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8 Ways to Increase Internal Communication Among Your Team

Desireé Duffy (/user/DesireeDuffy)   👤 Follow | *Friday, 05 October 2018 15:29 (EST)*

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Did an employee fail to deliver on an important deadline? Or did they completely miss the mark on a project you handed them two weeks ago? Broken communication could be the culprit.

Better communication among team members is crucial for happy and savvy employees. And happy employees are 12-percent more productive, according to a study by the economists at the University of Warwick

(https://warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/pressreleases/new_study_shows/). As fate would have it, strong communication doesn't just affect employee productivity – it can also positively affect your business. In fact, research by Towers Watson found that organizations with highly effective communication practices experienced 47% higher total returns to their shareholders.

Despite the significant ROI on increasing internal communication, for most small business owners and managers, it may appear like one more task on top of a heavy workload. But that's not the case.

There's no reason to go to drastic measures, consider these much simpler options instead.

Better Communication Starts with You

Implementing a culture that encourages internal communication among your team starts with its leader: you. That means you should clearly communicate the values of your business, and an environment that enables employees to enjoy the best experience possible. Think team-building events, training, and special perks that all encourage communication. It's also important not only to give feedback to your employees but to allow them to give you feedback as well – communication is a two-way street and an open culture encourages more dialogue and better solutions.

Make Sure Your Door is Always Open

Create a culture of openness and transparency if you want to simulate internal communication. One of the best ways to do this is to be completely open. For example, a manager could allow employees to provide feedback and even just vent without the fear of being reprimanded or fired. Make sure your team always feels comfortable coming to you when a problem arises and that you are responsive enough to make team members feel valued.

A Good Team Fit

During the hiring process, it's important to consider whether that potential employee will be a good "team fit," rather than just focusing on the experience and skills on their resume. All it takes is one bad apple to stall communication and productivity. If you've inadvertently hired a "bad" fit, do something about it now rather than putting it off and allowing the poor attitude to spread.

Culture is an important part of any organization and improving your culture starts with facilitating positive exchange. Don't hire people who do not fit in with your culture and make it a goal of your company to improve said culture. Try to do this by hosting happy hours, team building events, and even just allowing for open communication on the floor.

Host a Stand-Up

Stand-ups are a valuable part of any organization, whether it's for marketing firms or a software development company. Stand-ups are designed so people can express their ideas openly, provide updates on projects they are working on, and open up the floor for a conversation on important topics affecting the company. Implement daily or weekly stand-ups to improve transparency and communication while breaking down silos (https://www.equities.com/news/removing-silos-with-open-architecture-and-global-blockchain) between departments at your organization.

Invest in HR

Human relations departments are critical in ensuring that employee morale and behavior is optimized. Consider investigating a more horizontal style of management that allows employees greater freedom over tasks and how they spend their time.

By putting employees in charge of themselves they are more likely to gain experience at their task at hand and seek the aid of others in order to be successful. By promoting a culture that rewards collective performance, as well as individual performance, you can further streamline this process to ensure that team members work more collaboratively on projects.

Utilize a Variety of Tools

These days, many employees work remotely, even if just part-time, or some may be on the road at a conference, trade show, etc. It's important for the team to be able to communicate with remote workers and for those workers to be kept in the loop. That means taking advantage of the myriad of ways we have to communicate today thanks to advancing technology, from text messages and apps to social media and push notification tools.

Look into Slack (http://slack.com/) or other messaging platforms to better reach remote employees when they are most needed. Messaging tools like Slack and G-chat are also great ways to make remote employees feel more a part of the culture, even if they work

outside the building.

Along the same lines, you need to always be kept up-to-date on the status of projects. Project management software helps organize data and make it more transparent for all team members.

Furthermore, incorporating a centralized CRM or project management platform allows departments to increase data sharing and incorporate insights from each to optimize their processes.

Other options include time tracking and attendance management software that improves transparency across your organization.

Create and Make Public Individual, Team and Company Goals

Without goals, employees are unlikely to be motivated to come to work each day, and many companies fail to effectively communicate what their goals are. Creating and publishing individual, team, and company goals, and discussing how they can be achieved, improves internal communication and increases the odds of accomplishment on all levels. Be sure to reward teamwork, supporting peer-to-peer collaboration to create a feeling of unity while encouraging positive interpersonal relationships.

Make Improving Employee Communication a Goal

It may sound ancillary to your core business objectives, but improving team communication does improve performance, which leads to greater profitability. Again, by writing down a goal and making it a priority, you are already more likely to achieve it. Create workshops and host brainstorming sessions on ways to improve internal communication among your team.

Conclusion

When things seem to be at a stalemate and communication is suffering, what can you do? Whether you're outsourcing your SEO consulting and marketing services or keeping it in-house, maintaining communication among departments is critical to growing your business.

Improving internal communication is important from both an operations standpoint, as well as a cultural standpoint. But there are also many other benefits from improving transparency to just making the workplace more fun. In total, improving internal communication could reduce employee turnover, improve employee performance, and also make your company more profitable. Besides, as a manager you are accountable for your employees' performance, so make improving internal communication a priority.

After all, improving communication won't just make your employees happy and productive: You'll be happy, too.

DISCLOSURE: *I have no financial interests in any of the companies discussed in this article.*

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