help reduce destructive conflicts that may otherwise arise. In the next chapter, we will take a closer look at the different types of conflicts.



### ***Great for team building!***

*“We had so much fun! This teaches you the value of communication! Lol I love this place. Never knew it existed in Atlanta but I will definitely be back! Great place to take your friends.”*

## TIPS TO AVOID DAMAGING CONFLICT WITHIN YOUR TEAM

Team conflict is a way of life and is something that should not be ignored, nor set aside. If it is brushed under the rug, this will only fester and cause growing resentment until it becomes a full-blown in-fighting between members of the team. Lack of conflict within a team can also be a cause for concern as this could mean there's apathy or fear of voicing one's opinion out loud.

### ***Positive vs. Negative Conflict***

Conflict isn't necessarily a bad thing. In fact, it should always be encouraged within a team. Conflicting viewpoints between team members is always a good thing, as long as it is effectively managed. Conflict is usually a sign that something needs to be changed—maybe something is not right with the way things are being done, or that something new is about to emerge. Positive conflict usually results in adaptation to changing circumstances and growth in interpersonal relationships.

Having an open forum where decisions, policies, and approaches to business processes can be openly challenged and new ideas are welcomed is important. The benefit of a positive conflict is that all members can be held accountable for the resulting action because they have contributed in the decision-making and implementation process. As a result, this conflict will strengthen their commitment to do their work to the best of their ability.

However, conflict can also be damaging and may affect the morale of the team. A conflict becomes negative when a person oversteps the boundaries of a simple difference of opinion and attacks the person instead of the problem. The unhealthy conflict also alienates a person from the team,

## TIPS TO AVOID DAMAGING CONFLICT WITHIN YOUR TEAM

affects productivity levels, and results in a fragmented team that lacks cohesion.



### ***Tips to Prevent Negative Conflict***

Having a diverse group of talent within your team means that conflict can and will happen. How you handle the conflict can either make the team grow stronger or contribute to its demise. Here are some steps you can take in order to prevent negative conflict from spreading within the ranks:

- ***Establish ground rules.*** Having a team of people who come from diverse professional and cultural backgrounds is a guarantee that there will be different views on many issues. This is why you need to establish ground rules where everyone can have a say and be part of



## TIPS TO AVOID DAMAGING CONFLICT WITHIN YOUR TEAM

the process. These rules should include what is important, what is to be expected, and what is acceptable for each member. When setting up ground rules, make sure to give everyone the opportunity to speak up. Quash any form of groupthink and allow everybody to speak up for themselves, and not just for the team. Reach a consensus, if a unanimous agreement cannot be reached.

- ***Listen compassionately.*** Before you can resolve conflict, you need to acknowledge it first. Sometimes, people have the tendency to ignore conflict and sweep it under the rug, thinking it will go away of its own volition. You need to acknowledge the existence of the conflict by listening compassionately to both sides.
- ***Understand common stereotypes and mental shortcuts.*** Conflict happens whenever people feel that their own personal set of values, beliefs, and way of life are being affronted. Educate your people that although their perception of things might be the reality for them, the same cannot be said for others. The stereotype is a way of oversimplifying and pigeon-holing people into what we think they are. Create a culture of openness and acceptance, and impress upon your people that stereotypes do not necessarily reflect the reality of a person as a whole.
- ***Encourage the reframing of problems.*** Conflicts tend to become unhealthy when it gets personal. In a confrontation, make sure that members stick to the facts and issues at hand, instead of concentrating on the personalities involved. The focus here should be on the problem, not on the person.

## TIPS TO AVOID DAMAGING CONFLICT WITHIN YOUR TEAM

- ***Set clear goals.*** Conflicts arise within teams due to members infringing on other people's work or acting outside of their authority. This frequently happens whenever there are people on your team that have multiple roles. It also happens whenever a team member acts and decides on something without consulting the team first. In order to prevent these things, each member must have a clear understanding of their goals, roles, and responsibilities within the team. Ensure that everyone has a clear idea of what is expected from them.
- ***Actively manage conflict.*** Come up with actionable solutions. Discussion of the conflict is all well and good, but it comes up to nothing if it is not followed by concrete action. You need to actively manage the conflict by keeping tabs on the people involved, making sure that they keep up with their end of the bargain.
- ***Break into smaller groups and separate alliances.*** Not everybody in the team will get the chance to regularly interact with each other, especially if they have different responsibilities and roles to play. Breaking them into smaller groups ensures that every member gets the chance to interact with everybody else. Friendships can also cloud one's judgment of a conflict, so breaking off an alliance ensures that everybody provides a neutral insight into the discussion.
- ***Meet together as a team regularly.*** Aside from accomplishing daily tasks, there should be regular team meetings and team-building exercises. This allows the team plenty of time to bond together

## TIPS TO AVOID DAMAGING CONFLICT WITHIN YOUR TEAM

naturally, to find a common ground, and to understand each other better.

- ***Choose an idea everyone can live with.*** If a unanimous agreement cannot be reached among the members, compromise and choose the best solution that everyone can live with.
- ***Celebrate resolutions.*** Something as simple as a congratulatory email, kudos, or a Friday lunch out can do great wonders for the self-esteem of your members, especially coming off a major conflict.

Understand that the responsibility for resolving a conflict is not your sole responsibility. This will also demand cooperation from your team members. A shared awareness of the conflict as well as the commitment to constructively use it can pave the way for the team to be united again, which leads us into tips on team inclusion.

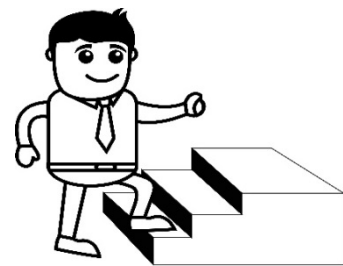


## STEPS TO TEAM INCLUSION AND TIPS FOR MANAGERS

Few things are worse in a work environment than feeling left out of the team. Inclusion means getting members of your team genuinely and wholeheartedly committed to the team's overall goals. Inclusion is a way to get people to talk and listen to one another, and make them feel a sense of “belongingness” within the team. By making your team more inclusive, you will make every member feel that they are wanted and valued.

### **3 Step Process**

As a leader, here are some of the things you can do to make your team more inclusive to its members:



- **Identify the purpose of the team.** One of the most important aspects of a successful team is having a clear purpose. Make a clear, concise, distinctive, and inspiring mission statement. Your mission statement should answer why you do the things you do, and how it affects the team's mission and vision as a whole. By having a mission statement, you can track the progress being made, determine if the team is on track with the mission, and implement what needs to be changed when things are not working.
- **Identify the group's needs.** Think about the kind of people you want to have on your team. Think about the attributes, skills, and specialty interest they must have. By establishing these qualities, it will be easier for you to spot future rock stars for your group. Also, think about the current people you have on your team—include people who would be complementary to those who are already working in your team. In order to create a well-oiled thinking and

## STEPS TO TEAM INCLUSION AND TIPS FOR MANAGERS

working machine, each part needs to be working together. So bringing on the right kind of people can make a huge impact on your team's productivity and efficiency.

- ***Identify potential team members.*** When choosing which people to include on your team, consider these questions. Do they share the values of your team? Does the person reflect the diversity that your organization is trying to promote? Is the person a lifelong learner? Ideally, you will need to include people who will grow with your team. You need to include someone who shares the same vision and values and who is very much willing to learn.

### ***Manage Your Team's Inclusion***

Creating an inclusive working environment for your people is important to guarantee that your team will be successful in the long run. If a member feels he is being excluded, it could result in low morale, increased absenteeism, decreased productivity, and high attrition. If people feel that they cannot be themselves or are threatened at work, they will be disengaged and will feel alienated from the team. This is why diversity and inclusion should be embraced, and diversity management should be implemented in order to prevent having a 'closed,' narrow-minded organization.

Ultimately, the goal is to find somebody who is the right fit and is aligned with your team's core values. Then it is the team leader's responsibility to help them integrate into the team effectively. You will want to hire not just people who will work hard, but who will express the same passion and enthusiasm that your team thrives in.

## TRAITS TO LOOK FOR TO HIRE THE BEST TALENT

A large part of building your team is having the right people on it. Hiring a person who will be the right fit for the job and the team is an often difficult and challenging process. A person that looks good on paper and who interviews well during the application process may end up as a big mistake, and a bad egg can ruin an entire team's efforts. As such, you need to hire the best people to help your team grow.

To ensure that the newbie you hire will be a perfect fit for your team, look past his resume and learn more about him as a person. While having the skills and experience are already a given in order to perform a job effectively, this person needs to fit in with the team's culture and be willing to be guided by you and the other team members. Here are the three things you need to look for during the screening process:

- **Work ethic.** When interviewing prospective employees and checking out their references, find out what their work ethics are. In order to determine a person's work ethic during an interview, rethink traditional interview questions and reframe them using specific, targeted, and behavioral-based questions. This way, the person will offer you real-life experiences—this reveals a lot about how they handle pressure and how they balance work with their personal lives.
- **Smarts.** Hire someone who has the smarts. By doing so, you end up with someone who has the natural instinct for the job and the shrewd



## TRAITS TO LOOK FOR TO HIRE THE BEST TALENT

resourcefulness needed in order to survive a new working environment. Having the smarts means the person also knows how to work shortly but efficiently, as it has been proven time and again that working long hours does not necessarily mean that a person is working productively.

- **Personality.** The ideal personality is someone who is adaptable and flexible. He should be able to incorporate the core values of the team in his own work ethics. This person should be open to new experiences and be willing to take risks. Also hire a person who exudes positivity, because having an energetic, go-getter personality is always a great addition to any team.

### ***Listen to What Your Gut is Telling You***

Do not hire a person based solely on the candidate's resume and cover letter. While experience and skillsets provided by a resume can give you an idea of how a person is going to perform, you should not take for granted what your instinct is telling you. Gut feel is just as important when it comes to hiring a person for an open position on your team.

Whenever your inner voice is telling you something's wrong with the person you are interviewing, and you want to doubly make sure, there's nothing wrong with taking things slowly during the hiring process in order to get to know him better. If possible, have the applicant meet with your other team members, and then ask them what their gut feel is about the person.



## TRAITS TO LOOK FOR TO HIRE THE BEST TALENT

The most qualified candidate may not be necessarily the best fit for your team. People who are hired solely on their skills and experiences may not last if they lack the smarts and people skills. Finding the right person who will be a great addition to the team can be challenging. It takes effective interviewing and gut feel in order to hire the best people who will thrive under your leadership and work well with the rest of your team. It is also important to build an attractive company culture that great hires will want to be a part of. We will go over how to create an attractive company culture in the next section.



## HOW TO CREATE AN ATTRACTIVE COMPANY CULTURE

As part of the management team, it is easy to get caught up in the day-to-day tasks involved in running a business, and forget the importance of creating a great company culture for your employees. A company culture is important, but what is it exactly? There is certainly more to company culture than having free lunch or implementing an open floor space plan. It is the traits of your company as a whole, how team members behave and the underlying principles.

An attractive company culture keeps your workers engaged, inspired, and motivated. For example, a company that focuses on taking steps toward success with an open and creative mindset. If you are looking for long-term sustainability in the workplace, then you need to establish a company culture where your employees will shine and thrive. This will be the glue that will hold your team together. There are three things to do in order to create a great company culture, and they are:

- ***Make your employees a priority.*** As a leader, you need to get out of your comfort zone and your corner office a little bit. Make it a priority to ask your staff if they need something. Ask them what they like and hate about the company, or if there is something that they would do differently if they were able to do so. Use your employees' feedback and focus on their needs to build a company culture.
- ***Maximize your best employees.*** Maximize your best employees by placing them in key positions within your team. From your current crop of team members, identify which person has a potential that remains untapped. Get to know your team members' interests,

## HOW TO CREATE AN ATTRACTIVE COMPANY CULTURE

hobbies, and passion projects. More often than not, a dissatisfied employee is merely a bored employee who is stuck in an unfulfilling role. By getting to know them more, you will know what tasks to assign them that will give them joy, and what roles to give them that they will relish doing. You can also switch things up by rotating roles to prevent monotony or complacency from creeping up within the ranks.

- ***Use emotional intelligence and stay involved.*** Emotional intelligence is a non-negotiable quality in the workplace. In many cases, having a high EQ will serve the company better than a high IQ. You can help your employees develop their EQ by helping them embrace workplace diversity and inclusion. Encourage authentic relationships, appreciate those who embrace differences, and establish a common ground between different people. Leverage these differences among your people by assigning them roles that will provide exposure and put the spotlight on their unique talents and abilities.

Having a great company culture can have a huge impact on the members of your team. It will determine how efficient tasks will be carried out and how receptive employees will be to change. A great company culture can transform the way a company runs its business and treats its employees. By building one for your team, you are, in essence, building a great place to work where employees take pride in what they do. Once your team is in place, it is time to build it to be the best it can be. Read on to find out how to develop an A-team.

## HOW TO DEVELOP AN A-TEAM

Investing in the training and development of your team members is one of the most important aspects of leadership, and also the most rewarding. A team's performance will depend on how well you have trained and developed your people. While you will always have your top performers and superstars, you also have other people on your team who will need more training and development so that they can be more effective at what they do. Unfortunately, what often happens is that management limits training and development to the A-players, while the rest of the employees who are not performing as well are relegated to the sidelines. This is a mistake, because some people might just need more prodding and more training to help them realize their full potential.

### ***How to Recognize the A-Players in Your Team***

The rock stars in your team show genuine commitment in their work. A good team player will get the job done 100%, but an A-player will finish the work with enthusiasm and creativity, and will give it his 110%. He is also quick to adapt, welcoming to changing circumstances within the company, and is flexible enough to accept the challenges thrown his way. An A-player is also reliable and can be depended upon during clutch times, and is always at the top of his game, even if feeling under the weather. He is friendly with everyone on the team and is an excellent communicator. He is not afraid to speak out what's on his mind and he expresses it directly and clearly, while being respectful of his other teammates.

## HOW TO DEVELOP AN A-TEAM

### ***Identify Your A, B, and C Players***

Just as there are A-players in your team, there will also be B- and C-players. Not every member of the team is an instant A-player. In fact, about 80% of your team will be composed of middling players. These are the people who lay out the groundwork that will make your A-players shine. These are the team members who are the silent contributors that solidly get the job done. You just don't hear from them very often because they like to keep a low profile in the office and are very low maintenance. They will need prodding and additional encouragement before welcoming any changes or accepting any new tasks that is anything outside of their normal responsibilities. They may not be as competent or as good a performer as the A-players, but they are fiercely loyal, and you can depend on them to deliver the goods.

### ***Motivating Employees to Be A-Players***

The average players in your team can be all-stars, too. They value recognition as much as the next person, so don't neglect them. It will be a nice gesture on your part to give them their turn on the spotlight for a change, and appreciate them for what they do for the team. You can also give them additional responsibilities aside from their regular tasks. Let them know of the bigger picture and the bigger role they play in the team: the A-players exist because of the B- and C-players who are right behind them.

Most often than not, the A-players on the team are the ones being lavishly showered with praise and attention. Rightfully so, but the other members of the team should not be ignored. Your challenge then as a manager is

## HOW TO DEVELOP AN A-TEAM

ensuring that all members get recognition, not just the A-players. Who knows, you may be able to groom a B player up to an A player, or a C to a B, making your team much stronger.



### *Great team activity!*

"I manage a team in an academic setting and we wanted a challenging team building activity. We greatly enjoyed the 'Zombie Apocalypse' challenge at Paranoia Quest. It was challenging and engaging. I highly recommend this experience."

## SECRETS TO KEEPING THE BEST TALENT

Once you finally have a team of great people, the challenge is keeping them. The best talents on your team are naturally your most important assets. However, these people do not necessarily consider loyalty as their top priority. They know they are very good at what they do; hence, they are always on the lookout for better options—which is why you should do everything you can to keep them around.

The secret to getting these highly-prized performers stay on your team has more to do with your leadership as their manager, than them as your employees. Here are some steps that you must take in order to keep your best talent from looking elsewhere:

- ***Make your employees feel valued.*** Take the time to get to know your performers a bit more. Invite them out to lunch, or perhaps go on a coffee run with them. Be specific when giving out much-deserved praise. Flattery will get you nowhere, but a sincere compliment will get you somewhere. Instead of saying a generic “Great job,” say “I love how you exercised your creativity and put your own flair on that logo design.” See the difference?
- ***Create an open and honest working environment.*** Implement an open-door policy where your office can serve as a venue for complaints, feedback, and other workplace concerns to be aired.



## SECRETS TO KEEPING THE BEST TALENT

- ***Make goals and expectations clear.*** Nothing causes discontent like unclear goals and expectations. Having an inconsistent, instead of an established, set of rules will make your people unsure of what to do. The lack of direction will also make them question the stability of the company's foundation, and will make them be on the lookout for more established companies.
- ***Provide development opportunities.*** Provide plenty of opportunities for continued learning so that the talented performers are continuously stretched in their roles. Implement both personal and professional development/training programs to improve their existing skills and help them learn new ones.
- ***Recognize success.*** Recognizing a job well done increases an employee's satisfaction with his job and enjoyment of work, thereby improving your corporate culture and reducing employee turnover.
- ***Give them responsibilities.*** Challenge them by giving them challenging responsibilities. Every job becomes a routine once you get the hang of it. By doing repetitive tasks, an employee may just go through the motions and become complacent at their job, which could make them seek out greener, more exciting job opportunities. You can balance out the routine tasks by giving them more challenging assignments that will keep their creative juices flowing. On the other hand, when you give them a challenging and difficult task, you are giving off the impression that you trust that employee and that you are confident enough of their abilities.

## SECRETS TO KEEPING THE BEST TALENT

- ***Mentor them.*** Your top performers will benefit from a little mentoring from you. They will become more engaged in the work they do and the organization they work for. You can provide career advice and use your networking skills to connect them to other people in the organization who can help them in their future.

Retaining your top employees is essential to your team's success. By implementing these tips, your key workers will be more likely to continue and work with you for the long haul.



## CONCLUSION

Many people think leaders are born, not made. This is not true. Successful leadership can only be achieved through experience and constant learning. Whether you are already a seasoned leader with decades of experience behind you, a newly-minted leader who has just been promoted, or an employee who dreams of leading his own team one day, we hope this e-book has helped to equip you with the necessary skills.

Being a leader is hard work, and it will require a lot of effort from you, both physically and emotionally. You must be humble, open minded, flexible and organized. This e-book can only do so much, and the real work is out there in the field with your team. We hope that the lessons you have learned here will not just remain as theories, but will be put into action in the workplace. In order to become a truly great leader, you have to be willing to put yourself out there. So once you are done reading this book, hit the ground running and start taking action through the correct mindset and purposeful action that you will help build your team up to their full potential.



## EASY TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Team building activities can range from trust games, communication activities, problem solving, puzzles to creativity based games. All of these activities differ widely but at the core of them, they all promote team building and cooperation between participants.

Some of our recommended easy team building activities for school include:

### **1. One Minute Talk**

One Minute Talk involves each participant talking for a minute on any topic. The topics may be assigned by the manager or may have been picked by the participants themselves. The objective of the activity is just to have the participants talk to the group. The topic is not important. They could talk about their pet, a favorite book, a hobby, a vacation, something they did in the summers, etc.

This team building exercise is great for building confidence among participants. It also gives the opportunity to the participants to get to know each other a little bit more.

### **2. Alien Greeting**

Make the participants stand in a circle. Ask them to imagine that they are aliens from another planet. Their task is to think of a sound that their alien race uses to say hello. Allow them a few minutes to come up with something and then they must share it with the participant standing next to them. This fun activity ends with each participant sharing his unique 'hello'

## EASY TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

with the group along with an explanation as to why they came up with that sound.

This great activity not only works as an awesome icebreaker between participants who don't know each other all that much, but it brings out their creativity as well. The fact that participants get to make alien sounds makes it all the more fun for teenagers.

### 3. Scavenger Hunt or Treasure Hunt

Scavenger Hunts or Treasure Hunts. All participants can have a ton of fun with them. The best thing about them is that their scope can be as expansive or as confined as you may like. It can be limited to just a Treasure Hunt in the office, or it can encompass searching the whole building for clues and treasure.



Usually, a hunt involves splitting the participants into a number of small groups of preferably not more than five each. Now each group will be given

## EASY TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

clues to find treasures hidden within the office or building. The clues might not necessarily be simple and can be in any form that makes it harder for the participants to understand. It's a great team building exercise that engages both the collective and individual puzzle solving capability of the participants.

### **4. Balloon Frenzy**

In this exercise, you will require two sets of balloons of two different colors (say red and yellow). Now, divide the participants into two teams and ask each participant to blow up a balloon. Once they have done so, make the two teams stand at opposite ends of the room and have them launch the balloons in the air by hitting them repeatedly.

The objective of the game is for the teams to knock down the balloons of the opposing team while trying to keep theirs in the air. Players are not allowed to catch the balloons and must only hit them to keep them in the air or knock them down. If anyone catches a balloon, they are disqualified, and their team has to continue with one less team member.

### **5. Trust Me**

This trust game is a unique variation of the obstacle course that works brilliantly as a team building exercise. It will help build trust among the participants as well as make them work together to try and win.

You will need to create an obstacle course for this activity. You may do this by yourself or take the help of your participants.

## EASY TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Divide your participants into two or more teams. Pick a team and blindfold all of its members except one. The one team member who is not blindfolded must guide his teammates around the obstacle course all the while you time them with a stopwatch. The team that takes the shortest time to complete the course wins. You can repeat this for each team by rotating swapping the non-blindfolded team member with one of the blindfolded ones.

### **6. Blind Square**

This team building exercise is one of the most useful ones for older participants.

You will need blindfolds and a long looped rope for this activity.

Distribute the participants into teams of 8 to 10 and blindfold them. Ask each of them to hold onto a part of the looped rope and by talking to each other try to form a square. Since they are all blindfolded, they need to reach a consensus. Once they agree that they have indeed formed a square, their blindfolds are removed to make them see how well they did.

Whichever team makes the best square wins.

This activity builds communication and understanding between participants. Since they are blindfolded, they need to trust each other and reach a consensus. This activity is one the most powerful team building activities for office out there.

### **7. Tug-of-War**

Possibly the most well-known team building activity, the tug-of-war is popular for a reason. It is easy to play and really brings out the togetherness and competitiveness of participants. It is great team building exercise that forces the participants to work together in order to win a battle of strength. After all, nobody wants to come across as being weak.

All you need is a long piece of rope. Make two teams and have each of them hold onto one end of the rope. Mark a middle distance between the two teams. As you shout GO, the teams have to pull on the ropes to bring the other team across the mark to their side to win.

### **8. Inside-Outside Circle**

Another one of the easy team building activities is the inside-outside circle. Pick a topic for discussion. It could be anything. Arrange the participants to form two circles, one within the other. Both circles must have the same number of participants. Ask the participants of the inside circle to turn and face towards the participants in the outside circle.

The two participants that face each other must talk about the topic that you picked. Set a time limit for each conversation, say 30 seconds. Then ask the inner circle to rotate clockwise and repeat the exercise with a different combination of participants. You will need to act as the moderator for this exercise to make sure that only the relevant topic is being discussed. The inside-outside circle is a favorite among teachers who want to promote discussion and team work for learning in their classrooms.