

Leadership FAQs

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Missive 2

the issue

how do I reward and motivate my team without money?

Lessons I Learned from Coaching Volunteers...by Dr. Jim Dyke

It's a common scenario – times are tough and there's a budget squeeze. So... what's a great team leader supposed to do? **THE ANSWER** – Take a lesson from non-profits and use the tools they have developed for motivating and rewarding volunteers. Here are some tips from my 30 years of experience...

Staff by strengths and appoint by passions

Make sure you have your team maximized from the beginning. That means assigning tasks and responsibilities that match personal strengths and *passions*. When we are doing the things we like that we also do well...that's a double bull's-eye that keeps us motivated way beyond long hours and challenging assignments. Organizations that leverage volunteers well are good at identifying individual strengths and personal motivations. Make sure you do the same with your team.

Let them lead

Empower your team members to make decisions and take initiative at appropriate levels of responsibility. Give them space to fly in (customize each person's air space appropriately, according to their abilities). Then, let them lead *you* by listening to them and learning from their "frontline" insight. Remember the adage – *Every person is an expert in their 25 square feet of space*. When you respect their opinions, they feel valued (you can't put a price on that!) Guess what else happens? They also value and respect *you* more as a leader!

Build from the beginning

Organizations that leverage volunteers well always seem to do a class job of *orientation*. They take time and strategic effort to tell the organization's story and show each volunteer how they are going to contribute to the "big picture" vision and represent the values of the organization in their individual assignment. Whether or not your company has an orientation process, *create one for your team!* Take new members out for lunch and pump them up with *your* vision and *your* passion for *your* team. Make sure they "connect" with your other team members. Then spell out in black and white what your expectations are for their performance. Keep it simple; keep it measurable; and keep them focused on the right values.

Reward with recognition

Nothing is more satisfying to the human animal than being thanked in public. Bob Maxson (President of California State University, Long Beach) is a master at this fine art. Take some cues from him – throw bouquets up, down, and sideways in your organization. In other words, thank your boss publicly; thank your peers openly; and *always* blame your team for your success! Here's another great by-product of this habit – *when you publicly affirm others, you automatically rise in everyone else's eyes!* **WHY?** People love genuine humility, and they already know the truth about your success – *nobody, including you, gets there by themselves!* By recognizing the contribution of other people, you have just scored big for yourself.

So Do it! And do it a lot!

Recognize with rewards

"Rewards" can come in all shapes and sizes, so put your creativity into overdrive. Read Bob Nelson's book, *1001 Ways To Reward Employees*, for lots of good ideas. The trick – make it personal...invest some of your own time and effort. Like... homemade banners or "thank you" greeting cards; a hand-written note enclosing a Starbucks or Baskin-Robbins certificate; dinner or lunch with you grilling the steaks yourself; or maybe just hosting your team member at a local sports event – including the refreshments. The point – *it doesn't have to cost a lot of money to communicate appreciation!* Just be sure you tailor the reward to the interests and likes of the person getting it.

Make a reputation

Don't wait...start now. Build a reputation for being a "great" person to work for and work with. You will have good people wanting to work for you. This is a good thing. Here's the kicker...**EVEN IF YOU HAVE THE LEVERAGE OF REMUNERATION AT YOUR DISPOSAL...THESE OTHER INVESTMENTS IN MOTIVATION ARE ESSENTIAL!**

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