

THE DONALD COOPER CORPORATION

Speaking and coaching internationally on management, marketing and profitability



Management tool #B-22: ©

16 ways to help your staff 'feel' important...and be more engaged:

'Employee engagement' is a hot topic these days and I'm frequently asked by clients what they can do to make their staff feel that they're an important part of the Team. The short answer is to actually make them an important part of the Team...and they'll feel important. 'Smoke and mirrors' and pretty speeches about 'teamwork' won't cut it.

So, here are 16 tips on how to help your employees understand that they're important.

1. Explain why what you do as a company is important to your customers, to the community, the environment and the economy. Also explain what happens to each of those if you 'mess up'.
2. Explain why their particular job is important to your customers, to the Team and to the bottom line.
3. Give them the training and resources, encouragement to do their job well and then empower them to do it. When we don't train our staff properly, we're telling them that how they do the job is not important. And, if we don't think it's important, why should they?
4. Pay them well and 'thank' them constantly.
5. Treat every employee with respect, dignity and joy.
6. Create a culture of celebration.
7. Commit to a set of values that good people can be proud of.
8. Communicate with them, ask their opinion, listen to them and take action on their suggestions and concerns when it's the right thing to do.
9. Don't lie, 'BS' or talk down to them. Don't bully them or allow bullying.
10. Teach your history and share your vision for the future. Your team wants to know where the business has been and where it's going. It gives them 'context'.
11. Give them a title that honors the importance of what they do.
12. Put them on a career track and promote them when opportunities arise. Start new employees at 'the beginning'...not at 'the bottom'. This simple change in wording makes a big difference. Nobody wants to start at the 'bottom'.
13. Let them know how the business is doing. Good people want to know that they're on a winning team.
14. Know your staff by name (easy if your business is small) and know who they are as people.
15. Create a 'Meet our Team' page on your website. Honor them and their contribution.
16. Invite them to attend industry conferences or events...or other learning opportunities.

So, there you have it. Using the boxes beside each of the '16 ways to help everyone on your team feel more important', rate your current performance on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being extraordinary. How does your business rate? What does this tell you about where you need to improve your businesses culture to make your staff understand that they are both important and appreciated? What specific action do you commit to take, on which points, by when? Who will take this action...and who will follow up?

Remember, the best people have to work for someone...it's just that you have to deserve them.

Donald Cooper, MBA, CSP, HoF, has been both a world-class manufacturer and an award-winning fashion retailer. Now, as a Toronto-based international management speaker and coach, he helps business owners and managers to rethink, refocus and re-energize their business to sell more, manage smarter, grow their bottom line...and have a life.

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