

Face-to-Face Communication: Creating an Engaged Workforce Summary of Selected Best Practices

This is a summary of group work done in supervisor workshops. The list includes only highlights of best practices. A more detailed list is provided at Cross Wise Communications workshops.

- New employee orientation – immediate, personal and meaningful.
 - Provide job descriptions, organization charts and relationship charts (shows employees how their role relates to others)
 - Spend some “casual” time with new employee to get to know them
- Ongoing role and responsibility clarification
 - Daily pulse check for new employees in first few weeks. “How is it going?” “What can I help you with?” “Are there any barriers I can help you with?”
 - Ask questions of the employee (e.g. what do you see that can/should be done differently or better?) – and then listen
- Regular performance feedback
 - Objectivity and consistency in performance feedback required – especially for younger workers (Gen X and Millennials)
 - Ask others (clients/co-workers) for input
- Regular rewards/celebrations
 - Reward appropriately – sometimes it’s more challenging work, sometimes learning opportunities, sometimes just thank you. Find out what fits for each person.
 - Send performers to conferences and seminars
- Invite upward feedback
 - Ask how you (the supervisor) are doing with respect to your communication objectives with the team.
- Show interest and care for their work
 - Visit staff who work irregular hours
 - Ride-along on a regular basis with field employees
- Be available/responsive
 - Focus – be “in the moment” with employees
 - Get out of your office.
- General relationships
 - Use personal thank you cards generously
 - Deal with problem employees
- Talk about team performance regularly
 - Circulate or post key metrics
 - Regularly ask for suggestions on ways to do things differently/better to improve team performance.
- Get employees involved in developing business plans as appropriate

- Reward the right behaviors
- Be barrier breakers/help your staff
 - Identify the obstacles to success and address them
 - Prioritize projects – defer what can be deferred
- Report back on progress of employee suggestions
- Leaders spend 80% of their time communicating...but only 10% of their time planning communication. Take that planning time! Turn to your communicator for help when/if required.
- Awareness of different generations, their information/communication needs and preferences and their motivations is highly valuable in employee engagement efforts. Read/take workshops on this topic to help build competence.
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