



People Make The Difference whitepaper

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How your leadership reputation fosters loyalty

When I mention the word loyalty in relation to leadership, what comes to mind? Is it employees blindly following a leader, no matter what? Or an environment of no-questions asked? That's not loyalty, it is autocracy and while it can work in the short term, it's not a recipe for long term success.

Strong, loyal teams boost organisational performance

There's no doubt that loyalty is an important element in organisational success. Yet research regularly finds that at least 25% of employees do not feel loyal to their current employer, and it's not unusual to have employee turnover of anywhere from 20% to 50% in any given year. Statistics like this are bad news for business, with the high cost of recruitment a factor, but employee retention isn't the only reason to develop loyalty to you as a leader.

As a leader, it's important to know that your team will follow your decision. Loyal teams will put in more effort to get the job done and work harder to achieve organisational goals. So what can you do to increase the loyalty of your team?

Loyalty is a two-way street

An important element in developing loyalty is providing and inviting feedback. Trust is built by regularly inviting your team to share their opinions and views. By demonstrating that you listen to and value their thoughts, it makes employees and team members more likely to ultimately support decisions that go against their own ideas because they have faith in your leadership. But remember that this is a two-way process, so it's important to also share

information with your team. Don't withhold information, as it signals that you lack trust in them and that undermines confidence in your leadership.

So how do you get to this point of your team supporting you and working hard to achieve your vision, even when it goes against their own ideas and suggestions? Well, loyalty breeds loyalty – so by demonstrating loyalty to your team, you will increase their loyalty to you. By fostering a relationship based on mutual respect, consideration and trust, you establish the foundations for long-term success.

Using EQ skills is vital

Once again, developing loyalty is another area where strong emotional intelligence and self-awareness is a vital skill for leaders. You use your emotional intelligence to recognise when your own behavior is not in line with your expectations for others and take the time to pause, regroup, and act in a calm and considerate manner. You can also remain humble, and not let your ego take control. You make decisions in an environment where ideas and views can be openly shared, and you are always thinking about what is best for your team and customers.

Leaders who have strong employee loyalty are also better at connecting with their team members as individuals – not just resources. By taking the time to know your team members beyond the boardroom table – knowing about who they actually are as people, and allowing them to truly know you also – they are less likely to see decisions that go against their own views as impulsive leadership choices. Instead, there is confidence in the direction that you are pursuing as a leader. Remember that you are only as good as the people you have working for you – so take the time to get to know them and treat them with care and respect.

To help you become the type of leader who inspires loyalty and gets results, People Make The Difference has our one-on-one coaching services, in-house workshops and Coach-on-Call for those times when you get a bit stuck and need some quick advice. To find out more, visit www.peoplemakethedifference.com.au or call +61 412 333 415.