

The Mansis Update

TEAMWORK

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Poor teamwork can be disastrous in the workplace. When everyone goes his or her own way and self-preservation becomes the major motive, the team eventually disintegrates. It's imperative that the leader -- you, the boss - keep all those individuals playing as a team.

If you have had difficulty with teamwork, especially with the group you directly manage, you might be relieved to hear that achieving good teamwork isn't very complicated or difficult, provided you do the following two things.

Want to improve teamwork in your business? Here's an effective way to do it.



[1] Behavioralize "Teamwork".

Unless you clarify exactly what you expect each member of the team to do to show teamwork, this vague concept will mean whatever each individual wants it to mean. Does it mean helping a peer out of trouble with a project? Does it mean sharing information and secrets for success with a colleague? Or does it mean pub-crawling with the "guys" each weekend and participating in other social activities? Make sure all team members know the expected behavior required for "teamwork."

Actually sit down with the "team" and discuss and document specific examples of teamwork activity that the team members expect of each other. Never presume that everyone is on the same wavelength and that a common understanding of teamwork exists.

[2] Enforce Accountability

There is no use talking about teamwork unless people actually do it! This is where teamwork usually falls apart. Institute regular meetings between yourself and each individual team member to review specific examples of what

that person has done to demonstrate teamwork. Hold all team-players personally responsible for doing the things discussed in the previous meeting to define teamwork. The best way for you to know whether the team clearly understands teamwork, and whether each one is performing as a team-player is to get each person to report specific examples of teamwork to you on a regular basis.

And there's no need to agonize about people who won't act as team-players if teamwork, as you've defined it, is a "condition of work."

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