

Teamwork: Components of an Effective Team”

Focus, Unique, Teamwork, Urgency, Recommit, and Enthusiasm are the “Keys to Your Future.” I have discussed Focus and Unique in depth in two prior articles and in this article I would like to discuss the third key – **Teamwork**.

Effective teamwork is essential to the success of any business. As “no man is an island,” the positive effects of productive teamwork can energize an entire organization, just as the negative effects of a lack of teamwork can cripple an organization. An essential ingredient to effective teamwork is attracting and keeping the right team members. No matter how hard a group of people try to work together and create an effective team, without the right people for the job, the team will inevitably fail.

Whether you are a team leader or a team member, teamwork is important. There are four essential components to an effective team:

1. Positive Corporate Culture

In order to recruit long-term effective team members, the corporate culture of your organization must be positive, open, and invigorating. Potential team members will thrive in a challenging and creative work environment.

Organizations with high turnover, negative attitudes, distrust, and secrecy will, at best, lose their best people and, at worst, make them a product of the destructive organizational climate.

Positive corporate culture comes from the top down. Management is largely responsible for the type of culture that an organization develops. As a manager, you can help foster a good climate in several ways. First, you should always make your expectations of your team members clear. You can accomplish this with a thorough and detailed job description followed by personal discussions for clarification. Secondly, when delegating, always empower each team member. Make sure to give the



team member the authority to make and carry out decisions that are required. Furthermore, always support and back up the decisions made by the team member. If you disagree with their decision, instead of chastising or reprimanding, coach the employee and help them to understand your reasoning.

2. Give Recognition

Recognition is key to an employee’s success. Team members will search out recognition from you. If you do not regularly give out positive recognition for accomplishments, your employees will eventually resort to seeking out negative recognition. Give your team members positive recognition for their successes. There are three important elements that you should consistently recognize:

A. Outstanding performance – for those who exceed their goals and what is expected of them.

B. Continued performance – for those who are consistent producers who fulfill their responsibilities and commitments, even though they may not be your star employees.

C. Improved performance – for those who have made an effort to increase their performance and who have demonstrated progress.

3. Positive Feedback

Without feedback, your team members are unable to measure their results. A lack of feedback creates confusion, missed expectations, and disappointment. Make it a habit to provide feedback on a consistent and

regular basis, either in public or private. Be specific – don’t just tell your employee they are doing a great job, tell them how they are doing a great job. Being specific ensures repeat performance of the action that you desire.

You can give both informal and formal feedback. Informal feedback consists of recognition and informal praise or congratulations. Formal feedback consists of planned reports and evaluations that measure outcomes.

4. Provide New Opportunities

Although an employee may be an outstanding member of a team, you must not overlook the fact that they are an individual. In order to keep the most effective team members, you must provide new opportunities and challenges. The alternative is boredom and eventual mediocrity of your team members.

Help your team members to plan their long-term career plans based on projected organizational needs. Show each individual how their career goals can help the organization in the achievement of its long-term goals. Help tailor existing and desired positions to meet the needs of each individual team members unique talents and strengths.

By creating an organizational environment rich in creativity, openness, and energy, you can expect to attract and keep vital team members that are a major part of the “Keys to Your Future.”



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