

# Banish the blues



Spread some sunshine in the workplace this January with **SOPHIE NUTT'S** guide to boosting staff morale and beating the post-Christmas slump

It can be tough to return to work in January following an over-indulgent festive period where days may have been spent in pyjamas and the 'it's Christmas' excuse used perhaps a little too often. The days are still dark and it can be a challenge to leave a warm bed to go to work on the cold, frosty mornings. All staff members go through periods where they may suffer and struggle to motivate themselves to get back into work after a sluggish festive period with friends and family. Luckily, we've gathered some top tips from industry experts to help banish those January blues and boost staff morale to make sure that you make the most of the New Year and start as you mean to go on.

## HOST REGULAR MEETINGS

Employees like to be communicated to and to know, generally, what's going on, so holding regular team meetings can promote a sense of inclusion. Encouraging staff members to share their successes or work highlights, as well as praising those for excellent performance, will also motivate fellow colleagues to do well.



*Jennifer Linton and Joanna Macdonald, co-directors of Linton & Mac, say...*

"We believe that communication is key and hold regular appraisals, interim meetings and even mid-week meetings that help our stylists achieve their goals. We also hold a team 'buzz meeting' every Friday morning before the salon opens. This is hosted as an extended family meeting on the first Friday of each month, at which a different member of the team shares what they have learned at a training day or passes on some knowledge or information."

## CELEBRATE THE SMALL THINGS

Most employees will experience many milestones throughout their time with a business and, by recognising that these things matter, staff will feel valued.

*Jennifer and Joanna say...*

"Important milestones are always celebrated too, like birthdays, engagements, pregnancies, and award wins and successes."

## PROMOTE TEAM BUILDING

Offer something extra to your employees by introducing team-building exercises; whether a fitness class, a workshop, or simply getting everyone together for a glass of wine at the end of the week. This will help employees associate the business with something fun and sociable, not just a workplace.

*Jennifer and Joanna say...*

"A regular team bonding event that is offered at Linton & Mac is a complimentary yoga class every Tuesday and Thursday. This was introduced to keep our staff motivated and relaxed."



## SET GOALS

Setting personal goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) is a great way to measure how your salon and staff members are performing in relation to strategic goals and objectives. They can help in understanding whether or not the business is on track towards achieving its objectives and can give a clear picture of current levels of performance.



*Rose Sterling, founder of Go Gorgeous Online, says...*

"Working through your staff members' personal goals will help you to understand and support their future ambitions, allowing you to work together to achieve them. KPIs will help you to track and monitor performance. They will also help to make your key business objectives clear to your staff, giving them clear targets to work towards daily."

## OFFER STAFF INCENTIVES

An incentive can be an ongoing reward programme to encourage specific areas of performance and can be a good motivator for staff to achieve goals, while being in the best interest of the business.

*Rose says...*

"Giving staff a reward for achieving targets and goals is an important part of acknowledging, supporting and motivating the team. Rewards can be monetary (relating to a percentage of sales or services), linked to education, or be based on personal goals."

## CREATE A FAMILY FEEL

The chances are, most of your employees spend more time at work than they do at home, so it's important to create a family atmosphere among the team to help ensure happiness and the smooth-running of the business.



*Monika Shine, UK CEO of Semilac, says...*

"I always try to set a good example for my staff and they all know they can count on me as a human being who listens, not just a boss. We often go out as a team, sometimes for dinner, to release the work pressure and better understand each other and the way we work. We are close, like a family really, and we all motivate each other in different ways."

## CONSIDER WELLBEING

Truly caring and wanting the best for your staff can pay dividends in return. By caring about your staff's wellbeing and encouraging them to look after themselves, employees are more likely to feel happier in their mood, take less days off sick, be positive with clients and maximise their time in the salon.

*Monika says...*

"I truly care about my team's wellbeing and I want them to stay happy. I encourage them to eat healthily and bring in their own prepared lunches rather than opting for convenience food. I also encourage them to dress smartly to help boost confidence because how you look and feel is really important, especially in the beauty business!"

## BE CONSIDERATE

The infamous saying, 'treat those how you'd like to be treated', can sometimes sound cliché but, in this instance, it is a phrase to live by. It is important to remember that respect is mutual and so is poor treatment.



*Hannah Potter, founder of Clinic Creators, says...*

"For the ultimate boost in staff morale, treat your team how you'd like to be treated. It's actually the most simple and effective way to attract success in life. If you wouldn't like something, then the chances are that your team won't either."

"Life is precious and considering people spend more time at work than they do with their family and friends, work life should feel positive, challenging, rewarding and balanced, otherwise staff will look for alternative work and environments. We are humans, not robots, after all! If you want maximum productivity, you need happy staff, who feel motivated, challenged and have a clear direction so they know that what they are contributing is making a positive difference to the success of the company."

## RECOGNISE SUCCESS

Recognition is an underlying theme when it comes to staff morale. Whether recognition comes in the form of words, in-salon awards, training, or team building events, give a little more to your team and they will give a lot more to the business in return.

*Hannah says...*

"Recognition is often more, or just as, important to people as money – so strive to use the carrot, not the stick, approach. Set structured goals for your staff to achieve and take the time to recognise these achievements, ideally in front of their colleagues and peers. Be sure to praise in public and criticise in private; never reprimand a staff member in front of their colleagues as it makes you look weak and volatile and doesn't just affect the morale of the staff member who is being reprimanded. It sends a ripple effect across the whole company culture and, over time, can seriously impede the success of a business."

## PRIORITISE TRAINING

Invest in your staff and encourage them to expand their knowledge of new treatments. Employees will continue to feel more enthusiastic about the treatments they perform, particularly if they feel confident in their capabilities. In turn, this encourages staff to perform treatments to the best of their ability.



*Kirsty Bridgeman, head of beauty at Westrow Skipton, says...*

"One of the key focus areas of a successful salon is proactive training offerings. Invest in staff by sending them on training courses or advancing their treatment knowledge through attending trade shows. By devoting time to advancing your team and making sure they are up-to-date with the latest innovations, they will feel a valued part of the business and motivated to do the best job possible, as well as excited about any upcoming in-salon treatments or advances."

## IN-SALON AWARDS

As well as providing an opportunity for team bonding, in-salon awards give techs something to work towards and can act as a motivational tool. In-salon awards can also be an excellent way of creating a salon ethos of continuity and progression. Awards can celebrate excellence, reward skills, honour technical ability and praise hard work.

*Kirsty says...*

"In-salon awards are a great way to motivate staff, generating enthusiasm and determination within a team and leaving staff feeling rewarded for their hard work. If your salon is part of a group, providing encouragement to staff from the top level ensures that the positive feeling cascades down through the group as a whole, meaning staff feel valued and in a position where they can grow."

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