

5 Steps to Manage Your Team for Maximum Productivity

Team management isn't easy. Getting people to work together can sometimes feel like herding kittens. If you want a highly effective team, you need to get everyone on the same page.

How do the best business leaders manage their teams for maximum productivity? What strategies do they employ to best lead their teams? What tools do they use?

There are several strategies for effective team management. You've got to run a tight ship if you want your business to succeed. Here are five of the most important steps for efficient team leadership.

Picture 1 of 5 Steps to Manage Your Team for Maximum Productivity

1. Use a Productivity Software

If you're not using project management software, you're seriously missing out! Project management software has become extremely sophisticated in the last decade. All businesses need to choose the right tools to best manage their teams. A good productivity tool can transform your workflow.

Productivity tools like Spike can make communication easy. Spike streamlines email into simple chat conversations. It also keeps your email organized through a priority list. Those clunky back-and-forth emails become an easy-to-read chat.

A team cannot reach maximum productivity without good communication. Invest in a good productivity tool to keep the lines of communication open and free of clutter. Spike also supports group chats, tracks tasks, and to-dos, and can integrate calendars, so you never miss a meeting.

Your team is already accustomed to communicating via email, Spike can take your productivity to the next level!

2. Be Clear With Expectations

The most confusing thing for any team is unclear expectations. Poor communication can be a huge efficiency sink. You have to be crystal clear with the expectations set for your team.

You need to be clear on deadlines and deliverables. It is also wise to set expectations for consistent communication. Who needs to address who, and on what schedule? Insisting on regular check-ins between departments keeps the lines of communication open.

This is why a lot of businesses set weekly video meetings and send out regular newsletters. Be sure to inform your team how often you expect them to communicate. A daily check-in can save hours in lost work time.

Another way to clarify expectations is to create an online resource of reference materials. This way, if any employees get confused, there's an easy-to-access reference to clarify things. Make sure to revisit your reference materials every six months, they may require updates.

An online employee training video can help to streamline the onboarding process. Onboarding is often confusing and can slow down productivity for weeks— you'll want to make that as smooth as possible.

3. Analyze Team Member Strengths and Weaknesses

Unless you're working with robots, you're probably working with a team of humans. Humans all have hidden gifts and talents. Your job as a manager is to find those talents and put them to good use.

You've got to know every employee's skill set: it's the backbone of forming a productive team.

Conduct a SWOT analysis on every employee. SWOT stands for "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats." It is a way to assess team members and best assign them to tasks.

For example, let's say you have an employee who's a great creative thinker, but terrible with numbers. Opportunities for that employee could be pitching ideas to your clients. A threat could be having them handle marketing analytics.

Good team management needs good delegation. Good delegation comes from knowing your employee's strengths and weaknesses. Do your due diligence as a manager, and you'll know the right employee for every job.

4. Incentivize Good Work

Good employees do better work when they feel there is a reason to do so. The best incentives are monetary.

A lot of managers make the mistake of offering worthless pats on the back. No employee cares about a useless badge or their picture on the "employee of the month" board if it has no real value. If you want good work, pay for it.

Do you want something completed early? Offer a bonus for it. If you can't offer cash, vouchers, gift cards, and extra paid time off are also good incentives.

Minimum wage gets you minimum effort. Take a page from the Dan Price model of leadership. Give your employees a competitive wage, and they'll consistently deliver their best work.

5. Avoid Micromanagement

You've hired a good team, let them do things their way. Employees lose focus and productivity when they feel micromanaged.

You do not want to create a work environment where it is more important to "look busy" than it is to be working. Micromanagement encourages your employees to always look busy, so you won't bother them. The performance of working becomes more important than actual work.

Last year, the world shifted to remote work and productivity was fine. Employees do not need to be monitored to produce great work. Trust your hiring instincts and let them work their own way.

Final Thoughts

Team productivity is like baking. You need the right ingredients, and you need to do things the right way. Even if you have all the correct ingredients, you can ruin your cake by opening the oven every minute to check on it.

There's no one right way to do things. There are a lot of small strategies, and good managers are always trying new things. One of the most important things you can do is ask your team what works best for them.

As stated before, trust your hiring instincts! You have a good team, and with some effective management, they can reach maximum productivity!

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