

# In the new year, share your dreams

Organizations improve when people improve, and we are finding that many people seem to be disengaged from their work. They don't feel connected to their work, their organizations or their co-workers. This disengagement affects morale, productivity, customer relationships and ultimately profitability. "The Dream Manager" by Matthew Kelly is a short fictional story about how "one leader and his executive team set out to transform a business by actively engaging a disengaged work force."

In this story, they come up with the idea of hiring a "Dream Manager" who helps employees achieve their dreams. The Dream Manager meets with employees, discusses their dreams and helps them put together a plan to achieve those dreams. Once a month they meet with the Dream Manager, assess their progress and discuss next steps. The company's leaders discover that helping employees move in the direction of their dreams creates a dynamic workplace and adds value to their lives both professionally and personally.



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Reading this simple book had a profound effect on me by raising several questions: What is the difference between striving for dreams and accomplishing goals? Do we know the dreams of the people we care about? How would relationships be different if we knew people's dreams? At my next seminar after reading the book, I asked people if they could recite the words to "Climb Every Mountain" and "Over the Rainbow." The word "dream" is a common component in the lyrics. Then I asked participants to talk about their goals. People were much more energized, inspired and engaged when talking about dreams.

We encourage our kids to dream and think big. We talk to young people about reaching for the stars. But with age and experience, we seem to stop dreaming. We get focused on getting things done and being busy, and forget about reaching our dreams.

Kelly encourages keeping a dream list in 12 basic areas: physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, psychological, material, professional, financial, creative, adventure, legacy and

character. You can create your own list, but the idea is to start dreaming and to keep track of your dreams.

Kelly concludes that if people are in the habit of pursuing and achieving dreams in their personal lives, they will be much more effective at working on the goals and dreams put before them in the workplace. It only makes sense that when we know the dreams of the people around us, we naturally want to help them reach those dreams.

We all can be Dream Managers both at work and at home. For our spouses, children, colleagues and friends. Do you know the dreams of the people you care most about?

It sounds simple, yet the concept is powerful, and it usually does not happen naturally. As Kelly points out, "Isn't one of our primary responsibilities of all relationships to help each other fulfill our dreams?"

I encourage you to share your dreams with the people in your life and to ask them to share theirs. Try it out and let me know what happens. □

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