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Inspire Loyalty With Your Leadership: Here's How



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As the leader of your business, you're surely aware that the loyalty you inspire in your employees is more than just important; it's essential.

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Beyond producing improved results from your employees and reducing turnover in your staff, the loyalty you encourage in your team -- through the behaviors that you exemplify -- will extend itself to your customer base, and beyond.

Loyalty isn't something you can just gain, at the drop of a hat. To be a leader truly worthy of loyalty takes hard work and requires self-inquiry and a clarity of mind. After all, who can follow someone who doesn't even know what he or she wants or is headed? Inspiring loyalty may take personal work, but it will be worth the effort when you have a team that will follow you to the ends of the earth.

There are many ways to inspire loyalty, but here are six essential ways in which the best leaders inspire loyalty, in even the most dubious of employees.

1. Trust.

Constantly looking over your employee's shoulder to second-guess his or her work creates a sense of personal doubt, especially if there has been no pertinent reason to mistrust the staffer's expertise. Great leaders give their trust to others, without reservation, and those others are then motivated to not only give trust back, but to work harder to meet the expectations of someone they respect.

2. Support for employee development

In the short and long-term, all people need to feel as though their work, and by extension their lives, has meaning and positive progression. If there is no opportunity for learning in an encouraging environment, employees may start to feel stagnant and resentful.

Employees who are encouraged to follow their passions and stretch beyond what they thought was

3. Leading by example

A leader is perhaps expected to have more responsibility than do employees, but that doesn't mean that the leader is "above" any work that needs to be done. Some of the best leaders I have known are right there in the trenches when that's called for. If you're too good to get your hands dirty with your team, your team members will start to see their jobs as menial and unimportant -- just as you do. But, if you do whatever it takes for your company to be successful, so will everyone around you.

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4. Clarity

A leader's clarity creates a compass by which his or her team can navigate. If you aren't completely clear about your mission and values, it's obvious to anyone in your employ that following you will lead nowhere. So, be communicative and definitive about your wide-reaching vision and your day-to-day tasks to enable your team to see that your leadership is true.

5. Personal relationships

Of course there are boundaries around personal relationships at work, but within those boundaries, there is room to recognize that the people who work for you are humans, dealing with trials and tribulations beyond the next budget meeting. Do you know when your employees have major life milestones, like a birth, death, marriage or divorce? Great leaders know that cultivating care for their employees creates love and loyalty in return.

6. Openness and honesty

Nothing inspires loyalty more than being honest. Open communication does two things: It creates confidence and trust, and also helps create feelings of inclusion. Being part of a team that works together will make any employee think twice before leaving or making a detrimental decision. Honest leaders will make team members stay much longer than they would have with a leader who hides information.

The greatest leaders in the world are not revered because they demanded loyalty -- they *created* loyalty through their words and actions. With everyday care and personal conviction, you too can create a company that is full of employees who are devoted, hard-working, and unwavering.

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