

Feature Article | *Monica Woffard*

## The boss's guide to a better, simpler, and more productive year

It's that time of year. Everything is new and fresh and we all tend to make an attempt at starting over, beginning anew, and revamping the old with the advent of a new year. When the resolutions wear off and reality sets in, you are still left with the same employees, the same job and usually the same issues. This year, don't just wish things were different and give it a shot for the first couple of weeks, make it happen...and keep it simple... even better and more productive.

The guide to a better, simpler and more productive year is an index to possible actions you could take in a variety of situations. They are not multiple choice questions, yet are multiple choice actions. Unless you take action, you will never know if your results were achievable. Use this guide to achieve your very own desired results.

### Employees:

If employees are not performing:

- share your expectations
- free them up
- coach them
- give them a buddy
- change them to a job they can do
- Are you measuring performance?

The action you take will depend on what you have done about his behavior up to this point.

Have you coached already

Have you shared expectations?

Have you given rewards/consequences?

### Expectations:

If employees are not clear on what your expectations are:

- tell them
- tell them
- tell them
- write them a memo
- send them an email
- get clear on your expectations yourself

The action you take will depend on what you have shared up to this point. Have you decided what your expectation are?

Have you shared them with some but not all of the employees you lead?

### Gossip

If the rumor mill seems to be the only thing functioning with ease and consistency in your office:

- realize that people will talk no matter what
- minimize damage of the rumor mill by over-informing as much as you can
- adopt a zero tolerance gossip policy
- encourage those who hear gossip to stop it by asking the person if she minds that you share what you have heard with the person who is the subject of the gossip

Gossip is actually the sign of a healthy organization and it will happen almost no matter what you do, but you can minimize the damage. Take gossip with a grain of salt and try to minimize it by not forcing it to not exist and by not taking it personally.

### High Attrition

If there seems to be a revolving door out of your company and into the vacant slots, then:

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- a. determine why people are really leaving
- b. ask for referrals from existing employees
- c. hire people who are well developed in more than just one personality
- d. surround yourself with multiple types of people, thereby keeping the team and the talents in balance.
- e. Avoid the temptation to hire too many direct, commanding, take charge folks, as they will often but heads with the many others on the team
- f. remember to hire those who have a little fun as it will keep the team happy

Many companies make the mistake of hiring only those who are "commanders" or "organizers", terms used in the CORE profile. These individuals are easily promotable, but not very good at people skills when stress is high. If you can hire folks who are gifted in more than one dominant are, along with those who are more people focused but may not always get things done right away, you will be better off.

**Low Morale**

If there is always doom and gloom and unhappiness, even the best employees will flee to a happier place. If you have low morale:

- a. talk about it openly
- b. try to find the source
- c. try to eliminate the source
- d. recognize that it may be temporary
- e. check to see if you are creating it by mistake

Low morale can be achieved by one bad apple or one bad event, as well as a series of changes.

Has anything bad happened that you can control?

Are there other factors bumming out employees?

What can you do to make work fun?

Do you have fun doing your own job?

**Recognition**

Has it been a while since you said "good job" or excellent work? If so, keep in mind, many people will be as pleased with a pat on the back, a high five, or a thank you card, as much as they will a raise.... Provided you recognize early and often and don't wait until it's too late.

- a. Ask them how they like to be recognized

- b. Give different recognition to different people (i.e. public, private, tangible, intangible)
- c. Recognize who values which kind of recognition through observation of what they do for others
- d. Be fair and exercise equality, yet be different and show value.

There is a difference between being equal and being the same. There is also a fine line between frequent insincere thanks and less frequent, more meaningful recognition.

**Teamwork**

If you are struggling with teamwork in such a way that it is creating a lack of productivity, that is something you wish to remedy and fast! If teamwork fails to exist or be effective:

- a. make sure you have a well balanced team
- b. make sure you have one person that is gifted in each of the four behavior traits (i.e. Commander, Organizer, Entertainer and Relater)
- c. share expectations of team performance in addition to individual performance
- d. give team incentives
- e. help them all get along.

These are the highlights of what many organizations struggle with and though the answers aren't always easy or quite this black and white, taking action is. You either do or you don't and the longer you wait to do something, the larger the problem gets. This year, set out to keep it simple, more productive and even better. Try one or two new things and see where they take you. Getting results require taking action and both will help you get better.

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*Monica Wofford has been a speaker and trainer for more than 18 years. As the owner of Orlando based training firm, Monica Wofford International, she helps companies achieve real results from real people who want to be real leaders. As a trainer, speaker, author, and CORE profile coach, she and those she leads have worked with organizations in all 50 states and 4 countries. For more information on her books, products, and services, Wofford can be reached at [www.monicawofford.com](http://www.monicawofford.com) or (866) 382-0121.*

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Redneck's Explanation  
of Computer Terms

BLUE TOOTH: - Cousin Jethro's smile.