



How to Create a Culture of Engagement by **Spreading Positive Gossip**

Positive gossip is the intentional sharing of examples of people's good efforts and successes. It can be used to build a culture of appreciation and recognition, improve communication and collaboration, and create a more positive and productive work environment.



The Dangers of Focusing on the Negative

In many organizations, the focus is placed on the mistakes that were made. This can often lead to a culture of negativity and discouragement.

Instead, leaders should focus on the positive things people are doing.



The Power of Focusing on the Positive

Positive gossip is the intentional sharing of examples of people's good efforts and successes. **It is about highlighting behaviors which lead to success.**

When leaders spread positive gossip, they are doing several things. They are:

- 1 Demonstrating that day-to-day valuable actions are expected, noticed, and appreciated
- 2 Building on the strengths of each team member
- 3 Encouraging team members to learn from one another

Even small successes can be shared as positive gossip. As these repeated examples of small wins become part of regular informal communication, engagement, morale, and ultimately performance will excel. →

How to Spread Positive Gossip

The practice of spreading positive gossip is much more than just positive talk. It is about building a culture that emphasizes exceptional work over sub-par work, and empowerment over micromanaging. When leaders share positive stories about the good work that people are doing, they visibly demonstrate that they value the contributions of their team members.



Here are some specific ways to spread positive gossip:

- ▶ During staff meetings, highlight the successes of individual team members or teams.
- ▶ Send out emails or Slack messages to celebrate people's accomplishments.
- ▶ Post positive stories on the company intranet or social media pages.
- ▶ Take the time to talk to people one-on-one about their successes.

Remember to Name Names

When sharing positive stories, it is important to be specific and to use names. This helps to make the stories more memorable and to give credit to the people who deserve it. It is also important to be genuine and to avoid sounding like you are just going through the motions.

Here are some examples of positive stories leaders can share:

- ▶ A team member who went above and beyond to help a customer.
- ▶ A coworker who came up with a creative solution to a problem.
- ▶ A manager who took the time to mentor a new employee.
- ▶ A department that met its goals ahead of schedule.



The Impact of Positive Gossip

Positive gossip can have a powerful impact on an organization. It can:

- ▶ Increase employee engagement and motivation.
- ▶ Improve communication and collaboration.
- ▶ Create a more positive and productive work environment.
- ▶ Promote a culture of innovation and creativity.

There have been several studies demonstrating the positive effects of positive gossip. Here are a few examples:

- ▶ A study in the Netherlands found that employees who heard positive gossip about their colleagues were more likely to perform better on a task than those who did not hear positive gossip.¹
- ▶ A recent study in China found that employees who heard positive gossip about their colleagues were more likely to come up with new ideas and solutions to problems.²
- ▶ The same study found that employees who heard positive gossip about their organization were more likely to identify with the organization and feel committed to it.²



How to Get Started

If you want to start spreading positive gossip in your organization, here are a few tips:

- ▶ **Be intentional about it.** Don't just wait for positive stories to come to you. Be on the lookout for them and make a point of sharing them.
- ▶ **Be specific and use names.** The more specific you can be, the more impact your stories will have.
- ▶ **Be genuine and enthusiastic.** People can tell when you're not being genuine, so make sure you're sincere when you're sharing positive stories.
- ▶ **Be consistent.** Don't just share positive stories once in a while. Make it a regular part of your communication.



So go ahead and **start spreading positive gossip today!**

To learn more, read the original blog [here](#).

Citations:

¹ Beersma, B., & Van Kleef, G. A. (2012). The impact of positive gossip on employee performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97(6), 1171-1181. [↗](#)

² Bai, Z., Liu, Z., & Zhang, Y. (2022). The impact of positive gossip on employee innovative behavior: The mediating role of employee loyalty. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, 1720. [↗](#)

A black and white photograph of a young Black man with a short haircut and a goatee. He is wearing a light-colored checkered button-down shirt under a grey suit jacket. He is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is white with some light grey geometric shapes.

About ALULA

ALULA is a boutique management consultancy that helps organizations and the people that fuel them achieve their full potential by unlocking the right behaviors and uplifting performance.

We believe that the most important asset of any organization is its people. When people are engaged, motivated, and working towards common goals, they can achieve great things. But too often, organizations are held back by outdated behaviors and mindsets.

That's where ALULA comes in. We help organizations unlock the critical few behaviors that have the biggest impact on achieving results. We do this by working with leaders and teams to identify the behaviors that need to change, and then developing and implementing a plan to make those changes stick.

We believe that when people are working at their best, they can do amazing things. And we're here to help make that happen.

Learn more at alula.clg.com