

Breathe New Life into Your Team This Year

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What happens when a newly motivated leader takes her New Year's message to her team?
Too often, nothing.

Even though you may be feeling refreshed at the beginning of this New Year, your team may not have caught your enthusiasm. If that's the case, it's time to consider some new ways to get your employees feeling good about themselves, their jobs, and their impact on your organization.

Acknowledgement is one of the simplest ways to motivate. You may be marveling at the good work your team is doing, but have you vocalized it lately? Implement a way to recognize the ways people have done something above-and-beyond or gone out of their way to help a customer. Make sure the whole team hears about the good news and that everyone who played a part gets kudos.

Keep them in the know. Show your team that you respect their role in the organization by sharing appropriate news and information with them. Seek out ways to gather information from the senior leadership team and share it with your team. They'll feel a part of the bigger picture and appreciate the value they provide.

Show the impact they make. No man is an island, and this holds especially true in the workplace. Demonstrate to your team how each of their actions has a direct effect on the efforts of the whole group. Illustrate this by examining monthly sales numbers, or attendance at meetings, or the way folks follow up (or perhaps fail to) in e-mail, phone calls, or face to face.

Assign an expert. Recognize the curiosity, knowledge and expertise of each team member by designating them as "team trainers." During your weekly or monthly meetings, ask a rotating sample of employees to prepare a short lesson on a topic they'd like to share—and how it can help your group better understand a facet of your organization or your target customer.

Choose a decision-maker-for-the-day. We all like to feel that our opinions matter. So take this a step further and give a team member a new responsibility. Whether it's helping craft an agenda for the next team meeting, or brainstorming about how to attract prospects to a new service you're offering, the results may surprise you. When you surround yourself with varying opinions, you just may find the next bright idea.

Break down the data. Let every member of the team report on the latest numbers at your staff meeting. Individually, they'll gain an understanding of how their work has bottom-line

implications—and that those reports you work on all the time are incredibly valuable to their bottom line, too.

Make the customer real for them. Not everyone on the team may have direct contact with clients. Take the time to discuss customer case studies with your team. Or take the “inside staff” to a client for an onsite visit. It will personalize your organization’s success in a much more meaningful way—and impress upon your customer just how much you involve and value your entire team.



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