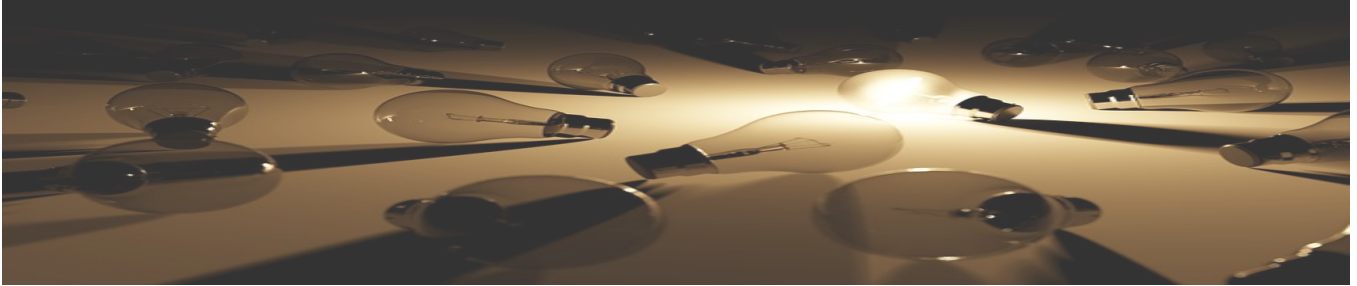


## The Best Way to Deal with Employees Who Lack Initiative

October 4, 2019 • 1:27 pm



Initiative is the ability to be resourceful and working without being told what to do – something that requires resilience and determination. In a workplace setting, having initiative is super important as it shows that employees can think for themselves and take necessary action to drive good results. Employees with good initiatives are also desirable as they possess signs to develop and grow which would help an organisation win in a competitive market.

*“Initiative is doing the right thing without being told.” – Victor Hugo*

Nevertheless, employees often dim their urge to take initiative some believe that taking initiative requires taking more risks. According to [Experteer magazine](#), there are some reasons why employees do not take initiatives at work. Some of the very popular reasons are that employees feel comfortable with their workload, they feel not qualified enough to speak up, and they are afraid to fail with the new expectations.

**See also:** [5 Top Leadership Tips for Small Businesses](#)

That being said, how does the lack of employee initiatives affect the company’s bottom line?

Joel Garfinkle, a noble speaker and an author, [answered](#) that if employees don’t take initiative, an organisation can become ensnared in the old ways of doing things, leading to more disengagement in both clients and internal team. In addition, the company will eventually lose ground to competitors that can encourage employees to speak up their initiatives.

Therefore, it is important for leaders and executives to step up and help employees find their piece of light to vocalise their ingenuity. Here are some ways to create an environment where initiative is encouraged.

### 1. Communicate expectations

You should tell your people why taking initiative is important for them and organisation, and how being proactive is a paramount thing in their tenure. Giving clear expectations and understanding will help employees realise their significance in the team and this will eventually give them the courage to talk about their ideas. Show that when employees take initiative, it will bring better customer satisfaction, cost savings, new product ideas, and problem-solving solutions.

## 2. Encourage an environment where the initiative blooms

Individuals are more creative when they enjoy their work, said Garfinkle, which is why Google allows its engineers to spend 20 percent of their time working on projects of their choosing. If you want to encourage such environment, find the best way that is aligned with your employees want and company's motto to create a positive working environment that results in creative minds.

## 3. Recognise efforts when they fail

As mentioned earlier, employees are probably afraid of voicing their initiative due to the fear of failing to fulfil new expectations. Nevertheless, the best company with the most innovative ideas should know well how to deal with mistakes. As what Bill Gates said, "How a company deals with mistakes suggests how well it will bring the best ideas and talents out of its people." Thusly, managers should recognise their team's hard work and take risks even when the ideas don't work. Consequently, the support will give employees the courage to continue trying.

## 4. Reward success

On the other hand, employees who successfully execute their ideas will expect recognition and better rewards. You can encourage it upfront by telling the whole team that those who demonstrate initiatives will be given the opportunity to have lunch with the CEO and executive leaders. Other exciting and motivating rewards can be giving employees extra vacation days or sending them to attend executives meeting, for example.

*"When the work environment promotes initiative, employees empowered to be creative rather than rigidly adhering to guidelines that might not provide the best solution...recognise risk-takers and give verbal credit when their suggestions are implemented." – Joel Garfinkle*

**Read also:** [Why Humour in the Workplace is Important & Needed](#)

CATEGORIES: EMPLOYEE RELATIONS • GENERAL • MANAGEMENT • PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT • PRODUCTIVITY •