

# Monthly Newswire

Welcome to our monthly newswire. We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and find it useful.

February 2022



## Setting objectives for your team

### Setting goals for the business is one thing, but in order to succeed, you need to set smart objectives for your team.

Any good business will have a set of goals which have been agreed by the management team. However, in order to achieve those goals, they need to cascade, throughout the business. For example, if you want to grow sales by 10%, each of your sales team should have an objective to achieve revenue that is 10% higher than last year. If you want your people to move in the same direction towards a common goal, you need to set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives for each member of the team.

Biting off more than you can chew can be demotivating. Therefore, the best way to set realistic objectives for your team is to start small. For example, rather than asking your customer facing team to sign up 120 new clients this year, break that goal down into smaller monthly chunks and set an objective to sign up 10 new clients per month.

Laying out the small, attainable stepping-stones each month can have a much more positive effect on motivation.

Ensure that you and your team write down your objectives. This helps commit them to memory. Objectives should be revisited regularly and keeping them visible can help to keep them top of mind. If a goal is staring you in the face because it is on your computer desktop, you will be much more likely to do something about it.

Ensure that you set measurable objectives for your team members. Agree metrics at the start of the year and ensure that a monthly reporting system is in place. Whether you measure - sales, headcount, revenue or production levels, will depend on the objective - the key is being able to measure progress on a regular basis.

Putting the right reward structure in place can motivate your team to drive forward and achieve their objectives. Consider what sort of incentive structure would work well in your firm

## Managing stress at work

### Work-related stress is an increasing area of concern.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated work-related stress as many of us have had to suddenly shift to new ways of working as well as balancing family responsibilities with home-working and home schooling, etc. This has put a lot of pressure on people and has tested the resilience of many of us. Stress can have a very negative effect on physical and mental health, to the extent that it can affect behaviour and people's performance.

This can have a knock-on effect on relationships with colleagues. Work-related stress is a major cause of long term absence from work, so knowing how to manage work-related stress is key for businesses.

Ideally, employers should approach stress management proactively, focusing on prevention and early intervention.

Managers should lead by example and promote healthy working habits. This may include taking regular breaks, encouraging employees to take all of their annual leave and avoiding sending emails outside of working hours as much as possible. If managers take an interest in their own well-being, others will follow suit.

Keep an eye on workloads and discuss this with your team regularly. Ensure that work is being shared equally and try to identify any people who may be overworked. If someone is showing signs of stress, try to delegate some of their workload elsewhere, or extend a couple of deadlines, to take the pressure off.

Invest time in building relationships with your team. If you know your team better, you will be more attuned to their stress levels. Keep up positive communication, celebrate successes and encourage your people to switch off after work or at weekends.

Regular team meetings and one-to-one meetings are key, particularly if your people are working from home. Positive interactions with colleagues can help give people a boost if they are feeling under pressure. Encourage feedback and let your people know that it is ok to ask for help if they have too much on their plate.

**Please contact a member of our team if you would like to discuss any of the issues raised.**

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## Top 5 management tips for 2022

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**Great managers build great businesses. Here are some top tips to help you become a better manager in 2022.**



### **A goal without a plan is just a wish**

Good managers create a business plan every year and communicate that plan with their team. It's important to keep your team informed of project goals, priorities and deadlines because employees who feel uninformed can become anxious and can even lose trust in their manager.

### **Hunger to learn**

Good managers are open to learning and growing. Managers who are closed to learning and are set in their ways tend to be less effective. Be prepared to learn from others, including team members who report into you. Be willing to adapt to change and to embrace new technology. Encourage a culture of "life long learning" in your team.

### **Set a good example**

Your team will look to you to set the standard. Lead by example and try not to demand too much of your team. The best managers exhibit a high level of professionalism and dedication – this inspires others to behave in the same way. Try to create an environment where the energy is positive and ideas are welcomed.

Set an example by being efficient and doing things properly - this will inspire others in your team to try to do the same.

### **Recognition builds confidence**

By publicly recognising the achievements and efforts of your team, you will build their confidence. This will, in turn, encourage future contributions and effort from your team.

Recognition doesn't always have to be formal. Praising team members can be part of your day to day routine. You can also recognise the achievements of team members during team meetings, one to one catch ups or during an informal chat.

Lots of managers cancel monthly meetings and catch ups when time is limited. The best managers never cancel these meetings as doing so can make team members feel undervalued.

### **Be decisive**

A good manager is one who doesn't procrastinate. Focus on making decisions in a timely fashion and stick to them. People tend to feel uncomfortable with someone who back tracks or changes their mind all the time. Decisive managers build stronger trust among their team members. You can also build trust with your team members by asking for their views and including them in making decisions.

## Network Attached Storage (NAS) Drives

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**Businesses are creating and storing more data across more devices than ever before. NAS drives can offer an effective solution for small and medium sized businesses.**

A NAS drive is a high-capacity storage device in a box, which is designed to connect quickly and easily to a network. NAS drives offer a good solution for small and medium sized businesses who need to share files, documents and data across a range of laptops, tablets and mobile devices.

NAS drives can be set up to allow multiple users to store and share files in a centralised location rather than individuals storing files on their own computers. They are popular with small and medium sized businesses who need a scalable solution at a relatively low cost.

NAS drives are designed to be simple to operate - a dedicated IT manager is often not required to run this type of solution, and this helps to keep IT costs down. NAS drives also offer an easy backup solution, ensuring that data is always accessible when it is needed.

Having data accessible from a centralised location also makes it easier for employees to collaborate, respond to customers in a timely fashion and manage day to day aspects of the business, even if they are working remotely. NAS devices usually have space for between 2 and 5 hard drives in the box. This means that as your business grows, you can increase your storage capacity as needed. In terms of connectivity, NAS drives can be connected to your network with an ethernet cable or over WiFi.

In terms of cost, NAS drives start at around £300 for a basic unit with around 4TB of storage and go up to around £5,000 for a high-end unit with around 100TB of storage. As ever with IT, it pays to do your research. Think carefully about what your business needs are now and in the future, and consult with a good IT professional for guidance on what options would suit your business best.

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