



April 2016

Volume 22, Number 4

Can't believe it's already April - can you believe we're already past the first quarter? I am sure your team has been accomplishing great things...are we recognizing and celebrating team victories? And are we creating more "rules" than necessary to help our people do their best work?

Spring is a great time to reflect on our best practices - our rituals - that we do on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis that support our team's work.

Kristin

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#### **CELEBRATE YOUR TEAM'S VICTORIES – BIG AND SMALL**

It's important to celebrate your team's small and large victories. Here are some ideas to show just how much you care.

##### 1. Group Share.

- Bring in a bottle of non-alcoholic champagne and glasses (plastic will do, but it's alot more fun with glass!). Start the toast with "I am thankful this team is....." Clink glasses, take a sip and encourage others to continue the toast!
- Have each team member share the most memorable "team moment" – it's a great way to provide closure!
- Have each team member share what they think is the team's most significant accomplishment and what contributed to their success.
- Share what each individual does to celebrate success (e.g. go out to dinner at a favorite restaurant) and then agree on how the team will celebrate their success.
- Have all the team members sit in a circle. Take a big ball of yarn and wrap one end around your finger. Throw the ball to another team member and thank them for a specific contribution or accomplishment. That team member then wraps a bit of

- yarn around their finger and continues the process. You can even send it back to the same person too! Watch the interconnected web the team weaves....
- Share what you have gained from working on the team – what are you thankful for learning.
2. Food.
    - Have a potluck lunch and encourage team members to stay and mingle rather than run back to their office.
    - Have breakfast or lunch catered – so no one has to bring anything!
    - Take the team to a local eatery and have a nice long lunch.
    - Go out to the local park for a picnic.
    - Create an ice cream sundae bar with all the fixins!
    - Send a gift basket of fruit, flowers or chocolate to their home. Every once in a while the family needs to feel appreciated too!
  3. Pictures.
    - Take a team photograph and post on the company FaceBook page (that is, if the company has one!).
    - Create a “Wall of Fame” – a special location where team pictures and plaques are displayed.
    - Make a photo collage that shows all the team members engaged in various parts of the project.
    - Frame a poster for each team member with a distinctive team quote.
  4. Outside Activities.
    - Go for a brisk team walk in the afternoon cool air and return to a mug of simmering hot apple cider.
    - Do something together such as paintball or laser tag, take a hike, go rafting, or have a private tour of the local museum.
    - Do a charitable activity together such as a walkathon to beat cancer, build a house for the homeless.
    - Go to a local movie theater and congregate for drinks afterwards.

But then again, you can do the usual cast of characters as well:

- Plaque. A wall plaque or paperweight that commemorates the effort.
- Newsletter. Recognition in the organization’s newsletter or website.
- Parking Spaces. Designate a set of parking spaces that are in prime locations.
- Logos. Get some clothing, office supplies or luggage with the organization’s logo. Team members will be proud to wear/use them!
- Pin. Create a unique pin that commemorates the successful completion of the project.
- Gift Certificates. Everyone loves a gift certificate to a local eatery or retail establishment.
- Day Off. Who doesn’t like a day off with no strings attached – especially when it is on a Monday or Friday to make a long weekend?
- Thank You. Send a personalized thank you card or letter that specifically comments on how that team member contributed to the team’s success.
- Tickets. Buy some movie, theater, concert, museum, amusement park etc. tickets for each team member plus one – or go as a group.

Regardless, don’t let this opportunity to let the team celebrate their success go by!

## **RULES ARE THE ENEMY OF LEADERSHIP - by Joe Sherren**

As managers at a large corporation, we would often joke about how after being promoted we were sent our “brain in a box” - standard operating procedures which told us how to think, what to say, what to do, and how to do it.

It detailed our human resource policies, client engagement procedures, guidelines for dealing with suppliers, spending rules, resolving conflict processes, hiring strategies, termination guidelines, etc. For a new manager this was a great tool because they did not even have to think about major issues. Decisions were made for them! However, for highly competent and experienced leaders, the “box” often constrained them in many situations from doing the right thing, the right way, at the right time.

During my assignment in the Business Practices Division, we learned that the difference between an average leader and a truly great one was the quality of their decisions. The problem is, rules take decision making out of the hands of the managers. This creates timid managers who just follow orders – often without understanding why. After time, high-potential employees will develop an attitude of vicious compliance.

Leadership is not about following old policies and dogma; it is about forging new directions and addressing the challenges of today’s environment. The fewer decisions a leader makes, the less thinking is required. The less thinking a leader does, the fewer alternatives they produce. Fewer choices result in an organization’s inability to be flexible and responsive to changing market trends and global demographics.

Leadership is not about making employees blindly follow rules. It is about teaching, sharing insights, and helping employees gain the experience that will advance their career, enable them to build self-confidence, and earn respect from others.

For decades, I have designed programs that taught experienced leaders how to think and make those critical decisions, and be responsible for the consequences. Here are some guidelines managers can use when a critical decision is required:

1. First, gather all the facts pertinent to the decision. Do not to engage in confirmation bias by focusing on only the facts that will lead you toward your preferred option.
2. Next, determine if the decision is appropriate according to the three major ethical standards:

Utility: Does it optimize the requirements of all the stakeholders?

Rights: Does it respect the rights of all individuals involved?

Justice: Is it consistent with the canons of justice and fair play?

If the answer is a no on all three criteria – stop, go no further! If it is a resounding yes on all three, then your decision is justifiable and you now have to develop an appropriate process to implement the decision and a method for constructively communicating it to everyone affected.

If the answer is a no to one or two of the three criteria, then you must explore: are there any “overwhelming” factors? Is there one criterion that should override another, or are there any incapacitating factors? Be sure to think through possible unintended consequences.

3. As well, does it pass the “double effect” test? This states that if the overall good is better than the harm your decision will initially cause, then it is the right thing to do. For example, terminating an employee when you know their life will be much better as a result.
4. Finally, a criterion everyone should use is: How would you feel if the decision you just made was published on the front page of a national newspaper?

My question for managers this week: “Are you blindly following “rules” or making independent choices based on sound criteria”?



## **FROM THE BOOKSHELF: Dealstorming: The Secret Weapon That Can Solve Your Toughest Sales Challenges**

I've been a big fan of Tim Sanders for years, starting with "Love is the Killer App," "Today We Are Rich," and his latest book is "[Dealstorming: The Secret Weapon That Can Solve Your Toughest Sales Strategies](#)." Ostensibly, this book is about making the complex sales deals. But you can't do that without having a fabulous team.

So really, this book is about building a team to pursue and land a complex deal - not just the sales people, but collaborators from within the organization. Tim is a storyteller, sharing details to highlight his seven-step methodology for getting the best results. You'll enjoy the read...but more importantly, you'll take valuable insights into how a small group of people can make a complex deal work against all odds.

### **UPCOMING WEBINAR**

#### **Using Creative Training Techniques to Engage the Audience During a Panel Discussion**

Panel discussions can be dull and boring...unless you tap into techniques that will engage the audience. We're going to learn from the master of creative training techniques, [Becky Pike Pluth](#) how to knock your next panel out of the park!

Thursday, June 16, 2016: 9am PDT, 10am MDT, 11am CDT, 12 noon, EDT

If you are a meeting organizer or panel moderator, then this webinar is for you! [Register here](#) today at [www.ExtraordinaryTeam.com/webinar-series/](http://www.ExtraordinaryTeam.com/webinar-series/)

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