

How to improve and inspire collaboration and camaraderie across departments

Creating a business with multiple departments tends to mean you have an agile organisation with a range of talented workers. Indeed, as your business grows, the experts in these departments can enable the company to explore new areas of your industry and perhaps innovate. However, it's important to be mindful of how these departments interact with one another.

Departments shouldn't be separate ecosystems that reside under your company's umbrella. The more distant the colleagues across your organisation are from one another, the less holistically strong your business is likely to be.

Let's take a moment to look at how you can improve and inspire both collaboration and camaraderie across departments.

Recognise the benefits

Too many company leaders feel that their efforts are best directed toward the most practical elements of productivity and business growth. As a result, aspects such as camaraderie often get left by the wayside. Yet, interdepartmental collaborations and connections have the potential for wide-ranging positive impacts. It's important to gain an understanding of these as a drive for your efforts.

Meaningful interdepartmental collaboration tends to have a variety of tangible benefits for an organisation. They result in better company-wide communication, which enables workers to be more proactive in responding to challenges and opportunities. You'll also find that workers with a range of expertise are able to act more efficiently and innovatively when camaraderie and collaboration are encouraged. Not to mention that better communication between departments tends to produce fewer costly errors.

Businesses are also increasingly recognising how interdepartmental camaraderie and collaboration can reduce organisational silos. When departments are focused purely on their own goals, rather than what boosts the entire organisation, this can inhibit growth. By encouraging positive and easy connections, these silos can be broken down and invaluable data, expertise, and experiences will be shared for the company's holistic benefit.

Consider your workspace design

Collaboration and camaraderie are unlikely to be sustainable if the environment doesn't support these characteristics. When the workspace is geared toward departmental segregation, it can certainly make it more challenging for colleagues of different disciplines to interact. It is, therefore, important to consider what changes you can make to the workplace that can make it more conducive to close cooperation, discussion, and networking.

Be mindful of the common mistakes when creating collaborative workspaces. Failing to provide diverse styles of working areas could discourage employees with different needs and preferences from collaborating. It's also important to not just think about desk space in your design choices. You should remember that environments like meeting rooms and social spaces can impact collaboration.

Wherever possible, avoid restricting specific departments to different floors in the building. This can create a natural division that can be difficult to overcome. If this is unavoidable, it's important to design neutral work areas and encourage professionals from different sections to spend portions of their

working days in these.

Encourage group activities

It's difficult for your various departmental teams to build camaraderie if they don't spend a lot of their time together. They're not always going to have opportunities to mix in the course of their duties, particularly if their professional expertise is focused on different types of projects. So, it's vital to establish interdepartmental connections through other group activities from time to time. This can include traditional team-building sessions but should go further.

Forming an employee volunteer program can help your business give back to the community while bringing colleagues together. Take the time to identify key volunteer project opportunities in the local area. This helps to ensure the activities can be meaningful to your workers and may make it more practical for them to engage. Perhaps most importantly, this offers a chance for your workers to hone their collaborative skills on something that is mutually positive. Not to mention that they get to bond over the social and ethical values that are important to them.

It's also wise to provide circumstances for interdepartmental colleagues to socialise with one another. When workers get to know one another outside of the context of their expertise, they get to understand one another and develop respect for the people behind the role. Organise trips out of the office for fun events, gaming sessions, or a meal. However, be mindful that your employees have families and other commitments. These activities should be performed during work time wherever possible to reduce the burden on workers' personal hours and encourage engagement.

Conclusion

Different departments tend to have the most positive influence on your business when they're closely aligned. Solid interdepartmental connections between colleagues benefit everything from efficiency to silo reduction. Take the time to create a workplace environment that supports colleague interactions. Provide social and volunteer actions that encourage interdepartmental workers to become closer. With some focus and planning, you'll find camaraderie and collaboration become invaluable aspects of your company culture.

