

Get the Wrong People Off the Bus

From Bill Copper & David Dewolf

If you remember one thing from this article, let it be this callout by Bill Cooper:

You have a greater responsibility to the rest of the team and organization than you do to the individual staff member who needs to go. Your failure to deal with someone who needs to go is having a much greater negative affect on the rest of the team than you are admitting.

David Dewolf, also, learned the hard way that getting the wrong people off the bus and the people in the right seats is a lot harder than getting the right people on the bus. Hiring is critical, but aligning employees for success is even more important.

Dive deeper with these insights & steps from Cooper & Dewolf:

- **Remove emotion from the equation.** This is not an emotional decision. Think through how the behaviors have negatively impacted the team and the organization, logically.
 - Just because someone was the right fit at the last stop doesn't mean they are the right fit for the next step stop. Companies outgrow employees. Employees outgrow companies. It happens. Get over it.
- **Be very clear about the problem.** This is not a time to wing it! You need to articulate the behaviors that you have determined are unacceptable – and the impact on you, the team, and the organization.
 - Make deliberate decisions. If you suspect that someone is no longer a fit, be deliberate. Do not make knee jerk reactions and do not let an issue linger. Be deliberate, decisive, and move on.
 - Measure production versus aggravation. It takes a huge amount of production to exceed issues that nag and distract the company – even for your top performers.
 - Use facts and examples like, “You failed to respond to emails from your co-workers seeking your help on a project.” Not, “You don't work well with the other staff.”
- **Give them a chance to respond and offer a solution for moving forward.** Spell out clear and measurable expectations and set near-term time frames for change. Then set clear (documented) consequences for failing to meet the expectations. Give them room to succeed or fail. Stick to it.
- **If the seats don't seem to add up, you may need to reupholster.** Reorganization, especially when strategy shifts, can be very beneficial. Sometimes people need to leave when a seat is removed.
 - Asking someone to change seats can be tricky. Before you do it, make sure that you're not taking the easy road because you don't want to have to ask them to get off.
- **Finally, if your efforts at remediation fail, give them their freedom.** Don't hold someone back in a role they aren't doing well – it only causes dissension in the team and frustration for the individual. In setting them free, be sure to affirm their strengths and talents, and give them some practical steps they can take in their new role to help them succeed.

If you have any compassion, it will be painful to ask someone to leave, but it will inevitably be better for the organization and the individual. Do both a favor and have the hard conversation.

<https://coachapproachministries.org/getting-the-wrong-people-off-the-bus-without-throwing-them-under-the-bus/>

<http://daviddewolf.com/its-not-about-getting-the-right-people-on-the-bus/>