

This week on Protips we highlight the importance of listening in effective communication and we identified the secrets and best practices of winning teams.

Are you a part of a winning team? More importantly, are you contributing to make your team win? Winners don't just wait for things to happen, they make it happen!

Be a blessing in the workplace.

Warm regards,

Maloi

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Enhance Your Listening Skills

Listening is often the neglected part of effective communication. If you want to save yourself from a lot of misunderstandings and miscommunication, learn to listen.

How can we enhance our listening skills? Practice the following:

List down important points. Most of us are visual learners. We need something to look at or read to understand fully the message. Write down key points in your meetings or discussions to help you remember what they are.

Intensify attention. If your mind has a tendency to go on "mini-vacations" while someone is talking, prep yourself to pay more attention.

Silence your thoughts and your lips. Don't busy your mind thinking of what to say next. And avoid cutting in while someone is still talking.

Take time to understand what is not being said.

Exercise good listening skills wherever you are; whatever the situation is; whoever you are talking to.

Never forget. Listen for understanding and recall.

Effective workplace communication is not just about clear talk and eloquent speech. Communication is effective when a common understanding is reached. You will only understand when you take time to listen.

"My child, listen to me and do as I say, and you will have a long, good life."
(Proverbs 4:10)

What makes a winning team? Here are the common qualities of successful teams that I have observed:

- Commitment to a clear vision
- Commitment to one another
- Commitment to excellence
- Commitment to Christ

Commitment to a clear vision

How can our team be committed to a clear vision? First, the vision must be crafted. Vision emanates from leadership. If the leader does not have a vision, it will be dangerous for the people he is leading and the organization as a whole. Once the vision is articulated, the second step to take to ensure that a strong commitment to the vision is created, it has to be cascaded from leadership to everyone in the team. Leaders need to communicate the vision and the followers need to own it. Lastly, through constant coordination, the team needs to check if the vision is being carried out.

Commitment to one another

The members of winning teams are committed to one another. They have confidence in their teammates. They show compassion and concern for each other. There are no lone superstars in teams. The entire team is the star because its members realize that there is no "I" in TEAM.

Commitment to excellence

Winning teams don't just start well; they end well. They expose themselves to excellence by learning from the best practices of other teams. Their perseverance is extra ordinary. They press on all the more when the going gets tough. Winning teams achieve excellence because they have mastered open and effective communication. They are also unafraid to explore new frontiers. They are open to endless opportunities to learn.

Commitment to Christ

The biggest C of winning teams is Christ. They are committed to Christ and they find their purpose in him. Winning teams "work with enthusiasm, as though working for the Lord rather than for people" (Ephesians 6:7). The motto of winning teams is this, "whatever we do, we do all to the glory of God!" (I Corinthians 10:31).

Best Practices of Winning Teams

I heard this from Mr. Bong Macasaet in one of the team building workshops that I co-facilitated with him:

Winning Teams...

- Look up at the Big Picture.
- Size up their Situation.
- Line up Needed Resources.
- Call up the Right Team Members.

- Give up their Personal Agenda.
- Step up to the Next Level.

The Bible has this to say about partnerships and teams, "Two people can accomplish more than twice as much as one; they get a better return for their labor. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help. But people who are alone when they fall are in real trouble...A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).