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It is the theory of easing yourself into the week with a gentle Monday—that it’s not only good for your well-being but also makes you more productive by the time Friday heralds the start of the weekend.

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4 Minute Read

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So far, concrete evidence either way remains inconclusive. Instead, we must rely on personal opinion.

So, here goes. While a bare minimum Monday may be a soothing balm for the active weekender, it fails to tackle the source of the problem. Why are you dreading your Monday at work in the first place?

It’s a little like a back massage to someone with a slipped disc. It makes you feel better but doesn’t address the root cause of why you keep damaging it in the first place.

Being overwhelmed and demoralized on a Monday by the length of your to-do list is a common feeling. It's normally preceded by the "[Sunday scaries](#)" and is a warning sign of burnout and disengagement at work. But rather than suggesting a gentle introduction to the working week as the solution, should we not be addressing the issues that cause employee dissatisfaction in the first place?

Here are some home truths. The biggest source of disengagement in the workplace is poor relationships between managers and those who they manage. We should focus on retraining the middle managers of the corporate world or weeding the current generation out. A different kind of middle management leadership is required in the post-pandemic world. Yet we have left our people ill-equipped to meet the challenges of the new world of work.

Here are the top five issues that damage the relationship between managers and their colleagues.

Trust

If we don't keep our promises, we erode trust. Once trust is broken, it is very difficult to restore it. Often it needs a third party to intervene and mediate. The only way it is restored is through small steps: keeping promises, being true to our word, and delivering on time.

Trust is all about relationships. It is shaped by how people have behaved in the past. It is impacted immensely by openness and transparency. Most of all trust is molded by consistency in our actions and through shared values, decency, and fairness.

Being too busy

The busy manager must always have time for their colleagues. Many a workplace relationship turns sour because managers just don't have enough time to spend listening and helping.

Time spent in fostering relationships is golden time, not wasted time. The benefits of investing time in building and maintaining workplace relationships far outweighs any downside in the diary. Just like in maintaining relationships in our personal lives with our loved ones, we need to invest time and effort in workplace relationships. Being too busy is not an excuse. It is a sign of poor leadership and a sign of lack of care for the people we work besides.

Keeping secrets

A lack of transparency and openness is often cited as a reason for the breakdown in workplace relationships and morale. Too often managers preside over a culture of not sharing information with their colleagues. Sometimes this is a misplaced attempt to showcase their own power. The people in the know versus the people who don't know.

It is very easy to find reasons not to share information with colleagues but it can be incredibly damaging. There is so much more to be gained by taking your colleagues into your trust and sharing the good and the bad. After all, if there is bad news, it is normally your colleagues who hold the answers to solving the problems in your business. If there is good news, they need to feel part of it and motivated and inspired to build on the positives.

Being overly critical

Most people like to be praised. Some managers find this very difficult to do. Recognition is like honey for a lot of people. Give them praise and they will respond positively and feel better about work. The manager who never says "well done" will fail to engage and inspire.

Even worse is the manager who sees the fault in so much of their colleague's work but never acknowledges a good job done. Workplace relationships are irreparably damaged by the presence of such behavior.

Treating people differently

Inconsistency is a killer in workplace relationships. If a manager is seen to have favorites or to treat one person in one way and someone else in a different way, that leads to bitterness and acrimony. In team sports, you often hear people criticize the referee for not being consistent. It's the same in the workplace. You can't have one set of standards and rules for one member of the team and another set of standards for others.

Whether employees leave because of bad relationships with managers or if they stay and sulk, this is hugely costly in terms of the negative impact it has on productivity. "Bare minimum Mondays" might paper over these cracks, but the new innovation doesn't solve the root of the problem. There is an onus on companies to ensure their managers invest time, effort, and emotional intelligence into making workplace relationships work. There is also an onus on employees to invest their own emotional intelligence into fruitful and positive relationships at work. None of this is a nice to have. It is the difference between spending huge amounts of our lives in a positive, supportive environment and making work miserable.

Source: Fast Company Compass

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