



Special Report:
**From Problem Team
to Money-Making
Machine!**

*How to turn your staff
into a successful team
that makes your business
more profitable
and frees you to do
what you started your business for
in the first place.*

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This report is going to show you how to have more time to do what you want *and* make more money — that's a pretty good formula. If you own a small business, chances are, having employees has added to your workload: taking up more of your time, not freeing you. And you probably know by now that just having more people working for you doesn't necessarily mean you'll make more money.

I've figured out how to make the formula work for me. Because of what I've set up with my employees, *I've been able to reduce the amount of time I'm spending in my business by about 70% in the past year, while increasing my revenues by more than 60%*. I have employees who have been with me for over 20 years, and the least amount of time that any of my staff has been with me is 6 years. They need no supervision, handle most of the day-to-day business of my company without me, and I get compliments about them from customers and vendors all the time. This, in an industry famous for employee problems and job hopping: marketing communications, advertising, and graphic design.

What if it worked for you, too?

What if you could have a loyal team of employees that churns in profits for your company and hums along beautifully, like a well-crafted machine? Imagine that there's fun and energy in your work environment and *it's all directed to support your business goals.*

Imagine what it would be like if your employees actually brought you more business, came to work every day excited to work with you, and translated that excitement to their interaction with your customers. How much would your customers love that, and how much would it impact your bottom line?

Wouldn't it be great to have a team that functions so seamlessly together that you'd be able to leave for weeks at a time, knowing that you'd come back to your business being in the same or better shape than when you left? *All because you have these bright, passionate, and loyal people rolling up their sleeves beside you, understanding your vision, and helping to make all of your dreams for your business come true.*

Sounds wonderful, doesn't it? But, in my experience, most small business teams don't work this way, and many have horrible nightmare stories (and you might know of some, too) that cost the business large amounts of money every year because of employee ineffectiveness, turnover, problems, and even law suits.

Dealing with employees can be one of the biggest problems in business today, and one of the things that will kill your profits the quickest if you don't know how to deal with it.

Think about it — when you actually started hiring employees, you became *a manager*. And that's not something most small business owners are prepared to be. You want to avoid all the mistakes you know can be made, *but how do you do it?* How do you avoid these problems now, and down the road as your business grows?

My big *aha!*

I didn't always know how to engage and retain employees, how to turn them into an asset that makes my company more profitable, and it didn't come naturally to me. In fact, in recent EQ tests

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administered to my entire organization, for my “natural” abilities, my lowest scores were in “empathy” and “interpersonal relationships.” Since it didn't come naturally to me, I had to learn these principles and practices, and I can teach you how to do it, too.

The turning point for me came at a day-long business workshop in Cleveland, Ohio, many years ago. I clearly remember the small, plain conference room we were in, and the skyline of downtown Cleveland and Lake Erie outside of the upper-story window. It was a small group, maybe 6 or 8 business owners, and all of us owned creative firms — graphic design or advertising agencies. I had been looking forward to the workshop for weeks, as the chance to share business practices with other owners in my industry was extremely limited by the dog-eat-dog business climate in my geographic area. I was sitting next to a very flustered woman who complained, during the break, that she couldn't keep good employees, and that they were never happy. She didn't understand why, as she set very clear objectives for them:

“I tell my employees their job is to make me look good,” she told me.

I was aghast! Who would want *that* for a job?, I wondered silently to myself. And the more I listened to her tale of woe, I decided it might not be very easy to make her look good, at that. She heaved a great sigh as she told me her second problem: she didn't understand why her clients didn't want to work with anyone in her company but her:

“My clients don't feel comfortable working with anyone in my company but me. I'm the owner. I'm the one they all want to work with,” she lamented.

She flattered herself to think she was the only one capable of solving client problems, but also realized this meant she had to always be at her clients' beck and call. She was running herself ragged, and she was exhausted.

She couldn't see it for herself, but it became crystal clear to me: I knew right then that I'd never let that happen to my business.

It was like something clicked over in my brain at that moment — like the movie froze on that frame, and the world around me came to a screeching halt — she couldn't see it for herself, but it became crystal clear to me: *I knew right then that I'd never let that happen to my business.*

My graphic design firm was about 5 years old at the time, and I had 2 employees — I was just beginning to struggle with these issues. No one had taught me the right way to do this, *but I knew at that moment* that it wasn't supposed to be *like that*. At least not for my company. So now I had a question that I had never before thought about — how *do* I do it? How *am I* supposed to manage my employees? This was the spark that set me on the path to find out how *should* I be engaging my employees.

First, I thought, I never wanted to keep my staff from growing by directing all of their efforts toward making *me* look good. I took a good hard look at how I managed them — was I doing that now, I asked myself? Then, I carefully turned over the idea in my mind of never being able to get out of the position of being the only person my clients wanted to work with — was that happening to me? What a horrible trap! I resolved to make the Cleveland Lady my poster child for *what not to do* and embarked on a serious program of employee empowerment. I knew that my employees needed it, and *I knew that I needed it*, if my business was going to survive and prosper.

The 3 big mistakes small business owners make that lead to problems with employees

If you're having a problem retaining and engaging good employees, you're probably making at least one of these 3 mistakes:

1. You're working too hard.
2. You're not clear about your expectations.
3. You haven't asked the right questions or listened well enough to the answers.

Mistake #1: You're working too hard.

Fix: You need a major mind set overhaul.

When I work with small business owners, I see this mistake being made over and over again. It's one of the most simple changes to describe, but without a doubt the most difficult change to make, because it has to do with the way we business owners think.

It all has to do with a secret, and this is the biggest secret I've learned in my 24 years of managing employees. The secret is this: *You've got to let go.*

Remember the woman I met at the workshop in Cleveland? The Cleveland Lady was working way too hard. She needed a major mind set shift. She needed to let go.

In order to make sure that I didn't follow in her footsteps, I needed a major mind set overhaul: I had to let go.

I had to let go of the idea that I was the only person who could handle the important work in my company — that I was the only person clients would be willing to meet with, that I was the only person who could come up with good ideas, that I was the only person capable of making decisions. If every important thing had to be

done by me, my business was not going to grow, my people were not going to grow, and I was going to be very, very tired — just like the Cleveland Lady.

Letting go is very difficult. Letting go is very necessary.

You've got to stop working so hard, too. You've got to make a major mind set shift, let go, and let others grow into their capabilities. You've got to let them do the difficult, important work, too.

You've got to stop working so hard, too. You've got to make a major mind set shift, let go, and let others grow into their capabilities. You've got to let them do the difficult, important work, too.

Mistake #2: You're not clear about your expectations.

Fix: You need an internal communications plan.

And it shouldn't be the Cleveland Lady's plan: "*Your job is to make me look good.*" Huh-uh. You need a better one than that.

It doesn't have to be a detailed plan, it just has to be a plan. And you need to communicate it to your staff.

Employees want three things:

- They want direction and regular feedback;
- they want to know your philosophy and the direction the business is going, to know what they're working towards;
- and they want to know how they fit into the plan.

You wouldn't be an entrepreneur if you didn't have your head in the clouds, so your employees expect you to be a bit different, a bit unpredictable. But you're their boss, and they look to you for direction, and it can be frustrating for them if you leave them on their own too much, which is something a lot of business own-

ers (myself included) do. It's really tempting to just hire someone good and let them do their thing — just cross that “to do” item off of your list and move on. *But that doesn't help you build a great team.*

A regular program of employee communication is a must for even the smallest company, and it needs to include a series of regular communication touch points. I work with my clients to develop a system of simple touch points that work into their business styles. The important thing is that they happen, and that they happen consistently.

Mistake #3: You haven't asked the right questions or listened well enough to the answers.

Fix: Ask your employees what they want. Then listen to and act on the answers (when it isn't bad for business or against the law).

This is just as simple as it sounds. Asking people outright what motivates them, what they need in order to feel supported in their work, and what they expect from you, will give you the answers you need to be a better manager.

You may be surprised. They may want less than you think. And the fact that you ask, if sincere, will give them pause — because most of them have not been asked these questions from a boss before.

The benefits of asking employees what they want is twofold:

- they respect you more for asking, and
- you don't have to guess what they want. (*I told you it was simple!*)

Patricia Drain, author, speaker, and consultant, tells this story about an employee of a staffing firm she once owned:

Patricia asked her top sales person, who she was positive was motivated by money, what he wanted. He was such a great performer, she wanted to give him a bonus or other incentive. He told her he wanted a parking spot near the door with a “#1 salesperson” sign on it. That was all he really wanted — to feel appreciated and recognized. She got him the spot and the sign that same day!

He told her he wanted a parking spot near the door with a “#1 salesperson” sign on it. That was all he really wanted — to feel appreciated and recognized.

When I’ve asked them what they want, I’ve had employees tell me they want more responsibility, less responsibility, more recognition, job sharing, working part time at home, to be able to come in late, to have their desk moved, and to start a branch office in Arizona (great idea, we went with it). I’ve had employees take advantage of me, and I’ve turned down a few requests. But I’ve had more wins than losses. And most of the answers have either cost me less money than I would have thought of on my own, given me more freedom or less stress (or both), or brought more money into the business.

Don’t guess about what it takes to motivate your employees, or what it would take for them to be more passionate about their jobs. Ask your employees what they want and act on the answers (when it isn’t bad for business or against the law).

Why all this is important to your business

Employee costs can exceed 40% of your business costs, so it’s important to spend this money well. And, for what you pay every employee, whether hourly or salaried, you’ll spend 25 to 30% more in taxes and benefits just to hire them. If you don’t consider these employee costs as an investment, chances are you’re looking at them as an expense, and *the thought of those dollars going out the door can really bring you down.*

This secret has the power to unleash the potential of your employees, to turn the money you spend on employees into an investment instead of an expense, and to turn your company into one of the top performers in your industry.

In a mid-1990's study on the ROI of human capital, using 1,000 companies, the 100 top performing firms shared beliefs of human value that were missing in the other 900. The main thing the top performers had in common was an effort to *consistently balance financial and human values*. The belief in people as a financial lever is still extremely rare. In most companies, people are considered to be an expense, not as an asset or an investment.

These companies knew the secret of empowering employees: *You've got to let go*. Don't underestimate the power of this small, unassuming phrase — it represents big changes. This secret has the power to unleash the potential of your employees, to turn the money you spend on employees into an investment instead of an expense, and to turn your company into one of the top performers in your industry.

The following are two of my favorite quotes on the subject of turning your staff into a high-functioning team that will help your business be more profitable:

“The only way to truly gain is to make other people better off.”
—Abraham Maslow

“You can get everything you want if you just help enough other people get what they want.”
—Zig Ziglar

Reading these quotes, you may think that they apply to attracting and retaining *customers*, and you'll be correct to think that. But I challenge you to also think of them as applying to your employees, and the practice of letting go. Try it and you'll see an entirely new world of possibilities open up for your business.

Letting go and empowering your employees can be frightening for most business owners, and it can also be exhilarating. And let me assure you, *you can do it*. With practice, this is something *you can do*.

Three Major Principles of top-performing teams

There are three major principles involved in turning a problem team into a money-making machine. I uncovered them after years of reading, studying, observing, asking questions, and working with coaches and mentors. They continue to work well for my business, and they'll work for yours, as well.

The Three Major Principles

- 1.** Get your people to think and act like owners
- 2.** Build a culture of interdependence
- 3.** Focus on each person's value to the organization

Principle #1: Get your people to think and act like owners

Getting my people to think and act like owners was a natural outcome of the program of employee empowerment that I embarked on after meeting the Cleveland Lady, and I've since found out that it's a major management component of many successful privately held corporations. The systems I've used with coaching clients get employees to look at things from a different point of view.

Responsibility and accountability are aspects of ownership.

Only those who feel a true sense of ownership in your company will be sincerely responsible to it and accountable for their own actions — isn't that why you're so responsible and accountable, because you own the place?

In Jason Jennings's book, *Think Big, Act Small*, the author describes managers in billion dollar private companies being rated on how much economic value they've created for the company during the previous twelve months. This echoes exactly how the business owner is compensated — *you, as the owner, have always been rewarded solely on the economic value you create for the company*. No value in the business = no paycheck, right?

In the companies the author studied, the employees who think and make decisions like owners are financially rewarded based on the value they add or create. Those who don't fit the profile, or don't add value, are moved out of the company quickly — they may be good people, but they may be happier somewhere else. *"People are most productive and have a passion for their work when they agree with the values of the company,"* says Jennings.

Principle #2: Build a culture of interdependence

At first blush, it sounds like a good idea to hire people who are self-motivated and can work *independently*, rather than inter-dependently, and I'll agree those are good qualities to have. But the temptation with employees like these, for owners, is to put them at a desk and just let them do the job, thinking, *"Good, that's one less thing I have to worry about."* Leaving employees to manage themselves can get you into trouble over time, in more ways than one.

First, *all employees need direction and feedback*, no matter how self-motivated and able to work independently they are. I've yet to meet an employee who wants to be left entirely alone unless he was up to no good. I did this, not once, but twice, with an office manager position — left them alone because I assumed they knew what they were doing — and ended up paying for it dearly both times.

Second, *people who prefer to work on their own may not be good team players*. An interdependent team knows the value

of working together for the good of the company versus gaining glory for themselves. The tactics used for building a culture of interdependence can help your people to rely on each other, which can alleviate all the craziness of problems like *withholding of information, sabotage, cliques, prima donnas*, and a raft of other tricks that people resort to when they don't feel valued as part of a team.

An amazing thing happened when I made this shift with decision-making in all areas of my company: decisions are being made more thoughtfully, carefully, and with better fiscal sense.

Principle #3: Focus on each person's value to the organization

Each of your employees has a special value to the organization that only they can provide, if you've hired correctly in the first place. That value should dictate their responsibility level and the decisions they're best suited to make. Focusing on each person's value to the business and assigning decision-making responsibility accordingly is *an excellent way to empower employees while letting go*.

When I first discovered this for my business, it was like a huge weight was lifted off of my back. As my business grew, I found it impossible to be up to speed on all of the technology and advancements in our industry while running the business, bringing in new business, and serving clients. When I realized that there were several people in my company who knew much more about technology than I did, and that I was consulting them on my technology decisions anyway, *it became apparent that I was definitely not the best person to be making those decisions*. I don't make those decisions any more — the person with the most value to the organization in that area makes the decision. My employees take this responsibility very seriously.

An amazing thing happened when I made this shift with decision-making in all areas of my company: decisions are being made more thoughtfully, carefully, and with better fiscal sense. This and other changes I've made to focus on the value of the individual

(and you can make them, too) has lowered my stress level while raising the confidence, resourcefulness, and strategic abilities of my staff.

They'll work hard for the opportunity to be part of a workplace that has meaning to them.

The benefits to you

Empowered employees, employees who feel that you're giving them room to do their best work and the responsibility for making themselves, the client, and the business look good (instead of just you), *will take ownership for their involvement in your business* and be more likely to stick around. Employees who understand how their jobs impact the organization and get regular feedback and direction *will motivate themselves to excel*. And employees who feel heard and listened to by their employer *will be thoughtful, careful, and respectful of the needs of the organization* in their requests. They'll work hard for the opportunity to be part of a workplace that has meaning to them.

Over the last several years, I've identified three major benefits of being a better manager as well as a good boss:

- My employee problems went away (almost entirely)
- My money flow increased (almost magically)
- My employees support me, they "lift me up," so I can do what I opened my business to do in the first place: I have the freedom to be creative on my own terms, to chart my own destiny. I have the luxury to call my own shots, I come and go as I please, I indulge my interests, and I make good money. I have bright, passionate, loyal employees rolling up their sleeves along side of me, (and along side of each other, without me), helping (seriously) to make all my dreams come true.

“If you’re really serious about turning your problem team into a money-making machine, sign up now for a one-on-one strategy session with me.”



Your business has many things in common with other businesses, and it also has its own unique differences. You need customized strategies that will help you improve the results you’re getting from your employees, so you can work less and make more money, right?

I can help you get there. *This session is where you and I roll up our sleeves, on the phone, in private one-on-one time*, and I will strategize with you, helping to craft exactly the plan you need to implement in your business, a plan that fits you specifically, so you can experience a dream team, money-making machine.

Here are just some of the things we can talk about in your session. We’ll chose the ones that will get results for you the fastest:

- How to “*let go*” and empower your employees to grow into their capabilities
- How to get employees to understand and support *your dream* for your company
- How to get your staff to think and act *like owners* instead of employees
- How to get employees *focused on profit* and the bottom line
- The basic elements of an internal communications plan and *how to implement it*, based on the size of your staff
- How to help your employees get what *they want* out of their jobs so they’ll be excited and passionate about supporting *you*

- How to improve the staff/customer relationship, so your customers will *respect your staff* and want to work with them
 - How to make sure the *right employees* are making the *right decisions* for your company
 - How to hire the *right employees* in the first place
 - How to foster an *interdependent* team
- and others that may come up during our talk.

Here's what you'll get with your Personalized Strategy Session:


- ✓ A 45-minute, one-on-one, private phone conversation with me. The session will be packed with profit generating ideas that you'll be able to put to use in your business right away.
- ✓ When you schedule your session online, you'll receive a confirming email within 72 hours to schedule your strategy call.
- ✓ Your session is 100% guaranteed. If at the end of the call, you don't feel that you got any value from the session, you can ask for and receive all of your money back, and we'll still be friends!

Don't wait to take advantage of this unique offer. Demand for these calls are extraordinarily high, and I only do a small handful every week. I recommend you reserve your spot today while there is still room in my tight schedule.

"Yes, Marcia, I'm interested! Please sign me up for my employee strategy session."

www.moneymakingdreamteam.com/coaching.htm

With best wishes of success for you,



Marcia E. Hoeck