

10 TIPS TO BECOMING A BETTER MANAGER

DRIVING GROWTH IN YOUR COMPANY BEGINS WITH YOU



In today's recovering economy, business volumes are growing and new opportunities are appearing almost daily, but many firms are finding that their post-recession staffing levels are hindering their ability to seize those opportunities and adapt quickly to change.

As market conditions continue to improve, many firms are back in growth mode, but growth presents as many resource challenges as downsizing. As leaders, it is incumbent upon you to work with your employees to mentor them and encourage their professional development and to train new employees in your company culture. Now is a good time to review these 10 tips for bringing forward the best in your existing employees, your new hires and yourself.

1 LEARN WHAT MOTIVATES EACH OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

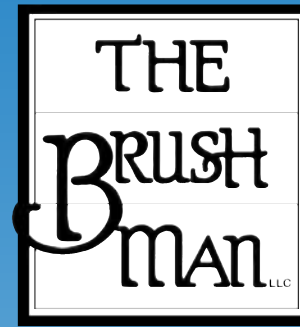
And use this to help manage their performance. While some people may be motivated by status, power or being awarded additional authority, others may be more excited by the opportunity to tap into their flair for the creative, job-related travel or more face-to-face contact with customers. Rewarding good employees with things that speak to their unique motivations, interests and long-range career goals can help you retain your best employees.

2 ACTIVELY WORK ON IMPROVING YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Rather than thinking about what you want to say, think about what you want people to hear. Depending on your

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WHEN PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO DO WHAT COMES NATURALLY TO THEM, THEY ARE MORE SUCCESSFUL AS WELL AS MORE SATISFIED.

audience, you may need to alter your message. Your customer service reps are likely to respond better to your message if you talk in terms that relate directly to them, rather than speaking to them as you would the executive management team.

And, of course, one of the biggest parts of communication is listening. Ask for input and listen to what you're hearing. Encourage people to share new ideas as well as concerns so communication lines are kept open.

3 PLAY TO YOUR EMPLOYEES' STRENGTHS

Know your employees' talents and allow them to participate in projects and activities where they get to use them. When people are able to do what comes naturally to them, they are more successful as well as more satisfied.

4 USE THE "GENTLE NUDGE" APPROACH

When you notice a potential problem, don't wait until it becomes an actual one. Nip it in the bud with a casual, but strong, comment about your concern. For example, if an employee is beginning to make a habit of coming in late, you may want to stop him or her in the hall and say, "I noticed you've been having some trouble making it in on time. If there's a problem, let me know and we can talk about it. Otherwise I just wanted to remind you that we start at 8:00." This way you don't blow a minor concern out of proportion and you can still keep it from escalating into something major.

5 BE SURE YOU ARE DELEGATING, NOT JUST GIVING ORDERS OR ASSIGNING TASKS

Establish roles and responsibilities at the onset of a new project, and explain what you want, why it needs to be done, due dates and how success will be measured. This will help prevent confusion and frustration, especially in busy, stressful times, as well as give employees autonomy, ownership of projects and the chance to contribute in meaningful ways.

6 BUILD YOUR TEAM

You can't just tell people they are a team and expect them to perform like one. They need to understand the purpose of the team and believe that the team is capable

of producing more than the individual members. They also need to know what talents each member is bringing to the team so each person understands how they are expected to contribute.

Be sure you treat the group as a team and reward them for working together rather than rewarding individual accomplishments. Don't hesitate to get help with team building if you're uncertain about how to get people on the same page, working together toward a common goal.

7 HIRE AND PROMOTE GREAT PEOPLE

The ability to surround themselves with the right people is often what differentiates successful managers from those who continue to struggle. Hiring right the first time means you spend less time on dealing with performance problems and turnover, and more time on strategizing and developing your strong performers. Developing and promoting your best people leads to happier, more productive employees and less time wasted on complaining and creating a "toxic" environment.

8 UNDERSTAND YOUR COMPANY'S VISION

If you don't know where you're going, you can't effectively communicate the path to your staff. Your employees need to understand how their jobs fit into the big picture and how they'll know if they've been successful in contributing to company's goals.

9 TAP YOUR STAFF'S CREATIVITY

Be sure to ask for ideas regularly. Set aside time specifically for brainstorming. Not only will employees feel more involved and valued, you're likely to get some great new insights in the process.

10 IMPROVE YOURSELF

Be open to your shortcomings and make an effort to improve them. Pick one thing you'd like to develop and put a plan in place. If you need some help identifying what to work on, ask for input about changes you could make personally that will help your employees in their jobs. And the focus doesn't just need to be on work. Doing anything that makes you feel better about yourself can have a positive impact on every area of your life. **CS**

Herb Greenberg is the founder and CEO of Caliper, a Princeton-based international management consulting firm, which, over the past 50 years, has helped over 30,000 companies, from Fortune 500 to start-ups and everything in between, hire and develop top performers. For more information on Caliper, visit www.calipercorp.com.



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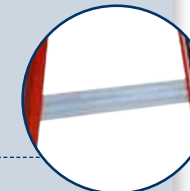
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