

Tips to Communicate More Effectively with Your Staff

Communicating with employees is a key component to running a productive business and leading an effective team. Below is a list of tips and techniques that can help you connect better in the workplace.



- **Schedule times when employees can talk with you.** Make these times known, or, if not too distracting, have an open door policy in your office.
- **Make it a point to connect with all employees, even the quiet ones.** Ask them about simple things, like how they are doing, or how a certain project is coming along.
- **Feel free to ask questions that inquire about an employee's life.** This can show that you care about how your employee is doing outside of work. Ask about a new baby or how a loved one is recovering from a medical condition, for example.
- **Research your employees so you can know them better.** Review their personnel files before addressing a problem or new opportunity.
- **Be trustworthy.** Don't share what an employee has told you in confidence.
- **Don't judge your employees.** Be respectful of personal and lifestyle choices.
- **If there is a problem in the workplace,** don't make a judgment until you have all the facts.
- **Invite feedback.** Give employees surveys or hold regular meetings to let them share concerns. Use this information to help maintain a positive work environment, and show employees that it's ok for them to speak up. This will help you receive both positive and negative feedback, both of which you can use to improve.
- **Don't let employees' opinions of you shape how you treat them.** Focus on their job performance, rather than if they like you or if you like them.
- **Value honesty and lead by example.** Don't be afraid to say no or to give your honest opinion.

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A MESSAGE TO MANAGERS

Often, the employee who needs their Employee Assistance Program the most doesn't think to call for assistance. A manager's referral to the EAP can be an effective strategy for improving an employee's effectiveness, productivity, motivation and morale. A referral to the EAP can also decrease absenteeism, reduce turnover, foster acceptance of change and reduce stress.



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THE POSITIVITY CENTER

This Claremont EAP website provides tips and tools to enhance resilience.

Coping with Burnout

Burnout is another way of describing the feeling of insurmountable stress that leaves you feeling delusional and completely exhausted. Burnout can happen to anyone – managers and employees alike. It is a serious issue that impacts all aspects of your life and daily functioning. If you or someone you know is suffering with burnout, here are some warning signs to look for:

- A sudden change in work performance and attitude
- A drop in drive and motivation
- An increase in negativity and confrontation
- Feeling a general lack in fresh ideas and creativity
- Frequently running late to work
- A rapid increase in time off

Dealing with Burnout

How do you stop burnout in your team? You need to pay attention to your employees, monitor their work habits, look out for the events and listen up for the conversations that hint at bigger issues. If the damage is already done, you need to work quickly to help the employee recover before the burnout gets worse.



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HERE ARE SOME COMMON ISSUES THAT LEAD TO BURNOUT:

Missed Opportunities

Employees who miss out on a promotion, don't receive a bonus when they're told it's coming, or aren't rewarded with feedback or support for a job well-done are more likely to experience burnout. They need to know that their hard work is noticed and that their efforts will be rewarded. By not recognizing employees, you might make them feel as if their work is undervalued or has no real contribution to the success of the organization.

Reorganization

A changing office climate can cause feelings of anxiety to develop. Employees might be concerned about a shift in roles or responsibilities. They might be concerned that the processes they have control over might be handed off to someone else. Long periods of anxiety can quickly wear on an employee and lead to burnout.

Uncertainty

A company that has experienced a failure or setback, is struggling to find a new customer base, or is experiencing layoffs, can expect to see a rise in employee burnout. Many employees are

expected to take on the work of two or three employees without an increase in pay or time off. The fear of job loss coupled with the extra demand on their time and work performance can rush them into feeling burnout.

Change in Career Track

An employee planning on transitioning into another job or leaving for another organization is likely to experience burnout in his or her present position. The present position might feel tired or uninspired to the employee, causing him or her to slowly retreat from daily responsibilities and goals.

Provide a Release Valve

Burnout is often linked to feelings of frustration – frustration over not being in control, not having an impact, or not having a voice that's heard. By providing opportunities for employees to vent their frustrations, release the tensions that they carry, and engage in healthy recreational activities, you help them unwind, recharge, and feel renewed in the workplace.

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