Leveraging Team Communication for Optimal Performance

Strong team communication is important because it helps employees remain engaged, build relationships, and stay focused on their goals. In turn, good communication also benefits the organization by improving productivity and bottom-line results. Unfortunately, team members can become siloed in their day to day work routine and fail to make the time to collaborate and brainstorm with their fellow employees. The danger is that employees can become disconnected, lack focus, or even worse, fail to progress in their work-related knowledge and skills.

Research

There is a lot of research regarding the importance of communication in project management and the success of strategic initiatives.

According to the Project Management Institute (PMI) Pulse research, effective communications lead to a much higher percentage of teams meeting goals, on time, and within budget.

![Bar chart showing percentage of teams meeting goals, on time, and within budget.]

Unsuccessful Projects
Successful Projects

Met Original Goals: 82% vs 60%
On Time: 37% vs 71%
Within Budget: 48% vs 76%

Leaders should create opportunities for informal and formal team communication to encourage skill building, trust, and to create a sense of community.

Examples: team lunches, training sessions, retreats, team projects, meetings, mentoring sessions.

Encourage all team members to participate and share information, so the team can see how projects are related and learn from each other.

Examples include:
- Reporting goal progress during team meetings
- Share project updates on a web-based platform
- Pair-up employees to provide support and mentoring

Clarity is the foundation for successful project management. In order to achieve your goals, you must establish clear and realistic expectations for all team members. Whether you are leading a small team or a large organization, it is important to understand the common pitfalls and how to avoid them. This guide will provide you with the tools and strategies you need to ensure your team is on track to success.

Quote:

“Communication plays a very important role in team building and extracting the best out of team members (The High Cost of Low Performance, 2013).”

“On average, two in five projects do not meet their original goals and business intent, and one-half of those unsuccessful projects are related to ineffective communications (The High Cost of Low Performance, 2013).”

Leader’s Role

1. Set the Tone
   - Plan and organize communication efforts in advance:
     - Be clear and concise
     - Utilize proper communication methods
     - Reflect and adjust as needed
   - Be collaborative:
     - Engage in face to face interactions
     - Build professional networks
     - Conduct brainstorming sessions
     - Provide and accept feedback
   - Be a good listener:
     - Ask clarifying questions
     - Rephrase information to ensure clarity
     - Show a sincere interest in employees while listening

2. Provide Opportunities
   - Leaders should create opportunities for informal and formal team communication to encourage skill building, trust, and to create a sense of community.

3. Clarify Goals/Objectives
   - As a leader, you should work with your team to develop SMART goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

   Be sure to:
   - Get input from the team on departmental goals and objectives
   - Write down and communicate goals on a regular basis
   - Review progress towards goals and provide encouragement and resources as needed
   - Ensure team members understand their roles and responsibilities for assigned projects
   - Provide team members an opportunity to lead projects and develop a sense of ownership
Works Cited


