Public Employee Benefits Alliance

July 2014
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Want Staff Loyalty? Then Earn it.

Surveys consistently show that lack of trust in management is one of the main reasons employees disengage from their work and seek jobs elsewhere.

Earning employees' trust is a key part of being a successful leader. In the long run, it's difficult—if not impossible—to be an exceptional manager without employee trust.

Leaders can't buy loyalty; they have to earn it. So here are 8 ways managers can work to earn trust from their employees:

- *Speak and act with consistency.* Employees look for management inconsistencies. So do what you tell employees you will do. Inconsistent words and actions create an impression of unpredictability.

- *Be honest.* Don't hold back information that the company entitles employees to know. Don't start to explain something to employees and hesitate or stop. If you can't answer a question, then explain why. Employees share stories and perceived dishonesty can become part of institutional memory.

- *Involve employees in decision-making.* When workers have input on both the big and small decisions, they'll feel more a part of the team and, thus, more trusting of the organization.

- *Be fair.* It's human to like some people more than others. However, recognize your feelings and don't let them influence how you manage, evaluate and communicate with employees.

- *Acknowledge their lives outside the office.* Managers who get to know the person—not just the employee—have an easier time gaining the respect and trust of their workers. Know their hobbies, names of their family members and favorite sports teams.

- *Admit obvious mistakes.* Silently ignoring or covering up errors damages trust more than admitting them.

- *Criticize privately.* Allow employees to make mistakes without being humiliated. Offer constructive criticism in one-on-one meetings, not in front of others. Otherwise, employees may feel vulnerable to receiving criticism any time in any setting.

Finally, trust your employees. It encourages them to trust you in return.

Source: http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/39506/want-staff-loyalty-then-earn-it#_

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Deer Oaks EAP Services

How to Build a Culture of Respect in Your Workplace

Barriers to a positive workplace culture

Employee attitudes that are negative or critical about the organization or its leaders are a common barrier to a positive and respectful workplace culture. These attitudes can form over time as employees experience difficult circumstances, and/or perceive that they're not receiving adequate support from the management team. Negative attitudes can become worse when they're not addressed, and result in morale problems and reductions in productivity.

High levels of chronic stress resulting from too much change, an intense pace of work, deadline pressure, etc. can also lead to problems with employee motivation.

In addition, a poor flow of communication between supervisors and staff members can contribute to a workplace culture that isn't positive or engaging.

Steps to take towards a more respectful workplace culture

Because of the authority that comes with the position, supervisors and managers typically have the greatest opportunity to make a positive impact on the culture of their respective department or team.

Along those lines, one of the best approaches to establishing a more respectful and positive workplace culture is to focus on enhancing the quality of the daily interactions between supervisors and their employees. Provide training for your supervisors on relationship skills so that their interactions with their employees are less directive, and more collaborative and supportive. Employees who are treated respectfully by their superiors will be more motivated and productive.

Also, remind your supervisors that proactively communicating with their staff is a key to having a motivated and engaged work team. Kevin Kruse, the author of Employee Engagement 2.0, suggests that every supervisor should create a system of consistent two-way communication with the staff that includes having regular team meetings and a 15-30 minute one-on-one conversation with each employee on a weekly basis.

In addition, provide relationship and communication skills training for all staff members. In today's hectic world, employees typically have a lot of rushed ineffective conversations with each other which can lead to miscommunication and disagreements. When employees treat each other more respectfully, they are happier at work and morale improves.

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Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.

Q. I received an anonymous note stating that my employee was once again drinking after a referral to a treatment program. The employee is performing satisfactorily. Should I throw the note away as "unread"? Should anonymous notes be discarded?

A. Getting an anonymous note is a frustrating experience because you are usually stuck with information you can't act on. The subjects of anonymous notes often deal with coworkers, management practices, and safety issues. These secretly passed messages often are attempts to manipulate the supervisor. Although taking formal action with anonymous notes is ill-advised, they're not necessarily useless. If you're concerned about the contents of an anonymous note, then processing it with your manager is a smart move. You can also discuss its contents with the EAP. There are no absolute answers on what to do with anonymous notes. They are simply a reality of managing employees in the workplace and should be handled on a case-by-case basis and scrutinized as to their underlying purpose.

Q. Can I refer my employee to the EAP for being argumentative? No matter what my suggestion, some nuance, problem, issue, objection, reason to hesitate, or correction is raised by this employee. What causes this behavior? Is it simply a bad habit?

A. Differences of opinion are not necessarily a bad thing, but the frequency and intensity of these interactions interfere with productivity and the quality relationship you need with your employee. A larger problem exists, therefore, and an EAP referral is appropriate, particularly if you have requested that this behavior stop. Even if your employee is accurately spotting problems and shortcomings in your every request, this doesn't preclude the need for some intervention. There's a way to communicate more effectively that will enhance your relationship and productivity and not position every request as a battleground. Many explanations could exist for this behavior. It could be a symptom of other conflicts or something more deep-rooted that compels your employee to demonstrate obsessive control and responsibility for your requests or decisions. Keep notes on the next few interchanges and share them with the EAP at the time you make the referral.

Q. None of my employees has indicated that they are having financial problems. Still, I know some of them must struggle with finances. How are money problems among employees different than other personal problems?

A. Typically, money is equated with power and status. Thus, for a person with financial problems, particularly overwhelming credit card debt, a terrible feeling of dread can drive a belief in personal failure. This can easily transfer into fear that one's job or reputation at work would be seriously affected if the extent of one's financial problems were known. Remarkably, research reported by the Personal Finance Employee Education Foundation shows that overall stress of the average employee could be reduced by 50% simply by resolving issues associated with financial stress. When you talk about the EAP to your employees, mention financial help. You may not see much of a reaction, but ears will perk up. Specifically, mention the EAP's ability to identify financial help resources.

Information contained in this newsletter is for general information purposes only and is not intended to be specific guidance for any particular supervisor or human resource management concern. Some of it might not apply to your particular company policies and available programs. This information is proprietary and intended only for eligible EAP members. For specific guidance on handling individual employee problems, consult with Deer Oaks by calling the Helpline.