

# THE POWER & THE PASSION

## HOW TO CREATE EFFECTIVE TEAMS THROUGH GIVING, SHARING AND CELEBRATION

"You give but little when you give of your possessions.  
It is when you give of yourself that you truly give."



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**B**USINESSES COULD LEARN A LOT from the Black Ferns when it comes to success. At the 2017 Women's Rugby World Cup, the final whistle heralded the end of yet another fabulous campaign, full of joy and pride the players rushed into each others arms to celebrate. The Black Ferns celebration of their team's success was a moving moment for us all. We couldn't have asked for a greater demonstration of a collaborative attitude and of giving every thing you have for the success of the team.

The Black Ferns have just received the World Rugby Team of the Year award, beating all other rugby teams throughout the world. They are still New Zealand's most successful rugby team ever, so what can we learn? A key part of their success is that every team member constantly demonstrates their dedication to bringing out the best in one another. This is not a one woman band, each has a uniquely fabulous skill set that when brought together under the skilful guidance of their inspirational captain Fiao'o Fa'amausili, they perform and deliver something that none of them could have delivered alone. Every woman in the team is inspired to succeed as a team.

In a truly successful team we give all we can to the team and to each other, we succeed because we are willing to give to others without compromising our self and our values.

### TEAMS TAKE WORK AND COMMITMENT

You would think that teams are everywhere; we use that word so freely in workplaces so we must be teams, right? The reality is we mostly work as groups, not as teams. Teams only form about 30% of the time. In fact in all my years of working with thousands of groups, very few become high performing teams. The assumption is, if we throw people together and call them a team that they will be a team. This couldn't be further from the truth.

### PEOPLE ARE NOT ASSETS

In fact, businesses often think that if they provide an annual Christmas party and engage in team building activities including the trust fall, or even more daring, abseiling off cliff faces, that they will turn a group of people into a motivated, loyal and dynamic team, think again! People are not resources, they are not assets, they are the organisation so businesses need to actively invest time and energy in creating a culture that enables teams and individuals to flourish.

Patrick Lencioni in *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, says "It is teamwork that remains the ultimate competitive advantage, both because it is so powerful and so rare". Let's face it, very few accomplishments of real value have ever been achieved by human beings working alone.

### WHAT IS THE KEY TO TEAM SUCCESS?

Groups typically turn into teams because of a sense of purpose, strong constructive relationships, commitment, trust that has built over time and a shared responsibility for the success of the team.

Recent results in the High Resolution Leadership Report conducted by DDI, after looking at 15,000 leaders of teams, in 300 organisations, across 20 industries and 18 countries found

that the most significant cornerstone of teamwork is our most critical social skill, empathy. Empathy described beautifully by Theresa Wiseman, nursing scholar, "is about having the ability to see the perspective of others, staying out of judgment. Recognising and responding to the emotions of others. Empathy is about feeling with people."

### WHY WOULD WE WANT TO BE IN A TEAM?

All of us feel it when we are working in great teams. We feel like we belong, we feel accepted and feel like we are achieving results. Maya Angelou eloquently said "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel". So, what do you give to others?

It is also a proven fact that people perform better when they feel part of a team. Teams are more productive than work groups, they produce results that exceed groups through simple cooperation. Teams generate greater revenue and always the combined effect of the team is greater than the sum of individual efforts.

### THE LEADER'S ROLE

Leaders in today's businesses must encourage collaboration, inspiring the team to perform, connecting the team to the purpose and connecting teams to each other. Leaders have to be prepared to willingly give their time, positive energy, their commitment, trust, feedback and praise and respect to everyone within their team. Leaders have to be a weaver of people. As Michael Henderson says in his book *Chiefing the Tribe*, "to truly lead people you must know the people and identify as one of them, you must be willing to be amongst the people in order to understand their world, their view of life, their fears and hopes". A leader's goal is to weave people together strongly demonstrating empathy and fueling connection. What every leader gives to the team will show directly in the engagement of others and their performance.

### THE POWER OF APPRECIATION AND FEEDBACK

Do you remember the last time you rushed into the arms of a work colleague to celebrate the successful achievement of a goal? Probably not. Maybe we don't need to be hugging each other, but we should and could be giving greater appreciation and valuing each other more. In fact, in the most successful teams, people get five times more appreciative comments about their work than negative comments. Most people leave organisations because they don't feel appreciated. Celebrating people and what they have achieved will inspire greatness and will build a stronger team.

Great teams really do appreciate each other and are willing to give their commitment to the team. Thank you to the Black Ferns for showing us how good it can be.

*Your local Staples Rodway office can help review your culture and climate or you can contact one of our HR consultancy team: Julie Rowlands, Taranaki; Andrea Stevenson, Hawke's Bay; or Chris Wright, Auckland.*