

## ARE YOU INSPIRING EXCELLENCE?

Of all the millions of decisions we make in our lifetimes, one of the most important ones has to be the decision to commit to excellence. When you commit yourself to striving for excellence, you set yourself on a path to living in a higher state of achievement on both a personal and professional level. Why? An attitude of excellence will help us make better decisions, behave more ethically, and spend our time more effectively. Excellence helps you create your own success. It helps you set yourself – and your company – apart from the overwhelming majority of mediocrity. As an excellence advocate, one of your responsibilities is to inspire excellence in other people – especially those who work with you and for you. Excellence in the workplace leads to higher profits, higher job satisfaction ratings, and higher employee morale. Are you ready to become an excellence mentor? Well, here are a few tips that will help you on your way. Walk the talk before you can expect others to be excellent; you have to be excellent yourself. Leading by example in an honourable and ethical manner is one of the best ways to productivity up and employee dishonesty down. As a general rule, employees will feel more disposed to giving you their best if they see you doing the same.

Communicate expectations - never assume everyone knows how to be excellent on their own. After all, everyone has his or her own interpretation of excellence. But since you are their leader and will be judging their performance based on your values, you need to make sure their performance reflects your idea of excellence. So first you have to decide what “excellence” means to you. What are your values in relation to your industry? Next, you need to plan to communicate the expectations to your staff. Consider making it a regular occurrence, like in a regular company newsletters or company meetings. Aim high - Don't be afraid to set high the bar high when it comes to morals and values. Believe it or not, people want to follow great leaders. Not only will excellence give people something to strive for, but it will also send a message that you expect everyone's best.

Have genuine respect for the people you seek to influence - Most people respond better to people they feel respect them. In return, they will have genuine respect for you as well, and in doing so, will be much more inclined to give 110 percent effort.

Give recognition - One of the best ways to inspire excellence is to reward and recognize it. Recognition is a great motivator; so when you “catch” someone doing a great job or going above and beyond the norm, draw attention to it. He/she will not only be inspired to repeat the behaviour that got them recognized, but others will be inspired to do so as well.

Encourage big dreaming - Never, ever, limit your dreams, or the dreams of others. When you encourage other peoples' dreams, you are saying “I believe in you.” In essence, you are letting them know that you think they are fully capable of achieving whatever they set out to do. Imagine how empowering that is to someone who looks up to you! Empower out-of-the-box thinking - Along the same lines, when you encourage creativity and initiative in people, something magical begins to happen...they become happier and more productive. Everyone is capable of creative thinking on some level, and when you encourage people to tap into that part of themselves, it releases achievement. Inspiring excellence in other people is a noble calling and one that can enrich your life, and those who choose to follow you. Because after all, the world could certainly use more excellence!