

Team-building 101

Choose the right people for your company and help them succeed

Another snow season is upon us. Are you ready? If you've invested in people and in building your team, there's a good chance you're feeling very good right now. After all, great people working together can accomplish anything they set their minds to. This is no secret; but it is a challenge, isn't it? The



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key is to build your team in a healthy, sustainable manner.

As any business owner knows, finding and keeping great people is one of the most challenging aspects of business. Great people are hard to find. They are the minority—and they're usually happily employed.

Keeping great people is equally difficult. Because they're ambitious, they get bored if not continually challenged. It's hard to keep them engaged and energized. They are well-connected, and competitors are always trying to steal them. Losing a great person can devastate your company.

So, what do you do? Give up and settle for mediocrity? Not a chance. You need to build your team—one person at a time.

Making it work

1. Decide what qualities you're looking for in your personnel. This involves some soul-searching to understand your values, mission and vision for your business. Once you know this, you'll be

able to screen people to find those who fit your business culture. Do not hire people who merely have the right skills but fail the test of fitness. You need the right person (the right fit) with the right skills.

2. Position your people. In an organizational structure, it's important that your team members fit your culture, your business model, and enhance your ability to achieve your strategic goals. Every person in the organization must be in the right position—playing the right role—in order to be motivated and aligned with overall goals.

3. Provide ongoing, regular feedback. Your team needs daily and weekly objectives, metrics, standards and expectations. Everyone should know what is expected of them and how they're doing compared with these expectations. Is this easy to do? No way. Is it worth the effort? Absolutely! Accountability leads to performance—or the door.

4. Provide incentives and rewards for your team members. At the end of the day, people are motivated by what's in it for them. Good luck if your idea of a reward for your people is for you to buy yourself a new car. Get serious about incentive compensation to drive higher levels of performance.

Building a team is done one person at a time. Begin by looking inside—at your values, mission and vision. Put in place the right structure for your team members to thrive. Have open and honest communication with them, and provide them with incentives and rewards. A great team can accomplish anything it desires. Is this your team? If not, what are you waiting for? **SB**

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