



TEAM BUILDING

Bringing Out the Best in Each Other

As a leader, you're responsible for the productivity and success of your team members.

This month's edition of Your Source gives you the tools to motivate them to grow and improve by examining:

- Ways of setting the right atmosphere to bring out the best in your colleagues
- How teams can develop effective and comprehensive goals
- Ideas for resolving conflicts that may arise among team members

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It Pays to Praise

An engaged and productive team needs a positive work environment. Set the right tone by staying positive and showing appreciation for your colleagues' contributions.

Always offer sincere recognition of a job well done. It will motivate your team members to excel.

Here are a few helpful suggestions for enhancing your team's work atmosphere:

Make praise meaningful and detailed.

When complimenting team members, tell them exactly what they did well and why it was beneficial. Doing so will build their loyalty, respect, and motivation.

Don't neglect team building.

Icebreakers may seem cliché, but they can help with promoting better communication, getting your teammates comfortable with each other, fostering group strengths, and addressing weaknesses. Make team building a part of your organizational culture instead of just an annual formality.

Be enthusiastic. Employees follow the tone of their leader, so lead by example and take an inspired approach to your work. This will prompt your team to become more dedicated and energized, too.

Set up an incentive or award program. When appropriate, reward members of your team for individual accomplishments or outstanding teamwork. Make sure your rewards are catered to the unique personality of each teammate—not everyone likes public recognition.

So, give some extra effort using praise and positive reinforcement to highlight the efforts of your team. Your carefully crafted compliments can go a long way in strengthening the ambition and efficiency of your workforce.



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Minimizing Conflict Among Colleagues

Conflicts in the workplace are bound to arise. Here are five ways to resolve a team conflict and, in turn, raise the productivity and morale of everyone involved:

1. **Diagnose what's causing the tension.** Diagnose the cause of the tension. It is important to recognize a conflict and figure out the root of it immediately, before things get worse.
2. **Stay open-minded.** Working out a problem is easiest if the parties involved remain patient and understanding of each other's perspectives.



3. **Keep the dialogue direct.** Have employees in conflict talk it out so they're clear about what the issue is and how it adversely affects them.
4. **Remain respectful.** Be sure that coworkers who are in a dispute avoid letting the argument deteriorate. There's nothing constructive about personal attacks, so ensure they stick to the facts at hand.
5. **Negotiate to reach a workable resolution.** All parties involved in a quarrel need to set aside opinions and cooperate to agree upon a specific course of action.

Be **SMART** about Your Team's Goals

One good way to track your team's performance is through the accomplishment of goals. But what should these goals be and how do you know if you've successfully achieved them?

Use the **SMART** acronym to remember some of the key qualities of effective goals:

Specific: Make the goal detailed enough to answer the Five Ws: who, what, when, where, and why? A well-defined goal is much easier to work on than a vague one.

Measurable: Give concrete criteria for monitoring the goal's progress, so you'll know if you're on track for accomplishing it, as well as when you've achieved it.

Attainable: Ensure your goal is actually feasible at the present time, not just a lofty ambition. Adjust or change goals if you find they're unrealistic.

Relevant: The goal should relate to the mission of your division and your team.

Timely: Confine your goals to a clear time frame to keep your team on target to accomplish them on time.

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