

## LESSON 16

### The Law of HIGH MORALE

*“When you’re winning, nothing hurts”*

- When you do well, you think it’s worth it. When you sacrificed so much and you finally do well, it really feels good.
- Every time you win, you’re reborn; when you lose, you die a little.
- High morale helps the team to perform at its best. High morale can be a crucial difference maker. It creates its own circumstances: *The fund-raiser* knows that under the right circumstances, people love to give. *The teacher* knows that under the right circumstances, students love to grow. *The leader* knows that under the right circumstances, people love to follow. *The coach* knows that under the right circumstances, players are able to win.
- High morale is one of the essentials to creating the right circumstances for any team to perform at the highest level.
- High morale magnifies everything positive that is happening for the team.

### HIGH MORALE IS GREAT....

#### 1) High Morale is the Great Exaggerator

Small victories seem sweet, and the big ones make you feel almost invincible. Some people call such a time a winning streak or stretch of good luck.

#### 2) High Morale is the Great Elevator

When the team possesses high morale, the performance of its people goes to a whole new level. The team focuses on its potential and not its problem. Team members become more committed and everyone finds it easier to be unselfish. Team members are confident and the confidence helps them to perform at a higher level. When losing, the opposite will happen.

#### 3) High Morale is the Great Energizer

High morale gives a team energy. They keep going and going. No project seems too difficult. Their enthusiasm builds along with their energy and the team build a momentum that is almost unstoppable.

#### 4) High Morale is the Great Eliminator

A team with high morale will keep going on the right direction even when faced with a huge obstacle or disabling setback. A losing team with low morale will be hurt even with slight problem.

#### 5) High Morale is the Great Emancipator

Winning creates breathing room. The breathing room allows team members to take risks and try out new ideas, new moves, new concepts that it otherwise wouldn’t. It does things that yield creativity and innovation.

## THE FOUR STAGES OF MORALE

### Stage 1: Poor Morale – The Leader Must Do Everything

Nothing is more unpleasant than being on a team when nobody wants to be there. The team is usually negative, feels lethargic and has no hope. This always present in a team that is losing. In such situation, do the following:

- 1) **Investigate the situation.** Tell the team what it is doing wrong. Fix the broken. It won't give the team high morale but it stops giving players reason to have poor morale.
- 2) **Initiate belief.** The team will change if members believe in themselves. Initiate such belief. Leader, show that you believe in yourself and them.
- 3) **Create energy.** You need to be energetic. Without energy, desire to change just frustrates people. Work with energy long enough, and someone on the team will join you. Then, more and more people will join you and energy spreads.
- 4) **Communicate hope.** The deepest need that player need at this point is hope. Help them see the potential of the team.

As a leader, you can't wait for anyone else to do it.

### Stage 2: Low Morale – The Leader Must Do Productive Things

To create a positive morale, you need to pick up some speed. Be productive! You can't steer a parked car! Get the team moving.

- 1) **Model behavior that has a high return.** People do what people see. So, do what you want others to do. Be a good role model.
- 2) **Develop relationship with people of potential.** To get any team going in the right direction, you need players who can produce. At this stage, your team might have some producers, develop relationship with them. If not, start with people who have potential to be productive. Leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand.
- 3) **Set up small victories and talk teammates through them.** Some wins help people to grow in skill and confidence. Small victories help less talented team members to gain confidence and succeed.
- 4) **Communicate vision.** Vision gives team members direction and confidence. Keep the vision before your team continually.

### Stage 3: Moderate Morale – The Leader Must Do Difficult Things

Do you remember what it was like when you first got your driver's license? Before you received it, maybe you enjoyed sitting in the driver's seat and imagining what it's like to drive a car. But, as you get older, just driving is not good enough but having a destination became more significant. Getting the team together and moving add up to accomplishment. But where you are going matters. To change the team simply from just moving to a team that moves in the right direction, you need to:

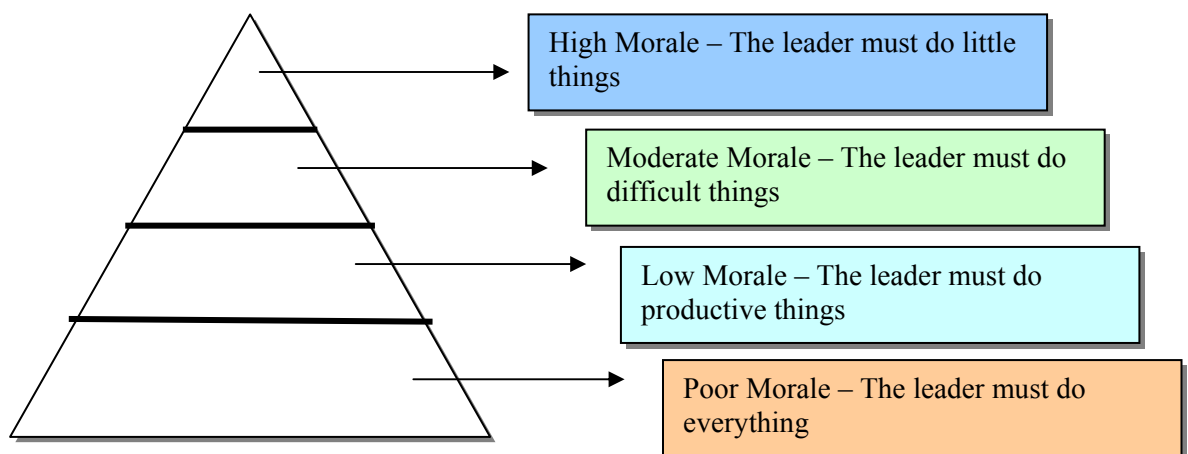
- 1) **Make changes that make the team better.** Leaders need to minimize the damage any team member can do to the team. Often, tough decisions by leaders need to be made.

- 2) **Receive the buy-in of team members.** Cast vision to the team. Teammates must buy into you as a leader, embrace the values and mission of the team and align themselves with your expectations.
- 3) **Communicate commitment.** If you want people to buy in, you need to show them your commitment, good character and high competence. People buy into the leader, then the vision.
- 4) **Develop and equip members for success.** Nothings build morale like success. If you invest in the team, then you actually are helping them and the team to succeed.

#### Stage 4: High Morale – The Leader Must Do Little Things

In this stage, your job as leader is to maintain high morale and momentum.

- 1) **Keep the team focused and on course.** High morale leads to winning and winning maintains morale. Important to keep the team focused. If they get off course, they'll stop winning. The farther you want to go, the greater the impact of an error in direction. If you want to cross an ocean, miscalculating a few degrees can get you into lots of trouble.
- 2) **Communicate success.** Know what the team is doing right and indicate that by communicating the teams success. Nothing boosts morale like winning and then celebrating it.
- 3) **Remove morale washers.** Once the ball is rolling in the right direction, keep it rolling. Leaders see before others do, they should protect the team from the things that will hurt the team.
- 4) Allow other leaders to lead. Leader should prepare other team members to lead and turns them loose to accomplish: 1) Use momentum in the team to create new leaders. It's always easier to create leaders in winning team. 2) Increases leadership in the team and that makes the team successful.



**Team thoughts: When you do good, you feel good – when you feel good, you do good.**

**Becoming better team member:**

- To reap the rewards of high morale, you can't wait until your morale is high to begin performing. You need to act your way to feel it, not feel your way into acting.
- Begin by performing excellently appropriate for someone who is experiencing a winning season.
- More dedication and enthusiasm to improve performance and you will inspire your teammates.

**Becoming a better team leader:**

- Figure out what kind of morale is your team experiencing.
  - **Poor morale:** The team is dead in the water and negative.
  - **Low morale:** The team is making some progress, but it's not cohesive and confident.
  - **Moderate morale:** The team has some wins already and is beginning to believe in itself. Some hard decisions might need to be taken to take it into the next level.
  - **High morale:** The team is performing close to its potential. It's winning and it just needs to be kept on track.

Once you figured out the stage your team is in, apply the guidelines in this chapter.

