Creating Highly Productive Employees and Team

Do you lead a team or perhaps the entire staff at your church? If so, you have the opportunity to develop a strong and productive team.

However, it's easy to get caught up in your own never-ending list of tasks. You have calls to make, emails to respond to, meetings to attend, and decisions to finalize. In addition to your own core workload, you also have a team to lead and direct. They'll have questions and will interrupt as you're working on something else. It's hard to juggle leading those who're doing work on your behalf while also keeping your own responsibilities under control.

If you've ever wondered how to help your team become more productive or to need your input less often, here are a few tips:

#1 – Establish clear expectations

If you're delegating a task to me, I'll want to know a few key things:

When is this due?

Do I have a budget to purchase supplies, etc.? If so, what is the budget?

At what point along the way do I need to get your approval to move forward?

What authority do I have for this effort?

What does success look like for this task? (A certain number of participants at an event, simply completing it on time and within budget, researching and recommending a few options to you...)
Notice that none of these questions involve how to perform the task – only looking for the boundaries to stay within and what a win looks like in your viewpoint. Unless it's a very detailed task such as entering member information into the church database or compiling a financial report, try to avoid telling someone the "how" unless they ask for that information. By delegating a task and providing boundaries but not a step-by-step process, you're communicating trust to that team member.

This also provides that individual with the opportunity to think for himself, learn throughout the process, and prove he's capable of handling more responsibility in the future.

#2 – Be available
Especially for new team members or those with less experience, you'll need to field a few questions along the way.

Let your team know if there are certain days of the week or hours within the day that you need uninterrupted. Ask them to email you questions during those times so you can get back with them later.

Another option is to setup a weekly 30-minute one-on-one meeting with each member of your team.

This trains them to compile non-urgent questions for that weekly meeting. This also gives you an opportunity to delegate tasks during that time, ask for status updates on projects you've already given to them, and to get an impression on how each person is doing.

#3 – Provide feedback
Most companies have a consistent evaluation process for all employees. That can be a very useful practice, but it's not sufficient if you only wait for those times to provide feedback to your team members. Don't be stingy with compliments when a team member does a great job. Let the individual know what you appreciated about their work.

If you need to offer correction, do so one-on-one and not in front of a group. Clearly explain why what they did wasn't what you wanted, and explain what you need them to change going forward.

These simple tips can produce great results with a stronger, more mature team.
As each individual knows what you expect, communicates more effectively, and grows based on your feedback, you'll have more capacity as a team to accomplish what God sets before you.