

## 30 Ways to get *buy-in* from your team

### Introduction

Over the years I've had numerous conversations with practitioners about getting their team members to *buy-in*. This is the happy state that exists where team members show initiative, come up with proactive suggestions, innovate, go the extra mile and otherwise make your life as a working owner much more enjoyable.

It's easy to say *buy-in* but a lot harder to achieve, particularly amongst longstanding employees who have settled into a groove of *adequacy* and definitely not one of *awesome*.

One thing for sure is that if you don't proactively foster *buy-in* then things are going to muddle along as before, which brings me to the purpose of this list. I hope you find inspiration amongst the suggestions that follow.

Pen or highlighter at the ready? Then let's proceed!

### Here's my list

1. Have a compelling statement of *Why*, that you refer to often.  
(For a compelling overview of this concept and how it should form part of your Firm's approach to business, watch the compelling talk by Simon Sinek, "[Start with Why](#)". (It's one of the most frequently viewed clips on YouTube.)
2. Have an exciting business plan that you are striving to achieve.  
Why settle for being average? Making team members feel that they are part of a firm which is going places will make them feel that they are contributing to something special.
3. A powerful BHAG (*Big, hairy, audacious goal*) that you are actively measuring and incorporating into team conversations. The ideal BHAG is at the far end of *achievable*, needing the Firm to grow and stretch to get there.
4. A career development plan for each team member that you are actively partnering with them to fulfil. This comes down to the tried and true *WIIFM* philosophy i.e. *what's in it for me*. Aligning what the team members want to achieve with achieving the Firm's goals provides them a tangible reason to get behind what you are seeking to achieve.
5. A *Pathway to Partner* program by which you assist team members to make this important step in their career. You can't assume that team members are aware of the issues that go with becoming an owner in your firm. Why not actually map it out for them and guide them to get there?
6. Tell your team about the targets you have set, then actively measure progress towards them. Everyone wants to be on a winning team yet all too often the team are not told what the targets are – that's if they've been set at all.
7. Empower your team members to make decisions, supported by constructive feedback.



## SCOTT CHARLTON B Com MBA FCA AFAIM

Business coach, author, consultant

8. Expect your team to come to you with suggestions, not problems. Closely aligned with the above. You definitely want to avoid team members coming into our office and dumping an unresolved problem on your desk, leaving it to you to resolve at a later time. The way to overcome this is quite simple. ☺ It involves three powerful words, "What's your recommendation?" Ask this often enough and profound changes in behaviour will ensue!
9. Implement the system of daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly meetings, as per Patrick Lencioni's book, *Death by Meeting*. Even better, share around the Chairman's duties for these meetings to keep things fresh.
10. Incorporate *Themes* and *Rewards* to keep the team engaged. (Refer to Chapter 9 of *Scaling Up* by Vern Harnish – *Focus, Finish Lines and Fun* for ideas and inspiration.)
11. Publically praise and actively encourage positive behaviour by team members, particularly in front of clients. In this regard, a great book to read is *The Carrot Principle*, by Adrian Gostick and Chester Elton.
12. Get rid of *non-performers* and *terrorists*. You know who they are. They're the ones whose resignation you would accept with relief. They are also the ones that disillusion the other team members who you are happy with.
13. Provide a regular team training program and expect each person to play a part in presenting. Set the expectation that team members who attend on external courses will come back and share their learning with the rest of the team. Also, mix up the technical training with getting team members to present on interesting client cases that they have been working on recently.
14. Get team members to undertake an [ID Profile](#) and actively use this as a means of getting the best out of one another. Better still, organise for me to present a session on this for your team, so that everyone is on the same page. There's a double benefit in doing this – helping each person to get the best out of themselves and helping team members to get the best out of one another.
15. Progressively challenge team members with more responsibility, particularly in areas of professional interest to them.
16. Lead by example – "Nothing builds a stronger case for holding employees to a high standard than a boss who holds himself to higher ones." Rudi Giuliani (Mayor of New York during and post September 11, 2001) in his book, "Leadership".
17. Implement a team profit share plan.
18. Implement an employee equity plan – the best way to have team members thinking like owners is for them to be owners.
19. Celebrate your wins, before charging off to the next deadline/challenge.



**SCOTT CHARLTON** B Com MBA FCA AFAIM  
Business coach, author, consultant

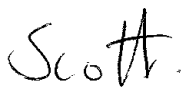
20. Involve team members in your business planning.
21. Bring team members to your business coaching meetings. It helps to keep them in the loop as to what you are seeking to achieve. It also develops them as business people.
22. Utilise your employees' special talents – video, social media, music, graphics, photography, organising events, coaching sports teams etc. The Firm benefits from engaging these extra abilities, whilst the team members involved will put their heart and soul into it.
23. Undertake a sporting challenge and/or group activity which requires everyone to participate and contribute. Not only does this foster collaboration and teamwork on the day, it provides a ready source of shared history and good humour thereafter. There's no limits on what the shared activity might be – a fitness program, course of study, conference etc.
24. Provide some work time for team members to work for a charity or good cause.
25. Provide a team uniform, which the team has had a hand in choosing/designing.
26. Choreograph a dance routine for the team to showcase at the next Xerocon 😊
27. Have a *purpose beyond a purpose* i.e. in some way integrate support of a worthy cause into your Firm's activities. For example it could be to support [Buy One, Give One](#) and thereby contribute to any number of causes that resonate with your team.
28. Write a personal thank you note to team members whose efforts have pleased you.
29. Enter (and even better, win 😊) a business award and take the team to the award ceremony.
30. Ask for feedback and act upon the suggestions received.

## What to do now

So there you have it. That's my list. How did you go? How many of the 30 suggestions are you currently doing in your Firm? Of those which you aren't doing (or perhaps, that you used to do but have drifted away from doing of late) could and should you implement?

Also, what suggestions do you have for inclusion in this list? I don't profess to have a mortgage on all the good ideas so I'd love to get your ideas.

I'd love to hear how you get on with implementing these ideas.



Scott Charlton is a director of Slipstream Coaching, a company dedicated to assisting financial practitioners achieve their potential. A long term business coach to both accountants and financial planners, Scott is also the author of three books regarding professionals in practice. Scott can be contacted by phone 0409 870 330 or via email [scott@slipstreamcoaching.com.au](mailto:scott@slipstreamcoaching.com.au)