4 High-Impact Leadership Strategies

By Susan Schilke; Februray 27, 2018

In your ongoing effort to become a more effective leader, I am offering four options to increase the positivity and productivity of your team. What happens when your team is inspired and motivated by your communication – especially when it directly addresses their top concerns? And how does your team morale and effectiveness increase when problem behaviors are addressed, and the key focus is on positive solutions? Put these into play this month and find out.

Follow these four pieces of advice:

1. **Take more care in presenting information.** Invest some time into crafting the message to your team for inspiration and motivation. Look for stories to illustrate your thoughts and share these in meetings. Find visuals and graphics that could resonate with a group. Even for the important one-on-one discussions, take a few minutes to write down your talking points in advance, and choose your words carefully. Your words have more impact than you think, so make the most of them. Just a little more planning in your communication can go a long way.

2. **Address their fears.** Ferret out your team's concerns and key issues and clearly address them when sharing plans and decisions. Share your own fears as well. Leaders usually make decisions after carefully considering the potential negatives – and then often communicate only the upside. When you do that, it leaves your team to wonder whether you really thought about the pitfalls, which creates doubt. Give them more insight into the WHY behind a decision – and make sure they know you aren't turning a blind eye to problems but facing them head-on and charting the best path forward.

3. **Actively attack dysfunction on your team.** At any given time, there is disruption getting in the way of your team's productivity. Maybe team members aren't getting along or some personal issues are limiting focus and progress. Your job as leader is to directly address these issues, versus waiting for them to go away. It is tempting to ignore some of these to see if they resolve themselves. But when there are ongoing ripples that get in the way of passionately serving the company's mission, get in front and lead people away from dysfunctional behaviors. Remind everyone why they're here.

4. **Eliminate complaining.** Work to reduce the negative impact of complaining on your team. You may have one or two habitual naysayers, or you be facing a series of challenges that has your team grousing and venting. Keep the focus on the positives – solutions and action plans – versus allowing rampant ranting that just brings everyone down. Don't ignore problems, just don't let the focus be on complaining instead of resolution.

For more on each of these, check out our resources this month on maximizing presentations, fear-setting, and dysfunction. And get your team to adopt a no-complaining rule or challenge for this month. Leave March madness to the NCAA and lead your team to more sanity and positivity!