

TELL THEM WHAT YOU WANT

It is easy to hold staff accountable to completing a task such as tidying at the end of the day - they either do it or do not - but many managers find it very hard to hold staff accountable to displaying the right attitude and approach to their work. This is because it is rare for managers to spend time identifying exactly what they want. Yet when you do Tell Them What you Want it becomes very easy to provide feedback to any individual who fails to meet the required standard for your salon.

And this achieved by forming a series of We Are statements. And whilst it takes a bit of work to complete this the rewards are more than worth it.

Here are the steps to take:

What are you seeing when people are doing things right? What is the attitude they are displaying that makes this the right thing to do for your Salon? Do take the opportunity to step in and congratulate and specify exactly what they did right – *‘Well done Stephanie, we are people who’*

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

From your observations of things being done right - what are your draft We Are statements?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Gain your team's input:

Now it is not enough for you to simply say to staff 'This is what I now want you to do'. It is a Parental approach and can work but if you have members of your team who work from a Child-like state they will respond just like a child when a parent tells them to behave. In other words – grudgingly comply when you are there but play around when you are not!

So the answer is to include them in generating 'We Are' statements. Treat them as Adults who have really great ideas - as they do and will. If they play a significant part in creating these We Are statements then it means they own them - that they are theirs not just yours.

Hold a meeting, formal or informal, with cake or without – whatever works for your team and ask them. Allow at least an hour if not an hour and a half for the meeting. Here is a suggested and simple format but please feel free to amend to fit your particular situation.

Hello everyone. I brought us here because I want us to be the best [infill here a motivational aspiration you hold for the Salon] and I want us to have a lot of fun as we work hard to achieve this. Also I want us all to really enjoy working here and for us to be proud when we say we work for [name]. And it goes without saying that I want us to completely wow our clients. So I would like us to take some time to consider what we are doing when we are having fun, working hard, really enjoying what we are doing, taking pride in our work and wowing the clients. [Notice this is about creating a benefit for the salon but also a series of strong and clear benefits for them – fun, pride, enjoyment, satisfaction of a hard day's work with delighted clients!]

Now over the last few weeks I have been observing when people have been doing that bit extra that makes all the difference to us and our clients. Then list examples of great work – be sure to include an example from each person or just a handful! Do not, whatever you do, mention everyone but one! Or be seen to only mention what others may consider to be your favourites. That will mean that some people are already sitting there with arms folded before you have even begun. Include a junior person and someone a little bit 'difficult' - that will show that you are fair and recognizing people across the entire team.

Then go on and ask the questions one by one to get the team thinking - if possible have a big piece of paper on the wall and write up the answers. Record everything that people say. And do not judge ANYTHING they say - as this stage no comment is a wrong comment.

So I have some questions for you:

- 1. Who are we when we thrill a client? What are we doing, feeling, thinking?*
- 2. When we are working at our best - what is that like and what are we doing?*
- 3. When we go home tired at the end of a day because it has been full on but strangely energised and happy because it has been a great day - what has happened? What have we delivered to make that day so special? [Basically your aim is to have most days these types of days - just how good would that be?]*
- 4. What do we want to be known for in our town?*
- 5. What do we want clients to say about us when they are recommending us to friends?*

You may get a great list from one meeting - or it may take a couple meetings but you will want to end up with 20+ statements and words.

Take the big list of statements and words and cluster them together so that you end up with about 5 or 6. The simpler and more straightforward the better. Remember Mencap have a really simple one 'We care'. You are looking for words and phrases that really describe your salon. What is the magic essence that you supply to your clients?

This stage may take some time, days, weeks, even a couple of months - you may do this alone or you may include some or all of your team - but work until you see strong agreement and energy from people when they see the statement. They are saying 'Yes, that is right. That describes us'. This tells you that they are motivated to meet it.

Publish the statements. Put them up everywhere so as to remind people - make them colourful, put sparkle on them, anything to make them alive. If you want to include them in marketing material then go ahead.

Set up a system of recognition and reward. Anything so that people are caught doing things right and gain a reward. Mencap have introduced the U Rock Awards and anyone can recognize anyone else. My favourite is to give each person 4 awards to give out every month. Think of a fair and fun way to mark the achievements, say at the end of the month. Do not put any cash or bonus to it. That will make it serious and competitive - just give appreciation and an amusing token. I know one manager who very successfully motivated a team with Wagon Wheels! It was a funny suggestion of a team member and just stuck.