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4th Quarter 2019 Manager Newsletter



Seven ways you can ring in holiday cheer at work

Looking to bring some holiday fun to your team this year?

Here are seven easy ways to do it...



Give your team what they really want

You might not be able to give your team everything on their wish lists. Huge bonuses and unlimited paid time off aren't left to the discretion of most managers. But you can boost your team's morale and job satisfaction by paying attention to the little things that matter. ***Here are some things your employees are likely to want, even if they don't know it...***



What's your leadership style?

How much do you understand about how you like to lead? Each quarter we're describing one or two of the leadership styles in the Blake Mouton Managerial Grid. ***Click here to learn more...***

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Seven ways you can ring in holiday cheer at work



[Return to index page](#)

Looking to bring some holiday fun to your team this year? Here are seven easy ways to do it.

1. Enjoy a treat a day. Each team member takes a turn bringing in a favorite holiday treat for everyone to enjoy. This can be a great way to start talking about different holiday traditions. And it gives your team something to look forward to each day.

2. Try this ice-breaker at your next team meeting. Ask each person to talk for a few minutes about any childhood memories of traditions they may have shared with family or friends. Then let your team decide together if they'd like to celebrate at work.

3. Give back together. Building your team can help build up the community, too. You can:

- Sponsor a drive for food, clothing and/or toys
- Head out to help build a house for charity
- Put together holiday or care packages for low income families
- Go to a soup kitchen together and help out

There's no end to the number of ways your team can make a difference.

4. Secret gift exchange. Everyone who wants to participate gets assigned someone to give one or more gifts. Set cost limits based on your organization's policies and what your team members would like. One option is to give a few smaller gifts over several days and then one larger gift at the end. That's when the identity of each person's mystery gifter gets revealed.

5. Throw a party. You don't need a big budget to have a good time with your team. If you can find a bit of time to socialize together, you can fill it with fun and games or just a little chat. Want to add food without extra cost? It's easy; try a potluck.

6. Decorate. You'll need to follow your company's safety guidelines. But most likely there's a lot you can do, even if electric lights or decorations aren't allowed. Decking out your work space can be a great way to share traditions and give your own spirits an extra lift at work, too.

7. Hold a contest. Even a small gift card or two can be great prize incentives for some holiday fun. Contests can be quizzes, charades, trivia and more. A simple web search can give you hundreds of ideas.

Whatever you suggest to your team, leave room for those who don't want to participate. And be sure to support an inclusive culture that honors all the holidays of the season.

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Give your team what they really want



[Return to index page](#)

You might not be able to give your team everything on their wish lists. Huge bonuses and unlimited paid time off aren't left to the discretion of most managers. But you can boost your team's morale and job satisfaction by paying attention to the little things that matter. Here are some things your employees are likely to want, even if they don't know it:

- **Meaning in their work.** Can they see where their work makes a difference for customers? For coworkers? Does their work align with their own beliefs and life goals?
- **Flexibility.** Employees don't just disappear when they're not working. They have home lives, community or school commitments and outside interests. Having the freedom to be a whole person outside work can make or break an employee's job satisfaction.
- **Autonomy.** Is there room for your team to make decisions? Suggest ideas? Your top performers especially want to leave a mark on the business and make things better for everyone.
- **Training.** Getting trained in a new area or cross-training to back up a team member can help your team feel like their careers are progressing. And getting to perform new tasks can broaden their perspectives. Giving team members the opportunity to train or support the training of others by answering questions, mentoring, etc. can also boost their job satisfaction.

- **Development opportunities.** Can your team members explore areas of interest, learn new skills and set their sights on promotions? Even lateral moves, new work groups or projects might help your team members enjoy their work more after they've mastered their current job responsibilities.
- **Recognition and appreciation.** Encourage your team members to give each other kudos on a regular basis. Share positive comments you get from customers. You can give praise too, to set an example. Just be careful not to make it seem like you're playing favorites.
- **Room for fun.** Can your team celebrate successes? Be themselves at work? Enjoy each other's company? All that adds up to a winning culture.

While many people work to make a living, being satisfied with work isn't just about the money. See if focusing on one or more of these aspects makes a difference for your team.

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What's your leadership style?

How much do you understand about how you like to lead? Each quarter we're describing one or two of the leadership styles in the Blake Mouton Managerial Grid.¹ Maybe you'll see some of yourself in one or more of these styles.



The Blake Mouton Managerial Grid¹

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton's grid helps leaders understand their natural tendencies using two spectrums:

- **Concern for people.** How much do you focus on your employees' feelings, happiness and interests?
- **Concern for results.** How much do you focus on your organization's needs and production outcomes?

Blake and Mouton defined five leadership styles based on where you fall in these two areas on the grid. So far we've reviewed the country club, produce-or-perish, impoverished and middle-of-the-road management styles. This article explores the last style in the grid, "team management." And we think you'll find we saved the best for last.



Team managers

What makes the team management style the most effective of the five options? These leaders don't just care about the job that's getting done; they care about the people doing the job. They

understand that taking care of results and staff members can be complimentary goals.

Because they're committed to the mission at hand, they're able to motivate their staff to perform at a high level. And their teams feel respected and valued, which inspires them to work harder. Team managers work to ensure their staff understands why their work matters. And they involve them in decision-making along the way.

You can work on improving your team management style by tapping into your own passion. Why do you enjoy your work? Why do you value your staff? When you believe that both are equally important, it will show. And your staff will appreciate it.

¹Blake, R. and McCanse, A. Leadership dilemmas — Grid solutions. Gulf Professional Publishing. March 8, 1991.

[Return to index page](#)



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