



People Make The Difference whitepaper

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By Craig Tegel

Are you spending your time wisely?

It's a fairly common understanding that the thing that you spend the most time on is the thing that you care about the most. You can see this if you look closely at your personal life; perhaps you spend most of your 'free' time focusing on your family, your friends or exercising - the things that you value the most.

The same should be true in your work life and if you're a leader, you should be intentionally dividing up your time to reflect the things that you value most in your organisation. What should be topping the list? It's people. Spending time with your people, giving feedback and getting alongside them regularly should be a top priority.

According to a study performed by [SAP and Oxford Economics](#), 50% of high performers say they expect to have a monthly sit down with their leaders and get feedback and yet, 53% say that their manager isn't delivering on this.

Some leaders like to use every excuse under the sun to make sure that they spend as little time as possible with their team. Why is this? Many leaders think that their people don't want to be disturbed by someone who should be leading from the front; others like to think that, because they haven't heard any complaints, everything is fine within the team. By far, the most common excuse is that leaders are simply too busy to spend time managing their people.

None of these excuses have particularly strong foundations and could be hindering your team's growth and performance.

Why should you spend time engaging with your team?

As leaders, we should be finding time, outside of the standard formal settings, to engage with our team so we can connect better with each member of your team and stay in tune with the team dynamics. Engaging in this way leads to learning about their lives, both professionally and personally and we can better understand how they work, so that we can learn how to get the very best out of them every day.

Time spent engaging with your team also ensures that everyone is on the same page, aligned to the organisations mission and values as you work together. If there is any disconnect, it should be easily spotted by a leader who spends time engaging with their team.

According to [Karie Willyerd](#), if your team is left to their own devices, they may start to look for other opportunities and challenges as well as growth and rewards - after all, only 38.8% of employees are satisfied or highly satisfied with their positions. You should be doing all that you can to engage and retain your team members.

What should you be doing?

There are thousands of ways you can engage with your team and it will vary from team to team, but there are simple things you, as a leader, can dedicate yourself to doing every week.

Stay informed – this goes beyond just knowing names. Know what's going on in your team's lives and check in regularly. This doesn't have to involve prying inappropriately or gossiping, it just requires really listening and caring. Listen to the office chatter and be in tune for any changes that may affect their work or the team dynamic.

Celebrate wins – It's important to acknowledge successes with your team privately and publically. It makes your team feel valued and lets them know they're on the same page as you.

Know strengths and weaknesses – Get your team exercising their strengths daily and encourage them to step out of their comfort zone to work on their weaknesses. Showing them opportunities to grow will help your team to feel enthusiastic about developing their skills.

Listen to feedback – getting alongside your team means that you become accessible when it comes to feedback – good or bad. The most important thing is to take all the feedback on board and to do what you can, where you can. Your team has a voice and it's your job to make sure it's heard and valued.

At the end of the day it's important to spend your time investing in your team so that you can be on the lookout for disengagement and you can turn it around.

When your team looks at the way you spend your time, do they see you focusing on paperwork, emails or meetings? Or do they see you spending time with your people?

To find out how you can be spending your time more wisely with your team, contact People Make The Difference. We can help you with our training workshops, one-on-one coaching and Coach on Call services. To find out more, call us on 0412 333 415 or visit peplemakethedifference.com.au