



# Being an effective employee and team member begins with you

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There are volumes of books on leadership but few books on being an effective employee and team member. When I think about any successful organization, clearly leadership is not the most important role for success.

*“Individual commitment to a group effort — that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work.”*

– Vince Lombardi

## A leader is only as good as his or her team

A strong leader without a strong team will accomplish far less than a strong team with a mediocre leader. Here are ten simple principles I endorse for being a great employee and team member:

- 1. Show up.** No one can be effective and contribute to the success of a team without being present. Attendance is a prerequisite to any success.
- 2. Take pride in your work and stay enthusiastic.** It really doesn't matter what function you perform; it's critical to be diligent and positive. Always strive for improvements including learning better ways to perform current functions and taking on new ones.
- 3. Go beyond just working hard — also work “smart”.** Set yourself apart by always striving towards improvement and offering suggestions. Share any solutions you've considered. That will help the process move forward. Sometimes your suggestions won't be implemented for a variety of reasons. That's expected and it's okay. Never be discouraged or stop making suggestions. Never stop learning.
- 4. Play by the rules — take the right path, regardless of how hard it is to accomplish.** Don't compromise your integrity for a short cut. Think before acting and ask for help when needed.
- 5. Always be honest, trustworthy and maintain a sense of humor.** This helps develop and maintain ongoing positive working relationships with your team members.

*“Don't find fault, find a remedy.”*

– Henry Ford

- 6. No gossiping.....ever.** It only causes distrust and destruction of relationships.
- 7. Share your knowledge but allow people to learn.** Always be willing to share with others the knowledge you have but let others use what works for them.
- 8. Always be accountable and admit your errors.** We all make mistakes. Hiding or — even worse — lying about your errors can cause significant damage. We are all responsible to find solutions and to be honest about the information. No one can help find a solution or avoid further damage if they don't know until it's too late.
- 9. Step up for something new.** Do something different and you will never know how it may help you. New experience and new contacts can lead to some great career development.
- 10. Be generous with recognition.** Always recognize others for their contributions and never take the credit when others deserve it.

*“Great things in business are never done by one person; they're done by a team of people.”*

– Steve Jobs

Being a part of a team means meeting responsibilities to yourself, others and your organization. It's a great opportunity to benefit personally and professionally from your team and the experience. Don't expect someone else to solve all the problems. Keep your own list of simple principles at the forefront of everything you do.

If you're willing to invest in yourself and your team, the payoff includes personal pride, a sense of empowerment and a successful organization.