Best-Practices Leadership

Team management tips and fun team-building activities to boost team performance, collaboration and morale

Special Report from:

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Best-Practices Leadership:

Team management tips and fun team-building activities to boost team performance, collaboration and morale

Best-Practices Leadership: Team Management Tips examines key ways to re-invigorate teams and improve their performance, along with fun team-building activities to reward and motivate all your team players.

Read how businesses of all sizes are getting creative with team icebreakers and fun team-building exercises—everything from scavenger hunts, "cruises to nowhere" and community walk/runs to building models of team projects out of Legos. And, while you're learning new ways to pump up your team's performance, now might be a good time to undertake our Leadership Assessment Exercise to gauge your *own* performance as a team manager.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #1

'Hot' tactics for heating up your team

"Hot teams" improvise, do more work with less supervision and make the extra effort to follow through.

Management consultant Laurence Haughton offers this advice for turning ordinary groups into hot teams:

1. Don't become rule-bound. Rules, intended to streamline and safeguard work, can hamstring your operation when common sense calls for exceptions. Before setting rules, ask if they're really needed.

2. Don't criticize in public. Embarrassing employees in front of the team will only come back to bite you. Mean bosses think that they're holding people accountable, but what they're really doing is inciting payback.

3. Show you care. If you like your people and show it, they'll enjoy helping you when crunch time comes.

4. Listen. Make it one on one, as well as in groups. Listening helps you correct misinformation, relax barriers, increase trust and let people feel good about what they do for a living.

5. Make it their mission. Even when a project is not terribly exciting, you can make the work more engaging. Creating roles for each person, for example, gives people a sense of being special.

6. Let them decide. Allowing people to devise their own processes boosts morale. Just make sure those processes keep improving.

— Adapted from "Creating Hot Teams," Laurence Haughton, *Leader to Leader*

Leadership: Team Management Tips #2

Bring off-site energy of team-building exercises back to the office

The typical off-site meeting is chock-full of PowerPoint presentations, flip charts and team-building exercises. But back at work months later, what actually changes?

Lead an off-site event that leaves your team energized and focused:

1. **Know what victory looks like. How will you know if you've achieved it?**

   When Timberland Co. needed to revamp and add new products, they held an off-site event to jump-start things. They invited designers, engineers and marketers from the company to spend one week hashing it out, a process that normally takes years. *Result:* They met their goals. "Having that concrete goal allowed us to walk the line between exploring creative flights of fancy and remaining results driven," VP Doug Clark said.

2. **Make sure team-building exercises relate to solving a real problem.**

   During Ford's off-site event, Carolyn Lantz, executive director of brand imaging, gave executives $50 each and put them on a bus to an Old Navy store. "I told them, 'You have 20 minutes to find and purchase an outfit that you have to wear tomorrow. You are busy people looking for great design at a great price. Those are Ford's customers.'" The exercise made a point: Ford's products need to be well designed, but democratically priced.

—Adapted from "Can This Off-Site Be Saved?" Cheryl Dahle, Fast Company, www.FastCompany.com

Leadership: Team Management Tips #3

Fight off team complacency: 5 strategies

Soon after a team forms, the excitement often peaks. Teammates dream of big accomplishments, set grandiose goals and promise to collaborate.

But when the initial enthusiasm dies down, the spirited atmosphere fades and a more solemn routine emerges. Senior executives who attended the first few team

meetings no longer show up. New developments (or crises!) within the organization redirect management's focus away from the group's activities. Some team members start slacking off or immersing themselves in other projects, leaving less time to devote to the group.

If this pattern unfolds at your workplace, step in and breathe new life into your team. Here's how:

- **Inject new blood.** Invite a few high-energy types to join the team. Don't put them in charge or they'll threaten the team leader and the informal hierarchy that's already formed. Instead, just ask them to lend their talents and revitalize the group.

- **Tape the team.** When a lethargic public speaker needs to liven up, a smart speech coach will videotape the individual's presentation and play it back. By raising the speaker's self-awareness, the tape serves as a training tool. The same goes when you want to jolt a team to rise to a higher level. Lecturing a team to improve might fall upon deaf ears, but a videotape of their meetings can show them just how listless they've become.

- **Turn your team into trainers.** Form a new team, and ask your current group to serve as an "advisory board" to it. Arrange for the veterans to coach the rookies. Encourage them to share their experiences about teamwork and isolate the kind of behaviors that facilitate more effective collaboration. You may want to create a buddy system, whereby each seasoned team member mentors someone in the new group.

- **Strip away routine.** Study how a tired team got that way. Disrupt predictable patterns by having the group meet in new places (a nearby park, a client's facility, your home) and work together in new ways. Instead of having them break into the same small cliques, for instance, juggle the mix so that team members who normally don't work closely together will get a chance to know each other better. Or, instead of having them sit in the same places, rearrange the seating configuration so that everyone's in a circle.

- **Host an outing.** Invite the team to join you on a weekend hike or family picnic. Schedule fun activities so that participants get to know each other with their guard down. Even if you already tried this early on, do it again now that the team has been together for a while. When the group returns to work, they'll have a newfound camaraderie, which will translate into more trust and teamwork.

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Leadership: Team Management Tips #4

Is your team stuck? Get them unstuck

The Wisdom of Teams, one of the first books to define the team phenomenon, still offers some of the best advice for managing them. Here's how to get a stalled team unstuck:

- ✓ **Revisit the basics.** Ask the team to rethink its purpose, approach and goals.
- ✓ **Achieve some small wins.** Even noncritical short-term wins can get a team moving forward again.
- ✓ **Introduce fresh new approaches, ideas and information.** Simply providing new customer case studies or front-line work measures can end the stalemate.
- ✓ **Set up fresh training for the team.** It could center on key skills, teamwork or goal-setting.
- ✓ **Juggle the team's membership or change its leadership.** Leaders who were appointed by upper management can seem irreplaceable to other team members. Don't be afraid to intervene and mandate a change.

It's great when the team applies some of these energizing tactics from within, without being asked. But if that doesn't happen, your job as a leader is to intervene and shake things up.

— Adapted from the classic 1993 book, *The Wisdom of Teams*, Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, HarperCollins

Leadership: Team Management Tips #5

Joe Torre's rules for leading a team

Baseball manager Joe Torre has led far more diverse and ego-driven teams than most of us ever will. Yet, Torre's teams have won repeatedly, thanks to these four "rules of straight communication" he has developed over the years:

1. **Remember** that every player has a special need for one of these things: motivation, reassurance or technical help. Determine what that need is and meet it.
2. **Deliver** tightly focused, positive messages, such as a quick word of praise for a good play. Simple words of appreciation are more powerful motivators than many leaders expect.

3. **Work hard** to establish rapport with team members from backgrounds that are different from your own. It does take extra work, but the results can be extraordinary.
4. **Let team members know** that you accept the full range of their emotions, including fear and uncertainty. Unless people admit their fear, they will never be able to confront obstacles and grow.

—Adapted from *Joe Torre's Ground Rules for Winners,* Joe Torre and Henry Dreher, Hyperion

Leadership: Team Management Tips #6

High-performing teams exhibit 5 traits

An effective team displays five baseline criteria, according to management consultant Patrick Lencioni:

1. Team members trust each other.
2. They deal constructively with conflict.
3. They are committed to doing well.
4. They feel personally accountable for the team's success.
5. They focus on achieving results as a team, not just as individuals who happen to work together.

—Adapted from *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*, Patrick Lencioni, Jossey-Bass

Leadership: Team Management Tips #7

Tap into creative, fun team-building activities

You've been put in charge of planning team-building exercises for your eight-person team? To get you started, here are a few ideas from some administrative professionals:

- **Find the perfect activity** in *The Big Book of Team Building Games: Trust-Building Activities, Team Spirit Exercises, and Other Fun Things to Do* (McGraw-Hill) or *Quick Teambuilding Activities for Busy Managers: 50 Exercises That Get Results in Just 15 Minutes* (AMACOM).

- **Bowl your way to tighter bonds.** Affordable, low-stress team sports are a good bet for smaller budgets. Another sporty idea for teams: bocce ball.
- **Spring for a big-budget adventure,** such as the "BG U.S. Challenge" (**www.ChallengerWorld.com**), a two-day adventure race. One administrative professional says it was "the best experience of my life! We have to train throughout the year (hiking, running, mountain biking and paddling), and that is also a great team builder."
- **Another option for bigger budgets:** facilitated team building. For example, Adventure Associates (**www.AdventureAssoc.com**) offers a range of exercises, from navigating a ropes course to assembling a tent while blindfolded.
- **Give back to the community as a team.** *Ideas:* Organize a clothing drive, work at a food bank, clean up a neighborhood or volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. You can also call your local United Way for suggestions. "A contribution of time, energy and knowledge to the community will strengthen a team of individuals who share the experience," writes one administrative professional.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #8

Is your team the ideal size?

When it comes to the ideal team, more is definitely not merrier. That's according to researchers who study well-functioning teams. If you're finding it tough to accomplish much with a team project you're working on, consider whether you have too many heads on the task.

Psychologist Ivan Steiner found that each time you add a person to a team, productivity goes up, but so do inefficiencies. For example, coordinating the group becomes trickier.

In 1970, two professors from Harvard University asked large and small teams to do several tasks, and then asked them whether they felt their group was too small or too large for the task. Using feedback from the groups, the professors calculated the ideal team size: 4.6.

Bottom line: If you try to include everyone on a team, you might find that the group subdivides itself into cliques. Look for ways to logically subdivide the group or trim the overall head count.

—Adapted from "Team-O-Nomics," Jia Lynn Yang, *Fortune*

Tips from the trenches: Fun team-building exercises

The Admin Pro Forum recently asked readers for their advice on how to solve this reader's dilemma: "I'm looking for suggestions for outside team-building exercises for a small group of three employees. All exercises seem to be for larger teams. Our company budgets $150 per quarter for such events." Here are some of their responses:

► "Team building is a great exercise whether it's for a group of three or 33! For a small group, it doesn't necessarily need to be something super structured. The time spent together away from the office will help them bond so think of things the three people would enjoy doing together. Consider a cooking class, bowling and miniature golf. Also, see if your community has a design-your-own pottery or artwork place, and have them design and paint something for the office. Another thing to consider: having them work a volunteer event together." —Lisa

► "No need to spend a fortune on team building. Look around for a community run, for a good cause. Whatever you do, don't make it too competitive. Make sure your people, should they win something, win it as a team, not an individual. For a community run, for example, have them all wear T-shirts with a logo and run as a team. One last thought: If there is anybody in need in your community—fixing a porch, repainting a room or something similar—go at it together." —Emeric

► "I'm actually planning something for about eight employees and was thinking about a dinner and comedy club. Something different and I think it would be enjoyable." —Debi

► "A volunteer event would provide team building in addition to providing a worthwhile service. For such a small group, how about contacting the Ronald McDonald House to see what's needed? Usually, they welcome food being brought in for the families and, at times, served by the volunteers." —Judy

► "I agree with doing volunteer activities. We are encouraging employees to give blood. When they donate blood, they get into a drawing for time off from work … There are always things around the community that could use a few hands!

"Our latest team-building activity is going to coincide with a community event. The goal is for the community to walk 50,000 miles by the end of the year. We are going to provide pedometers to employees and gather their steps to contribute to the tally. You could do a similar thing by challenging some other companies in your area to 'beat your miles.' Use a miles/person calculation to balance the playing field. Could be fun *and* would develop beneficial relationships with other companies in your community." —Julie

► "I'm taking a group of 25 on a Cruise to Nowhere for two days. In the past, we have 'Pig Out Days' when we have all the food you can eat. Also, we have a monthly luncheon at a seafood restaurant. All of these events build team spirit." —DRM

► "Two years ago, we had a team-building exercise at an amusement park. We did a photo scavenger hunt! The department was divided into teams, and each team was given a disposable camera to take photos of the items they found on the list. I developed the photos and posted them on the wall. There were prizes for the most creative, funniest, etc. They still talk about it!" —KS

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Leadership: Team Management Tips #9

How to refuel a sputtering team

You're thinking your team needs to push itself harder, but how do you determine that? Look for hard evidence. Ask: What has it accomplished so far?

Here's a good exercise to measure your team's progress to date:

At your next meeting, ask each team member to list "what you see as the team's top five achievements so far." Give them no more than five minutes to write down their responses, and then collect them. Explain that they don't need to include their names—you're not grading their answers as much as using them as a learning tool.

Share the results with the group. Rank the "consensus achievements," the ones that appear in the most responses. Write these items on a flip chart. Then ask the group whether they're satisfied with their work thus far. Encourage them to discuss the significance of their achievements. Prod them to explore whether they're capable of making a more substantive, lasting contribution to the bottom line.

Another way to tell whether you're managing a sputtering team: Sit in on a few meetings and observe the group's interaction. Then, for each meeting, complete the exercise "Take a Team Diagnostic Exam." *(See box on page 10.)*

To refuel a sputtering team, redirect the group's focus away from easy, safe tasks to more ambitious stretch goals. Motivate them to "think big" by dangling fresh, meaningful rewards for stellar effort. Offer to give each team member a choice of three prizes if the group attains specific, measurable objectives.

Here's an example:

Three months after you formed a team to study high employee turnover, the group hasn't come up with any useful research or solid recommendations. It started out strong but has since stalled. You present the group with this challenge: "If you were the head of human resources, what steps would you take to reduce turnover?" Tell them they have two weeks to devise a practical, doable, cost-effective answer. Promise to give team members a paid day off, a gift certificate to the local mall or a chance to spend a day shadowing a senior executive of their choice—as long as they come up with an action plan that cuts turnover by 10% over the next six months.

Take a Team Diagnostic Exam

Does your team need a push? Sit in on a few of its meetings, then complete this exercise. Read each statement and answer Yes or No:

	Yes	No
The team leader distributed an agenda or action items before the meeting.	☐	☐
All the team members show up for the meeting.	☐	☐
Team meetings begin promptly at the scheduled time.	☐	☐
All the team members complete their assignments (present research, provide facts and so forth).	☐	☐
Everyone participates in the meeting.	☐	☐
The team reviews goals from its last meeting, and members give progress reports.	☐	☐
Team members take notes, especially when they promise to do a special task.	☐	☐
Team members take responsibility for their work rather than giving excuses.	☐	☐
Team members linger after the formal meeting ends, discussing issues with enthusiasm.	☐	☐

Note: If you checked **Yes** for all nine statements, odds are your team is in fine shape. But each **No** answer raises a red flag. If you notice the number of **No's** increasing from meeting to meeting, you need to intervene and take steps to lift the collective spirit and performance level of the group.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #10

A case study: Boost office morale with team-building games

Morale was plummeting at D'Ambrosio Eye Care, and Jocelyn Rodgers knew it. The administrative assistant realized she needed to do something at her Lancaster, Mass., office before the problem grew even worse.

She'd recently been inspired by the book *Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale and Improve Results,* which taught her that, to create an energetic and creative workplace, each person needs to play, make each other's day, be "present" and choose to have a positive attitude.

With the book in mind, she proposed a game.

Everyone on the office staff would play the game, which meant about 55 people split among three office locations. Part of her goal: to help these far-flung groups get to know each other better and to "feel like family again."

"They were allowed to create their own team name," says Rodgers, and everyone "came up with fun, silly names for themselves."

The teams worked with a preapproved list of ideas—such as being a new employee's buddy or celebrating a teammate's birthday—for which they'd win points. They won more points for "inviting" another team to help them.

The teams also came up with their own ideas for earning points. *Examples:* One team proposed giving every female patient a red carnation on Valentine's Day and every child a Valentine. Another team participated in a local fundraiser.

"I created this game to help everyone have some fun during the day," says Rodgers, but it also helped employees win perks. Management agreed to award movie tickets and VISA gift cards to each team that earned 300 points and $250 and two hours for a team lunch for those who scored 600 points.

If all three teams scored 1,000 points, they'd receive all of the above, plus management would close the office for an employee Fun Day.

Result: All three teams hit 1,000 points and will spend a full day together in Boston next April.

"Our team morale is up from last year," says Rodgers, "and it's a goal of mine to keep it that way."

Leadership: Team Management Tips #11

Why close-knit teams don't always win

You've spent lots of time building team closeness and cohesiveness. You might have spent a lot of money on it, too. Maybe that was a bad idea. New findings suggest that close-knit teams are often *less* competitive than teams in which camaraderie is weak.

Sociologists at the University of California and elsewhere, who have been studying effective teams, see some compelling reasons why friendly teams finish last:

- ✓ **Individual accountability is stronger in a "loner" team.** When a player's performance sags, he or she is more likely to say, "It's my problem and I'll fix it."

That happens more quickly than on teams in which everybody has to talk about problems before fixing them.

✓ **Arguments are less likely to divide a "loner" team into rival camps.** The battle plays out purely between the combatants. Sometimes, other teammates don't even care who wins.

✓ **Leadership resides more in each player and less in the coach.** That may be one reason individual leaders are more likely to emerge in a "loner" team.

—Adapted from "Close Doesn't Always Count in Winning Games," Benedict Carey, *New York Times*

Leadership: Team Management Tips #12

Dealing with team 'negatives'

Negative team members are like poison. Left unchecked, they corrode morale through the ranks. They can take many forms, including:

- **Cynics,** whose superior attitude infects other cynics in the ranks.
- **Political players,** who attract other power-seekers to their sides.
- **Laziness addicts,** who attract others who want an easy way to the top.

If you're dealing with negatives like those, keep the situation under control by taking these steps:

✓ **Take strong action against them,** no matter how popular they are. Giving preferential treatment to someone who's not delivering results sends a signal that you're afraid of him—hardly the message you want to send through the ranks.

✓ **Avoid politicking against negatives.** It's tempting to try to build consensus against them or express your frustrations to other members of your team. Be careful, since doing so can degenerate into a power skirmish that will erode your integrity as a true team leader.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #13

Caution: 'Fun' team-building activities could land you in court

In the summertime, corporate thoughts turn to company picnics and outdoor morale-boosting events. But a word of caution: If your team-building exercises go

beyond three-legged sack races and into the realm of reality TV, you could be headed for a lawsuit.

Engaging employees in fun and games is fine, but make sure the joke's not at one employee's expense. Stay away from activities that could embarrass, humiliate or injure employees.

Recent case: A California security company staged employee team competitions to boost its sales team's unity. Part of the exercise involved spanking members of the losing teams with yard signs. Other "fun" punishments: Employees were forced to eat baby food and wear diapers.

At least one employee's morale wasn't boosted. Janet Orlando quit over the incidents and sued, alleging sexual harassment. A jury awarded Orlando $500,000 in damages for emotional distress and lost wages, plus it slapped an extra $1.2 million onto the company's tab for punitive damages. Two supervisors who helped concoct the exercise were found *personally* liable for $50,000 each. (*Orlando v. Alarm One*, Fresno County Superior Court)

Leadership: Team Management Tips #14

Fun team-building activities: Bring out the Legos!

Here's a quick team-building exercise that's fun and inexpensive … and it won't take all day:

1. **Bring out a set of Legos** at your next team meeting or at the first meeting of a new team. Look for a set that includes different shapes.

2. **Build a structure** that represents your team's project or goal, the work of your group or organization, and the mission and vision that you have established. It could be where you do your work, a piece of art or piece of equipment needed for your job.

3. **Allow five minutes** to decide your team's goal or vision and to plan how you're going to build your structure. Allow 10 minutes to implement your plan and complete your structure.

4. **Discuss the following** at the end of the exercise: As your group worked to identify its goal, what are some things that helped you be successful, and what are some things that hindered the group? How can you use what you learned?

Note: If your organization is interested in more formal team training exercises, Lego Group offers an entire series of training programs called Serious Play. For more information, visit www.SeriousPlay.com.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #15

Leadership assessment: Improve your team management skills

To strengthen your team's performance, you probably embrace the notion of continuous improvement. By always looking for ways to teach your team new skills and holding it accountable for steadily better results, you send a message that you won't accept complacency or a halfhearted effort.

That's a good start, but how about your *own* performance?

Leading a team wisely requires a high degree of self-awareness. You should know how the group perceives you and what strengths or weaknesses influence your ability to lead. Use the exercise below to help you elicit feedback from the team about your own performance.

Leadership assessment: Invite the team to grade your performance

Distribute this exercise to all your team members, and ask them to complete it. Promise anonymity: Insist that they not write their names on the form. That way, they won't be discouraged from providing honest feedback.

Read each statement below. Rate the team leader on a scale of 1 to 5 as follows:

1 = Never 2 = Occasionally 3 = Sometimes 4 = Somewhat often 5 = Frequently

Our team leader:

____ acts arrogant when talking with the team.

____ treats team members rudely.

____ micromanages the team.

____ gives us too much negative feedback.

____ lies to the team.

____ enjoys making people sweat.

____ treats team members disrespectfully.

____ plays favorites on the team.

____ uses inappropriate humor.

____ loses her temper.

____ doesn't recognize the team's efforts.

____ keeps changing deadlines or shifting team goals.

____ can't keep a secret.

Comments: _____

_____

_____

Note: After collecting the forms, add up the score. Any total below 20 means that you're an enlightened leader. Once you pass 25, however, you're entering the danger zone. Take their input to heart, and try to improve your communication and leadership skills.

Leadership: Team Management Tips #16

Re-energize your team: 6 quick tips

► **Pump up creativity** by scheduling a group innovation strategy session, even it if means coming in on a weekend or setting aside a few hours a week, recommends Rowan Gibson, co-author of *Innovation to the Core*. Let discussions play out and reward effort with, say, extra vacation time, a prized parking space or a spot on the development team.

► **Want teams to work together most effectively?** Keep some distance between one member and the rest of the team, says an article in *Organization Science*. When one member is at a different location, it forces the group to be more conscious about including that person. *The result:* better and more productive communication. When forming a team, think beyond individuals to consider configuration.

► **Encourage your team to ask you the hardest questions** they can think of, not the easiest. That's what the Dalai Lama asks journalists to do when they interview him. It's a leadership practice that's worth copying.

► **Poll your team members** to find out where they'd like to see your organization next year, in the next five years and on into the next decade. Post responses on a whiteboard, and use them to brainstorm for a new, shared sense of mission.

► **Keep your team motivated** during demanding periods by stressing the personal side. Try a simple statement such as, "Is there anything I can do for you?" It shows you haven't forgotten the "give" side of "give and take."

► **Resist the temptation** to keep people who hate each other from working together. Once you begin to cherry-pick the people you put on teams to avoid conflict, you lose the ability to use your best people to your best advantage.

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FMLA Intermittent Leave: 5 guidelines to managing intermittent leave and curbing leave abuse under the new FMLA regulations

One of the biggest employer complaints about the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is the productivity problems caused by employees' use—and abuse—of FMLA intermittent leave. The problem: Employees with chronic health problems often take FMLA leave in short increments of an hour or less. The Department of Labor took steps to help minimize workplace disruptions due to unscheduled FMLA absences by saying that, in most cases, employees who take FMLA intermittent leave must follow their employers' call-in procedures for reporting an absence. Amend your organization's policies, update your employee handbook and revisit how you track FMLA intermittent leave with these 5 guidelines.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/FMLAIntermittentLeave

Overtime Labor Law: 6 compliance tips to avoid overtime lawsuits, wage-and-hour Labor audits and FLSA exemption mistakes

Employers, beware: The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division reports that wage-and-hour labor litigation continues to increase exponentially. Federal class actions brought under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) outnumber all other types of private class actions in employment-related cases. Use this special report, Overtime Labor Law: 6 compliance tips to avoid overtime lawsuits, wage-and-hour Labor audits and FLSA exemption mistakes, to review your overtime pay policy and double-check your FLSA exempt employees' status. Expecting a visit from a DOL auditor? Get prepared by taking the self-audit at the end of this report.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/OvertimeLaborLaw

Office Communication Toolkit: 10 tips for managers on active listening skills, motivating employees, workplace productivity, employee retention strategies and change management techniques

A manager's job is 100 times easier and more rewarding when his or her employees are performing like a well-oiled machine. But when that machine runs slowly or breaks down entirely, a manager's job becomes exponentially harder. The best managers are the best listeners … listen to our 10 tips and maximize office communication skills and bolster workplace productivity.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/OfficeCommunicationToolkit

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Workplace Violence Prevention Toolkit: HR advice, guidelines and policies to keep your workplace safe

Unfortunately, in the wake of a spate of workplace shootings, HR professionals and managers nationwide must consider the horrific possibility of violence erupting at their own facilities and events. To help employers prevent tragedy, this toolkit offers business advice, guidelines and policies aimed at keeping workplaces safe from employee violence. Learn prevention strategies, tips on identifying potentially violent workers, managerial advice on maintaining a safe workplace. It includes two sample anti-violence policies, adaptable for use in any company, plus checklists to use in case violence erupts.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/WorkplaceViolencePrevention

14 Tips on Business Etiquette: Setting a professional tone with co-workers, clients and customers

For organizations and employees alike, recognizing the critical link between business protocol and profit is key to your success. Learn how to confidently interact with colleagues in ways that make you and your whole organization shine. Discover best practices on making proper introductions; cubicle etiquette; "casual dress" rules; handshake protocol; guest etiquette; workplace behavior faux pas; business dining etiquette, office wedding invites and other co-worker special occasions; business letter and email protocol—and even how your office decorations may affect your professional image.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/BusinessEtiquette101

12 Ways to Optimize Your Employee Benefits Program: Low-cost employee incentives, recognition programs and employee rewards

If you've had to cut pay and staff and now expect more from those who remain, it's vital to revamp your employee recognition and rewards program. Employers can double their rewards and recognition efforts in innovative, cost-efficient ways with employee-of-the-month awards, employee incentive pay, employee appreciation luncheons, more time off, shopping sprees, wellness incentive contests, plus employee rewards customized to motivate Millennials, Gen Xers, Baby Boomers and the Matures. Now is the time to get clever with your employee recognition programs. This report shows you how with great ideas offered up from our Business Management Daily readers.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/EmployeeBenefitsProgram

The Bully Boss Strikes Again! How to deal with bosses who make crazy requests

And you thought your boss was unreasonable? Bet he never asked you to perform oral surgery or fill in for the bomb squad. Talk about "other duties as assigned!" Even if your direct supervisor swamps you with petty tasks and doesn't appreciate all you do, you can always "manage up" to make sure the boss's boss knows your worth. This report includes practical advice on how to manage a toxic boss along with dozens of outrageous stories about bully bosses.

http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/BullyBoss

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Microsoft Email: Outlook Tips & Training: How to improve productivity by effectively employing under-used features already at your fingertips

We all use Outlook. It's easy. You can answer email, keep your appointments and your calendar, and save your files in various folders. But are you using it to manage your entire workflow? You can. Melissa P. Esquibel combines her 25+ years of experience in information technology with a background in training, technical writing and business risk analysis to move beyond email and help you understand Outlook's amazing workflow benefits. You'll discover how to get more out of Outlook than you ever dreamed possible with this hands-on road map to Outlook that can send your productivity skyrocketing.

http://www.businessmanagementdaily.com/MicrosoftEmailOutlook

17 Team Building Ideas: The team building kit for managers with team building exercises, activities and games to build winning teams today!

With employees still reeling from workplace budget cuts, now's a great time for new team building ideas. No, you don't need an expensive round of paintball to gain the benefits of team building exercises, but you do need to squeeze the most out of them. This report provides teamwork examples, exercises and tips for leading winning teams. Go from being a manager who oversees people to a leader who molds them into winning teams with these 17 team building ideas.

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/TeamBuildingIdeas

10 Time Management Tips: A how-to guide on efficiently managing your time through effective delegating, calendar management and using productivity tools

In this era of downsizing and the quest for efficiency, businesses of all sizes are asking employees to take on extra tasks to boost productivity. Has your job turned into one of those "stretch jobs"? If so, you may be looking for a better way to get more done in less time, reduce stress and stop burning the midnight oil. Read about calendar management, keyboard shortcuts, running productive meetings, setting up agenda templates and using tech tools for project management with these 10 time management tips. Learn to prioritize your tasks and stop working in a crisis mode all the time

www.businessmanagementdaily.com/TimeManagementTips

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At Business Management Daily, we're driven to help organizations and individuals succeed. That's why we deliver plain-English, actionable advice to high-performers at over 80,000 companies of all sizes across hundreds of different industries.

Our Free Email Newsletters, Print Newsletters, Free Special Reports and Webinars, Podcasts, Audio Conferences & CDs help provide business professionals with the news, skills and strategies they need to grow their business, avoid legal pitfalls and advance their careers.

Our editorial team includes experienced managers, leaders, HR professionals, lawyers, administrative professionals, CPAs, strategists and business owners from a wide variety of industries.

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