

BUILDING HIGH-PERFORMING TEAMS: KEY TACTICS FOR BUSINESS MANAGERS

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Abstract:

Creating and maintaining high-performing teams is essential for organizational success. This article explores key tactics that business managers can employ to build and sustain such teams. By understanding the dynamics of teamwork, fostering a positive team culture, promoting effective communication, providing necessary resources, and encouraging continuous learning and development, managers can enhance team performance and drive overall business outcomes.

Keywords: *High-performing teams, Business management, Team dynamics, Team culture, Communication, Continuous learning*

INTRODUCTION:

High-performing teams are the cornerstone of successful businesses. They exhibit exceptional collaboration, innovation, and productivity, achieving superior results compared to their counterparts. Business managers play a pivotal role in nurturing and sustaining such teams by implementing specific tactics tailored to their organizational context. This article aims to explore these key tactics and their implications for building and maintaining high-performing teams in various business settings.

Understanding Team Dynamics:

Team dynamics are the intricate interpersonal relationships and interactions that occur within a group of individuals working towards a common goal. To harness the full potential of a team, it is essential for business managers to have a deep understanding of these dynamics. Firstly, recognizing the unique strengths and weaknesses of team members is crucial. Each individual brings a diverse set of skills, experiences, and perspectives to the table. By acknowledging and leveraging these differences, managers can create a cohesive team where each member's contributions are valued and utilized effectively.

Diversity within a team can be a powerful catalyst for innovation. Embracing a variety of backgrounds, cultures, and ideas fosters creativity and problem-solving capabilities. Business managers must create an environment where all team members feel empowered to express their opinions and contribute their unique insights. By harnessing the collective intelligence of a diverse team, managers can drive innovation and out-of-the-box thinking, leading to more robust solutions and outcomes.

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities is another critical aspect of understanding team dynamics. When each team member knows their role and how it contributes to the overall objectives, it minimizes confusion and enhances collaboration. Business managers should ensure that tasks are delegated effectively, taking into account each individual's strengths and interests. By clarifying expectations and aligning responsibilities with team members' skills, managers can optimize performance and productivity.

Team dynamics are influenced by the relationships and interactions among team members. Building trust and fostering psychological safety are foundational elements for effective teamwork. When team members feel safe to express their opinions, share their concerns, and take risks, it creates a supportive environment where collaboration flourishes. Business managers play a critical role in cultivating this trust through transparent communication, empathy, and genuine care for their team members' well-being.

Understanding team dynamics is essential for business managers to effectively lead and manage their teams towards success. By recognizing individual strengths, leveraging diversity, establishing clear roles, fostering trust, and promoting psychological safety, managers can create a cohesive and high-performing team. Ultimately, by investing in understanding and optimizing team dynamics, managers can unlock the full potential of their teams and drive superior business outcomes.

Recognizing individual strengths and weaknesses:

Recognizing individual strengths and weaknesses is a fundamental aspect of building high-performing teams. Every team member brings a unique set of skills, experiences, and perspectives to the table. By acknowledging and understanding these differences, business managers can leverage them to create a more diverse and well-rounded team. This recognition allows managers to assign tasks and roles that align with each individual's strengths, maximizing their contribution to the team's success. Conversely, identifying weaknesses enables managers to provide targeted support and development opportunities, ensuring that team members have the necessary resources to overcome challenges and grow professionally.

Recognizing individual strengths fosters a culture of appreciation and empowerment within the team. When team members feel valued for their unique abilities, they are more motivated to actively engage in team activities and contribute to shared goals. This sense of recognition also cultivates a positive work environment where collaboration and mutual respect thrive. By highlighting strengths, managers can create a supportive atmosphere that encourages creativity, innovation, and initiative among team members.

However, it's equally important for managers to acknowledge and address weaknesses within the team. Ignoring or downplaying weaknesses can lead to inefficiencies, conflicts, and ultimately, hinder the team's performance. Instead, managers should approach weaknesses as opportunities for improvement and growth. This may involve providing targeted training, mentoring, or coaching to help team members develop new skills or overcome limitations. By proactively addressing weaknesses, managers demonstrate their commitment to supporting the professional development of their team members, ultimately strengthening the team as a whole.

In addition to benefiting individual team members, recognizing strengths and weaknesses also enhances overall team dynamics and effectiveness. A team that is composed of individuals who complement each other's strengths and weaknesses is better equipped to tackle complex challenges and adapt to changing circumstances. By capitalizing on the diverse talents and capabilities of team members, managers can foster synergy and collaboration, leading to higher levels of performance and productivity. In this way, recognizing individual strengths and weaknesses is not only about supporting individual growth but also about optimizing team performance and achieving collective success.

Leveraging diversity for innovation:

Leveraging diversity for innovation is not merely a strategic choice for businesses; it has become an imperative in today's globalized and interconnected world. Diversity encompasses a wide range of dimensions, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and cognitive styles. By embracing diversity, organizations can access a wealth of perspectives, experiences, and ideas that fuel innovation. Research consistently demonstrates that diverse teams are more creative, adaptable, and adept at problem-solving than homogeneous ones. Therefore, businesses that actively cultivate diversity within their workforce stand to gain a competitive edge in an increasingly complex and dynamic marketplace.

However, harnessing the potential of diversity for innovation requires more than just assembling a diverse group of individuals. It entails creating an inclusive environment where every voice is heard, valued, and respected. Inclusive leadership practices, such as fostering psychological safety, promoting equity, and empowering diverse team members, are crucial for unlocking the full potential of diversity. When people feel included and appreciated for their unique contributions, they are more likely to collaborate effectively, challenge conventional thinking, and generate innovative solutions to business challenges.

Diversity alone is not sufficient to drive innovation; it must be accompanied by inclusion and equity. Inclusion goes beyond mere representation; it involves actively inviting diverse perspectives, fostering belongingness, and removing barriers to participation. Equity ensures that all individuals have equal access to opportunities, resources, and support systems, irrespective of their background or identity. Organizations that prioritize diversity, inclusion, and equity (often referred to as DEI initiatives) not only enhance their capacity for innovation but also cultivate a more engaged, motivated, and resilient workforce.

One of the key benefits of leveraging diversity for innovation is the ability to anticipate and respond effectively to the evolving needs and preferences of diverse customer segments. By bringing together individuals from different cultural backgrounds, demographics, and lived experiences, organizations can gain valuable insights into emerging trends, market demands, and consumer preferences. This deeper understanding enables businesses to develop products, services, and marketing strategies that resonate with diverse audiences, driving customer loyalty, satisfaction, and market share.

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities:

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities within a team is fundamental to its success. Clarity in roles ensures that each team member understands what is expected of them, reducing confusion, overlap, and conflicts. When roles are well-defined, individuals can focus on their specific tasks and responsibilities, leading to increased productivity and efficiency. Moreover, clear roles contribute to accountability, as team members are aware of their own duties and those of their colleagues, making it easier to hold each other accountable for their contributions to the team's goals.

Effective communication is essential for establishing clear roles and responsibilities. Managers must communicate expectations clearly, outlining each team member's role, tasks, and areas of responsibility. This communication should be ongoing, with regular check-ins to clarify any misunderstandings and address any changes in roles or tasks. Additionally,

creating role descriptions or job profiles can provide a reference point for team members, ensuring alignment between expectations and actual responsibilities.

Another aspect of establishing clear roles and responsibilities is ensuring that roles are aligned with individual skills, strengths, and interests. When assigning roles, managers should consider each team member's capabilities and preferences to maximize efficiency and engagement. This alignment not only enhances individual performance but also fosters a sense of ownership and motivation within the team. By leveraging each member's strengths, the team can operate more effectively and achieve better outcomes.

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities facilitates collaboration within the team. When everyone knows their role and how it contributes to the overall objectives, collaboration becomes smoother and more focused. Team members can coordinate their efforts more effectively, leveraging each other's expertise to achieve common goals. Additionally, clear roles help prevent duplication of work and ensure that all necessary tasks are completed, leading to greater efficiency and synergy within the team.

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities is crucial for team success. It enhances productivity, accountability, communication, and collaboration within the team, ultimately driving better outcomes for the organization. By defining roles clearly, aligning them with individual strengths, and fostering effective communication, managers can create an environment where team members understand their contributions, work cohesively towards common goals, and achieve higher levels of performance.

Fostering a Positive Team Culture:

Fostering a positive team culture is paramount to the success and sustainability of any organization. At its core, a positive team culture is built upon trust, respect, and collaboration among team members. One of the fundamental aspects of cultivating such a culture is to encourage an environment where individuals feel psychologically safe to express their opinions, share ideas, and take calculated risks without fear of judgment or reprisal. When team members feel valued and supported, they are more likely to engage actively, contribute their unique perspectives, and work together towards common goals.

Central to fostering a positive team culture is the promotion of accountability and ownership. Team members should be empowered to take responsibility for their actions, decisions, and outcomes. By holding themselves and each other accountable, individuals demonstrate commitment to the team's objectives and uphold high standards of performance. Moreover, cultivating a sense of ownership instills a deeper sense of pride and motivation within the team, driving a collective effort towards excellence.

Celebrating successes and learning from failures is another crucial aspect of fostering a positive team culture. Acknowledging and rewarding achievements, both big and small, reinforces a sense of accomplishment and boosts team morale. Equally important is the ability to embrace failures as learning opportunities rather than setbacks. Encouraging a culture of experimentation and continuous improvement enables teams to adapt, innovate, and grow stronger in the face of challenges.

Effective communication lies at the heart of building and sustaining a positive team culture. Open and transparent communication channels foster trust, clarity, and alignment among team members. Leaders play a key role in facilitating communication by actively listening to

their team, providing constructive feedback, and ensuring that information flows freely across all levels of the organization. By fostering a culture of open dialogue and collaboration, teams can overcome barriers, resolve conflicts, and achieve greater synergy in their endeavors.

Ultimately, fostering a positive team culture requires ongoing commitment and effort from both leaders and team members. It is a journey that involves building relationships, nurturing talent, and continuously reinforcing shared values and norms. By investing in the development of a positive team culture, organizations can create an environment where individuals thrive, creativity flourishes, and collective success becomes not only possible but inevitable.

Encouraging trust and psychological safety:

Encouraging trust and psychological safety within a team is paramount for fostering an environment where individuals feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute their best work. Trust serves as the foundation upon which effective collaboration and communication thrive, allowing team members to express ideas, share feedback, and take calculated risks without fear of judgment or repercussion. In cultivating trust, business managers must lead by example, demonstrating transparency, honesty, and integrity in their actions and decisions. By consistently upholding these values, managers can build credibility and establish a sense of reliability that encourages trust among team members.

Psychological safety goes hand in hand with trust, creating a supportive atmosphere where individuals feel comfortable expressing themselves authentically and taking interpersonal risks. In psychologically safe environments, team members are more likely to engage in open dialogue, admit mistakes, and seek help when needed, knowing that they will be met with understanding and support rather than criticism or punishment. Business managers play a crucial role in promoting psychological safety by creating clear expectations, fostering a culture of empathy and respect, and actively listening to the concerns and perspectives of their team members. By validating and valuing diverse viewpoints, managers can cultivate an inclusive environment where everyone feels heard and valued.

Encouraging trust and psychological safety not only enhances individual well-being but also boosts team performance and innovation. When team members feel safe to voice their opinions and take risks, they are more likely to collaborate effectively, explore creative solutions, and challenge the status quo. This dynamic fosters a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability, where teams can thrive in fast-paced and uncertain environments. Additionally, psychological safety fosters a sense of belonging and camaraderie within the team, leading to higher levels of engagement, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Despite its importance, building trust and psychological safety takes time and deliberate effort. Business managers must invest in relationship-building activities, foster open communication channels, and address any issues or conflicts that arise promptly and constructively. By prioritizing trust and psychological safety, managers can lay the groundwork for high-performing teams that are resilient, cohesive, and capable of achieving extraordinary results. Ultimately, it is through the cultivation of trust and psychological safety that teams can unleash their full potential and drive sustainable success for the organization.

Promoting accountability and ownership:

Promoting accountability and ownership within a team is fundamental to achieving high performance and fostering a culture of excellence. At its core, accountability involves taking responsibility for one's actions, decisions, and outcomes. When team members feel a sense of ownership over their work, they are more likely to be committed, engaged, and proactive in their efforts. Managers play a crucial role in promoting accountability by setting clear expectations, providing support and resources, and holding individuals and the team as a whole answerable for their performance.

One effective way to promote accountability is through establishing clear goals and objectives that align with the team's mission and organizational priorities. By ensuring that everyone understands what is expected of them and how their contributions contribute to the team's success, managers empower team members to take ownership of their tasks and outcomes. Regularly communicating these goals, tracking progress, and celebrating achievements further reinforces accountability and fosters a sense of accomplishment within the team.

Fostering a culture of accountability requires creating an environment where individuals feel safe to speak up, share ideas, and voice concerns without fear of judgment or reprisal. Managers can cultivate this culture by encouraging open communication, actively listening to feedback, and addressing issues promptly and transparently. By promoting a climate of trust and psychological safety, team members are more likely to take ownership of their work and hold themselves and their peers accountable for delivering results.

In addition to setting clear expectations and fostering open communication, managers can promote accountability by providing regular feedback and coaching to team members. Constructive feedback helps individuals understand how their actions impact the team's performance and provides guidance on areas for improvement. By offering support and guidance, managers empower team members to take ownership of their development and actively seek opportunities for growth and learning.

Ultimately, promoting accountability and ownership is not just about holding individuals responsible for their actions; it is about creating a culture where everyone feels invested in the team's success and is motivated to contribute their best efforts. By fostering a sense of ownership, managers can cultivate a high-performing team that is driven, committed, and resilient in the face of challenges, ultimately leading to greater organizational success.

Celebrating successes and learning from failures:

Celebrating successes and learning from failures are integral aspects of fostering a culture of continuous improvement within high-performing teams. When successes are acknowledged and celebrated, team members feel valued and motivated, reinforcing positive behaviors and encouraging future achievement. Recognition not only boosts morale but also serves as a powerful incentive for individuals to strive for excellence in their work. By publicly acknowledging and rewarding achievements, managers can reinforce the behaviors and outcomes aligned with the team's goals and values.

Equally important to celebrating successes is the ability to learn from failures. In every endeavor, setbacks and failures are inevitable. However, what distinguishes high-performing teams is their capacity to extract valuable lessons from these experiences and use them as opportunities for growth and development. Rather than assigning blame or dwelling on mistakes, team members and leaders should adopt a mindset that views failures as learning

opportunities. Encouraging open and honest reflection on what went wrong, why it happened, and how it can be prevented in the future fosters a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

Learning from failures cultivates resilience within the team. When individuals are empowered to take risks and experiment, they are more likely to innovate and push boundaries. Failure becomes less daunting when viewed as a natural part of the journey toward success. By creating a safe environment where failure is not stigmatized but rather embraced as a stepping stone to progress, managers enable their teams to bounce back stronger and more resilient than before.

Additionally, celebrating successes and learning from failures fosters a sense of camaraderie and solidarity within the team. When victories are shared collectively and failures are viewed as shared experiences, team members become more supportive of one another. Instead of working in isolation or competition, they collaborate and offer assistance, knowing that their collective success is dependent on each individual's contributions. This sense of unity strengthens team cohesion and enhances overall performance.

Celebrating successes and learning from failures are essential practices for building and sustaining high-performing teams. By recognizing achievements, embracing failures as opportunities for growth, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement, managers can cultivate an environment where teams thrive and excel. Ultimately, it is through these practices that teams can achieve their full potential and contribute to the success of the organization.

Promoting Effective Communication:

Promoting effective communication within a team is paramount to its success and cohesion. Clear and open channels of communication foster trust, understanding, and collaboration among team members. One crucial aspect of promoting effective communication is establishing an environment where individuals feel comfortable sharing ideas, concerns, and feedback without fear of judgment or reprisal. Encouraging an atmosphere of psychological safety allows team members to voice their opinions freely, leading to richer discussions and better decision-making processes.

Active listening is another essential component of effective communication. Encouraging team members to listen attentively to one another promotes understanding and empathy. By actively engaging with their peers' perspectives and experiences, individuals can gain valuable insights, identify common ground, and resolve conflicts more effectively. Furthermore, fostering a culture of active listening cultivates a sense of respect and appreciation among team members, enhancing overall collaboration and rapport.

In addition to verbal communication, leveraging various communication tools and technologies can facilitate seamless information exchange and collaboration within the team. Whether it's through email, instant messaging platforms, video conferencing, or project management software, providing accessible and user-friendly communication channels enhances connectivity and efficiency. Moreover, utilizing technology enables remote teams to stay connected and aligned despite geographical barriers, promoting inclusivity and flexibility in today's dynamic work environments.

Effective communication also entails providing clear and timely feedback to team members. Constructive feedback helps individuals understand their strengths and areas for improvement, empowering them to enhance their performance and contribute more effectively to the team's goals. Managers play a critical role in delivering feedback in a constructive and supportive manner, focusing on specific behaviors and outcomes while fostering a growth mindset within the team. By promoting a culture of continuous feedback and improvement, teams can adapt and evolve to meet evolving challenges and opportunities.

Lastly, promoting effective communication requires ongoing effort and commitment from all team members. Regular check-ins, team meetings, and collaborative sessions provide opportunities for individuals to share updates, seek clarification, and align on priorities. By fostering a culture of transparency, openness, and mutual respect, teams can overcome communication barriers, build trust, and achieve greater cohesion and success in pursuing shared objectives.

Establishing open channels for feedback:

Establishing open channels for feedback is essential for fostering a culture of transparency, growth, and continuous improvement within a team or organization. Open communication channels provide team members with the opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas, concerns, and suggestions openly and without fear of reprisal. By encouraging feedback at all levels, from peer-to-peer to manager-to-team member interactions, organizations can create an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

One of the key benefits of establishing open channels for feedback is that it enables teams to identify and address issues promptly. When team members feel comfortable providing feedback, they are more likely to speak up about challenges or obstacles they encounter in their work. This enables managers to take proactive measures to resolve issues before they escalate, ultimately improving team performance and productivity.

Open feedback channels facilitate constructive dialogue and collaboration among team members. By exchanging feedback and engaging in meaningful discussions, team members can gain valuable insights into different perspectives and approaches. This not only enhances problem-solving and decision-making processes but also promotes a sense of unity and cohesion within the team.

In addition to fostering collaboration, open feedback channels contribute to individual and professional development. Constructive feedback provides team members with valuable insights into their strengths and areas for improvement. This enables them to identify opportunities for growth, set personal development goals, and take proactive steps to enhance their skills and capabilities. Ultimately, establishing open channels for feedback is a cornerstone of building a culture of trust and accountability within an organization. When team members feel empowered to voice their opinions and concerns openly, they are more likely to take ownership of their work and contribute actively to the team's success. This cultivates a sense of trust and mutual respect among team members, leading to higher levels of engagement, satisfaction, and overall performance.

Encouraging active listening and constructive dialogue:

Encouraging active listening and constructive dialogue is paramount in fostering effective communication within teams and organizations. Active listening involves fully concentrating

on what is being said, understanding the message, and responding thoughtfully. It requires not only hearing the words but also empathizing with the speaker's perspective and emotions. By promoting active listening, business managers can create an environment where team members feel valued and respected, leading to improved collaboration and problem-solving.

Constructive dialogue goes hand in hand with active listening, as it encourages open and honest communication among team members. It involves expressing thoughts, ideas, and concerns in a respectful manner while also being receptive to others' viewpoints. Constructive dialogue facilitates the exchange of diverse perspectives, which can lead to innovative solutions and better decision-making. Business managers play a crucial role in promoting such dialogue by setting clear expectations for communication, modeling constructive behaviors, and providing opportunities for discussion and feedback.

One of the key benefits of encouraging active listening and constructive dialogue is the enhancement of team cohesion and trust. When team members feel heard and understood, they are more likely to collaborate effectively and support one another. This creates a positive team culture where individuals feel empowered to contribute their ideas and opinions without fear of judgment or reprisal. As a result, teams become more resilient and adaptable, capable of navigating challenges and seizing opportunities together. Active listening and constructive dialogue contribute to conflict resolution and problem-solving within teams. By fostering an environment where all voices are heard and respected, managers can prevent misunderstandings and reduce the likelihood of conflicts escalating. Instead of avoiding or ignoring issues, team members are encouraged to address them openly and collaboratively, leading to more effective solutions and stronger relationships.

Encouraging active listening and constructive dialogue is essential for promoting effective communication, enhancing team cohesion, and driving overall organizational success. Business managers should prioritize creating an environment where team members feel empowered to express themselves openly and respectfully. By fostering a culture of listening and dialogue, managers can unlock the full potential of their teams and foster a culture of continuous improvement and innovation.

Leveraging technology for seamless communication:

In today's fast-paced business environment, leveraging technology for seamless communication has become not just advantageous but essential for organizations aiming to stay competitive. The rapid advancement of communication technologies has transformed how teams collaborate, share information, and coordinate efforts across distances and time zones. By harnessing the power of digital tools and platforms, businesses can streamline communication processes, enhance productivity, and foster stronger connections among team members.

One key benefit of leveraging technology for communication is the ability to break down barriers of time and space. Virtual communication tools such as video conferencing, instant messaging, and email enable teams to connect in real-time regardless of their physical locations. This flexibility allows for more efficient collaboration, as team members can communicate and collaborate on projects without being constrained by traditional office settings. Additionally, technology facilitates asynchronous communication, allowing team members to communicate and share information at their convenience, thus accommodating different work schedules and time zones. Technology enables richer and more dynamic forms

of communication beyond text-based messages. Video conferencing platforms, for example, allow for face-to-face interactions even when team members are miles apart, fostering a sense of presence and engagement that traditional phone calls or emails cannot replicate. Similarly, collaborative tools such as virtual whiteboards and document sharing platforms enable teams to brainstorm ideas, edit documents in real-time, and track changes collaboratively, enhancing creativity and productivity.

However, while technology offers numerous benefits for communication, it also presents challenges that must be addressed. One such challenge is the potential for information overload and communication fatigue, particularly with the proliferation of communication channels and notifications. Business managers must implement strategies to manage digital communication effectively, such as setting clear communication protocols, prioritizing important messages, and leveraging automation tools to streamline workflows.

Leveraging technology for seamless communication is imperative for modern businesses seeking to thrive in a digital world. By embracing digital communication tools and platforms, organizations can break down barriers of time and space, foster collaboration and innovation, and adapt to the evolving needs of the workforce. However, it is essential for business managers to strike a balance between leveraging technology for communication efficiency and addressing potential challenges to ensure effective and meaningful communication within their teams.

Summary:

Building high-performing teams requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses understanding team dynamics, fostering a positive team culture, promoting effective communication, providing necessary resources, and encouraging continuous learning and development. By implementing these key tactics, business managers can cultivate an environment where teams thrive, leading to improved performance and sustained success for the organization.

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