

I've Grown a High-Performing Team in Just 2 Years – Here's are 5 Growth Strategies I Learned

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When I transitioned as Bigleaf's CEO in 2022, my day-one goal was establishing a solid, high-performing team. This required my focus on identifying and establishing clear goals, ensuring everyone was on the same page regarding the company's mission and vision, especially the 102 employees scattered across 38 states. But, as all effective strategies start, this huge step was characterized by trial and error.

A team's strength lies in its people's skills and how they synergistically come together. I invest heavily in our people, providing ongoing training, encouraging open communication, and ensuring every team member feels valued and heard.

Although we've achieved this goal, I also recognize that markets constantly shift, trends come and go, and technology evolves. We may have succeeded in solid recruitment, training and retention strategies, but I still needed to ensure everyone could roll with the punches. Every day, I aim to develop further a team that can seamlessly pivot and adjust to evolving market demands.

1. Clear mission alignment, role

clarity and accountability

One of the first steps we took was ensuring every team member understood the company's direction and aspirations. We clarified our product-market fit, value proposition, and the milestones critical to customer satisfaction.

Moreover, we focus on reaching business goals by strategically tying job functions to them. For example, high-quality growth is measured through a key metric at Bigleaf: our Annual Revenue Run Rate (ARR). We do this at least once a year to ensure the entire team's focus is headed in the same direction.

Related: [10 Growth Strategies Every Business Owner Should Know](#)

2. Thoughtful performance metrics

Beyond ARR, we learned to balance our performance metrics carefully. Prioritizing one metric over another could lead to unintended consequences. For example, focusing on service quality alone could lead to inefficiency and vice versa. Our practice has evolved to meticulously analyze and strategically balance performance metrics. We incentivize the right behaviors aligned with the core of our business, which has worked wonders so far, helping us achieve desired outcomes across the organization. This also minimizes the risk of unforeseen repercussions.

3. Intellectual safety

Creating an environment where every team member feels safe sharing ideas and challenging the status quo significantly influences our performance levels. Intellectual safety in the workplace can drive creativity. This open-door policy encourages open communication, innovation and risk-taking, allowing the team to collaborate and pioneer solutions to our

unique challenges in the workplace and the business.

We strive to maintain and solidify this culture to consistently boost morale, engagement and productivity and, ultimately, drive bottom-line results.

Related: [Why You Should Care About Psychological Safety in the Workplace](#)

4. Preventing burnout

To prevent burnout, I focus first on maintaining my own equilibrium. As the saying goes, “You cannot pour from an empty cup.” As for the team, we keep our mission and goals clear, ensuring every task has a purpose.

Having a dispersed work environment comes with its unique perks and challenges. Some members may feel tracking their time and productivity is a form of micromanagement; some may understand that it’s a tool to keep their focus on what really matters and spend less time on other tasks. Regardless, building that personal connection is essential. We hold regular in-person meetings, monthly all-hands-on-deck calls and an annual company gathering to strengthen that sense of belonging and unity. These initiatives are not merely logistical but crucial to maintaining our team’s overall health and morale.

Related: [The 10 Warning Signs of Employee Burnout and How to Handle It](#)

5. Learning from mistakes

Every mistake has been a step toward understanding what it truly takes to build a high-performing team. Leaders, as much as you want things done sooner, remember there are no shortcuts, especially in growing a team. Yes, following the more straightforward route or listening to a single opinion is

tempting, especially in recruitment, but building comprehensive training programs is worth it.

Gradually integrating new hires into your company culture but leveling expectations upfront yields more efficient results and drives the business forward more consistently. This realization has driven us to prioritize transparent and comprehensive approaches to our recruitment and training processes, cementing our reputation as a leader in the tech industry.

The path forward

Adaptability, curiosity and open-mindedness have become our guiding principles. Our work demands that we remain flexible and eager to learn from successes and failures. Similarly, resilience, commitment and an open heart are the key ingredients to building a high-performance culture focused on team well-being and business growth.

I hope to have highlighted the undeniable truth that a company is only as strong as its culture and people. For founders and business leaders alike, investing in your people goes a long way. Listen to the folks outside your bubble, and take insights with an open ear. Stay curious, stay open-minded and don't be afraid to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. Building an empire requires grit, and it takes learning from mistakes.

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