



WORKINGSMARTER

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Rally your team to a daily win

Imagine you and a friend have just sat down at Game 7 of the NBA Finals, the arena buzzing with electricity. Your team grabs the opening tip and scores the first basket — followed by exuberant cheers. Baskets are traded furiously, yet with each score the crowd grows quieter.

You look up at the scoreboard over center court and there is nothing being reported. No scores, no statistics — just blanks where the numbers should be.

You wonder what is going on as you slump back in your seat. You soon lose interest in watching grown men run up and down a floor for what appears to be no purpose at all.

After about two hours, both groups of men walk off the floor. You and the few remaining people in the arena trudge to the parking lot. On the drive home, you turn on the radio and learn your team won the game by one point with a last-second three-pointer.

How do you feel?

The oversimplified scenario above might border on the absurd, but try to apply the concept to your business. How many of your employees trudge to their cars not knowing whether they won or lost at the end of the day? How many are told the final outcome long after the “game” is over? For companies that Work Smarter, putting up easy-to-understand scoreboards for their teams makes sense — and, ultimately, makes money.

Stroll around your company and see how many scoreboards you can identify. You might be rationalizing that all of your scorekeeping is in the computer and in reports shared with “need-to-knows” at

company meetings. That’s fine, but how does that help employees heading home every evening know whether they won or not?

“Did we win today?” should be a question you and your teammates ask every day. The most important thing, regardless of the answer, is that everyone is able to answer the question. If your employees know the score is being kept, they will strive to win — it is our human nature to want to win and achieve.

Game on

Here are some simple guidelines that will help your players enjoy the game and focus on winning:

- 1. Get visual.** Think about where the scoreboards are at sporting events. They are not hidden; they are a major focal point and constantly being looked at by fans and players. Get your scoreboards up where everyone in the company can see them.
- 2. Keep it simple.** One of the biggest mistakes companies make when it comes to keeping score is trying to track too many things. Determine one or two key indicators, and make sure everyone understands what they mean.
- 3. Train the team.** Spend time coaching the team and help them determine what they need to do to improve scores and earn a victory for the day. Time spent discussing this will pay dividends quickly.
- 4. Celebrate every win.** I’m sure you’ve watched a team win an NBA or NCAA championship: There is an enormous rush onto the court and the celebration begins. Now you might not need to cut down the nets, but you can and should use such victory celebrations to build up your team. Acknowledge the success achieved on the scoreboard, and draw attention to it. The more you make a practice out of doing this, the more opportunities you will have to do it.

Did you win today?

MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Get a very visual scoreboard up somewhere with just one simple measurement on it. Allow your team to decide what they want to measure — and how they will celebrate a victory.

More than 250 Green Industry companies have participated in JP Horizons’ Working Smarter Training Challenge (WSTC), typically saving tens of thousands of dollars annually. To learn whether your organization qualifies to participate in the WSTC, visit www.jp horizons.com/LM.htm today.