

---

## Team Work

### **I Believe In Team Work .....but why don't my employees work together?**

In any article about team work we need to include a couple of well known statements.....

- “There is no “I” in “Team”,
- “a team is only as good as its weakest link”
- “every team needs a leader”
- “one for all and all for one”

Clichéd yes; but who hasn't heard of one of these statements in their working lives? We would suggest no one.

So whilst they may be tired old sayings, we need to ask if they have any relevance in businesses today.

The short answer is yes.

All too often when we are speaking with company CEO's and Directors we hear the same issue in relation to their employees with regard to team work. “We invested significant amounts of money training our people in not only technical skills but also team building exercises...” So why can't they work as a team? I've done my bit.....when are they going to give me payback for my investment?”

This type of attitude can have a very negative impact on your ambitions to create a high performing team. No matter how intelligent your people are, to simply expect that a 2 day seminar or workshop will address all of your team's issues is at best naïve. Yet that is what a lot of people believe. They hope that a facilitator will be able to wave their magic wand and fix every problem a team has.

What owners fail to recognise is **their responsibility** in driving a team based culture approach into their business. When employees constantly hear their bosses looking to blame people for mistakes and seeking some form of retribution it is hardly surprising that they do not feel part of a team. The blame culture that emanates is far more destructive than most people recognise. It breeds fear, it harbours distrust and it engenders cynicism.

All of these elements will undermine any business, so it is vitally important that work is done on the leadership shown by the Boss. As we have said in various other articles, the direction and tone of each business is set by the behaviours of the leader. They cannot abrogate their responsibility to set the tone.

### **So how do you go about creating a team based environment?**

#### **No 1. Learn to have fun**

It's actually o.k. to be happy at work. It's o.k. to smile and joke with your colleagues. Being at work should not be seen as a jail sentence. If you are able to create a professional yet light and happy environment through your own actions then you are a big step closer to a close knit group

---

**No 2. Recognise the differences of your people**

Each person in your team will be different. That is a good thing. To try and create robotic clones of yourself or some “ideal” worker does not do justice to the diversity of your people. It would also be extremely boring and definitely negate the “fun” we have advocated above. There is immense value in allowing people to be different, as long as it is in a professional sense

**No 3. Clear understanding of roles & responsibilities**

If each employee is well aware of what they are responsible for and what is expected of them, and the team is also made aware, there can be no “misunderstanding” which creates uncertainty and disunity.

**No 4. Create clear organisational values and beliefs**

Set the tone for the company. Put your thoughts up on a wall. Write down what you believe in and how you would like the company to be known. Then it is much easier for employees to relate to how they should act in certain situations.

**No 5. Embracing continuous improvement as a work ethic**

Promote the fact that you do not know everything. You need your people to review their processes and offer up ideas to improve them. Reward their efforts, recognise them and celebrate the changes. It will ensure others follow suit. It becomes infectious.

**No 6. Have common goals that are clearly understood**

Set the company’s performance expectations and ensure that all employees understand and share the vision. Everyone needs to have goals that support this so they feel they are adding to the effort.

Whilst there are various other smaller areas that can be highlighted, if you concentrate on these 6 issues, you will be a lot closer to achieving your goal of having a team that will work together, towards your company’s goals, and enjoy doing it!

This team environment will allow you to be successful.

So “Business owner/CEO or Director”, its over to you once again, to ensure you do your bit in setting the scene.....