

Tip Sheet

Building a Collaborative Work Culture

TIPS

Individual Performance

When we talk about collaboration we often look at it solely from a team perspective. However, it starts with the individual. Each person on the team needs to be committed to do their best.

A chain is no stronger than its weakest link

Thomas Reid's "Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man"

Take care of your people. Have **tough conversations** and give **feedback**. Deal with **performance issues** and skill gaps if you want a truly collaborative team.

A Shared Goal

In most companies, there's typically no shortage of goals set for individuals. Often, it's more like target-setting overload. When this is combined with a culture where performance management focuses largely on whether an employee meets their own targets versus a **shared goal**, it unintentionally destroys collaboration.

Trust and Respect

Trust requires integrity, transparency, caring, open and honest communication. Your employees must trust you will support them. Employees also need to trust that others will do their part. You

are the **role model** needed to create an environment where everyone welcomes each other's perspective and appreciates and learns from the team's diversity. There can be no **tolerance** for undermining, gossiping and backstabbing.

Getting Along

From childhood we learn about getting along with others. Don't hit your sister, play nice in the sandbox. It's a basic human expectation. Can you think of a time where people accomplished anything efficiently by not getting along? It's impossible to move forward productively.

When we choose not to get along with others we short change ourselves from gaining a valuable life experience. When we **tolerate** the behavior in the workplace, we short change everyone.

I don't like that man. I must get to know him better

Abraham Lincoln


Opposing Views

Opposing views might sound like the opposite of collaboration. However, collaboration requires growing and learning together. You actually need a bit of conflict to encourage different perspectives. Without any opposition, opportunities are missed.

Encourage people to speak openly, ask questions and make suggestions. As with all discussions, opposition should be focused and respectful. Opposition should be meant for real change and not for the sake of antagonism. You don't want your workplace resembling a political debate.

Healthy Competition

Competition is part of human nature. It motivates us, drives improvement and efficiency, and creates and drives excitement. Good competition stretches everyone to be their best. Unhealthy competition allows people to thrive at the expense of others, creates distrust, **self doubt**, and internal rivalries.



Encourage people to compete with themselves and be their personal best. You can still allow employees to shine individually. Know your people, communicate to them how they fit on the team. Everyone needs to get this in perspective.

Read the full article on collaboration [here](#).



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