

## Involve 'personal manifesto' in writing your new year's resolution

For those aspiring to lead, New Year's resolutions should involve creating a "personal manifesto" that address where you are in your career, where you'd like to be and why you want to be there, writes Eric J. McNulty, Director of

Research at the National Preparedness Leadership Initiative. Unlike New Year's resolutions, the personal manifesto isn't tied to the time of year or to specific acts. It is a way to keep yourself focused, thought-



ful, and on-track through the ups-and-downs of a busy life. And it can be amended as needed. A personal manifesto begins with an honest conversation with yourself. That's not as easy as it sounds; honesty takes work — and

guts. It also takes time, he adds. This is something for you and by you. It is not intended to be shared with anyone.

Source: <http://www.strategy-business.com/>

## Reach an agreement when confronting with difficult coworker

Talk to the difficult coworker about what you are experiencing in "I" messages. (Using "I" messages is a communication approach that focuses on your experience of the situation rather



than on attacking or accusing the other person.) You can also explain to your coworker the impact of their actions on you. Be pleasant and agreeable as you talk with the other person. They may not be aware of the impact of their words or actions on you. They may be learning about their impact on you for the first time. Or, they may have to consider and confront a pattern in their own interaction with people. Worst case? They may know their impact on you and deny it or try to explain it away. Unfortunately, some difficult people just don't care. During the discussion, attempt to reach agreement about positive and supportive actions going forward.

Source: Susan M. Heatfield, <https://www.thebalance.com>

## Let employees feel responsible for owning what they do

Leaders can help employees feel responsible for owning what they do, even if they aren't actually shareholders, writes Susan Fowler. People who have a sense of ownership in the company they work for treat the company differently than those who don't. They realize that the more they contribute to the com-



pany, the better chance the company has of succeeding. And, a healthy company leads to job security and opportunities for growth. An ownership mindset can become a means for experiencing your psychological need for competence and growth.

Source: Susan Fowler, [http://](http://smartbrief.com/)

[smartbrief.com/](http://smartbrief.com/)

## Should you give a salary figure in job posts?

When you're posting a job ad, should you include the starting salary? Some argue that giving a salary figure will result in fewer responses and decrease your flexibility during negotiations. But it can have benefits, including demonstrating the job's importance to the organization and showing



that it's a real position, not a fishing expedition. Give a salary range instead of a single number, and you can still negotiate final arrangements based on the skill and experience of individual candidates.

Source: <https://www.managebetter.biz>

## Don't turn a lead from personal to general



One of the biggest mistake people make is that having engaged people around an area of their interest at an event, they then add their names and contact details to a general database or CRM system, following up with them in a way that makes no reference to the positive experience they have just had with your brand. The goodwill that was generated is lost rather than built on.

Source: Richard Woodward, <http://www.richardwoodward.com.au/>

The function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers.

--Ralph Nader

# How to improve your workplace and team communication

Here are five simple strategies you can implement for effective workplace and team communications that will help improve team productivity, engagement and foster a collaborative culture.



## 1. Build and maintain internal relationships.

One on one time can make a huge difference in effective communications. With today's "remote" workers and telecommuters, this can be even more important for those who don't already spend all day in an office together. Respect their time and keep your meetings brief and friendly, a short lunch or coffee is ideal, somewhere away from the distractions and pressures of the office environment.

## 2. Collaborate whenever possible.

Collaboration among teams whether virtual, remote, in person or cross-department is vital. As the old saying goes, two minds are better than one. Whether you need a fresh idea from a different perspective, or simply need some confirmation on an idea you are already working on, ask for help. Being available to help others is the flip side of this coin and does a lot to build communications and trust.

## 3. Keep your meetings short.

Only hard core loners hate all meetings on principle, and you can do a lot to make your meetings valuable to all concerned by keeping them short and focused. Keep meetings regular, but only as frequently as is actually productive to minimize the frustration associated with interruptions.

**4. Avoid impersonal communication.** It's easy to get overwhelmed with too much communication. This can be worse than not enough. To combat this, avoid the urge to send copied messages to those who don't really need them. Make your communication targeted. The extra time it takes to personalize messages, at least to smaller groups if not individuals, will be made up for by the seriousness your communications will be treated with. By respecting your team members and only giving them what they need, you save them time in sorting out the essential information as well.

**5. Open source best practices.** Even those who consider themselves least creative, have brilliant ideas from time to time. By providing a place to share the tips and tricks that are working best, you can open source your own best practices among your team members.

Source: Source: Jessica Miller-Merrel, <http://www.workology.com/>

# Stop giving your team unnecessary work

No one likes busy work. And yet, not only do we all have it, but most managers assign it. If your team is buckling under deadlines and stress, assess whether you're giving them unnecessary tasks and then figure out how to ease the burden. Start by regularly auditing your team's work. Ask team members to estimate how much time they spend on each task, how central the task is to their role, and how much value each task yields. For those tasks that are needless or low in value, solicit your team's suggestions



for how to reduce or eliminate them, and work together to implement solutions. Often, improving communication and granting greater autonomy can help to get rid of any inefficient processes. Keep in mind that you may not be the one assigning the unnecessary work. Advocate for your team by insisting on better information when your team receives unclear or conflicting directives from above. And always make sure your team gets the resources it needs to perform and thrive.

Source: Management Tip of the Day, Harvard Business Review

# Give employees what they need

What do employees want from their managers? It's a seemingly simple question without a single answer. Focus on these basic requirements:



- **Communicate.** Let employees know what's going on in your organization.
- **Buffer.** Protect your team from outside interference.
- **Provide resources.** Make sure employees have the tools necessary for doing good work.
- **Connect.** Help employees get to know each other and form useful workplace relationships.
- **Recognition.** Tell employees when they're doing good work.

<https://www.managebetter.biz>

# Need employees to cooperate? Play upbeat music



New studies show that people tend to be more cooperative (and less self-interested) in a group setting when they're listening to happy music.

Note that the type of music matters. Happy music — songs with rhythm and warmth — encourage cooperation much more than "unhappy" music with arrhythmic song structures and screamed lyrics. This isn't just applicable to the retail setting. Next time you need a group to work closely together — during a meeting or a brainstorming session — consider playing music. Not only will it break up the usual, often dreary, background silence in your office, but it could also improve your team's performance.

Source: Management Tip of the Day, Harvard Business Review

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