

## **How to Keep People on Task without Being too Hard**

Many managers struggle with the balance of being liked while still being respected as the figure of authority. Surely many managers go into their jobs worried about the balance that they will have to find between being their employee's friend and being their boss. Ultimately, you must do your job and make sure that your office is held accountable for the work that they do. But is there a way to keep people on task without being too hard on them?

### **Instructions**

There are many win-win situations to be had concerning this issue. As the manager you can spare your employees the embarrassment of being reprimanded while at the same time avoiding the unpleasant situation of having to assert your authority over a co-worker. You can run an efficient office while still maintaining the respect of your employees. Here are a few tips to doing so that you may want to consider and determine how and if they would be appropriate tactics to use in your own business setting.

### **Tips to consider when you need to keep people on task without being too hard**

1. Use your Human Resources department - If you are lucky enough to work at a company with a Human Resources department you have a great resource for insight into how you should handle specific and delicate situations. A third party such as the HR department, not only provides you as the manager with an additional resource for suggestions, but the Human Resource department is responsible for handling many instances regarding those who do not remain on task.
2. Put yourself in their shoes - Being a manager involves many skills, one of which is creativity. Sometimes when keeping people on task you must be creative in instigating situations where your employees will be given incentive to motivate themselves. To do this effectively you must put yourself in your employees' shoes or see the situation as they see it. You show your respect by taking into account personal factors that may be present when an employee is not staying on task the way that they should be.
3. Group reminders - A very popular way to remind one or two individuals about staying on task without coming down on them too hard individually is to send a reminder to the entire office about the need to stay on task. Most working people have had this happen to them. It is not a bad idea to remind the whole group that they need to stay on task, but sometimes the subtleness of the message fails to reach the one or two people it was intended for and a different tactic will need to be used.

4. One-on-one - Sometimes the best way to keep someone on task without being too hard on them is simply to have a polite one-on-one conversation with them to determine what can be done to resolve any problems that exist that are preventing your employee from being productive. Many employees are offended by the office games of beating around the bush and would simply like to be told when there is a problem. Using tact and respect in a meeting such as this will help to prevent you from coming across as too hard.

### **Conclusion**

Your general attitude is an important factor in how your employees are going to perceive your actions when it comes time to lay down the law. Keeping people on task is a constant struggle and leading by example is an excellent way for you as a manager not only to be able to empathize with your employees but to illustrate that the expectations for a day of work are fair.

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