Small Business Management Toolbox

Manage a small team

Tips for tricky times

Be a good listener
- Show you are willing to listen.
- Stay friendly.
- Do not get emotional - focus on the facts.
- Show interest in what the employee says.
- Look at the employee giving your full attention.
- Do not interrupt.
- Keep the mood relaxed.

Get the whole story
- Get all of the facts.
- Remember that the employee is wanting you to understand their point of view.
- Keep focussed on getting the facts and stay unemotional.
- Don't get sidetracked.

Consider all material
- Be sure you have all of the facts.
- Why this an issue for this person.
- Treat this person with compassion/how you would like to be treated.

Restate employee's case
- Restate your understanding of what the specific issue(s) are.
- Ask the employee if your understanding is their understanding.
- Clarify any points about which you are unclear.
- Restate and agree on what the problem is.

Find out what the employee wants
- Ensure you clearly understand what will solve the issue from the employee's perspective.
- Ask employee, ‘is this what you want?’
State your side of the case
- Tell your side of the case - facts not emotions.
- Restate clearly any problems/policies/issues in resolving the matter as the employee wants.

Compare both sides of the story
- Compare both sides of the case - facts not emotions.
- Clearly state what you cannot do and reasons why not.
- Work together to get an amicable solution.

State what you can do
- Put forward your plan for resolving the issue.
- Make sure the employee's points are valued by you.
- Stay positive and relaxed.

Follow through
- Set a mutually agreeable time to meet again to review progress.
- Encourage employee to speak up/honestly.
- Treat people fairly and morale will improve.
- Show respect, be open and honest in your communications.
- Show you value their input.

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