Seven Ways to Guarantee Your Team Will Be Highly Engaged



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Highly engaged teams are the holy grail of business success.

According to researchers, the benefits are many and varied, includingincreased revenues and earnings, reduced costs, fewer sick days, and fewer defects. All of which have a tremendous impact on the bottom line of your business.

Sadly, far too many businesses aren’t willing to dedicate adequate resources to developing highly engaged teams, but in reality, creating highly engaged teams does not require much more effort, and the returns are worth it.

Having created multiple high-performing teams that have helped improve performance by 50 to 500 percent, here are seven simple steps you can take to double your revenues by creating team engagement.

Step 1: Provide clear direction

The one thing that always surprises me is how many projects and departments I am involved in turning around that lack clear direction. How can people possibly engage, let alone be highly engaged, if they do not clearly understand the goals and objectives?

Teams need to have clarity in direction and a clear picture of what success looks like. This means your business cannot have too many goals either because when everything is a priority, nothing is a priority, and your teams don’t know where to focus.

Step 2: Make goals aspirational

When your goals are aspirational, your teams want to be involved and want to be highly engaged and committed. Aspirational goals have a higher purpose, such as driving sustainability, helping people, benefiting the world, being first, and having a sense of achievement. The higher the purpose you can attach to your goals, the higher the engagement will be.

If it’s challenging to make your goals aspirational, then tell your teams what’s in it for them and how they will benefit. It could be simply by working for a stronger, more robust company that will grow and give them bigger and better opportunities in the future. No one will be highly engaged if it’s just about making your shareholders richer unless they are shareholders too.

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Step 3: Empower them to be successful

Engagement is great, but if your teams are not empowered, even the most highly engaged teams will become disillusioned, frustrated, and demotivated if they don't have the tools to be successful.

To empower your teams check that they have everything they need to be successful, and if they don't, provide it for them or change the goal or objective. People are not afraid of hard work, they are afraid of failure, and as leaders, it's our job to put them in a position where they can be successful.

Step 4: Create a safe environment

Driving performance improvements often means taking risks and doing things a little bit differently. To foster this behavior, you need to create a safe environment where mistakes are accepted and expected. It doesn't mean that people can do as they like, but that they are encouraged to take intelligent risks where the chance of success is high and the impact of the failure is low.

When people have confidence in their environment, it helps build more innovative and creative teams.

Step 5: Give them space

High-performing teams need to be given the space to succeed. When your teams have the resources necessary to be successful, the best thing you can do is get out of their way and let them succeed. I see too many people wanting to micromanage, but nothing disengages people more quickly than micromanagement.

It shows a lack of trust, and trust is critical in any success. It doesn't mean that you don't check on them, but do this periodically, weekly, or monthly depending on the task's duration.

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Step 6: Provide support

Let your teams know that you are there to help if needed. Having created a safe environment, they should feel comfortable asking for your support, and just knowing it is available will boost their confidence. Like a trapeze artist with a net, maybe they won't use it; but just knowing it's there will help them immensely.

Step 7: Give recognition

Giving praise and recognition is one of the keys to driving continuous performance improvement. What gets recognized gets repeated, and when we see highly engaged teams and give them positive feedback, this encourages them to remain engaged and become even more engaged. When people feel that their efforts are appreciated, this boosts momentum and motivation. And remember, recognition starts with efforts, don't wait until people are successful before you say let them know you value them.

If you follow these seven simple steps, you will start to create highly engaged teams, teams that will significantly boost the level and quality of your output and set you on the way to increased profitability, growth, and customer satisfaction.

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