

Leaders Must Celebrate Success

Insights from Tom Hershberger, CEO, Cross Financial, 2020

The work is consuming. Deadlines are in play. Your team is working through a never-ending things-to-do list. One project ends, another begins. It's the daily grind. Eventually, active projects blend into the next, and the next, and the next. If you have a productive team, they probably complete one project and move seamlessly to the next. No missed steps. No fanfare.

Stop right there. Before you let your employees engage with the next activity, take a minute to celebrate the past achievement.

The daily grind is real and dedicated employees feel the pressure to get the work done, but they also want to accomplish results. You can help your team function more effectively by connecting their efforts with the team's achievements. Celebrate successes, even small ones.

The achievement might be hitting a measured goal, completing a short-term project, tweaking a policy or procedure, or maybe, the introduction of a new service to customers. How your team perceives their contribution to achievements will influence your success or failure.

Pressure Points

Take a minute to think about the pressure your team feels. Is it providing a positive or negative influence on their performance?

If your team embraces the pressure to achieve results because they have a shared value for the outcome, they will see their contributions as a

positive endeavor. If the pressure to achieve results is a dictate from a distant manager, the pressure they feel will likely have a negative impact on their engagement. It is up to leaders to set the course, share the vision and celebrate success when achievements are accomplished.

Some managers feel that having a cohesive workgroup is enough to motivate employee contributions. In some respects, this is true. Providing employees with a stable job, fair compensation, health insurance, retirement benefits, and a safe work environment is certainly a great start toward satisfaction. But, is satisfaction enough?

Mediocre Is Not My Goal

Jeffrey Gitomer suggests that being satisfied is the equivalent of average or mediocre. In that context, are there any leaders that want their work environment to be mediocre? Not me. Probably not you. We understand that achieving more is important if we expect top performers to remain engaged and motivated by the culture we create. Success is a desirable result, so take the time to define success for your team.

I was a wrestler in high school. It's a great sport for individual athletes and teams. As a member of the team your first focus was on your own success. Did you win your match? The second focus was the team achievement. Collectively, did each team member do enough for the team to celebrate a victory. This was the case in head-to-head competition, as well as tournaments. If our team wanted to celebrate success, everyone needed to do their part, contributing based on their talent and opportunities.

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Celebrate Success, continued

The bus ride home from dual meets and tournaments was more fun when we were bringing home a team trophy. A 'W' in the win column just feels better. It set the stage for another week of hard work and effort. It sets the stage for future outcomes. It also set the stage for everyone pulling together, as a team.

It Doesn't Pay To Have A Memory

Some coaches will tell you that it doesn't pay to have a memory. I like that concept. If you continually think about your last loss or last mistake, it is hard to focus on a positive outcome. The past is the past. We can learn from it and improve on it, but we shouldn't hold on to it. Instead, set a goal for the next achievement and prepare to celebrate success.

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.

- Andrew Carnegie

Make a list of your last three wins and losses. Now, circle the wins and write down simple ways to celebrate those successes. Then, cross out the losses and resolve to leave them behind.

Tomorrow is always positive, because we can still influence the outcome. Focus on that and be prepared to celebrate each achievement with your team.

Three Wins To Celebrate

Three Losses To Forget