

Trust, motivation and teamwork

Three one minute reads on key leadership topics

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Trust

What's the best way to build it?

Without trust, it's hard to build relationships, engage employees and create effective teams.

Partnering with businesses over the past 30 years, I've observed that effective leaders build trust by demonstrating 3 key qualities: clarity, accountability and by showing people they care

- They are **clear** about their goals and expectations, talk straight and confront reality
- *They are **accountable***. They do what they say they will do, admit their mistakes and support others' in taking risks.
- *And **they show people they care***, by listening and taking the time to get to know them They help their team leverage their strengths and provide meaningful opportunities

Importantly, I've noticed that they do this **consistently**. Their behavior is **predictable** and they build trust, one-day and one-interaction at a time.

I've seen these leaders increase engagement and improve both individual and team performance - but not only this, they've helped to build careers and create an enjoyable place to work.

Motivation

Can you motivate other people?

I've coached leaders and teams for many years, but I don't believe I've motivated any of them, or that I actually can.

This raises a key point.

To get the best out of your team, it's important to understand the difference between internal (or self) motivation and external motivation (such as rewards or externally driven deadlines) that can lead people to behave differently while that condition exists – but cease to, once it's gone.

Focusing too much on external motivators is unlikely to lead to lasting change.

What steps can you therefore take to help energize your team?

- *First*, find out **what makes them tick**: Listen & ask questions to understand their interests & what they value)
- *Second*, seek to **marry each person's interests with organizational goals**. If they obtain meaning from their work, they are more likely to perform
- And *third*, **remove** as many **work inhibitors** as you can (such as inconsistent work conditions or overly-intrusive supervision)

You will need to **personalize your approach for each individual**. I'm sure you can attest to how your kids, cousins and friends are all motivated by different things.

In summary, while you may be tempted to incent people to perform – first seek to understand them better and create the conditions for sustainable improvement.

Teamwork

Teamwork happens when a group works cohesively together, toward a common goal, applying complementary skills.

How can team leaders create the *conditions* for effective teamwork?

First, they need to create a sense of **purpose** for the team so it can answer, “Why are we doing this?” and align on a **shared vision** and **common goals**

Second, they can help team members make sense individually as to **why they** are on this team: **what** unique value they can add and **what** they can learn and gain.

Third, to bring about **collaboration** and **cohesion** leaders can encourage **shared leadership**, embrace and **respect differences** and demonstrate **empathy** when mistakes are made.

Building an effective team is a journey. Ultimately, the leader serves as a role model: setting big goals, encouraging others’ to step up and fostering a positive working environment through behaviors that encourage teamwork and broader team success.