

3.6

WHEN IS A DONUT MORE THAN A DONUT?

VIDEO 21

The secret ingredient for creating
a positive workplace culture

1 big idea

Have you ever looked out at your workforce and wondered why they just can't seem to come together as a team? Well, consider the one person you're leaving out of that picture. That's right: it's *you*.

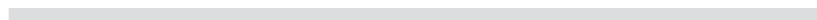
2 insights from our workplace research

1. A cohesive team culture starts and ends with you. As a leader, it's your responsibility to set a vision for your workplace culture, and to design moments that will guide and foster that vision.

Here's the amazing thing: those moments can be so small! Take one employee we interviewed a few years back: he told us that what he remembered most about his favorite manager was the way he brought in donuts every Tuesday morning. A simple thing, sure, but the true value was in the time he gave his people on those mornings to gather and chat about their lives and the work ahead while they munched on their crullers and jelly-filled. Call it "the Donut Principle"—but it's really not about the donuts. It's about creating opportunities for your team to get to know each other as *people*, not just as some kind of traffic they move through from 9 to 5.

2. Okay, yes, on one level it's simple, but (as I'm sure you've guessed) it's more complex and subtle, too. If you want these moments to be *more* than moments—to be building blocks for a cohesive,

high-performance culture—you have to be intentional about *how* your employees are connecting. Participate, quietly facilitate, and model the kind of respect and mutual interest you want to see in your staff. And, most importantly, be clear in your mind about what it is you’re trying to create. “I want everyone to get along” is not enough. You need to have a detailed vision in your mind about what kind of workplace you want, whether that’s efficient and focused, or lively and fun.



1 moment to master

This week, set that vision for the culture you want by mapping it out. Write down three adjectives to describe your current workplace culture. Is it light-hearted? Stuffy? Competitive? Don’t overthink: just go with your gut.

Next, visualize your *ideal* team atmosphere. Picture the actual employees you have on your staff right now: How would you like to see them working together, strategizing, socializing? Write down three words to describe *that* culture.

Now you have a definition of where you are, and a direction for where you want to go. Need a first step? Review both lists and choose the one word that feels most important (what defines “important” in this context is up to you). That word—and the designed moments that will foster that culture—is the Milestone #1 you’re aiming for.

