

Engage Staff to Help Form and Execute a Plan

By Donna Rawady

In the current business environment, we've become familiar with downsizing and reorganizations, which have generated more work and responsibilities — not only for the individual contributor but for those who lead. These challenges are difficult enough, and when you add the absence of a solid, communicated plan to move forward, it can be paralyzing to a work team.

Strong leaders are able to distance themselves just enough from the immediate, day-to-day challenges and demands to focus on the bigger picture and create a plan to lead a team to an end goal. They have the ability to relay the details of their vision, whether it is short or long-term, and then to engage, organize and collaborate to create or restore the bigger picture to its healthiest state.

Not all people in leadership positions are strong planners. Some may be challenged, either in the midst of immediate demands, or in general, with being strategic.

If you find yourself stuck, here are a few approaches that may help you jump-start a plan:

- Revisit your end goal and be sure you're communicating the goal clearly to your team members.
- Engage your staff in providing creative ideas that may contribute to a plan to reach the goal. Use their ideas to launch your own creative thinking, and begin translating those ideas into actions.
- Assign components of the plan among your team members and then document the plan, including assignments and target dates to generate accountability and measure progress.

In today's lean business environment, it's natural to find yourself bogged down with day-to-day operations. But if it's been a while since you looked through it, you may want to pick up your strategic lens and take a look.

Your team is depending on you.

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