

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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