



Drive the Change

Desperately Seeking Leaders Who Communicate

By Linda Finkle, Incedo Group, LLC

A lot of leaders haven't caught on to it.

Why is it that the focus of business leadership usually lands entirely on strategic action plans, competitive tactics, financial statements, and answering to shareholders? While everyone knows that these aspects of running a business are vital to the achievement of profit, we seem to have forgotten the most fundamental element of success — the people who make it happen.



All the tactical brilliance of the C-suite boils down to nothing if they can't communicate their visions, goals, and success strategies to the people within the business. To build trust and loyalty throughout an organization and into the customer base, communication values must trickle down surely and strongly from the top. Communication, in all its facets, needs to be identified and

implemented as a key corporate value by leaders who practice it effectively themselves.

Leaders who communicate effectively are the most important asset in any company. Without strong communication, you cannot build high-trust relationships. High-trust relationships are the key to: a) low turnover, b) high workforce performance, c) consistency in behavior and quality of work, and d) creating a culture of commitment and accountability. So how does a leader communicate effectively?

- **Tell people what you are going to do, and then do it.** Don't vacillate and don't make up a bunch of excuses to explain why you didn't do something or can't do it.
- **Communicate often and openly, and request the same from others.** Communication isn't about sharing only the good news. It's about sharing — good, bad, and indifferent. It's about sharing what's in your heart, not what you think they want to hear.
- **Listen to your people.** Sit down and talk with them, face to face. Listen carefully to what they say — and what they don't say. Perhaps you'll find that there are new and innovative ideas for moving forward that have yet to be considered. What better way for a leader to take the true pulse of the organization and understand how their workforce really thinks and feels?

- **Set clear expectations and standards for behavior.** For example, if you don't want to make special deals with certain customers, don't. But then don't change the rules because you 'need the business' or 'just this time it makes sense.' You have to tell people the rules, standards, and ethics by which to operate within the company and then follow them yourself. If you decide to change them, that's okay, but you have to communicate that to people and let them know your thought process for making the change. You can't expect them to 'figure it out' accurately without telling them yourself.
- **Hold people to the commitments they've made and make them accountable.** And if they aren't (which will sometimes happen), don't scream at them about how badly they've screwed up or, worse yet, say nothing. Remind them of their commitment and let them know how you feel about them not being accountable to their commitment. Caring is caring enough to invest in people to make them better. It isn't simply about being nice. If that means expressing disappointment or frustration, then express that — clearly and without judgement.
- **Care deeply about people.** Care about who they are and what's important to them, and always be learning about them. If you see people as simply another disposable, necessary resource (like a computer) but not as an essential part of your company, you can be sure they feel exactly that.

Being connected to the people in your organization, truly caring about them, and being accountable for your own actions and communication will provide a strong foundation for company growth and development. Leadership can have a heart — and they can communicate it. Indeed, the success and productivity of your organization depends on it.



Drive the Change

About the Author

Linda Finkle, CEO of Incedo Group, works closely with leaders and management to create sustainable productivity and organizational strength. She holds a Master Certified

Coach designation through the International Coaching Federation. For more information on Linda and Incedo Group, please go to <http://www.MakeSomeDamnMistakes.com>.

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.