

Corporate Cohesion



Numerous studies agree that happy employees are the foundation for a productive business, such as a recent survey from the University of Warwick maintaining that happiness leads to a 12 percent improvement in productivity, while unhappy workers were 10 percent less productive.

Building a happy and well-motivated workforce starts with the initial recruitment process. Think carefully about the role you want to fill and what type of person you want to attract. Provide a clear job description, setting out the duties and responsibilities the role will entail and what experience, qualifications and skills are required. The job description and personal spec should form the basis of your interview and assessment process.

It may sound a little "new age", but hire happy people because they transmit positivity. When you are making a choice between similarly qualified and experienced people, consider how well each will fit in with your organisation and how open and responsive they seem. Likeability is also a great asset when you are building a team, the odds are that if you like the candidate so will other people.

Your onboarding process is vitally important to establishing your new hire as part of the team. Assign an experienced team member to act as a mentor so that your newbie will have a constant point of reference, and who will build on your normal induction and training process, and included them in any office related social activities.

As part of the onboarding process many companies supply their new hires with good quality branded clothing, where appropriate, and branded items such as water bottles, pens, pencils and stationary to foster a sense of corporate identity and inclusion.

Learning should not stop with your induction process, but continue throughout the employee's time with the

company. Successful managers "grow" their employees by providing ongoing training, coaching and mentoring. They will provide external training opportunities and support their employees in gaining additional qualifications relevant to the business. By identifying your employees' strengths and providing them with appropriate opportunities you will send a clear message that you value each team member as an individual.

Establish a clear path for career progression, not everyone wants to be a leader, but for those who do, the appropriate support, be it with extra training, on the job experience or extra qualifications, demonstrates your faith in their ability to reach their goals.

Empowering employees by giving them the power to make day to day decisions is very motivational, especially for those who aspire to leadership. The power to go off script, bend the rules and do what they see fit if they believe it is the right thing to do for the greater good of the company, shows that you have faith in their judgement.

Frequent feedback – regular one-on-ones during which you get to coach employees and evaluate their progress in real time, not just their results, will encourage a group mentality. Millennial high achievers, in particular, crave regular affirmation and want to keep developing, building strengths, and adding value.

The companies with the highest engagement levels use recognition and praise as a powerful motivator to get employee commitment. Employees who receive it on a regular basis (from managers and peers alike) increase their individual productivity, receive higher loyalty and satisfaction scores from customers, and are more likely to stay with their organization.

You could create a monthly or quarterly award for the team

member who most embodies your core values. Send out an email when you notice someone going above and beyond, or give it a personal touch by writing them a handwritten note. The unexpectedness of the gesture will give it greater impact.

If it is appropriate to your business, consider offering flexible working, in surveys 80 percent of employees state a preference for more flexible work options, that meet their personal needs. Many employees like to work away from the office part of the time, remote workers are typically happier and more productive. Parents with young children may prefer different working times to fit in with school hours.

Finally, make sure that your workplace is a pleasant place to be. There is no need to go to extremes with your office décor by installing slides and merry go rounds, just ensure that the office is well maintained, clean and tidy, with controlled temperatures and light levels. Ensure that people have comfortable working positions and provide break out spaces.

Above all else, remember that you are the key influencer; happiness is contagious. If you lead with a positive and approachable demeanour, you will create a domino effect – tricking from the top down.

