

10 Tips to Manage People Through Uncertainty

During times of change, stress and anxiety can run high with employees. As leaders, it can be hard to manage your own stress, but equally tough to help your team members stay motivated at the same time.

When your team may be feeling uncertain and dealing with stressful changes, leaders have the added responsibility of helping to keep their members engaged. During these times, business as usual methods of managing may not be enough to keep employee stress levels lower.

The following are a few ways to help maintain engagement in times of stress or change:

1. Communicate

Dialog with your team and individuals often. Increase your normal frequency of meetings, even if in shorter lengths. If challenges are not openly spoken, look for signs of stress and acknowledge it in the team or privately if more appropriate. Offer available solutions or services where available.

Remember everybody handles change and stress differently, so seek to understand team members challenges individually and address accordingly.

2. Keep the Door Open

Make yourself accessible to employees. Make sure they feel safe to express concerns or issues they are having. Don't offer solutions or promises you can't keep. Understand what you are or are not allowed to discuss with employees.

3. Keep Your Own Stress Out of It

Just like your employee, you might be feeling some of the same stresses. Make sure that those pressures don't affect your reaction to situations with your employees. Show calm, lead by example, and seek to understand first. Don't be afraid to work with your leadership or available channels to address your own needs.

4. Recognize your Employees

Don't forget to recognize employees for their hard work during stressful times. Use available resources to send thank you notes, eCards, monetary rewards if appropriate, or make public praise in front of peers. Showing recognition in times of change can reinforce behaviors and encourage others to follow suite.

5. Keep Employees Focused

Remind employees of the tasks at hand. Break larger projects into smaller ones if needed. Keeping busy and showing success can help people feel accomplished. These small wins can keep individuals motivated and moving forward.

6. Play to Individual Strengths

Remember each employee has unique skills and methods of accomplishing tasks. Assigning jobs to individuals whereby they can utilize those strengths can add additional satisfaction to their job.

7. Control Rumors

Negative rumors can grow out of hand and quickly spiral into unproductivity. Don't be afraid to ask about rumors and address them head on.

8. Set Goals

Give employees a vision towards the future by setting mid and long-term goals. Show your team that they have a career beyond the situation they may currently be in.

9. Don't Make it all Work

Don't forget to encourage down time. If vacation or time off is available, don't discourage its use. Set aside time during meetings for a little levity and non-work topics. Encourage employees to take breaks, get fresh-air, and do something to walk away from the job for minute. If possible, spend time as a team doing something fun, even if it's virtual.

10. Show Empathy

Show employees that you care about what they are going through. Keep your own stresses in mind and try to relate to what they might be feeling. Listen first and seek to understand.

The bottom line is that during times of change, stress is prevalent. As managers you have responsibilities to help your employees manage through that, while also taking care of your own. Be a model for well-being and lead through change with clear communications, recognition, and understanding until less challenging times prevail.

About Inspirus

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Only Inspirus combines an integrated rewards engine, communication tools, and analytics into a single platform spanning recognition, service anniversary, well-being, and diversity and inclusion. Through Sodexo's broader mission of improving the Quality of Life of all we serve, Inspirus aims to bring joy to work, one experience at a time.

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