

Five Easy Steps to Eliminate Workplace Negativity

As a department manager, do you ever feel like practically every person in the office starts complaining just as soon as you turn your back and take a few steps away? It's a creepy and demoralizing feeling. However, the good news is that you can take steps to improve the morale at your workplace immediately.

Step One – Be a Team Player

With all of the buzz going around about teams and working together as a team, what's the upside for the employees you work with? For the model of team play to be effective, you must also be a part of the team and not just an overzealous and demanding coach. Step in and understand what each and every employee does to accomplish their goals. Really appreciate what they do and everyone will benefit from the improved attitude.

Step Two – Watch Your Lingo

Make each employee in the department feel important. Catch yourself before you publicly or privately refer to your coworkers as "my employee," "my software guru," or for that matter, "my whatever." The individual is not actually "your" employee. They simply choose to do their work at the same company as you do. Improve on this habit and you'll almost immediately notice resentment decline.

Step Three – Stop the Secrets

Whether or not your conversations are meant to be confidential is up to you. If something is intended to stay private, then keep it that way. Take care of sensitive business behind a closed office door in a professional manner. Do not conduct whisper sessions in the hallway, no matter how trivial the subject matter. Other employees will perceive them as secrets and resent the fact they're not included in the conversation. After all, it's only human nature.

Step Four – Encourage Communication

Unless your office is truly out of control, let your coworkers have a little freedom of communication, both personal and otherwise. There's no need to tell them they cannot make a brief personal phone call for a minute or two or discipline them for receiving an occasional personal email. If someone feels out of touch at their office, they'll be stressed and in a big hurry to leave. Allowing reasonable personal communication will make everyone more comfortable.

Step Five – Be Accountable

If an employee asks you a question or sends you an email about any thing business related, give them an answer. Don't just say "I'll look in to it and get back to you." They're waiting on you, so be as prompt as possible and do as promised. Even if you

can't give them the perfect answer, do everything in your power to see that their issue is fully resolved. If you expect accountability, you must be accountable yourself.

Above all, keep in mind that many workplace negativity issues take a long time to develop. Logically, they'll probably take at least as long to undo. Take steps of action immediately and you'll be on the way to a much happier positive workplace environment!