

Building a loyal team starts with leadership



People Sense

Lorinzo Foxworth

Leadership of today has to openly command a high-performance and high-commitment team, but it's all about building and fixing.

Superior performance and commitment depends on superior learning manifested in organizational culture. If the leadership prides itself on instilling high motivation as well as learning the technical

aspects of the job, then many employees respond to positive work areas.

Case and point: A client we're working with found that employees only give minimal performance on projects and only communicate with each other if a project demands so.

After conducting a company assessment, we recommended that individual-assessments, weekly team meetings and performance updates be instituted to foster accountability and a sense of pride.

In only three months, employees stated they were having more fun at their jobs and felt more accountable and enthusiastic about being a part of the organization.

Is having a high-performing and highly committed "alpha team" important to you?

It should be! High performance boils down to making a positive change and adapting to new strategies and integrated learning processes. Don't wait for significant emotional events (S.E.E.'s) to push your button.

Employ the x's and o's like a coach would.

I'll lend you a few of the performance measures used by top companies nationwide.

You — CEO, manager, supervisor, employee — have to be committed to excellence and willing to weather the

ebbs and flows that come with building a cohesive team. Are you ready?

Here's your starter kit:

Face the music. Acknowledge that your stuff (processes) is broken. Be willing to face staff to articulate where the company is and wants to go, and invite suggestions on how to get there.

Empower change. Take off the shackles and move out of complacency. Remove all barriers to higher-level performance. Be a cheerleader for staff. Examples turn into things.

Create tension. Yes I said it. Leaders must produce an environment that stimulates action, a little confusion and a sense of urgency. Moving towards company vision requires a higher state of performance.

Become a servant to employees. Leaders know their position and authority. Employees need to know you care. So serve them. Service should become a natural activity while leading the troops. Handle a customer request, sweep the floor, and solve a grievance between staff. Teams appreciate your commitment.

Fire 'em up! Notice our Terps football team this year. The coach didn't go in and fire folks. He fired 'em up with enthusiasm. The quick fix is to dump folks, interview lesser qualified rookies, and fire them in a couple of months. Smart builders use the intellectual capital within and get them to buy into your vision.

High performance and high commitment isn't hard to sustain, isn't rocket science nor like rolling dice. It requires a collective spirit, a fun-filled process and a passion to do what is right. So go on. Make it happen. In the end the troops will say, "We did it all together." ■

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