SOFTWARE & TECH

The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams

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Introduction: The Power of One Minute Management in Team Building

In today’s fast-paced business environment, leaders are constantly searching for effective methods to build cohesive, motivated, and high-performing teams. Among the most enduring and practical frameworks available is the philosophy behind **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams**. This approach, rooted in the groundbreaking work of Ken Blanchard and his co-authors, distills complex management principles into simple, actionable practices that any leader can apply immediately. The beauty of this methodology lies in its accessibility: it does not require expensive training programs, extensive organizational restructuring, or years of study. Instead, it empowers managers to create a culture of clarity, recognition, and continuous improvement through brief, focused interactions. This article explores how the timeless principles of The One Minute Manager can transform average groups into exceptional teams, providing practical strategies that drive engagement, accountability, and results.

The Foundation: Understanding The One Minute Manager Philosophy

Before examining how **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams**, it is essential to understand the foundational concepts that make this approach so effective. The original *The One Minute Manager*book, published by Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson in the early 1980s, introduced three simple yet powerful secrets: One Minute Goals, One Minute Praisings, and One Minute Reprimands (now often referred to as Re-directs). These techniques were designed to help managers achieve better results with less effort by focusing on what truly matters: clear expectations, immediate feedback, and genuine concern for people.

What makes this philosophy particularly relevant for team building is its emphasis on the human element. The One Minute Manager recognizes that people are not simply resources to be managed but individuals with unique motivations, strengths, and aspirations. By treating team members with respect and providing them with the tools they need to succeed, leaders can unlock extraordinary performance. This people-first approach creates an environment where trust flourishes, communication flows freely, and collaboration becomes second nature.

The Three Core Secrets and Their Application to Teams

One Minute Goals: Creating Clarity and Alignment

The first secret of The One Minute Manager is the One Minute Goal. This practice involves taking a brief moment to clearly define what needs to be accomplished, how success will be measured, and why the goal matters. When applied to team settings, One Minute Goals become the foundation upon which high

performance is built. Teams that lack clear direction often struggle with miscommunication, duplicated efforts, and conflicting priorities. By establishing concise, measurable goals that every team member understands, leaders can eliminate confusion and align individual efforts with collective objectives.

Effective One Minute Goals follow a simple structure. Each goal is written in fewer than 250 words, making it easy to read and remember. The goal specifies exactly what the team member needs to do, not just what they should avoid. It includes a clear timeline and measurable criteria for success. Most importantly, the goal is reviewed regularly in brief check-ins to ensure continued alignment. When team members know precisely what is expected of them, they can take ownership of their work and make independent decisions that support the team’s overall mission.

For teams, the practice of setting One Minute Goals creates a shared understanding of priorities. During team meetings, the leader can facilitate a quick review of each member’s primary goals, ensuring that everyone’s efforts are complementary rather than contradictory. This alignment is critical for high-performing teams, where coordination and collaboration are essential for achieving complex objectives.

One Minute Praisings: Building Confidence and Reinforcing Positive Behavior

The second secret, One Minute Praisings, is perhaps the most underutilized yet powerful tool in a leader’s arsenal. The concept is simple: catch people doing something right and immediately acknowledge it. When **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams**, this practice becomes a cornerstone of the team culture. Regular, specific praise reinforces the behaviors that contribute to team success, whether it is effective collaboration, innovative problem-solving, or going above and beyond for a customer.

One Minute Praisings are effective because they are timely and specific. Instead of waiting for annual performance reviews to offer feedback, the One Minute Manager praises team members as soon as they observe positive behavior. The praise is delivered in a genuine, personal manner, focusing on the specific action and its impact on the team or organization. This immediacy reinforces the connection between the behavior and the positive outcome, making it more likely that the behavior will be repeated.

In a team context, One Minute Praisings serve several important functions. First, they build individual confidence, helping team members feel valued and appreciated. Confident team members are more willing to take risks, share ideas, and contribute to group discussions. Second, they model the behavior that the leader wants to see throughout the team. When team members see their colleagues being praised for collaboration, they are more likely to collaborate themselves. Third, regular praise creates a positive emotional climate within the team, which research has shown to be a key driver of high performance. Teams that experience high levels of psychological safety and positive feedback are more innovative, resilient, and productive.

One Minute Re-directs: Addressing Mistakes with Respect and Growth

The third secret, originally called One Minute Reprimands and now more commonly referred to as One Minute Re-directs, addresses the inevitable mistakes and performance gaps that occur in any team. The key insight of The One Minute Manager is that feedback, even when corrective, can be delivered in a way that preserves relationships and promotes growth. The One Minute Re-direct follows a specific sequence: the leader immediately addresses the behavior, confirms the facts, shares how the behavior made them feel, reminds the team member of their value and potential, and re-affirms confidence in their ability to improve.

This approach is radically different from traditional criticism, which often damages relationships and demotivates team members. By separating the person from the behavior and focusing on the specific issue, the One Minute Manager creates an opportunity for learning without causing defensiveness. The team member leaves the conversation knowing exactly what went wrong, why it matters, and that their leader still believes in them.

For teams, the practice of One Minute Re-directs establishes a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. When team members understand that mistakes are addressed constructively rather than punitively, they are more likely to own their errors and learn from them. This openness to feedback is essential for high-performing teams, which must constantly adapt and improve to maintain their edge.

How The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams Through Trust and Communication

Trust is the invisible currency that fuels high-performing teams. Without trust, collaboration is superficial, communication is guarded, and innovation is stifled. **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams**by systematically creating the conditions for trust to develop. The three secrets work together to establish a framework of reliability, transparency, and mutual respect.

One Minute Goals build trust by setting clear expectations. When team members know exactly what is expected of them and their colleagues, they can rely on each other to deliver. Ambiguity is the enemy of trust because it creates uncertainty about whether commitments will be met. By making goals explicit and measurable, the One Minute Manager eliminates this ambiguity and creates a foundation of accountability.

One Minute Praisings build trust by demonstrating that the leader is paying attention and values contributions. Team members feel seen and appreciated, which strengthens their emotional connection to the team and its mission. This positive reinforcement also encourages open communication, as team members are more likely to share ideas and concerns when they feel safe and valued.

One Minute Re-directs build trust by showing that the leader is committed to the team member’s growth. When corrective feedback is delivered with respect and genuine concern, it signals that the leader has the team member𔃏s best interests at heart. This psychological safety is critical for high performance because it allows team members to take risks, admit mistakes, and seek help without fear of retribution.

Accountability and Empowerment in High Performing Teams

One of the most common challenges in team leadership is striking the right balance between accountability and empowerment. Too much control stifles initiative and creativity, while too little structure leads to chaos and inconsistent results. The One Minute Manager offers a elegant solution to this dilemma by providing a framework that empowers individuals within a structure of clear expectations and regular feedback.

When team members have clear One Minute Goals, they understand the boundaries within which they can operate. They know what success looks like and can make decisions independently, confident that their choices align with the team’s objectives. This autonomy is empowering because it gives team members ownership of their work and the freedom to find the best way to achieve their goals.

At the same time, the practice of regular One Minute Praisings and Re-directs ensures that accountability is maintained. Team members know that their performance is being monitored and that they will receive immediate feedback on their actions. This combination of empowerment and accountability is the sweet spot for high-performing teams. It creates a culture where individuals are motivated to take initiative and are supported in their efforts, while also being held responsible for results.

Building a Feedback-Rich Culture

Feedback is the lifeblood of high-performing teams. Without regular, honest feedback, teams cannot learn, adapt, or improve. **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams** by institutionalizing feedback as a daily practice rather than an annual event. The three secrets make feedback simple, timely, and constructive, removing the fear and awkwardness that often surround giving and receiving feedback.

In a feedback-rich culture, team members become comfortable providing input to each other, not just receiving it from their manager. Peer-to-peer feedback is particularly valuable because it comes from those who work most closely together and understand the nuances of the team’s daily challenges. The One Minute Manager model can be taught to all team members, enabling them to offer One Minute Praisings and Re-directs to their colleagues. This democratization of feedback accelerates learning and strengthens relationships.

To build a feedback-rich culture, leaders must model the behavior they want to see. They should regularly offer specific, genuine praise to team members and deliver corrective feedback with respect and empathy. They should also solicit feedback on their own performance, demonstrating that feedback is a gift that everyone benefits from. Over time, this openness becomes part of the team’s identity, creating a continuous cycle of improvement and growth.

Practical Strategies for Implementing One Minute Management in Your Team

Knowing the principles of The One Minute Manager is one thing, but applying them consistently is another. Here are practical strategies for bringing **The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams** to life in your organization.

Start with One Minute Goals

- Schedule goal-setting sessions: Dedicate 15 minutes per week to review each team member’s primary objectives. Keep these sessions brief and focused.
- Write goals down: Encourage team members to write their goals in fewer than 250 words. Post them where they can be seen daily.
- Align individual goals with team goals: Ensure that every team member’s goals contribute directly to the team’s overall priorities. This creates coherence and shared purpose.
- Review goals regularly: Use the first few minutes of team meetings to quickly check progress on key goals. This keeps everyone aligned and accountable.

Implement One Minute Praisings

- Be specific: Instead of saying “good job,” describe exactly what the team member did and why it mattered. For example, “Thank you for staying late to help the client meet their deadline. That builds trust and strengthens our reputation.”
- Be timely: Deliver praise as soon as possible after observing the positive behavior. Delayed praise loses its impact.
- Be genuine: Only offer praise when it is deserved. Team members can detect insincerity, which undermines trust.
- Encourage peer praise: Create opportunities for team members to recognize each other, such as a shout-out board at the start of meetings or a dedicated Slack channel for appreciation.

Master One Minute Re-directs

- Address issues immediately: Do not let small problems escalate. Address them as soon as they occur, while the details are fresh and the behavior can be linked to its impact.

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