

# Achieving Results

A Black Diamond Associates Publication

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## Top 10 Ways to Empower Employees

The word empower is often over-used. Many employers talk about empowering their employees but often employees feel disempowered. Here's a list of the top 10 things you can do that will really empower your employees, according to employees, not employers!

### **1 Allow employees to actively participate in team and company goals.**

Look for every opportunity to include employees at every level of the organization in being active participants. Employees often report getting one-way directives instead.

**2 Allow employees to suggest better ways of getting their jobs done.** Ask for employee suggestions for other ways of getting the task or project accomplished. Listen and be willing to really hear the employees' comments. Employees often report that they have no input and are told exactly how to perform their jobs, leaving no creativity.

**3 Provide positive reinforcement.** Always listen and acknowledge your employees. Employees often report that their decisions and actions are second-guessed and that most, if not all, feedback given is negative.

**4 Clearly delegate responsibility and give the employees authority along with the responsibility.** Do you give inconsistent messages? Do you ask the employee to handle a problem or project and then give them negative feedback or give them an assignment and then say, "never-mind?" Employees often report that they are given tasks and then told they did it wrong.

**5 Be clear in your communication.** When you express goals or explain projects, be sure the employees really understand what you are asking for. Employees often report that the goals are unclear and that they are not sure what they are being asked to do.

**6 Show you have trust in your employees.** Allow them to make mistakes as a form of learning. Show that it is really OK to make mistakes. Let them know you really support their decisions. Employees often report that someone is always looking over their shoulder to make sure they do things right.



**Black Diamond**  
A s s o c i a t e s

Our goal is to help you achieve significant long-term results and to successfully address current needs. We accomplish this by developing a partnership with you in which you clearly identify the results desired and the obstacles that are preventing you from achieving those results. Black Diamond Associates helps you discover the way to unlock the door to success and achieve the things that are most important to you.

Black Diamond Associates helps you discover the way to address your challenges and to achieve results. Through proven processes, we work with organizations to:

- Develop strategic plans
- Create alignment between behavior and strategic objectives
- Produce positive, measurable behavior change in leaders, managers, and supervisors
- Accelerate sales to exceed quotas, shorten sales cycles and improve closing ratios
- Increase customer satisfaction and reduce customer problems
- Improve productivity by eliminating waste
- Turn ideas into focused action that get results

In short, we help you achieve improved results!

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**7 Listen. Listen. Listen.** Do you do most of the talking? Employees often report that conversations are one way, comprised mostly of their ideas being criticized. They don't feel they are heard.

**8 Be interested in the employees' career development.** Meet with employees and discover their goals and their wants. Employees often report that their goals are not viewed as important in the organization.

**9 Let the employees help you achieve success.** Are you doing it all yourself? Employees often report that their managers do all the tasks and that they have no way to make contributions outside their job descriptions. Look for opportunities to delegate and enhance the employees' career development at the same time.

**10 Be a coach.** The best way to empower employees is not to manage them. Coach them to success. This is a process of developing their skills and providing them specific feedback to meet high standards. Employees often report feeling like children rather than being on the same team with their bosses. Be their coach and lead the team to success!

*Submitted by Terri Levine, Professional and Personal Coach, Copyright 1997-2003 by Coach U, all rights reserved.*

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## When Employees Set Standards

When Andy Heck played football for head coach Lou Holtz at Notre Dame, he switched positions on the offensive line. It was a tough transition. One day, watching game films with the assistant coach, Heck complained about a negative grade the coach gave him for a play that Heck thought was OK.

"Andy, I don't think you're an average player," the assistant coach said, stopping the film. "Do you want me to grade you as an average player so your mark will be positive? Or should I grade you as a great player, in which case your performance on that play was a minus? You choose."

Heck chose 'great player,' and Holtz says, "He immediately elevated his personal standards."

Heck became Notre Dame's team captain and enjoyed a solid professional career with the Chicago Bears. Holtz believes the coach's question that day-and Heck's choice-launched that success.

Suggestion: Challenge employees to set their own standards. Their motivation to succeed will be stronger than if they try to reach goals others impose.

*Source: Winning Every Day: The Game Plan for Success, by Lou Holtz, Harper Business, 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022*



## Can Coaching Deliver Results?

Whether you're an executive or an entrepreneur, coaching helps you achieve the results you are looking for. Here is what our clients had to say:

"I cannot imagine going back to my old self and the lack of awareness I held before I went through the Leadership Program. It is a lifelong program, and I continue today to use the simple and easy tools and exercises to help me to create a balanced, happy, and successful life I can call my own."

"The difference it has made to my business has been phenomenal! Black Diamond Associates has helped me move from point A to point B with a clear sense of direction. They do not force feed me solutions to my problems. Rather, they use their vast business background and together we develop solutions. This is a pivotal time in my business and with their help I have a solid foundation to build on."

Let Black Diamond Associates help you address your challenges and achieve results.

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## Motivational Thoughts

Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection.

*Mark Twain*

Not much happens without a dream. And for something great to happen, there must be a great dream. Behind every great achievement is a dreamer of great dreams.

*Robert Greenleaf*

Success comes to those who make it happen.

*Gary Sorrell*