THE NEW BREED TEAM LEADER

NINE LIVES CONSULTING

Career Navigator

Since the start of the COVID, responses to surveys have consistently indicated that about 50% of the workforce wishes to work remotely, 2-5 days per week.

The improvement to their quality of life and productivity is too substantial to relinquish so, they do not want to revert to the pre-COVID attitudes and rules.

This cohort is defined by those whose tasks enable them to undertake their work this way. There are many more who would like to have this privilege but their work and tasks cannot accommodate the remote activity.

This significant change in attitudes, enabled by IT systems and the internet capacity, has embedded what seems to be a permanent change to remotely configured teams, be they working from home or in satellite offices.

The effective leadership of this new team format is now a critical factor

The observations of our team of counselors (who are coaching participants moving from one job/employer into new roles) have developed into some insights into the new requirements of a leader.

We have calibrated our views with several recruiters (employers views), including general, Executive Search and one managing large teams of temporary staff. We have also compared notes with Brigadier Greg McGlone, who, over the last few years has been leading a large volume and very large budget procurement program for ADF equipment. COVID restrictions forced his team to rapidly change and adapt to a new way of managing a very large and complex team and procurement process.

We think our observations equally apply to large and small teams and are already being practised in many organisations.

Essentially, success in leading a remotely configured team requires adherence to the guiding principles of Clarity and Respect which is manifested in the following ways.

FRAMEWORK; Staff need to work in a framework that provides clarity on:
- Purpose of the organisation
- Values and ethics of the organisation
- Purpose of each role
- Procedures
- Communication lines
- Authority delegations
- Reporting processes
- Performance measurement

FIT; there must be a good fit between the team leader and the team.
- Values and ethic must match
- Team leader must be good at their role
- Staff must be in suitable roles that they enjoy
- All members must be able to communicate with each other to establish respectful and appropriate ways of communicating. *Refer to Blogs (Career Resilience, Coping with an Incompatible Boss, Minimising Stress, Employer Culture)*

FEATURES:
Therefore the team leader must be able to provide clarity and demonstrate respect for each and every team member through a variety of processes managing communications, roles, addressing issues arising, rapid response to requests and apply a consistent attitude to each and every team member as summarised below.

Tailor their communications methods and style to each team member. Some approaches include:
- Each team member needs a different style of communication, depending on role, personality, age (maturity) and experience. Try asking each person about their preference.
- Morning check-in (welfare check).
- Quizzes to engage team members, personal chats for each individual.
- Allocate on a rotating schedule team leader task (e.g. lead a focus group on an issue).
- Use internet, telephone and email as appropriate to the task and issue.

Provide clarity about roles; greater attention to the definition of outcomes and quality required.
- Focus on getting it right first time
- Trusting the person to do their job reinforces their self-esteem, confidence, commitment and capability.
- Judging performance on output and quality, articulating the minimum required.
- Allowing flexible working hours, such as travelling to work off-peak.
- Providing updated information so each team member can apply some discretion to their priorities and outcomes.
- Daily briefing on key issues for the day/week.
- Ensure meetings are booked ahead so people can prepare and focus.
- Ensure meetings are succinct and focussed, no long multi-topic meetings with no actions arising.
- Provide honest and relevant feedback frequently, doesn't always have to be positive or comprehensive.

Provide clarity about arising issues;
- Use facts and succinct documents.
- Ensure each effected member knows their role and response required.
- Decisiveness needs to be demonstrated and genuine.

Respond quickly to any requests or decisions.
Be consistent in their treatment of all staff.
Review; regularly and genuinely review the processes being used and evolve as required.

In **summary; the new breed team leader needs to:**
- **Be highly competent in their functional tasks.**
- **Deliver clarity on roles, requirements and solutions to their team.**
- **Fit with their team.**
- **Communicate readily and openly with all their team members.**

 Simple; GO FIND.

Peter E Pick | CEO | Nine Lives Consulting peter.pick@ninelivesconsulting.com.au T: 1300 425 592