

What your team needs most is stability



That team member who isn't performing well may just be hungry. A team that seems to be spinning its wheels may just need a long weekend.

Underlying the list of what needs to get done is the list of what your team needs to get things done. Satisfy those basic needs, build a culture of trust, and people will follow.

To build a culture that satisfies basic needs, create a sense of stability. Stability begins when people have what they need, including tangible resources and emotional support. *For example:*

At the Hospital for Special Care in Connecticut, employees get free lunch on snow days. That means that no one has to feel stressed about venturing out for food, and everyone who makes an effort to show up when weather is bad is shown a little care.

The policy benefits the patients who depend on staffers, the team leaders who would have to reorganize the work schedule, and the administrators who would have to make up for lost billable hours.

The hospital pays roughly \$10 per lunch for each of its 250 staffers. For \$2,500, the hospital buys high morale and quality care.

When Woot.com was sold to Amazon, CEO Matt Rutledge penned a letter to employees to help them feel stability during a time of intense change. But he didn't do it with words that sounded like they'd been scripted by the PR department. He communicated the way he'd always communicated, in a style that was humorous and humble. If he'd suddenly turned serious, his team wouldn't have trusted him.

Being the same person you've always been can bring stability to a team even amid great uncertainty.

— Adapted from *The Three Commitments of Leadership*, Tom Endersbe, Jay Therrien and Jon Wortmann, McGraw Hill.