Top 10 Tips – How to get the best from your staff

Supplied by: Simon Baylis Associates Ltd

1. **Recruit for attitude and train for skills -** Most people can learn new tasks, but the hardest thing to change is people's attitudes and the resultant behaviours. When you recruit, look for people with the right attitude and the potential to learn the skills you need.

2. **Make your employees feel welcome -** The first three months of employment with a new company are important. Make your new employees feel welcome. Set up a structured induction into the company with on-the-job training and a 'buddy' system to help a new recruit with any questions.

3. **Have clear rules for behaviour -** Put your rules and shared terms and conditions in a clearly written staff handbook so that all staff can refer to it as required. This way you tend to avoid disciplinary issues and encourage behaviours that underpin your culture.

4. **Develop a supportive culture -** Develop a set of leadership values with your people. Think about ideal behaviours such as being approachable, listening, honest, fair, supportive and communicative. Include being decisive, people almost always prefer and respect strong leadership. Live up to the values and make sure your managers do the same.

5. **Plan with your staff -** Involve your employees in planning in line with your vision and short-term goals. This promotes ownership, understanding and motivates people. It also underpins decision-making and prioritisation of tasks.

6. **Listen to your employees and encourage ideas -** Use team meetings and any other opportunities to encourage people to come forward with ideas. Be proactive in this, passive approaches do not usually work as well.

7. **Keep your people informed -** You should let people know how things are progressing. Keep it to the right level, it need not be complex, but nothing discourages people more than participating without then getting feedback.

8. **Bring out your people's potential -** People almost always have unused potential and are motivated by learning new skills. Give your people the opportunity to develop their skills and provide an environment where they can try new things without fear of failure.

9. **Recognise the learning content of different activities -** Many activities have a learning component and development is much better if this is recognised. For example, projects, secondments and acting up are all opportunities to learn. Discuss what learning will result from all new activities in the workplace and agree any support that is required.

10. **Give people clear goals and feedback on their performance -** People need to know what success looks like. So agree clear goals with them, in line with what your business needs to achieve. You don't necessarily need to get into formal appraisals, but do give them regular constructive feedback on progress. This means helping them to understand their strengths and identifying areas for improvement.

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