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allow employees to reach their full potential.

John Graziano • Jan. 30, 2024



Continuous improvement can save companies **80%** of the time spent on certain tasks, but it starts with more than just telling teams to *be better*. You have to create a culture within your workforce that will continually improve and allow employees to reach their full potential.

How do you create a culture that strives for continuous improvement? You need to

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cutting edge of the industry and honing skills that will make them a valuable asset today and in the future. Companies and team leaders are encouraged to discuss and add:

- Regular training sessions
- Workshops
- Professional development opportunities

If firm leaders prioritize learning and education, it will encourage accountants to do the same. Your workforce wants to skill up, and if they can do this on company time, it is *even better*.

Feedback Loops and Open Communication

Statistics show us that **41%** of employees leave their jobs because they don't feel like they were listened to in the workplace. You don't want your accountants to leave – especially in this environment. Creating feedback loops and maintaining open lines of communication are crucial to your firm's culture. You should create:

- Open lines of communication with constructive feedback encouraged
- Implement regular performance reviews to let employees know what they're doing right and wrong
- Encourage employee input with feedback sessions that highlight potential areas for improvement

Employees grow into their roles, and feedback can help them reach their potential. You want to be kind, encouraging and willing to hear what the employee has to say.

Feedback that is truly considered and acted upon will be crucial to creating a

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- Motivate employees
- Encourage innovation
- Praise creativity

You can encourage this culture by investing in professional development, limiting your office bureaucracy, encouraging diversity and enlisting ideas from multiple accountants in your firm. For example, if one of your accountants comes into a meeting with the suggestion of a new practice management software that could make their life easier, hear them out. This doesn't mean you have to switch practice management software, but you should still take the time to listen to their idea.

You may find that their new idea could save not just their time but your whole firm a lot of time. Accountants who deal directly with your clients may realize a critical need from your clients that your firm can fill. Hear the employees out and reward them for thinking outside of the box.

Use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to Measure Progress

You've worked hard to build a culture that values continuous improvement. But how do you know if your hard work is really paying off? Start using KPIs to measure progress. Make sure that you're setting clear and measurable goals, so employees can focus their efforts in the right places.

Recognize and Reward Improvement

One of the most important aspects of cultivating a culture of continuous improvement is to recognize and reward achievements. If you want your employees

to grow and develop, then you must recognize their hard work and progress. Doing

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● Peer-to-peer recognition from managers and co-workers.

Rewarding and recognizing improvement on a regular basis can go a long way in keeping your team happy. In fact, one study found that employees who regularly received small rewards or a thank-you were **eight times more engaged** than those who only received annual bonuses.

Final Thoughts

Cultivating a culture of continuous improvement will benefit your firm in a variety of ways. When employees are encouraged and motivated to grow and develop their skills, you help build a team of top talent. At the same time, employees feel satisfied because they are given the opportunity to advance in their careers. Even more importantly, clients will see added value from your services.

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