



O.C.TANNER

LEADERSHIP

How to Be a Leader Your Employees Never Want to Leave



The very definition of leadership has evolved over the last few years. In the past, leaders “climbed their way to the top” and “got people to follow them”. Today, successful leaders don’t tell their teams what to do—they connect with their teams, empower their people, and inspire greatness.

The latest research from the O.C. Tanner Institute found there are 6 essential elements of a great workplace culture: purpose, opportunity, success, appreciation, wellbeing, and leadership. We call them Talent Magnets because they are what make a great organization irresistible to

the most passionate and engaged employees. The study found that “leadership” was the most challenging magnet to get right. When employees thought about leadership, they envisioned mentorship, trust, shared responsibility, camaraderie, and advocacy. But when asked how they felt about their own leaders, more than 1 in 4 employees did not trust their direct manager and 35% of employees did not trust senior leaders at their organization.

More than 1 in 4 employees do not trust their direct manager.

The old saying “people don’t leave organizations, they leave leaders” was overall true. Employees wanted to stay in their organizations when they felt they were trusted, heard, seen, and inspired by their leaders.

35%

of employees do not trust senior leaders at their organization.

BE INTERESTED IN YOUR PEOPLE

If you want to be a great leader, someone who truly inspires their people to greatness, you need to start by focusing on how you communicate with your employees. As a leader, it is your responsibility to keep communication continuous and open. Many leaders still believe the way to lead is to only share what they know; to be the one who talks while others listen. Effective leaders ask questions and are genuinely interested in their people’s responses. Ask for their views and opinions on upcoming projects. Listen to what they have to say during meetings and standups. And most importantly, look for valuable ideas in their insights.

Almost 1 in 3 employees say their direct manager doesn’t know people on their team as individuals and that they are all just workers to him/her.

Try these questions in your next meeting or one-on-one and discover where your people want to succeed:

- What else is possible here that we have not considered?

- If you were creating the future, what would you choose?
- What if you could change a certain situation? How would it be different? How would you choose to change it?

EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE

Another great way to make your employees feel heard and respected is by giving them opportunities to contribute outside of their job role. The contribution an employee can make to your business often extends well beyond their daily job description. Encourage your employees to contribute in ways that interest them, which often means working and collaborating across traditional job roles.

ONLY 42%

of employees say their direct manager causes them to focus outside themselves and make them part of something bigger.

In an article for HR Daily Advisory, Gary Douglas, author and founder of Access Consciousness, wrote that “the true value of employees goes beyond the job they were hired to do.” Douglas continues to unpack what this means by saying, “just because someone isn’t working in a particular department, doesn’t mean they are unable to contribute to it. Your receptionist may be an excellent problem solver. Your accountant may have extraordinarily creative marketing ideas. An effective leader will recognize these assets, and draw upon them.”

USE RECOGNITION TO INSPIRE

What allows managers to achieve their full potential? What could ignite dedication, commitment, and motivation in their employees? And what is the one thing that is proven to transform “good enough” into “great”? The simple answer is: recognition.

There is no greater motivation with more lasting impact than meaningful recognition. In fact, research shows that 79% of people who end up quitting their jobs cite “lack of appreciation” as their reason for leaving.

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65%

of North Americans report that they weren’t recognized even once last year.

Take the story of Captain Mike Abrashoff. At the age of 36, Abrashoff was selected to become Commander of the USS Benfold, known then as “the worst ship in the navy.” When he stepped into the position, the USS Benfold was facing low morale and very high turnover. There were very few who thought this ship could improve, let alone within the span of one year. Abrashoff immediately established a management technique solution he called, “The Leadership Roadmap.” The Leadership Roadmap is a practice that empowers every individual to share the responsibility of achieving excellence. At the core of his roadmap was the process of replacing command and control with commitment and cohesion. He gave out medals that were previously used for only the highest honors for daily victories he saw in his teams and individuals. He wanted to engage the hearts, minds, and loyalty of his crew. And he did.

Within one year, Abrashoff achieved results no one thought was possible. Personnel turnover decreased to an unprecedented 1%, the rate of military promotions tripled, and the crew slashed operating expenses by 25%. The ship went from one of the worst to one of the finest in the Pacific Fleet. USS Benfold went on to win the prestigious Spokane Trophy for having the highest degree of combat readiness.

“Challenge the process, not people’s motive. No matter how hard you try, your ship is never going to be perfect. Assume your shipmates wanted to do a good job, but didn’t. Don’t blame them, look inward and see what you can do better to help them.”

- MIKE ABRASHOFF

For any leader, the bottom line is this: nothing connects a team to their leader better than celebrating victories together.

MAKE TIME FOR ONE-ON-ONES

Has there been a good replacement for performance reviews?

In an interview with Forbes, Patty McCord, former Chief Talent Marketing Officer for Netflix, shared her beliefs on how the old way of performance reviews is dying. McCord said, “no law says you have to do an annual performance review... [HR professionals] made up this Corporate-speak language about management that doesn’t have anything to do with just straightforward communication.”

Patty goes on to point out how the way our modern world works now is through open dialogue and people giving continuous feedback (on platforms such as Facebook or Instagram). The willingness to have this open dialogue is just part of how we operate in society now and HR people need to move towards that or fall behind.

Frequent one-on-ones outperform the annual performance reviews.

In a recent survey conducted by the O.C. Tanner Institute of over 1,044 responses (December 2017), they found that only 57% of employees have the type of relationship with their direct manager that makes it easy to go to them with questions or concerns. Best practice one-on-ones create these stronger connections between leaders and their employees and their employees feel more supported and appreciated overall. A best practice one-on-one is defined as holding one-on-ones at least monthly, if not more frequently. On the other hand, the opposite of best practice is defined as conducting one-on-ones less frequently than once a month.

Employees who had a best practice one-on-one with their leader resulted in a 44% increase of employees feeling like their leaders acknowledge their work and a 32% increase in feeling supported by leadership.

Employees who took part in frequent one-on-ones versus those who didn't participate in any one-on-ones:

↑44%

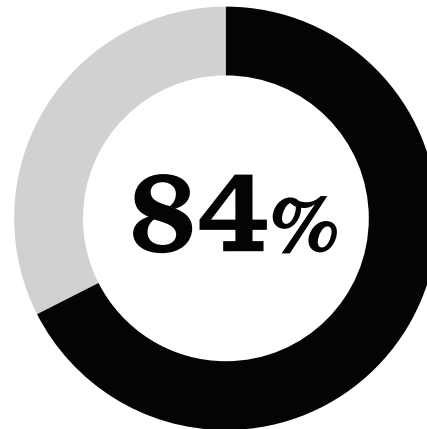
Increase in feeling leaders acknowledge their work

↑32%

Increase in feeling supported by leadership

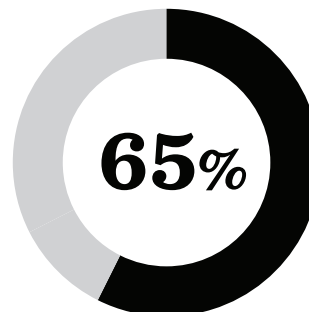
Not only that, but research showed that employees who participate in best practice one-on-ones, versus those who do not, felt a higher sense of purpose and connection to their organization. 84% of employees feel their organization has a clear purpose, as opposed to those who do not participate, and 81% of employees understand how their team contributes to that purpose.

Employees who took part in best practice one-on-ones:



of employees feel their organization has a clear purpose

VS



of employees who do not participate in one-on-ones

There was also a greater feeling of balance and belonging. 28% of employees felt an increase in belonging when they took part in best practice one-on-ones.

Employees who took part in best practice one-on-ones:



7 in 10

employees feel their job allows them to balance work and personal life

↑ 28%

Increase in feeling a sense of belonging to their organization

WHAT IS A BEST PRACTICE ONE-ON-ONE?

“So, where do I start?” This is the question that rolls off everyone’s tongues. When it comes to improving as a leader, utilizing the tools and technology you have at your fingertips is a great place to start and makes your daily job a breeze. Almost 250 million people in North America use a smart phone, so why not use it to your advantage?

Look for a tool that easily syncs to calendars and helps set clear expectations of projects and outcomes. Use it to stay on top of your employees ideas and insights during meetings and keep current with their career goals by taking notes of your regular one-on-ones. Pair an effective recognition program with performance management to give timely and meaningful feedback. The right performance management tool will rally teams and leaders around a shared vision, connecting them to a shared purpose and each other.



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