

10 Tips to Ensure Your Team Doesn't put 'New Job' on Their Holiday Wish List

1. Tell people 'Good Job!'

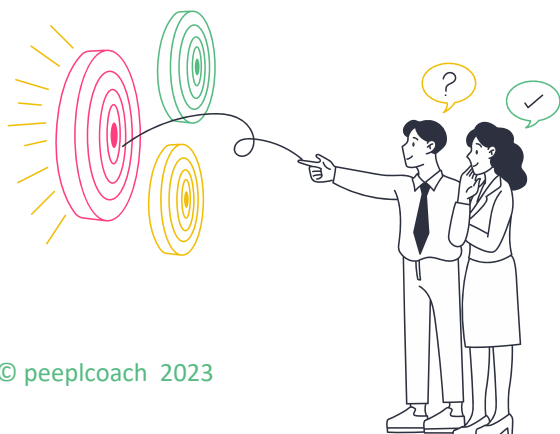
Research has shown that individuals and teams are more successful when they receive positive reinforcement and acknowledgement. In fact, the 'Rule of Five' suggests that the ideal ratio of feedback is five positive points to one negative. But it is not only a numbers game. The feedback also needs to be honest, genuine and offered consistently.

And, however popular it may be, we'd recommend avoiding the 'poo sandwich' approach of giving positive feedback followed by a negative point and then another positive one in a single conversation. Instead, think about the most inspiring leader you have ever had. No doubt they told you what you needed to develop and improve on and what you did well in an honest and direct way. They didn't try to bury the 'poo'. Aim to be that kind of leader.

2. Discuss your team members' goals and ambitions.

Progress theory, first outlined by professors Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer in their 2011 book [The Progress Principle](#), holds that performance is enhanced when individuals (and teams) are able to measure and track their progress. Some in your team will be highly ambitious, wanting to be promoted yesterday, while others may appear to be content in their role. But don't become complacent. Even those who do not want to be the next CEO will want to know they are building their skills, experience and value, both to themselves and others.

Make sure you have robust and open discussions with your team regarding their goals and ambitions for 2024. Do not assume you know what they want and do not assume that they know your plans. Too many times managers are surprised when a valued employee leaves because they 'had plans in place' for this employee but didn't clearly communicate them. If you have a plan for someone, tell them.



3. Invest in training and development.

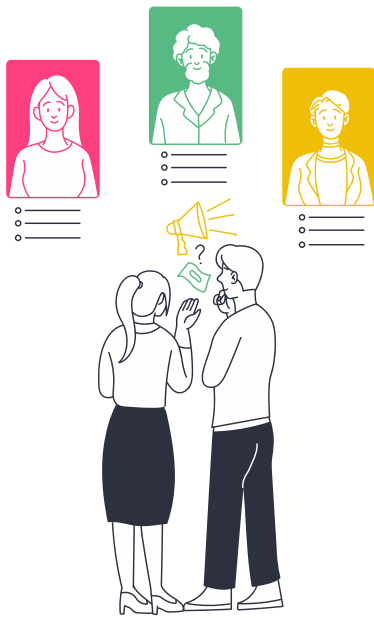
Effective and meaningful training and development is essential for so many reasons, including increased productivity, engagement, innovation and retention. A recent LinkedIn report found that 94% of workers reported that development opportunities would keep them in a role.

Furthermore, LinkedIn's 2023 Workplace Learning Report found that 93% of organisations are concerned about employee retention. And the number one way to improve retention is to provide learning opportunities.

The face of training and development has also changed. Micro on-demand and bite-sized learning can be as effective, if not more effective, than three- or four-day intensives. The 2023 PWC report highlighted that mentoring, coaching and customised programs are critical to engage and retain high-performing employees, as is developing and nurturing strong leaders. Organisations with strong training, development and leadership cultures are more profitable so it is essential for organisations to stop seeing training and development as a cost and instead view it as an essential ingredient for future success.

4. Challenge and create opportunities.

Great leaders will create opportunities for their employees to grow, learn and develop. These opportunities may include training and development, as per point 3, but also nominations for special projects and opportunities to innovate, to fail and to develop autonomy and independence. The next time one of your team asks you to recommend or approve a development opportunity, turn the responsibility back on them by asking, 'What do you think?' Then let them run with their idea.



5. Create connection and a sense of belonging.

Employees, and people generally, are more committed and will go the extra mile when they feel like they fit in, belong, are accepted and are valued. Having fun is also important to build team culture. We are all busy and many of us are stressed but take time to reconnect with your team and have some fun. Good will and the sense of camaraderie that this creates could mean the difference between a resignation or a commitment.

6. Offer mental health support.

Since Covid, mental health is no longer a taboo topic. Be aware of the impact of stress, burnout and mental health issues as we approach the holiday season. While some of us might have strong, loving families, others may not, which can contribute to extra stress during this time. Ensure that the workplace is a safe place to share concerns. Remind your team of the EAP, if you have one, or consider mental health training for your team or managers.

7. Provide clarity of role and purpose.

We all like to have clarity of purpose, to understand the company goals and how our role and skills will help achieve the organisation's objectives. What are the critical KPIs for each team member for the next year or the next quarter? What obstacles are they facing and what support do they need to achieve these goals? Give each individual the confidence that they can achieve their goals so that they don't worry over the holiday period. Give them something to look forward to, not to stress about.

8. Remind people what's in it for them.

Encourage your employees to think about how else the company can support them beyond just their salary. Are there cost-effective solutions that can encourage engagement and loyalty to the organisation? Could you offer greater flexibility – maybe even working four days a week? Could you provide extra training and development, a mentor or days off to volunteer? Could your organisation support diversity and inclusion initiatives, offer life insurance or salary packaging, or support an employee's local sports club? Could you consider introducing or expanding a rewards program?

9. Communicate, communicate, communicate.

This one is not just for the holidays; this one is an evergreen. Be curious, open and honest when giving and receiving feedback. If you haven't read it before, we love the book *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott. People love to know where they stand and to be given the opportunity to develop.

10. Lead by example.

All employees would like, and high-performing employees demand, inspiring leadership and a boss they respect, like and can learn from. Are you inspiring? How? And if not, why not and what can you do to improve? Take time off over the holiday period to regroup and reinvigorate. Strong and inspiring leaders create loyalty, engagement and retention.

Sources

- [More than half of us quit our jobs post-holiday](#)
- [Why learning and development is now a competitive differentiator](#)
- [The right mix of positive and negative feedback is a vehicle for growth and improved agent performance in your contact center](#)
- [Amabile and Kramer's progress theory](#)
- [Economic growth is slowing: how should leaders respond?](#)
- [Investing in middle managers pays off – literally](#)
- [How great management can impact employee retention in 2023](#)
- [The future of work](#)
- [Employee training statistics, trends, and data in 2023](#)
- [Belonging at work: what it is and why it's important](#)