



# Misty Lown

**Motivating Excellence  
in Your Clients and Employees**

Misty Lown has been featured in the following events and publications:



*More Than Just Great Dancing!*<sup>™</sup>  
★ Affiliated Dance Studios

# Motivating Excellence in Your Clients



By Misty Lown

## 5 Tips for Motivating Excellence in Your Clients

### 1. **SHOWCASE** their achievements.

It doesn't even have to relate to your business. At my dance studio we recognize student dance achievements, but what we don't stop there! We make announcements for students who are A+ Achievers in school, sports, and community. If we are about "more than just great dancing", it makes sense to showcase our clients who are, too!

### 2. **TRAIN** desired behaviors with rewards.

My friend, Dr. George Sargiss, will probably agree that this is very effective. My son Mason is rewarded with prize tickets every time he shows progress at his orthodontist appointments. I could never motivate him to wear his retainer like those tickets do! And, it's not just kids who respond to rewards. If you have a frequent flier account or a credit card with miles, you have been trained as well!

### 3. **COMPLIMENT** something about your client every time you see them—even if it's just their hair.

According to Dale Carnegie, the greatest desire of the human heart is to be important. Abraham Lincoln said it this way: "Everyone likes a compliment." So ask yourself when you are interacting with your clients—is your focus on what's great about YOU or what's great about THEM? If the 90/10 rule of giving vs. selling is important in social media, it's even more important in real time.

### 4. **ASK** clients for ideas about how to make your business more excellent.

When they tell you—and they will—act on as many suggestions as possible and the give credit where it is due. Harry S. Truman said, "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

### 5. **CREATE** a tribe of ambassadors.

In his book "Tribe", author Seth Godin says, "Ultimately, people are most easily lead where they want to go anyway." Everybody wants to be a part of a winning team. Not one of your clients wakes up in the morning and aspires to mediocrity. Find ways for your clients to get on board with, or be a part of, your winning team. Can they represent your brand with logo wear, accompany you to a function, serve on advisory board, committee, or referral project? I mean, who among us isn't happy to represent Darren and the HPF? Excellence breeds excellence. Make the most of your client-ambassadors.

# Motivating Excellence in Your Employees



By Misty Lown

## 10 Tips for Motivating Excellence in Your Employees

### 1. **SET** the pace and standard for your organization.

If you are early, your employees will be early.

If you are efficient, they will be efficient.

If you pursue excellence with vigor, they will run hard to keep up with you!

At the end of the night at the dance studio, my administrative director asked a work-study student if she had taken out the garbage. She replied, "Well, I got it in the dumpster, but not really to the 'Misty standard'." Now, we do not have an official policy about how to put the garbage in the dumpster, but this 16 year old student knew enough about me to know that getting in half way, and not being able to shut the top, would not meet my standard!

As a leader, YOU are the measure of excellence for every facet of your organization whether it's cleanliness or communications.

### 2. **Be crystal CLEAR.**

There is a verse in the Bible (Proverbs 29:18) that says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Now lack of vision may not cause someone to die at their desk, but it can certainly lead to death of an organization. As a leader, your job is to communicate your vision for the organization to every level of your team. They can't execute what they don't understand.

### 3. **GET IN** the trenches.

I love to jump into a class at a dance studio and show the teachers and students how I like it done. No amount of staff training will ever beat seeing a live demonstration of company standards in action. Getting your hands dirty will give you a greater appreciation of the work your staff does as well.

### 4. **ACKNOWLEDGE** contributions.

If there is a quality you value, find a way to recognize it in your people. In his book "1,001 Ways to Reward Employee's", author Bob Nelson says the guidelines are simple:

1. Match the reward to the person,
2. Match the reward to the achievement, and
3. Be timely and specific.

To that list I would add, "Be sincere." A handwritten note will never go out of style.

### 5. **If recognition is good, INCENTIVES** are great.

If you've been through the recent issue of SUCCESS, you know that we are a culture of gamers. It doesn't matter whether it's Mario Kart or a company sponsored trip, we are wired to desire the next level. Even Dave Ramsey, who is known more for saving than spending, says that if he could find a way to do it, he would incentivize every position in his company.

**6. COMMUNICATE consistently.**

With a five kids to care for, I am not on site every day at my business. So, when I do have face time with employees I ask them some version of these same three questions every time:

1. Where are you winning?
2. What do you need my support on, or an answer on?
3. What idea do you have to make this place the best place to work and teach kids in the world?

This is a technique I picked up from reading about mega church pastor and author of “The Purpose Driven Life”, Rick Warren. It works for a congregation of tens of thousands, and it works for my team of 22.

**7. Give direction and GET OUT of the way.**

Navy Captain D. Michael Abrashoff, author of “It’s Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy” says, “The best way to keep a ship-or any organization-on course for success is to give the troops all the responsibility they can handle and then stand back.”

**8. Keep it SIMPLE.**

Dave Ramsey has three to five Key Results Areas (KRA's) for each position on his team. KRA's are how an employee knows if they are winning on your team. Mine are initiative, courtesy, follow through, excellence, problem solving. Good KRA's are few and firm.

**9. Recognize that money is not the MOST MOTIVATING factor.**

Years ago I conducted an anonymous (and free!) survey of my employees through the Department of Labor. Through this study, we found the following things to be most important (in order): Meaningful work, recognition, growth opportunity, and financial opportunity. Gone are the days when college grads are going to come out school and work a job they hate for 40 years, 40 hours a week just because it pays the bills.

*Which leads to the most IMPORTANT thing:*

**10. Create opportunities for MEANINGFUL WORK.**

In our organization we support what matters to employees with time off to volunteer, the freedom to create new programs, donated rehearsal space, and program sponsorships. Our teachers have created programs to connect generations through nursing home performances, a free dance outreach called Steps of Praise, school outreach programs and career days, and choreography for the local community theater. We even had one teacher volunteer to teach social dancing to the special education program at a local high school so that they could go confidently to the prom. Talk about “More than just great dancing!”

*There are a lot of tools here, but here's the take away:*

If you want excellence in your people, be relentless in your pursuit of it yourself. You can't take people where you have never been.



Misty Lown is the founder, president and energized force behind *More Than Just Great Dancing™*. Misty's sky-high energy level is rooted in grassroots charitable giving. Her studio, Misty's Dance Unlimited, founded in 1998 and named a "Top 50 Studios in the Nation" by Dance Spirit Magazine, has provided over \$135,000 in cash and scholarships for young women. She coordinates the popular "Dancing with the La Crosse Stars" event, which has raised \$285,000 for the local American Red Cross.

Misty's Dance Unlimited is an industry leader that has performed at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, on Carnival Cruise Lines, and at Walt Disney World. Misty has been a guest speaker at Rhee Gold's DanceLife Conference, is on the staff of Dance Revolution Convention, and has authored over 30 articles for Dance Studio Life magazine.

People that Misty touches are elevated by the life experiences she shares and it is an essential part of the learning process that Misty delivers with *More Than Just Great Dancing™*.

Misty has studied dance in New York, Los Angeles and London, attending summer school at Harvard, Colorado College, and earning a Masters of Education degree from the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse. She has been recognized as "Dance Teacher of the Year" by United Performers Association, "Outstanding Businesswoman of the Year" by the La Crosse YWCA, and with the "Philanthropy Award" from the Red Cross of La Crosse.

At dance competitions her studio often wins the "Sportsmanship Award" for the professional way in which Misty's group presents themselves on stage, and off. It is a recognition that *More Than Just Great Dancing™* will bring to your dance studio.

Misty's favorite part of the day is spending time with her husband and their five children.

For more information about Misty and *More Than Just Great Dancing™*, visit [MoreThanJustGreatDancing.com](http://MoreThanJustGreatDancing.com).

*More Than Just Great Dancing!™*

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