

Team Building Through Leadership

Can you hold on to your best people? What is your reaction when good people decide that their careers would be better off if they did not work on your team anymore? Do you say to yourself: "Hah, good riddance!" or do you ask yourself: "What could I have done differently in this situation"? Consider this a simple test regarding the state of your leadership skills. You flunked if your first response to a good person leaving your team was the statement and not the question in the sentence above. Learn how to improve your score. I will show you the most important ingredient for being a successful leader. People seem to want the same thing from leadership and management that they always have: a competent leader that they trust and one that cares about them. You may be wondering if you are in a leadership/management role how you can be the sort of leader that people want to work with and learn from. Not too hard. Communicate even when you do not want to. You only have two choices. Either you communicate or your team will make up the story as they go. You should not underestimate the importance of talk. There will always be a story. It just depends on whether the story comes from you or your team has to create the story because you are not talking. If you want to be effective you will learn how to lead the story by telling your people exactly what is going on. If you don't then you will need to get used to following the story. It does not make any difference how busy you are or how much you think you have already talked. Your people have to know that you will make the time and give them the attention if they need it. This is where the part about caring about them comes in. Don't confuse this with being friends, (although you may be) I am talking about professionally caring about your people. That means if something is wrong, don't pretend it's not. If news is going on that has an effect on your people, don't let hear the news from others first. Care enough to make sure your team knows first about what will affect them. I can hear you now: "I don't have time, they want too much from me, I can't satisfy them." Hold on. I know there will be times when you are in a dead run, but you can stop and say, "I am in dead run right now and I will talk to as soon as I can" and then, make sure you do just that. A good rule is to not treat your team with any less respect than you would your boss. Your real job as a leader is to keep your team moving in the right direction at the right speed to get the job done the right way. Talk to your people. It is the least they deserve.

About the Author

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