



Roundtable Member, **Tracy Gelder, Director of Business Development & Partner Management at Bell**, shares strategies for balancing organizational objectives with team morale and mental health.

## Mentoring **MATTERS**



*My team is under a lot of pressure and it's a struggle to meet our targets. It's had a direct impact on the overall morale and "team mojo," and I can feel that everyone is a little down. How can I re-energize my team and balance objectives with everyone's mental health?*

## Tracy's Point of View

I think it is important to put myself in the shoes of your team members. Feeling down can lead to feeling bored and isolated. And that stress can have a negative impact on team morale. You need to turn it around, and help the team get their mojo back.

It sounds simple, but happiness has been proven to be a key driver of producing results. Recognizing there is a disconnect between where your team is now and the "sweet spot" of a happy, productive team is the first step.

Engaging the team to generate ideas on how to create a more positive work environment can be very empowering. It also shows the team that you get it, you understand, and you feel it too. This itself is a positive move. There will be collaboration, ideas shared, and likely some laughs.

### *7 Tips to Improve Morale*

As a leader, you can model positivity and impact your team. Some of the following strategies and tactics seem very simple yet yield substantial outcomes.

- 1. Morning coffee chats.** Kick off your day with declaring your top 3 priorities. Invite your team to do the same. This small daily act can help to keep everyone grounded and focused on the task at hand.
- 2. Get out and walk.** Exercise is linked to mood. Where you can, get out and about for meetings that don't require a screen. Holding an in-person team meeting? Why not get out of the building and go to your local park or coffeeshop patio?

- 3. Focus on outcomes with clear targets.** Satisfaction in achieving a goal definitely boosts and builds confidence. Making sure everyone knows the goal, their role and the timeframe are all key in helping to achieve your targets.
- 4. Celebrate victories.** An email, a call, a shout-out, etc. – whatever you do, make sure you recognize a move in the right direction and individual and group milestones. It helps lighten the mood and creates team spirit.
- 5. Safe space to share.** Creating connection builds trust. When team members can find shared passions or goals it benefits the team as a whole as well as overall morale. Encourage collaboration between team members to help them build these relationships.
- 6. Create separation at the end of the day.** Balancing work and home time is so tough considering how connected we are with our devices. It is important for us to recognize that an after-hour email can inadvertently push stress on the recipient. Work together with your team to create a set of team boundaries so everyone knows the rules and feels good about carving out separate work and home lives.
- 7. Change how you show up to your meetings.** Meetings are generally viewed as boring, time-wasting affairs. So, change them up, and make sure they are short, sharp and succinct. Consider cutting your meetings from 60 minutes to 45 minutes. Or change the venue, add in an element of fun, or even a short one-minute guided meditation. Who knows, the team might start to really look forward to the next meeting.

Finally, I would say, keep it real. Be authentic. It is important for your team to see you for your real self. When we can be vulnerable as leaders, we contribute to a stronger internal culture where people are more open and feel safe to bring their whole selves to work.



**Tracy Gelder** is the **Director of Business Development & Partner Management at Bell.**

A leader with more than 2 decades of experience at Bell Canada, she has a successful track record of driving results through focus, people and execution. Tracy is known for continually fostering a culture of collaboration, integrity, accountability, to support driving revenue growth in the very competitive Canadian Telecom/IT market place.



**Glain Roberts-McCabe** is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.