

Resolutions

by Lori A. Hoffner

res·o·lu·tion

1. the act or an instance of resolving
2. the condition or quality of being resolute; firmness or determination
3. something resolved or determined; decision

goal

1. The purpose toward which an endeavor is directed; an objective.

In Greek mythology, Sisyphus was a king who angered and offended the gods. As a punishment King Sisyphus, banished to Hades, was made to roll a huge boulder up a steep hill. Before he could reach the top, however, the massive stone would always roll back down, forcing him to begin again. No doubt, there are days for every single employee that feel just like this; pushing the rock up the hill only to watch it roll back down and having to start all over. But every job, even in its time of monotony should have creativity, excitement and direction.

However, if your organization cannot see the bigger picture; if the staff and even their leaders have no idea what the direction or the course that each individual and department should be taking, then everyone feels like they are getting nowhere fast with meaningless tasks and no end in sight. What makes a positive change of attitude and approach to tasks? What gives your staff direction?

Leadership does by setting clear, explicit organizational or team goals. Leaders can resolve to do this by defining for their staff the purpose of tasks and being certain to tie those tasks to a desirable and achievable goal. The tasks are the same, but the importance changes and staff are much more engaged in 'pushing the rock uphill'.

The everyday goals as well as the long term goals are defined by the mission of the organization. We have all learned that the mission is where you are going and the goals help get you there. Can your staff clearly state the mission of the organization? If they can, then as a leader you have probably communicated your goals clearly to them. All employees at every level need clarity from the leadership. That clarity helps everyone understand the goals, clear and explicit communication helps the team with the process and progress as they work toward those goals and finally, the success of achieving those goals can be celebrated because everyone understood their role, their value to the overall mission.

Leaders set the tone. It can be one of pessimism and frustration from 'pushing that rock up the hill' and not understanding the purpose; or it can be a tone of enthusiasm and optimism for the future because every individual is valued for what they bring to each task in order to accomplish the goals. Here are five ideas to think about as you resolve to achieve the individual, team and organizational goals for the new year.

1. The staff understands the mission of our organization.

Posting the mission statement is a good start, but making the mission statement a living document is better. Everyone throughout the organization knows the mission statement and their work reflects that mission. It is only through their work that goals are achieved.

2. I give my staff measurable goals to achieve.

If the rock looks too big and the hill too steep, it's difficult to see how the ultimate goal will ever be achieved. Clearly stating the overall goal is important, however, it is equally important to identify each step along the way and the role each individual and/or team will take to help achieve that ultimate goal.

3. Goals are clearly communicated to every individual.

Explicitly state the goals to everyone. The goals can be discussed but in the end, goals cannot be up for interpretation. Everyone is held accountable for their role in the process.

4. My staff can communicate with me their ideas in achieving our goals.

By allowing this open type of communication, everyone feels engaged; they are a part of the process. Not all ideas will work, but you gain buy-in of the process when you allow the communication to happen. You never know, you might uncover a new and easier way of 'pushing that rock'.

5. We recognize and celebrate the progress along the way.

Everyone wants to be acknowledged for the work they've done and the value they bring in achieving goals. Taking the time to do this makes future goals easier to achieve.

Lori A. Hoffner, Professional Speaker ~ Trainer ~ Consultant, draws on years of experience of leadership in both the for-profit and non-profit business world. She can offer staff-development programs helps promotes a cohesive internal team and positive culture of support within your organization that helps benefit your bottom line. Please share this article as long as the information above and Lori's contact information is included.