

FROM THE FOUNDER'S HUB

Strengthen Your Startup Culture with "Good News Fridays"



Many high-growth startups build headcount quickly; adding upwards of one new hire per week is certainly not uncommon. Completely new departments (e.g. finance) are formed, and early hires find themselves struggling to recognize all of their new coworkers, especially as more and more companies go remote. To add to this disconnect, information tends to become more compartmentalized. Company news becomes harder for everyone—but especially junior team members—to come by.

Employees feel left out of the loop

In the early days of a startup it's usually fairly easy for team members to keep up with sales wins, new hires, engineering successes, etc. At my startup, MineralSoft, our first office was small enough that it was impossible for the engineering team not to hear every sales call (much to their frustration).

But as headcount begins to tick up, the office footprint expands, and clear divisions between teams form, it quickly becomes impossible for teams to keep up with news through osmosis.

The cost of alienating employees

Employees certainly don't expect to know every detail of every departmental action across the company. But employees who feel mostly alienated from company decisions, achievements, and culture can have a big impact on your bottom line.

According to a Gallup poll, disengaged employees may cost US companies a total of \$450 – \$550 billion per year. Each disengaged employee costs at least \$2,246 per person per year, owing to factors like lost productivity, missed deadlines, and lost sales (thanks to a lack of enthusiasm for the company).

Company culture is factoring into new hires' decisions more and more, and many refuse to join startups that aren't open and honest about what's going on in the company financially (and culturally).

Building stronger connections

Building a connected culture involves putting a concerted effort on the part of all departments to link arms in making employee experience a priority. Time is in short supply at most startups, but this doesn't have to absorb a ton of energy.

One easy solution to this challenge is to send an all-hands email each Friday summarizing the key news of the week. Topics to consider include:

- New hires and promotions
- An employee spotlight to get to know people across the company at all levels
- Product releases and engineering successes
- Upcoming events
- Sales wins
- New marketing assets
- Funding progress

Try to highlight news from all departments (engineering, product, sales, marketing, finance, HR, etc). Consider including investors on your distribution list. Most will appreciate the opportunity to keep up to date on company news between board meetings and investor emails.

Spreading the good news

Executing your "Good News Friday" initiative can be fairly straightforward. I suggest tasking one team member with responsibility for soliciting news from each department head. The CEO should hold their leaders accountable for delivering the requested information in a timely manner. The editor will then assemble all of the news into a single email for distribution to the entire company each Friday afternoon.

Don't let hypergrowth drive information asymmetry at your company. Informed teammates make informed decisions. In a hypercompetitive market for human capital it's critical that teammates are kept (and feel) informed. You'll also be pleasantly surprised how celebrating success breeds additional success. **Want more insight from founders who've been there? [Talk to a partner at Scaleview Partners today.](#)**

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