

Hello. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thanks for tuning in, as always. Don't forget about bootcamp coming up this fall. And as always, we like to have your comments in the comment section below.

This week, I want to talk about how do you know, not how do you feel, but how do you know if you have a great team? Well, why is this important to you? I would say that the majority of problems that our clients and our members have tend to be people problems. So, let's talk about those and let's talk about seven ways that you can know, not feel, not think, not infer, but know that you have a great team. And five tips for upgrading your team if you think it is a need of upgrading. And we're always in need of upgrading our talent.

Okay. You know you have a great team when, first thing is, senior leaders make people the priority. If you remember, we've talked about McDevitt and Street, the magnificent construction company that's no longer around, but Bob Street required his leadership team to invest 20% of their time in people. And they had to demonstrate that they were investing 20% of it, one day per work week if you think about it, in people. That sends a loud and clear signal that people are the priority here.

The second thing is your company's financial performance is good because good people, great people, great team members drive financial performance. They're not just there to improve morale, and to make sure that the trains run on time. They know that they're there for a number of reasons, one of which is driving profits to the bottom line.

The third thing is, if you have a great team, they are making decisions. They're not driving decisions up the chain. They're not requiring the senior leader to make every single decision. They're making decisions at the lowest possible level in the organization so that the people closest to problems are tackling the problems and dealing with them themselves. Rather than waiting a week or a month or worse sometimes, to bring those problems to senior leadership.

The fourth thing, all the bases are covered. If you've got great estimators, great project managers, great superintendents, but a poor controller who's always late with financials, or a subpar business development function, you don't have all your bases covered. So, you can have some great employees, but the goal is to have great employees throughout the organization, covering all of your key functions. And if you've got weak players in any of those top key functions, it's going to hurt the overall performance of the team. So, you want to upgrade there for sure.

The fifth thing, great employees solve problems on their own. They dig in, they gather resources. They talk to other people in the organization and people outside the organization. Architects, engineers, customers themselves, or whatever, and they solve problems quickly and decisively. So again, problems solved quickly are problem solved cheaply. And waiting to solve problems or avoiding difficult decisions and things like that, they just hamstringing an organization.

The sixth thing is the people are low maintenance. That's one of my favorite ones. They are self-reliant. They are self-motivated. They are self-driven, so that you don't have to become a rah-rah cheerleader, motivator type. I actually don't think you can motivate people. I think people who are unmotivated are going to stay unmotivated. You might get 10% more performance out of them on some days, but if you hire and train great people who are self-motivated, then you won't have to do that. And it's not natural for some of us, frankly, to be the cheerleader rah-rah types. So that solves that problem by getting people who are low maintenance and motivated on their own.

And the seventh and final thing is great people are aligned with your mission, vision, and values in your organization. Maybe this is the key one. Everybody has a personal mission. It may not be written down, but it's in their hearts. It's in their minds. They see themselves doing things and going places in life. And if they can see that they have alignment with your organization, that your organization is going to foster, they're doing things and going places in life. That's perfect. If on the other hand, they're interested in anything but work and they live to be off at five o'clock on Friday and live for the weekends, maybe that's not in alignment.

Okay. So, what are the five tips then for upgrading if you think that you need to upgrade? The first thing is, look in the mirror. We have to be self-aware. We have to know that sometimes we're not getting it done. We're on cruise control. We're not undergoing self-improvement, or taking classes, or learning new things, or demonstrating new skills. So, look in the mirror first, if you're not taking your own medicine, and you're not trying to get better as a leader, as an executive, as a businessperson, then chances are good that people in your organization are going to see your actions. They hear what you say, but they believe in what you do. And they'll see what you're doing and copy that. And you know what rolls downhill in organizations.

The second thing, take the McDevitt and Street tip. Make people your priority. Make developing your team your highest priority. The third thing, I've said this in so many blogs. Go out and get the book *Who, W-H-O*, Who by Geoff Smart, and follow that book. Let that be your guide for how you hire and onboard people in your organization. Best book ever written about getting people. Recruiting, hiring, and onboarding people. And I wish we'd written it ourselves.

The fourth thing, get help. Maybe one of your weak functions is HR. If you need to go out and get an HR consultant, or a hiring consultant, or a talent consultant, or you need someone to talk about how McDevitt and Street did all the things they did, get help. Find somebody that knows these things and get help so that you can get training, and you can upgrade your own skills. Because you can't get great talent without a great talent acquisition process. Makes sense, right?

And the final thing, be willing to pay great people. We're all thrifty. Contractors are notoriously thrifty. And, it just makes sense that if you want the top talent, you're going to have to pay them, especially in a talent marketplace as competitive as today.

So, I'd love to have your thoughts, comments below about the seven ways to know if you have a great team and the five tips for upgrading your team, if it's necessary. This is Wayne Rivers at The Family Business Institute. Thank you.