



The Idea Book for Winning Managers

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Introduction

What does it take to be a successful manager? Some people believe you've got to be Mr. Nice Guy to get ahead in management. Others say you've got to play the Wicked Witch to keep employees in line. Choose either role, and you'll find yourself going home every evening with a sick stomach, wondering where you went wrong.

The truth is, you don't have to be a dictator to supervise effectively, nor do you have to be a pal to everyone in order to get people on your side. Most importantly, being stressed out doesn't have to be part of your job!

What you DO need to succeed as a manager are solid skills. When "experts" talk about management as an art, don't believe it. It doesn't require extraordinary charisma, magic or a special set of genes. It requires skill — and like any skill, effective supervision can be learned.

If you carefully study people who are exceptional managers, you'll see that each of them is following a path that many have walked before. They're following clearly defined steps that have been proven to work. They've learned to apply methods and techniques that work and avoid those that fail. These are the things that you can learn too.

This handbook contains everything you need to become an excellent manager. It's filled with practical ideas to handle the situations you're most likely to encounter. It has dozens of tips that will help you get the most not only from yourself, but from the people you supervise as well. Use it for self-study to sharpen your managerial skills, then keep it close at hand as your trusted desk reference.

THE IDEA BOOK FOR WINNING MANAGERS

When the concepts you learn in this book are combined with your desire and enthusiasm to succeed, you'll have the winning formula for achieving your professional goals and for becoming an exceptional manager.

We feel confident that this handbook can play a role in helping you handle the most common challenges you face as a manager. While the guidelines and techniques presented here are suggestions and not meant to supersede your organization's policies, government regulations or your own good judgment, you should experiment with these concepts. Try new things. Let the ideas in this handbook serve as a springboard for your own creativity as a manager, and watch your effectiveness soar!

This excerpt is from *How to Supervise People* by Donald P. Ladew. If you liked this introduction, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

1 How to Hire and Keep the Best People

Pressures to find and keep good people have never been greater. Blame it on an overheated economy and the Internet gold rush if you will, or the requirement of specialized skills, but the fact remains that it's a seller's market. Employees, especially recruits, can call the shots. Maybe employers have made the problem worse with their downsizing, mergers and acquisitions. With the notion of company loyalty in shambles, employees are in the driver's seat. Some experts predict this will continue indefinitely.

To cope, employers must be sure they foster loyalty. They must have a climate that goes beyond temporary perks and must invest in long-term effective means of finding, hiring and developing employees. Superficial methods won't survive. The only reliable solutions involve listening to employees, addressing their needs, treating them with respect and investing in them as long-term assets.

The best organizations will create a teaching culture that encourages both individual expertise and organizational depth.

This is the very best way to cope with a tight labor market. Why? Because when people leave, their place can be taken by another insider who knows what they know. The first step is to continuously emphasize cross-training. The second step is to establish a Performance-Based Management culture that consistently focuses on results achieved and is not diverted into the quicksand of seniority, credentials, social ties or political contests.

It's easier to find the right people and help them improve when managers follow a performance-based approach to interviewing and hiring rather than a task-oriented approach.

Performance-based hiring involves more than asking questions to help you determine how a candidate will perform once hired. It also involves determining how the open position fits into the overall mission and performance goals of the department, identifying the specific results the person will be expected to generate, and following an interviewing process that will help you differentiate among candidates and make the best hiring decision.

This chapter will:

- Describe how to avoid three mistakes new managers frequently make during the hiring process.
- Help you create an effective, performance-based hiring process.
- Provide a candidate comparison worksheet to help you differentiate among candidates.
- Offer guidelines for handling a new hire who doesn't perform as well as expected.
- Describe eight steps to help you retain good employees.

How to Avoid Three Common Hiring Mistakes

The three most common mistakes managers make in hiring are:

1. Inadvertently putting themselves and their companies at risk by failing to do a thorough job of their pre-interview homework.
2. Filling the position because it's open, not because it's vital.
3. Hiring their third-, fourth- or fifth-choice candidate rather than beginning a new search when their top two candidates turn down the offer.

How can these mistakes be avoided? Let's explore why it's important to do your pre-interview homework, fill the vital position and not the open one, and start over if your top two candidates say "no" to the offer.

Do Your Pre-interview Homework

The process of interviewing and hiring people often brings new managers face-to-face with critical aspects of business that they didn't have to know before they became managers — such realities as antidiscrimination laws and the current enforcement policies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. While most companies don't expect managers to be legal experts, they do expect managers to learn and follow approved interviewing and hiring guidelines, policies and practices. So, before you conduct an interview, do your homework — thoroughly. Review the information before every interview to make sure it's fresh in your mind.

Five Hiring Steps

Here are five ideas that will help you follow approved interviewing and hiring guidelines, policies and practices:

1. In many but not all companies, the human resources department is the overseer of employee-related policies and procedures. So start your homework there. Ask your human resources department or the person who deals with these issues at your company for general interviewing and hiring do's and don'ts and for any specific rules that apply to your department.
2. In addition to the employee handbooks, which all employees are given at the time of hire, some companies give new managers a manager's handbook. It details how to handle everything including interviewing and hiring, specific performance problems, termination and rewarding excellence. If you were given a manager's handbook, be sure to follow the interviewing and hiring procedural advice it contains. If you weren't, check to see if one exists.
3. Remember that it may not be *what* you ask but *how* you ask that makes the legal difference during interviews. So, write down the questions you want to ask candidates and what specifically you're trying to find out through each question. Then ask your human resources department or the person who deals with these issues at your company to review and "OK" the questions. Do this well in advance of the interview; the questions might need to be run by the executive committee or corporate attorney — and that could take some time. Once you've received approval, ask the questions exactly as they were approved.

4. Ask what kind of documentation you should keep to verify that you followed approved interviewing and hiring practices for every candidate. Then, keep that documentation. It can make a critical difference if a candidate challenges your interviewing methods or hiring decision.
5. Ask what the probationary period, if any, is for new employees, what records you need to keep during that period, and how termination procedures work during and after the probationary period. The goal isn't to plan for failure; it's to know your management options before you need them just in case that "perfect new employee" turns out to be the "imperfect choice."

Fill the Vital Position, Not the Open One

Filling the vital position instead of merely an open one will help your department accomplish its mission and goals. An open position is the job just vacated — customer service representative, administrative assistant, accounts payable clerk, etc. Traditional hiring involves dusting off the old job description, announcing the opening and hiring a replacement — without first assessing whether or not the position is still vital to the department's mission and goals. If your department has gone through or is going through restructuring or other changes, chances are pretty strong that positions — or at the very least, position descriptions — need updating to reflect department changes. The title of the position may remain the same; however, the job focus and the "must have" credentials in new employees may need to shift to keep the position relevant to the department's goals and the organization's mission.

Example — The Case of Changing Job Responsibilities

A customer service department that has never been responsible for negotiating renewal contracts with established clients is suddenly given that responsibility by the executive committee. In the past, good communication skills and technical knowledge were the "must have" skills for customer service representatives. Now, however, the new responsibility of negotiating renewal contracts means negotiation skills are now top priority for all customer service representatives. While the job title of customer service representative remains the same, the focus of the job description and the "must have" credentials does not. This position must be updated if the new employee is to accomplish the vital responsibility of successfully negotiating renewal contracts with established clients. Moreover, current customer service representatives must be trained in negotiating.

Start Over If Your Top Two Candidates Say “No” to Your Offer

You’ve followed a carefully designed, performance-based interviewing process — one that took into consideration the department’s mission and goals and the results the person will be held accountable for producing — and you’ve ranked every candidate according to skills and experience. Of all the candidates interviewed, two stand out because they have the “must have” skills and experiences identified as being most important to the position. Choosing between the two candidates is hard, but you do it. You extend an offer to your first-choice candidate, who says “no.” So, you extend the offer to your second-choice candidate, who also says “no.” Now what do you do?

Proceed with extreme caution. If you don’t, you’ll turn the performance-based interviewing process you so carefully followed into the task-oriented goal of filling a position fast. And, if that happens, you’ll probably make a hiring mistake.

Before you offer the position to the candidate you ranked as number three, four or five, stop and think. Ask yourself if hiring this candidate fulfills a short-term plan to fill the position fast or a long-term plan to fill the position with the best person for the job. Be brutally honest. When you’re feeling pressured to hire fast, it’s easy to justify offering the job to less-qualified (perhaps even unqualified) candidates.

Example — The Case of the Medical Mis-Hire

A successful medical-staff recruiter was promoted to manager. As manager, his first challenge was to hire a new recruiter to fill the position he had vacated. The manager identified the qualifications necessary for a medical recruiter’s success: excellent telephone communication skills, especially the ability to build rapport fast and to discover how the person decides; a flexible, friendly, professional approach; and experience in the health-care industry. The manager interviewed dozens of candidates. His first- and second-choice candidates, who met all the qualifications, turned down the job offer. Rather than starting over, the manager offered the position to candidate number three, even though that candidate had a stiff and formal communication style, no selling experience and very little knowledge of the medical industry. Candidate number three accepted the job. Within two weeks of hiring the inexperienced and underqualified recruit, the manager knew he had hired a good person for the wrong job. He checked with the human resources department to find out his options and discovered that replacing the new recruit would require a great deal of his time, reams of documentation and would probably take several months. At that point he

would start over, reposting the position and going through the interviewing and hiring process again. His hiring decision proved to be an expensive mistake in every way — time, effort and money.

You can learn from this manager's experience. If the candidates ranked number three or higher didn't have enough of the "must have" skills and credentials to make the top of your preferred-candidates list, before you make them a job offer ask yourself, "So, what's changed?" Accept the fact that the top two candidates said "no."

Managers are usually better off starting over with the hiring process if the top two candidates refuse the job offer. Starting over means reassessing everything — including the reasons the candidates turned down the offer. For instance, if they turned it down because of compensation, compare the costs of offering them a more attractive package with the costs of readvertising, reinterviewing, being short-staffed, etc. A comprehensive reassessment will help you determine whether it is wiser to make one of your top two candidates another offer or spend the time and money readvertising and reinterviewing for the position.

Performance-Based Hiring

Experienced managers know that one of the best ways to retain a good work force is to hire the right people into jobs that match their skills and interests. Performance-based interviewing and hiring help you do just that. The clearer you are about the positions you are filling, the easier it will be to develop and follow a performance-based interviewing and hiring process that helps you make the best hiring decisions every time.

Six Steps to Performance-Based Interviewing and Hiring

Step One: Identify Interviewing Criteria

Before you begin screening applicants, identify the criteria that will help you determine which applicants are or aren't qualified to become candidates for the position you're filling.

Before you do anything else, look at the job description for the position you want to fill and identify the credentials and skills that are critical to that position. These credentials and skills become the "Success Factors" on the Candidate Comparison Worksheet that follows and that you will use to help differentiate among candidates during the interview process. It will also help you build consistent documentation about the interviewing process and the hiring decision you make.

There is room to write in eight success factors on this sheet. (Be sure to ask your human resources department for feedback to ensure that the criteria you've identified meet Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and antidiscrimination regulations.) Underneath each success factor, indicate how important it is to the overall performance of the job. If it's a "must have," weigh it a "ten." If it's "preferred but not a must," weigh it a five. If it's "not important," weigh it a one.

If you've weighed all or most of the factors as "tens," go back and prioritize. If you've weighed all or most of the factors as "fives," check to see that the really important credentials are listed as "tens." If you've weighed all or most of the factors as "ones," take another look at the job itself — why does it exist if the success factors aren't important?

Leave enough space in the "Candidates" column to put the names of all the people you interview after the initial screening. Notice that after you score the candidates according to the success factors, you'll rank them in order of preference — with plenty of space for comments that will later trigger your memory of why you ranked each candidate the way you did.

Step Two: Evaluate and Screen Applicants

Now that you've prepared your Candidate Comparison Worksheet, you're ready to begin evaluating and screening the applicants.

You've established job must-have requirements. These become automatic "knockouts" during the screening process.

Quickly scan all résumés for knockouts and put them in pile number one. Put the résumés that meet some of your must-have criteria in pile number two, and put the résumés that seem to meet all of your must-have criteria in pile number three. Then, go through the résumés in pile number three (people who seem to meet all of your must-have requirements) and pile number two (people who meet some of your must-have requirements), again looking for a match between each applicant and the job requirements in these areas:

1. Work history
2. Education/training
3. Patterns of stability (staying a reasonable length of time on each job)
4. Upward movement, promotion, money, responsibility
5. Participation in professional and community activities
6. Leadership positions
7. Accomplishments/results achieved

Establish an order for interviewing the applicants who appear to meet all or some of your must-have criteria. It's sad, but true: You just can't tell by the résumé. You'll want to verify all the credentials and job history and check references to be sure the applicants have accurately described themselves.

Step Three: Screen by Telephone

Before the applicants are interviewed in person, conduct mini-interviews by telephone. The benefits are:

- Telephone mini-interviews are fast, objective and save considerable time and expense.
- Telephone interviews are especially important screening devices if you're filling a position involving a high percentage of telephone work (telemarketing, customer service, executive secretary, etc.).

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People often do not communicate the same on the phone as they do in person. So, to more accurately assess their telephone skills, “test them” at least once.

- Another approach is to consider placing an employment ad that encourages all applicants to “call only” (before sending a résumé) on certain days between certain hours. Remember: As you talk with each applicant, inform him or her that you are taking telephone applications. Ask specific questions that help you determine if the applicant meets your must-have and preferred criteria. Remember to fill out the Candidate Comparison Worksheet as you go.
- As soon as you know an applicant doesn’t match your requirements, discontinue the mini-interview by thanking the person for calling and mark your worksheet: “Rejected — does not meet must-have requirements.”
- Ask applicants who meet your requirements to follow up with résumés or schedule interviews.

Step Four: Interview the Candidates

- Ask every candidate the same questions in the same order to make your documentation, weighing and ranking processes easier. Be sure to check with the human resources department for question-asking do’s and don’ts before you interview anyone.
- Ask closed questions to verify information on the résumé or from the telephone mini-interview. Closed questions are questions phrased to generate a “yes” or “no” answer.
- Ask open-ended or performance-based questions to discover how candidates are likely to respond in the situations they will face on the job. Open-ended questions are questions that are designed to get descriptive answers, not “yes” or “no” answers. Descriptive answers are your best indicators of how the candidate is likely to think and behave once hired. Be sure the open-ended questions you ask are designed to help you see how the candidate would use must-have and preferred qualities like negotiation or problem-solving skills. Questions beginning with “What would you do if ... ,” “Tell me about a team challenge you were involved in and how you helped resolve it,” and “Describe the most difficult negotiation you’ve experienced and how you resolved it successfully” will generate valuable information to help you differentiate among candidates who, on paper, seem to meet all your must-have credentials and those who, in reality, do not.

- Testing of skills, knowledge and attitude can be very useful but should be handled carefully.

Step Five: Rank the Candidates and Make an Offer to the Top One

If that candidate turns down the offer, approach your second-choice candidate. If that candidate says “no,” refer to the advice given earlier — carefully weigh the benefits of starting over with the potential costs of hiring a candidate who doesn’t have the right qualifications.

The best approach is to follow the performance-based interviewing process and extend an offer only to the candidates whose qualifications and skills match the specific job requirements.

The true test of the match between candidate and position begins on the first days of employment. And, the first days on the job can leave you and your new employee questioning the decision or looking forward to a mutually rewarding, long-term business relationship. So, it is as important for you to form a plan for the employee’s first days on the job as it is to plan an effective performance-based interviewing strategy. Here’s how.

Step Six: Start With Enthusiasm

New employees, no matter how skilled, appreciate the performance-based manager who takes the time to sit down and help them identify the major task and behavior goals they are expected to accomplish during the probationary period, usually the first three months of employment.

One of the most effective ways to accomplish this is to schedule a two- or three-hour period to talk and identify in writing what needs to be done or learned first, how efforts will be measured and how results will be achieved.

Set regular meetings with the new employee to review progress. This will help you determine if the employee is on track or if problems are occurring. The goal is to do everything possible to ensure a new employee’s success and to turn any problems around before they become too serious to fix.

What to Do if the New Employee Doesn't Perform as Expected

Before doing anything, check with the human resources department to ensure that you follow your organization's preferred methods and timelines for handling nonperformers. The following four steps serve only as guidelines to familiarize you with the general process. The best place to get specific information about how to handle nonperformers is from your organization or from the professionals they refer you to.

Step One: Hold an Appraisal Meeting

If at any time after agreeing on specific goals and measurement methods, you discover that your new employee isn't doing what he or she agreed to do, immediately schedule a meeting to appraise the situation. Use the following chart as your discussion guide to determine the causes and reaffirm commitment to the goals and timelines. Since this is your first meeting, make all comments in the appraisal column.

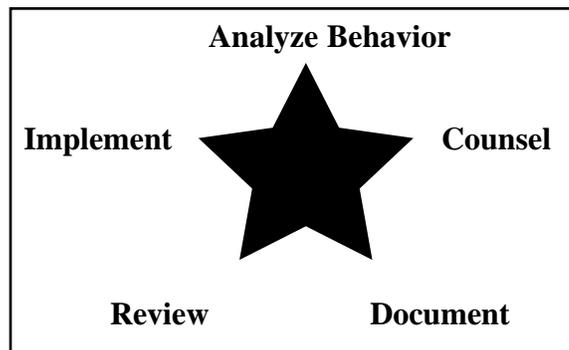
**Thirteen Reasons People Don't Do
What They're Supposed to Do ...**

	Appraise	Discipline	Terminate
1. They don't know they should do it.			
2. They don't know how to do it.			
3. They don't know what they are supposed to do.			
4. They think your way will not work.			
5. They think their way is better.			
6. They think something else is more important.			
7. There is no positive outcome to them for doing it.			
8. They think they are doing it.			
9. They are rewarded for not doing it.			
10. They are punished for doing it.			
11. They anticipate negative consequences.			
12. No negative consequence exists for poor attempts.			
13. Obstacles exist that exceed their control.			

Adapted from *Why Employees Don't Do What They're Supposed to Do and What to Do About It*. Ferdinand Fournies, Liberty House Press.

Step Two: Hold a Positive Disciplinary Meeting

If, after this appraisal meeting, you do not see the required change in behavior, take a positive approach to discipline by following the guidelines shown below.



Step Three: Document

You may want to document this meeting just in case the employee's behavior still doesn't change and you have to take stronger action. Before documenting unacceptable performance or behavior, be sure you understand the entire situation. After you have investigated the incident or behavior, use the following as a checklist for preparing your warning letter:

- Be sure the letter is neat and legible.
- Address the letter to the employee. Be sure the preparer of the document dates and signs it.
- Always clearly describe the specific details — who, what, where, why, when, how — in the letter.
- Avoid subjective statements and emphasize association policies and procedures.
- Offer solutions and state objectives and timelines for accomplishing them.
- Spell out the consequences of continued poor performance; for example, "Failure to ... will result in further disciplinary action up to and including termination."

Step Four: Conduct a Termination Interview

1. Do your homework.
2. If the situation seems to call for it, have a “friendly witness” present during the session.
3. Give clear, specific reasons for the termination. Put them in writing, signed by both parties.
4. Help the employee realize that once the consequences were explained, continuing the unsatisfactory behavior was the employee’s responsibility.
5. The focus of the termination is on unacceptable behavior, not the person.
6. If it is applicable, advise the employee of the implications of removing files, equipment or other organizational property, as well as revealing trade secrets to competitors.
7. Not all employees will take termination calmly, although the termination should come as no surprise. Should the employee become upset, these steps will help:
 - a. Listen
 - b. Share
 - c. Continue
 - d. Above all, stay in control of your own emotions. There’s no need for you to feel threatened by words — you still work there.
 - e. If you are physically threatened and there is no one with you, call in someone else immediately.
8. Know your company policies.
9. Let employees know where they stand with you. Will you provide references? A final word: Your anxiety about the termination session is both normal and healthy — it is a sign that you are a caring, feeling person, involved with a difficult task.
10. Help employees realize that termination is painful for everyone; you and the organization would like everyone to succeed — and you wish them well.

But, the best plan of all is to do everything in your power to prevent an enthusiastic new hire from turning into a disgruntled employee.

This excerpt is from *Think Like a Manager* by Roger Fritz. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

2 The Coaching Role: Inspiring and Motivating

History buffs will agree that a prime example of coaching is Henry Kaiser, an industrialist. He thought of possibilities that continually surpassed what others thought couldn't be done. Historians attribute winning World War II to his inspiring and motivating management of ship-building crews. He took ordinary people who thought it took three months to build a ship and said, "Fine, give me one in four-and-a-half days." Instead of monetary rewards, he broke his workers into teams and had them compete with each other. When told there wasn't enough steel for the ships, he built the first Pacific steel plant. When told there wasn't enough magnesium, he built a magnesium plant. His teams produced 1,466 ships for the war effort. He led a consortium of builders and constructed Hoover Dam in two years, ahead of schedule. Average performers and extraordinary results!

Coaching is more than a set of management actions for improving performance. It is an involved and supportive approach for allowing others to realize their potential. Coaching is a partnership, as Kaiser demonstrated, for achieving results. Both he and his production teams played vital parts.

Coaching rests more on motivation and interpersonal influence than on getting others to comply through a chain of command or hierarchy. Jack Welch and GE's decentralized mega-organization illustrate this. Coaching isn't a mechanical process between the coach and individual or team; it requires good chemistry, a lot of listening and observing — and caring. Barbara Jordan exuded that caring, whether in front of an audience, beside a group of citizens or among her staff.

As a StaffCoach™, you will use all three approaches — coaching, mentoring and counseling — as your people need them. For the people who do average work, meet all their goals and handle their accountabilities, you will get the best results from coaching them. Help them directly improve their performance and go beyond “just enough.”

Coaching is at the heart of the StaffCoach™ Model. Its actions are the foundation for mentoring and counseling. The guidelines, steps and techniques apply to all. Whenever you want to move your people, get buy-in, inspire or motivate, coaching is the answer.

The Coaching Role

Coaching is a before, during and after set of activities. It goes beyond the game and throughout your people’s employment. It’s not a single action. You won’t be able to review an employee’s past performance, note that he has been doing just enough to get by — no more, no less — and decide this guy needs some coaching. Since you have five minutes, you call him in, give him a “one more for the old gipper” speech and shove him out the door with a friendly pat on the shoulder and an “I know you can do it” farewell. This may be abdicating or copping out, but it sure isn’t coaching.

Your role as a coach involves basic, continuous facilitation.

1. Involvement and trust

Your overall relationship, just like a preseason, is devoted to communicating your willingness and ability to support the team. Immersing yourself in their activities and interests and involving them in discussions is a trust-builder, for both sides. As tasks occur, just as a regular season of play arrives, team members should be convinced that you are the right coach for them ... even if your decisions aren’t always popular. You and the team are together, learning about each other and how you can rely on each other.

2. Clarifying and verifying

Before any job, just as before every game, you “clarify” expectations for your team by reviewing the desired outcome, what’s expected, the game plan. This includes letting them know how you keep score. Measurements are a part of clarification as well as instruments for motivation and accomplishment. It’s a form of “no secrets, no surprises” style of management. You “verify” the team’s understanding by asking each team member to explain his special

assignment(s) during specific tasks, like game situations. Speaking doesn't guarantee that they get it. Test their understanding of what they think are the results and restrictions. Clarify the goals and objectives to verify that they understand.

3. Affirming and acknowledging

You observe the performance of your people. You acknowledge team members, giving them special reminders, warnings, encouragement and praise. You acknowledge the team by your visible, vocal, and tactical involvement and support. Credible affirmation relies on your knowledge of your people. The question isn't whether or not they want recognition; it's how they prefer to be recognized. Effective coaching underlines every excellent behavior and notes each step forward — so that it gets repeated. In order to make sure your people listen to you and really hear you, affirm them individually.

4. Motivating and inspiring

In sports, when a time-out is called just before the tie-breaking point is played, the coach reminds team members what is at stake ... what rewards await the individuals who make the winning team effort. As a manager, you challenge team members with the memory of past victories, with examples of what they accomplished. You enthuse, you excite, you encourage — so they believe they can do it. Motivating and inspiring is about them, not you. It's about instilling the confidence and energy that has them achieving the results. It's what causes ownership.

These actions of the coaching role of the StaffCoach™ are self-perpetuating. As people become motivated, they trust, which reinforces what they can and should do. This affirms that they are doing the right things, which in turn motivates.

This personalized and focused attention takes your employee and your team to optimum behaviors. You move people from an average, okay performance to greater gains.

The Coach's Role in Communicating Involvement and Establishing Trust

Critical to your ability to function effectively in the coaching role are your willingness and ability to:

1. Become involved with your team.
2. Develop trust.

While the two work very closely together, there are differences.

Your Involvement as a Coach

The coach's involvement in team activities is perceived by team members as "caring." Management expert Tom Peters came up with a concept called "MBWA: Management by Walking Around." This means simply being with the members of your team. It means getting out from behind your desk ... being available ... asking questions about people and projects. How are your people doing? Can you help? Is there something you can do to improve a process? Peters asks an important question: How can you coach what you don't know, see and understand?

The more you get involved with your team members, the easier it is to express something to them in a meaningful way. If you know what they are dealing with, their frustrations and the skills they use, then you will be able to pinpoint exactly what they need to change. It's harder for someone to listen to you and your encouragement or advice if they doubt you really know what's going on. Until you establish that you are savvy to the work and their way of doing it, you won't get results.

Think for a moment about the bosses who have made the greatest impact on your life. There are undoubtedly positive things you can say about each memorable boss. For instance, you might be able to say that he or she:

1. Was the one who taught me the value of _____.
2. Encouraged me the most by _____.
3. Consistently exhibited the admirable quality of _____.

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There may be negative remarks you could make about the same bosses. But it's the impact on you that equates with coaching success. Additionally, there was probably one other statement you could make about that boss, a statement that makes all the others meaningful. That statement is this:

"(Boss's name) cared about who I was, what I thought and what I aspired to."

Understanding why you are involved is important. This relates back to why you get paid. Think about it. While coaching is all about getting results, you aren't paid for what YOU do, you're paid for what your associates do! Managing is getting results from others. You need your employees and that team. Involvement leads to understanding, rapport, credibility and trust.

Developing Trust

Developing trust among team members and between the coach and each individual is crucial. It is an outcome of involvement. Without trust, your people won't take you or your support seriously. They may think you are a great person, but just not one who knows how tough their jobs are or the way things really are. It is more than being able to rely on each other and know each is there for the other. That's important, but trust is more: It's knowing that each of you can do what is needed in the relationship.

Trust is built by laying critical foundation stones.

- **Confidentiality**

In order to push the individual to the next level, you must know his weaknesses and fears as well as his strengths and motives. Why would he confide in you unless there was a sense of privacy? The moment you repeat something told to you in confidence, you risk the loss of mutual trust.

To illustrate this point for yourself, complete this short exercise, answering candidly in light of the information provided.

You are in a private meeting with your brand-new boss, briefing him on the status of the work group you supervise. You are the third of four supervisors he has met with today. During the course of your conversation, he comments to you that 1) he probably wouldn't have taken this job if the salary wasn't "top dollar," and 2) the supervisor just before you apparently "has a problem at home that occupies too much of his thinking."

THE IDEA BOOK FOR WINNING MANAGERS

In response to the questions, check the boxes true or false.

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| I would not hesitate to tell this new boss my personal problems. | <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| I believe my new boss is fully committed to company goals and employee development. | <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| I can be completely confident that my new boss will not talk about me behind my back. | <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| Just because my boss gossiped a little doesn't mean I can't trust him in other areas. | <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F |
| When the job gets long and the task hard, I know the uncompromising character of my boss will provide needed inspiration. | <input type="checkbox"/> T | <input type="checkbox"/> F |

Did you answer all five “false”? Of course. That’s because the word “false” always becomes associated (consciously or unconsciously) with betrayals of confidence ... especially at the coach level! If you learn only one lesson from this manual, learn to fight the urge to look important by telling all you know! That one truth alone is worth a whole library of books like this one.

- **Supporting your team members**

Let them know that, right or wrong, you rise or fall with them. If every member believes you will support him or her in the daily performance of team duties, your team will respond to your goals. Support is tied to synergy. As soon and as fast as you can get across that you win when they win, you begin knitting together and as a unit are able to accomplish more. It requires confidence, and that requires knowledge.

- **Rewarding performance**

Use rewards generously. Remember, what gets rewarded gets repeated. Rewards run a spectrum from promotions, raises or bonuses to a day off, bowling or lunch, to complimenting or giving him or her a sticker of merit or a humorous “award.” They don’t have to be monetary. Praise can be one of the most important of all rewards when properly used.

Here are five keys to making praise a valuable reward for good performance.

1. Praise only when it is truly deserved, not to pump up an employee. Overpraising, or praising a ridiculous action, has a ring of insincerity that fools no one.
2. Criticize in private, compliment in public. When employees make a mistake, they should never be admonished publicly. Praise anytime, anywhere.
3. Don't assume that people would be embarrassed by praise. Be sensitive to their personalities and choose the time and place with that in mind. Recognition and praise are a way to honor them.
4. Avoid praising one individual or group in hopes of boosting performance in another. This kind of manipulation is easily spotted. Competition doesn't motivate everybody.
5. You don't have to wait for major accomplishments to offer praise. Rewarding small achievements with praise is a great way to shape behavior.

In Bob Nelson's book, *1001 Ways to Reward Employees*, rewards include positive reinforcement, motivational strategy, appreciation, recognition or just common courtesy. Recognition fosters job satisfaction, builds self-esteem and reinforces desired performance.

- **Honesty**

Humorist Kim Hubbard said, "Honesty pays, but it don't seem to pay enough to suit some people." For a coach, however, it definitely pays the bills. Nothing is more evident to team members than lack of honesty at the management level. You can't hide dishonesty, even when it is "in the best interests" of employees. Without honesty, there can't be the trust and confidence inherent in any relationship.

There's no way around it. The critical issue here is honesty, as it is in any situation where you have a truth that affects the team. Can your team count on you to "bite the bullet" and level with them at all costs? Or are they going to always wonder if you are withholding some information on every project in order to spare their feelings? Taking an "easy way out" never works for a coach.

Tell your people the truth, even if it hurts. They will learn they can depend on you to shoot straight with them — and they will reciprocate. Honesty is part of honoring and being respectful.

- **Encouraging communication freedom**

You've heard the expression, "My door is always open," yet the reality often is open door, closed mind. Regardless, your team should be absolutely convinced that it is the figurative truth. When your team trusts you with any news ... personal or professional ... and expects you to hear with objectivity, understanding and compassion, you are a coach who can count on the "extra mile" from your people. Your team has to know that you are accessible to them.

How do you know if you are providing communication freedom?

Check if you really do encourage communication freedom with these ten questions.

1. Do my people feel free to disagree with me when we talk?
2. Are team members aware of the basic problems I have to cope with in coaching them?
3. Am I able to tell any team member when he misses the mark — without putting him down?
4. Do my people know at least two specific things they can do to get a better rating at the next performance review?
5. Do my team members know I understand their personal goals?
6. Are my people aware of the major decisions I have made this year in coaching them?
7. Do I coach my people toward improvement when they need it?
8. Do team members understand exactly what I expect of them?

9. Do I acknowledge the good things accomplished by each of my people?
10. Can my people ask for help at any time without feeling embarrassed?

If you can answer “yes” to at least eight of these ten questions, then you are well on the way to measurable StaffCoach™ success!

- **Consistency**

If you are a leader who tends to be impulsive, or if you have high highs and low lows, hear these words of warning: Your inconsistencies can make your people paranoid. You will have great difficulty taking people to higher levels of performance if they're not sure that what you want is what you want.

The Coach's Role in Clarifying Expectations and Verifying Understanding

You can't expect to have an impact on people without involvement and trust. The first thing you must do to achieve results, however, is clarify goals. Tom Gilbert, the father of performance management, teaches that you always describe what good performance looks like and let employees know how you will measure successes.

The finest game plan for the best team won't guarantee success unless that plan is communicated and understood. That's why coaches of professional athletes spend so much time reviewing and discussing game films, designing play books, conducting "chalk talks," diagramming sideline plays, etc. Many coaches believe that the game is won or lost before the actual competition, depending on how well the game plan has been presented and understood by team members.

The same holds true for the military, business and industry, and any project management. There is no question that victories in the organizational environment cannot happen without clear, purposeful direction from the StaffCoach™ and consistent team member comprehension. You can still fail despite having those key elements, through factors beyond your control (e.g., policy changes, equipment or material alterations, inadequate or incorrect information). But probability says that the clearer the goal, the surer the achievement.

One of the biggest challenges faced by managers is getting employees to do what they are supposed to do. Coaches have the additional challenge of getting employees to do more than what they are supposed to do. While working as a management consultant, Ferdinand Fournies collected information from more than 20,000 managers and discovered that there are 16 specific reasons why employees do not do what they're supposed to do. The top three reasons follow:

1. They don't know what they are supposed to do.
2. They don't know why they are supposed to do it.
3. They don't know how to do it.

Each of these causes of nonperformance can be addressed immediately with the StaffCoach™ Model. The coach tells them the “what” — setting expectations and showing them how to know when they achieve them. The mentor handles the why and the counselor deals with the how.

How do you start any coaching session to establish the “what”?

Clarify Your Expectations as Coach: How to Say What You Think You Said

- **Communicate in terms team members can understand.**

Have you ever been in a meeting and listened to a well-meaning, intelligent professional talk gibberish? Everyone has. “Gibberish” is trade talk or industry jargon — words and expressions that mean something to some specialized group somewhere but are meaningless to the general public. Hearing gibberish is a maddening experience, particularly when you really want to know and act on the information being communicated (or rather, not being communicated).

You have three choices in those instances.

1. Smile and nod and hope no one asks you to repeat what you’ve heard.
2. Risk looking dumb by asking, “What does that word mean?”
3. Hope someone else will look dumb and ask the questions for you.

A StaffCoach™ can’t afford to put his associates in that position, especially when communicating instructions, action plans or goals.

- **Avoid using abbreviations or nicknames even when “everyone” knows what they mean.**

Everybody plan on having your IRC on the TL dock ... clean and ready for old “Iron Shoulders” tomorrow morning at the latest.

Sounds ridiculous, but every organization, yours included, has pet abbreviations that save time and effort. However, for the benefit of anyone who may have forgotten, who may be new or who may confuse one abbreviation with another, the clearest instructions are always abbreviation-free! Clarifying includes adding insight about what things mean, where you can get more information, what it’s all about.

- **Don't permit sight or sound competition.**

Anyone who has ever stood on the fringes of a crowd and strained to hear a speaker above traffic noise, laughter, applause, etc., understands the importance of this rule. If your listener must resort to asking a nearby co-worker, "What did he say?" or "When did he say it's due?" you're asking for trouble. If there is distracting noise in your environment, move.

- **Improve clarity by using illustrations and examples.**

Understanding is doubled or tripled when reinforced with illustrations. That's just the way the human mind works. Memory tests conducted by the 3M Corporation revealed that "a picture is worth a thousand words." Understanding and retention are enhanced when you tell, show and do.

- **Additional communication methods might include:**

- Role-playing: explaining by acting out a desired activity.
- Outcome contrast: describing what not to do, usually based on past experience.

- **Organize before communicating.**

In the rush of busy days, when the procedures seem obvious and the projects seem predictable, failure to organize before communicating important directions or goals is very tempting ... and very common. In spite of that, remember: Organized effort never results from disorganized input! The responsibility for project progress ... for tasks that move from start to finish smoothly, on time and without hitches ... rests squarely on the coach and his ability to outline organized activity.

Never use shortcuts in the organizational phase of your team communications. Two ways to avoid that follow:

1. Write your instructions or information.

Directions are three to four times more likely to be followed correctly when written! Why? For at least three reasons:

- a. The team member can reread and make notes in writing on the facts you provide.

- b. Misunderstandings or inaccuracies are avoided regarding names or numbers.
- c. Responsibilities and expectations are documented in advance. It may take more time and effort to put your communication in writing, but the effort will pay off in fewer errors, less time policing performance and consistency in follow-through.

2. What, Who, Why, How, Where, When, What

Whatever form your communication takes ... memo, one-on-one, team presentation, conference calls, etc. ... a formula used by many coaches to communicate informational essentials is the “3-1-3” method. The numbers represent three “W’s” (what, who, why), one “H” (how) and three “W’s” (where, when, what). While the order may vary, these letters represent the information elements to include in your directions.

WHAT: Explain the project, the task or goal.

WHO: Assign responsibility for follow-through.

WHY: The reasons for and benefits of the task.

HOW: What action will achieve the goal.

WHERE: Relevant project locations (conference rooms, warehouses, client offices, departments, etc.)

WHEN: The project timetable: start and finish dates.

WHAT : The consequences of success or failure, rewards and penalties.

As mentioned, the order of your W’s will vary with your situation, but the simplicity of this formula and its “catchall” power will prove to be one of your key communication allies.

Verify Understanding: How to Hear What They Think They Heard

- **Ask questions.**

An open, nonthreatening work environment encourages associates to ask any question anytime. The old adage, “The only dumb questions are the ones never asked,” is still true and important to the ongoing growth and development of employees. Even when you are sure this freedom exists, however, the way you ask verifying questions can

reveal questions your team members didn't know they had. Remember, what you think they heard may be nowhere near what was absorbed. They may not even be listening!

“What is there that might still be a little unclear about what I've said?”

This question, or one like it, encourages your associates to search their understanding and verbalize any doubts that may exist ... especially when the coach asks it in an agreeable, even expectant tone of voice. Simply barking the words, “Any questions?” (particularly in a group environment) is deadly. You might as well add, “Or are you too dumb to understand the first time?”

Some managers have used the following statements to elicit employee responses.

- *“This is pretty complicated stuff, so don't hesitate to tell me when I can make something clearer.”*
- *“I expect lots of questions about this, so just stop me if you have one.”*
- *“Let's stop now and deal with questions you have about all this. I had lots of questions myself when I first heard it.”*

Do you sense the advance acceptance in these statements? When you are working with your average employees, clarity is vital. You want them to clearly hear that you want to help them move to that next level. You want them to buy into doing that little bit extra.

\ Three statements communicate very encouraging messages.

1. *As coach, I'm not always as clear as I want to be ...*
2. *I feel your questions are justified ...*
3. *I've had questions like you may have right now.*

Unanswered questions are like bad checks. They will return to demand your attention ... with penalties!

Be clear about why you want the associate to do more, and in what ways.

- **Hypothetical scenarios**

Another helpful technique for flushing out misconceptions about information you've communicated is to pose hypothetical situations based on the project and procedures you have outlined.

Hypothetical scenarios can be fun and enlightening, depending on the situation. A word of caution, however: Such scenarios can also sound childish or insulting to highly professional mentalities. You must make that call. In any case, scenario development is nearly always best in a group setting where individuals can interact and not feel as if they are being graded by their responses or put on the "hot seat."

- **Reports on progress**

A popular method to verify understanding of your directions is written or verbal project progress reports. These can be as simple and informal as daily or weekly coffee meetings where you casually discuss job flow. Or they can be as regimented as submitting forms at specific project points or job phases.

Monday Notes are one way to follow the actions of your people. Each Monday morning, employees can e-mail or give you a short, concise list of accomplishments from the previous week. A report might use the kind of outline on the following page:

Whether written or oral, reports should update the coach on what is going right, what isn't, what might not go right, and what uncertainties or problem-solving tactics involve the team.

Your report outline (if you choose to use one) may be quite different from this one, but a standardized structure for reporting progress can assure everyone that nothing is falling through the cracks.

- **Listen to the feedback generated by your verification efforts.**

Use the techniques important in hearing "the message behind the message" to hear both what they say and what they don't say. Watch the eyes, the face, the head position, the full-body angle. The tone of associates' responses to your questions as well as facial expressions, gestures and postures can send signals that verify or contradict their oral messages. Really effective coaches unconsciously follow the nonverbal clues that employees share with them to indicate that they "get it," that there is agreement. Likewise, when employees say, "Sure, no problem," connected coaches do not end the conversation, but begin a series of probes to ensure understanding, agreement or further discussion.

The Coach's Role in Affirming Associates

Affirming is a key coaching behavior. It impacts trust and trusting makes the affirmations more believable. Consider what draws you to another person: having your flaws and weaknesses pointed out or having your self-esteem enhanced? Affirming makes people listen to you and makes them want to listen to you.

There was an old leadership trick called the sandwich technique in which managers were taught to sandwich the criticism, or negative, between two positives.

“You handled that customer well. You were a little rushed with her; next time slow down your explanation. You really are an asset for us when it comes to handling irate people. Nice job.”

There are conflicting thoughts on this technique. For many, the affirmations to soften the criticism appear contrived. Others feel that people open up to critiques or suggestions when they know you see their worth. Think about the times your employees interrupted you with, “Wait, you don't understand, I tried” When trust is established and/or you have affirmed good behaviors, people can hear your coaching suggestions for improvement.

Like rewarding employees, affirming or complimenting them on effort and attitude is an excellent motivator for continued performance. It energizes. No team member works well for long without a compliment. Susette Elgin discussed the art of verbal self-defense in her book of that title. She taught that to cause behavior, you recognized or affirmed it; to sustain behavior, you irregularly acknowledged it; and to cease a behavior, you ignored it. The attitude of some managers, “If you don't hear from me, just assume everything is fine,” equates to ignoring and will not get desired results. Mark Twain said, “One good compliment can sustain me for a year.” It's the same with your employees; go beyond “sustain” and encourage them to greatness.

Being comfortable with affirming others' behavior is tied to attitude on your part. Coaches with negative or poor attitudes tend to have trouble affirming others. It's often said that you can't give what you don't have inside you.

A hard concept for many coaches to realize is exactly what they must impart to their people: You choose your attitude. Fact: Thoughts cause feelings and feelings cause behavior. There are only two options here.

1. Keep thinking those negative thoughts.

Wake up in the morning or drive to work thinking, “another day, what

problems now, I can't believe these people," letting the thoughts roll over and over in your mind. It pulls you down. Negative thoughts = negative attitudes. Allow this thought process to continue and everything is colored by the negative lens through which your mind views the day. The drive to work is chaos. It seems that all you encounter at work is bad news. Even the good news isn't as good as it could be. Unless something happens to jar you out of this negative mindset (i.e., you win the lottery), your day will end no better than it started — and the next morning it will pick up where it left off! Worse, it spills over to the team. An affirmation would sound more like a grudging comment.

Cherie Carter-Scott, author and coach, labeled “negaholism” a constant state of negativity. One reason for this ailment is habit, simply allowing yourself to float into negativity. Negative attitude and improved performance just don't equate.

2. Think of the things you look forward to about your day.

A second choice is to focus on the positives. This rarely happens automatically — at first. Positive thoughts have to be a conscious choice.

This is an important skill to have and to teach your people. Some ideas to help you include the following:

- Make a list of all the things you like about your work. It may start slowly but one or two positives will multiply as you ponder. The list can act as your 80–20 guide. Keep your attention on the 80 percent of the job that you find positive.
- Psycho-cybernetics, taught by author Bobbe Sommer, suggests a technique called “cancel, cancel.” Whenever the negative thought comes to mind, repeat out loud: *cancel cancel*.
- A third technique is to deny access. You can take control of your attitude by simply blocking out the negative. When the negative thought starts coming into your consciousness, tell yourself you won't take that thought or that person with you, into the office, or into your home at night.
- Scott Peck wrote about “Thirty Golden Minutes.” He noted that your mind is most susceptible during the four to 10 minutes before falling asleep and the 16 to 20 minutes when awaking. Consciously put in affirmations and positives. Repeat them, and allow your attitude to take on those thoughts.

Teach your people how to change their attitudes and change their minds. This can be one of the most powerful influences you have on your people's performances. With a positive mindset, they can take over their own responsibility to grow their skills and take their actions to higher levels.

An excellent action to connect this important technique — your own attitude and those of your employees — is to list the job strengths and positive character traits of one team member per day. This will strengthen your overall attitude toward him or her as well as give you the means to honestly affirm that person on a regular basis.

An example of this is shown on the following form. It illustrates what you could note about Robert. Read what was written, then consider one of your associates. Who is an employee who has been on your mind? Write down four compliments that you can honestly give that employee. Our brains tend to focus on negative memories rather than on the potential for new tomorrows. If you were told to write down four reasons why that same person is a problem employee, it would probably be much easier.

The Coach's Role in Motivating and Inspiring

A fourth accountability in the coaching process is helping your people become and stay energized. It means pumping up your people from the outside until they gradually begin energizing themselves from the inside. Coaching does include cheerleading. When you are involved with your people, you earn their trust by being real, by respecting their points of view, by keeping the lines of communication clear, and by affirming their efforts to be the best they can be. This is motivation, and this is where their inspiration to greater performance can come from. It isn't what you do to them, it's what you do around them that lets them do it to themselves.

In short, motivation and inspiration are the logical outgrowths of everything you have read in this chapter up to this point. Logical, but not automatic. As coach, you still provide the vision — a focus and direction. While a manager creates the team's vision, the coach gets personal. Your inspiration is for people to feel good about their vision, their goals, the direction they are taking. That is why StaffCoaching™ is not about what you do, but about what they do. You provide the challenge to look beyond the tasks at hand to new horizons.

For instance, realizing that money is not always the best performance motivator, listen carefully and observe your staff to know what they consider worthy and important. Every serious study of team behavior over the last 30 years shows that numerous short-term and long-term career incentives are more important than income increases when it comes to energizing employee performance, morale and loyalty.

Demonstrating that you care for employees as unique individuals inspires today's work force.

Some Cautions for the Coach

There are pitfalls to coaching. They serve as a summary for what to do to cause your people to produce results. Avoiding the pitfalls is all about doing what excellent coaches do.

The top ten difficulties to watch for are the following:

1. You don't determine what is worthy performance.
2. You aren't clear about what you expect.
3. You don't have enough information about your people.
4. You are inflexible about how to perform.
5. You lose it when your employee is negative toward your coaching.
6. You become defensive.
7. You don't get feedback or suggestions or solutions from your people.
8. You don't listen to what your people are saying.
9. You don't hold individuals accountable for their performance measures.
10. You fail to reinforce improved performance.

Steps for Effective Coaching Interactions

Whenever you coach your people, your approach will depend on the situation and what you are attempting. The following steps give you a general guideline for interacting with your people. Using it will keep you out of the ten pitfalls just listed.

1. Put the employee at ease by being warm, friendly and open.
2. Clearly and immediately define what you want to discuss.
3. Explain why you are concerned about the specific area of performance even though the employee is meeting standards.
4. Describe what the employee can do to use more potential.
5. Acknowledge and listen to the employee's feelings.
6. Ask how the employee thinks he or she can move performance to the next level.
7. Ask open-ended questions to encourage the employee to determine his or her own solutions.
8. Let the employee know that you respect his or her ability to get results.
9. Continually build on any ideas your employee has.
10. Agree upon specific actions the person can take and you can do.
11. Schedule another meeting to discuss what has occurred from now to then.
12. Commit to provide feedback, encouragement and attention to the employee.

The steps for a coaching session essentially focus on communication, honoring your associate and establishing a continuous relationship of support.

Common Activities for the Coach

Activities that are included in this approach of the StaffCoach™ Model vary depending upon your employee. Anything you do, however, is for the purpose of encouraging more than average performance. Avoiding the pitfalls and working within the steps give you a big range. Things that a coach commonly does include the following:

- Listening to the employee talk about him- or herself, the job, the issues
- Watching the employee interact with others
- Showing the employee what others do that surpass performance
- Asking about reasons for doing some of the tasks as he or she does

THE COACHING ROLE: INSPIRING AND MOTIVATING

- Taping the employee and listening together to how he or she does the job
- Videotaping the employee and watching together how he or she does the job
- Reviewing why enough isn't enough
- Demonstrating where the employee surpassed his or her own performance
- Underscoring the employee's successes
- Persuading the employee to take on more

Each action taken by the coach implies follow-up. You don't call attention to something and walk away. Neither do you set up something and walk away. This is beyond Tom Peters' MBWA. With any action you take, your goal is clear: Motivate your employee to do more. Hence, the approach is continuous: You tell, show, demonstrate, praise, explain, tell, praise, have him tell, praise — on and on, in and out — as you shape his performance.

What to Expect When You're Doing It Right

As an effective coach, you will begin to immediately experience very specific, very real results. People respond to caring and recognition. You will motivate and energize yourself by the results you see in your people. When associates start growing and changing and accepting responsibility for their own performances, you know you are contributing.

Remember: Use your coaching role for people who are performing above their job standards. In the coaching role, your primary goals are to initiate or affirm a relationship that builds trust; clarifies and verifies your communications; supports, motivates and inspires. These are some of the results you can expect to see when you are effectively performing that role:

1. Clarification of performance expectations
2. Changes in point of view
3. Increased self-sufficiency/autonomy
4. Insight into behavior and feelings
5. Acceptance of difficult tasks

Clarification of Performance Expectations

When you properly perform the coaching role, both you and your team members have a clearer understanding of what performance is expected. Because you talk with your people, you have a clearer picture of what each can do. And they get a clearer picture of what you expect. Help people see that, while you are paying them for performance, it is potential that you want. Quite often, this increased communication inspires both of you to greater achievement.

Changes in Point of View

Because you are involved, respecting team members' opinions and affirming their skills and goals, you will learn more about other people's points of view. And because you are encouraging and inspiring others, you will affect their points of view — helping them catch a new and broader perspective and professional vision. It is too easy to be myopic in any given job.

Increased Self-Sufficiency/Autonomy

An important outcome of effective coaching is the increase in the self-sufficiency and autonomy of team members. The coaching role should help give team members a freeing, new identity ... a sense of responsibility for their own performance growth. It imparts confidence. It can minimize a tendency for the status quo. It allows team members to rechannel "ego energy" into collective goals. Once team members are secure about how you view them ... and how they can perform ... they are willing and receptive to use more of their potential. They can act to energize teammates who may not be as self-sufficient.

Insight Into Behavior and Feelings

The more you coach, the more you learn about your people, and the more you learn about yourself. You grow your own insights into human behavior and emotions. This increased sensitivity to the contextual nature of results adds to your power in influencing behaviors.

The managerial style of the new millennium is one of responsiveness and empathy. This is in part due to the demands of the new work force and in part due to the number of women in management equaling their male counterparts. Regardless of the origin of the emphasis, the impact is real. Recognize how someone feels and you deal with the complete person.

Break Old Habits of Responding

Developing coaching skills requires you to change your mind as well as your people's minds. Telling and doing behaviors must switch to facilitating and observing ones. It's more important to discuss what your people can do than what they're doing.

Like any behavior, one challenge to you is habit. Coaches often respond to people in a knee-jerk fashion, reacting as managers.

A Three-Step Process to Monitor the Knee-jerk Response Tendency

When someone does or says something that bothers you, instead of blowing up, stop and take a deep breath. Then ask yourself three questions:

- 1. “What part of this problem is the employee’s and what part may be mine?”**

For instance, have you ever been given “great” tickets to a sporting or arts event, only to discover that you are much farther from the action than you imagined? You find yourself sitting there seething inwardly about the injustice of it all ... even when the seats are free!

The same situation can occur in the work environment when team members' attitudes or actions conflict with your expectations. Someone's choice of clothing may be inappropriate for a client presentation. Someone's phone manner may seem at times grating or insensitive. Maybe those observations are accurate and need to be addressed, rather than waiting until there is a performance problem. But first examine yourself — avoid a knee-jerk response! You may find that the difficulty lies in your negative expectations, not in the actual behavior.

- 2. “What is the specific feeling that I’m choosing to feel because of this action?”**

Note the key word, “choosing.” You have the ability to reject or accept feelings. As a coach, you have the responsibility to do that!

- 3. “What is the root reason for my feelings?”**

What lies at the core of your anger, frustration, disappointment or bitterness? Does it really bear on this specific action or does it have its roots in something totally unrelated?

None of us approaches any experience totally free of previous experiences. Each has a history he or she brings to a task. Both positive and negative experiences have value, and we learn from bad as well as good. But if we're not careful, we can also allow experiences from the past to hinder or prevent positive responses in the present.

The truth is, a bad haircut really can prompt you to respond more negatively to people and events than you would have normally. An unexplained dent in your new car can give you an excuse to sound curt to a client on the phone. But, knowing that, you must evaluate your responses — otherwise, your team members will begin to feel like children waiting for mom's or dad's mood to improve before approaching either of them with something important.

Have you ever been upset and not really known why? Someone asks, "What's wrong?" and you say, "I don't know." And you really don't. You're not in control. When you ask yourself the three questions listed above, you're getting yourself under control so you can talk to people as an adult and not as an irate parent trying to punish a child for doing something wrong. Act ... don't react.

Acceptance of Difficult Tasks

There's one more outcome you can expect if you have effectively assumed the role of coach. Your team members will accept increasingly difficult tasks. This is a natural result of team members having a clearer understanding of your expectations — as well as the confidence to work more independently. The coaching role is to encourage that growth. Challenge your people. Let them know that you have confidence in them. Let them know that you think they are "unlimited resources." Let them know that you think they can do and be whatever they choose — and show them how.

This excerpt is from *The Manager's Role as Coach, 2nd edition*. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

3 Enhancing Performance: Motivating Through Recognition

In a national business survey, employees were asked to prioritize elements of job satisfaction. The factor that repeatedly ranked first was “full appreciation of work.” Job security and good wages came in fourth and fifth, respectively.

Such responses make it clear that recognition is one of the most effective motivators managers can employ. It’s also the least understood. Recognition is a way of rewarding employees for good work; but unlike financial rewards, it’s free. Recognition is a strong motivator because it binds an individual employee to the work group and the organizational hierarchy. In this chapter we’ll look at:

- How recognition differs from financial rewards.
- Why recognition works.
- What kinds of recognition work.
- When recognition doesn’t work.

Recognition and Money

Recognition and money are often combined; for instance, handing out bonuses at an awards dinner. But as most managers know, the motivation provided by cash incentives has a way of wearing off. Recognition, on the other hand, forges a bond between employer and employee based on the following basic human desires:

- The need to interact with others in a meaningful way
- The need to do good work and enjoy a sense of accomplishment
- The need to receive recognition from a higher authority for putting forth your best effort

How Recognition Differs From Financial Rewards

Money and recognition are the two most common ways a manager can reward employees. Even in instances when a promotion doesn't involve a salary increase, it is still an effective form of recognition by conferring upon the employee a new title, a new office and enhanced stature with the employee's peers.

As we discussed in Chapter 1, money incentives are often viewed as "job satisfiers" — factors that attract job candidates to the company. The problem with job satisfiers is that they gradually become institutionalized and their uniqueness wears off. A few decades ago it was unheard of to offer employees a wide range of benefits and profit-sharing plans. Now these "money motivators" are standard fare.

The following list shows you the common methods of reward, money and recognition, and how they differ.

Financial Rewards

Cash

- Bonuses
- Raises
- Cash incentives
- Profit sharing
- Employee benefits

Perks

- Cruises (for top achievers)
- Paid vacations
- Paid parking
- Sabbatical
- Paid membership in professional organizations

Recognition Rewards

- Articles about an individual or winning team in the company newsletter
- Picture on the bulletin board of an employee shaking hands with the CEO
- Recognition at an awards banquet
- Public thanks from a higher authority at a departmental meeting

- Inclusion in a top club
- Small acts of recognition by a manager toward employees on a regular basis
- Continuous on-the-job training

Why Recognition Works

It's easy for a harried manager to overlook the consistent contributions of her staff. Recognition should be reserved for a major achievement; otherwise it will lose its meaning. Right?

Wrong! That major achievement might be happening right under your nose. Yet you don't see it because there is no system in place to identify and reward solid, loyal performance. All too often, employees complain that their hard work, punctuality and years of service go unnoticed, while the awards go to higher-ranking managers and executives. Without recognition, their own performance becomes lackluster.

The first problem most companies need to address is how to train management to recognize employees' contributions. If you're a new manager in the department, review your staff's work history. Look for indications of company loyalty and hard work. Note employees who consistently arrive at work early or on time, who make helpful suggestions, and who see projects through to completion with little supervision. Look for people who take pride in their work and demonstrate a commitment to their jobs day in and day out, not just during a crisis.

Recognition is one of the easiest ways to increase productivity, because it boosts morale. To be effective, it should be accompanied by a symbol — an award that sets the employee apart from his or her peers. It can be as simple as a carnation or note of thanks for employees who pitched in on a project. It can be something more tangible that demonstrates the employee has been included in a club of top achievers. This can be:

- A certificate.
- A trophy.
- A plaque.
- A jacket (with team name or project name on it).

The only hard and fast rule of recognition is that it must reward real achievement. Ideally, it occurs when a specific goal has been reached or when an individual employee's effort serves as a motivating example to others. If you're wondering where to begin, take a lesson in recognition from a manufacturer on the East Coast that started its own "club" to recognize employee contributions.

"The 100 Club" worked on a system of annual accrual of points. Employees earned points in the following ways:

- Twenty-five points for a year of perfect attendance.
- Twenty points for a year without formal disciplinary action.
- Fifteen points for working a year without a lost-time injury.
- Five points deducted for each day or partial day of absence.
- Five to 20 points for cost-saving or safety suggestions.
- Five to 20 points for company-approved community service.

Employees who reached 100 points were rewarded with a jacket bearing the company logo, "The 100 Club." A simple act of recognition, but it worked. One of The 100 Club members modeled her jacket proudly at her local bank, announcing, "My employer gave me this for doing a good job. It's the first time in the 18 years I've been there that they've recognized the things I do every day."

The same employee had earned more than \$230,000 in those 18 years with the company. To her, The 100 Club jacket was recognition for her work; the money wasn't.

THE COACHING ROLE: INSPIRING AND MOTIVATING

Recognition works because it builds loyalty. You, as a manager, are rewarding loyalty with loyalty when you take the time to inquire about an employee's family. This simple act of recognition tells the employee you value his or her as an individual, not as a cog in the corporate machine, and that you understand people are your most valuable asset.

Here are some simple acts of recognition that really get the message across:

1. Know the names of all your employees. Never stumble when introducing them to visitors.
2. If they have children, know their names and ages.
3. Acknowledge watershed events: marriages, the birth of a child, a teenager's graduation from high school.
4. Write thank-you notes. The impact lasts longer than a verbal thank-you. A proud employee can show it to friends and family.
5. Leave surprises on desks: carnations, cupcakes, chocolates, greeting cards.
6. When the pressure's on, pitch in. One boss serves her staff coffee and doughnuts when they've put in long, exhausting hours.

Simple acts of recognition are effective because employees see their genuineness. They don't feel manipulated by bosses, but appreciated by them. One employee described how recognition motivated her: "I have an expectation that if I do well, good things will happen to me."

What Kind of Recognition Works

Depending on your position in the company, you are able to institute various types of recognition. Only if you're a vice president or CEO, for example, will you have the means to provide the more lucrative symbols of recognition: the hefty paychecks and the generous expense accounts. Nevertheless, you should be aware of the different types of recognition and how they get results.

- Position in the company. This denotes title, power and rank. Professionals often have a strong identification with the company. Their position is tangible evidence of career achievement.
- Luxurious offices. Office size and location is frequently seen as a symbol of an individual's authority and position in the company.
- Formal recognition of achievement. This can come from a CEO, a respected mentor, or from a leading expert in the individual's field. The more "professional" the source of recognition, the more valuable it is. The recognition can be given at a small ceremony, during a staff meeting, or at an annual awards banquet.
- Time off with pay. This can take the form of extra personal time, sabbaticals or time off to attend professional meetings out of town.
- Paid membership in professional societies and paid subscriptions to professional journals. This translates as company support for staff specialists getting information from professional groups outside the company.
- Being taken to lunch. It's a small gesture, but it's an effective way of letting a staff member know you respect him or her as an individual, that she's special, that you're interested in her feedback, and you appreciate all her efforts on your behalf.
- Immediate rewards. When your staff has worked hard and helped you meet a tight deadline, act, don't talk. You can promise them annual bonuses, but for the present give them Friday afternoon off. You have repaid loyalty with loyalty. Taking action builds trust and credibility.
- Day-to-day recognition. Give loyal employees a day off or occasionally encourage them to take a long lunch. Stay in tune with their personal needs (enrolling in school, friends from out of town visiting, a relative's funeral) and reward them with a flexible work schedule.

THE COACHING ROLE: INSPIRING AND MOTIVATING

- Expanded visibility. Some of your staff may be in the process of acquiring the skills or education that will increase their promotability. In the meantime, expand their visibility. Include them in meetings when it's appropriate. Make them feel important because they are.
- Training. You can do a lot to increase your staff's promotability by seeing that they are included in company training sessions. If your company doesn't offer training, initiate it.
- Shared information. You recognize your staff's importance when you share information about company changes with them. Seek their feedback. Act on their suggestions.
- Personalized tokens of appreciation. Take the time to find out the hobbies or interests of each person so you can customize your selection of tokens of appreciation. When an employee receives something obviously selected for them personally based on their interests (as opposed to the standard certificate or whatever), the positive impact is multiplied exponentially.

Rewards for clerical workers and other support staff often take the form of recognition. As outlined above, it's a powerful motivator for staff because it reinforces the mutual respect between manager and employee.

When Recognition Doesn't Work

Ideally, recognition is a means of building trust and loyalty and ensuring better team effort by motivating employees. Recognition won't work, however, when it's not genuine; that is, when employees sense it's an alternative to giving them a well-deserved bonus or promotion. Depending on your company's reputation for fairness, recognition can be interpreted as a cheap way of buying off workers.

To keep recognition effective, make sure it fulfills the following objectives:

1. **Don't substitute recognition for financial reward.** If employees deserve a financial reward, make sure they get it.
2. **Make sure a recognition party is effective.** After enjoying a lavish dinner and awards presentation, it's not unusual for employees to complain, "The party was great considering how much it cost, but I would rather have had the money." Keep the objectives of the recognition party in view: to raise morale, lower tension, recognize

individuals or teams who have made significant contributions. Don't spend money just to impress employees.

- 3. Reward what you ask for promptly.** When you've asked for extra effort, recognize and reward your staff promptly. Get in the habit of verbally recognizing employees on a regular basis for their commitment to their jobs.

Key Points

In this chapter, we've examined the most powerful motivator managers can employ: recognition. It's also the least understood and most underutilized motivational tool.

- Recognition and financial bonuses are the two most commonly used rewards. To be most effective, they should be combined. The effect of financial rewards gradually wears off. Recognition, however, builds loyalty and trust.
- Recognition can be a simple gesture — a manager inquiring about an employee's family — or it can include symbols of achievement: a plaque, a certificate, a trophy, a team jacket.
- Be aware of the many different ways you can recognize employees and know when to commend them appropriately and effectively.
- Know when recognition isn't enough: when it's a substitute for deserved financial rewards, when it is not handled appropriately or fails to meet motivational objectives, or when the reward doesn't match what was asked for.

This excerpt is from *The Secret to Developing Peak Performers*. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

4 The Performance Appraisal System

There are numerous types of appraisal systems — each with its own unique set of advantages and disadvantages in various situations and types of organizations. This chapter is devoted to enhancing your understanding of appraisal system choices. Carefully read the description of each type of system. You will find ideas you can use no matter what style your company currently follows.

Types of Appraisal Systems

- Self-Directed Work Teams
- Peer Appraisal
- Self-Rating Systems Combined With Formal Performance Appraisal
- Rating Scales
- Free-Form Essay
- Results — MBO
- Forced-Rank Comparisons

Self-Directed Work Teams

Overview

In this model, the performance appraisal is the primary vehicle for communicating business strategy to employees. Each team has a family of critical measures linked to measures of performance that, in turn, constitute the overall business strategy. These measures are revised annually.

Description

Performance measures usually fall into the following groups:

- Quality
- Financial — cost and revenue considerations
- Timeliness
- Productivity/efficiency

Associated with each measure are three criteria: a long-term goals, short-term goals and the minimum standards of performance.

Teams usually:

- Identify behaviors that have the greatest impact on performance.
- Measure behavior and create specific feedback on team performance compared to the goal. Employees keep track of their own performance. Weekly and monthly team meetings are held to identify problems and work through solutions.
- Rely on managers who are trained to reinforce desired behavior as it occurs, not just once or twice a year.

Individual employee performance goals center primarily on learning and development. Goals for an individual might be to improve communication or build problem-solving skills. General actions to achieve these goals might be taking on more leadership responsibilities in meetings (communication) or serving on a task force (problem-solving). Specific tactics might include working on different communication or problem-solving techniques.

Personal contribution to the team's goals might include: quality improvement, cost reduction or improvements in customer service. Team goals clarify the role of the work group. Work groups are charged with the responsibility to accomplish a "family of measures," five to 10 key measures of performance that the team must monitor, control and improve.

In summary, the self-directed work team performance appraisal system is one type of system used by companies that utilize work teams. This system allows you to conduct short, ongoing, informal reviews as well as formal reviews every quarter. It provides the freedom to structure the review in light of individual and team needs. It is not just a paperwork exercise but real, ongoing communication with no once-a-year surprises.

Peer Appraisal

Overview

Sometimes you may use this technique to gain additional information, especially when using work teams.

Description

The employee is reviewed by his or her peers. Feedback is collected from team members, compiled by the appraiser and used in combination with a more traditional appraisal form.

Advantages

A well-rounded view of performance can be gained by combining a variety of perspectives. It also builds peer accountability.

Disadvantages

You may need to build the veracity and commitment of your employees. Helping them feel good about the process takes time. Here are some guidelines to making a peer evaluation system work:

1. Start small. Don't try to get everyone to appraise everyone. Begin with one or two peer evaluations. Sometimes the employee picks his or her own peer evaluators.
2. Protect the confidentiality of all peer ratings. Truthfulness and honest feedback increase when peers know their specific insights will not be exposed. Your employee needs to know how he or she is perceived by the team, not necessarily the specifics.
3. When peers know that performance and income potential come from these ratings, it is very tempting to write favorable reviews. No one wants to take food from someone else. It's important that you de-emphasize punishment, emphasize positive criticism and keep everyone focused on team success.

4. Do not abdicate your managerial responsibilities to the peer review. The peer review offers valuable information that should support and affirm the key points you choose to appraise. If you are out of step with an employee's peer reviews, rethink your perceptions.

Self-Rating Systems Combined With Formal Performance Appraisal

Overview

Self-rating creates a participative approach to the traditional appraisal method. Employees rate their performance and then review it with you. This is the method we will expand upon in an upcoming section, "The Employee Self-Analysis." You can change the rating to reflect the true situation if the employee has rated herself too high or too low. Responsibility for the performance appraisal is delegated to the employee. This method treats people like adults. Your role truly becomes one of counselor, teacher and coach.

Description

Ninety percent of all self-appraisals rate employees at or below what you would! This high percentage makes the method viable. Your role becomes one of praising, encouraging and being generally positive to the employee. The employee comes away with a better self-image.

If an employee rates him- or herself correctly, your role becomes one of confirmation and reinforcement. This leads naturally into a "Where do we go from here?" attitude, opening up exploration of further development and improvement.

Ten percent of employees will rate themselves higher than the manager does. Half of them genuinely believe their performance is that good, and this calls for a response from you. These employees usually aren't trying to fight about their rating; they simply have a different perception. The other half, however, are the employees who are not happy under any performance appraisal system. They have inflated opinions of themselves, and they argue with whatever weaknesses the manager addresses.

Advantages

Self-rating stands up well in court defenses. Fewer cases go to court when employees participate in their own performance appraisals than when appraisals are completed only by supervisors.

Rating Scales

Overview

Behaviorally anchored rating scales are charted. Key issues are targeted and measured. You sample behavior over the long term and do not rely on short-range judgments and impressions. Such scales reveal the complex behaviors that contribute to successful performance.

Description

The rating scales method offers a high degree of structure for appraisals. Each employee trait or characteristic is rated on a bipolar scale that usually has several points ranging from “poor” to “excellent.”

Rating scale appraisals are popular because organizations can use a common “one-size-fits-all” form that can be administered quickly and easily. They also give the appearance of objectivity and perception of fairness—false though they may be.

Advantages

The greatest advantage of rating scales is that they are structured and standardized — allowing ratings to be compared and contrasted across an entire organization. Each employee is subjected to the same basic process and rating criteria.

Rating scale methods are easy to use and understand. The concept of the rating scale makes sense; both managers and subordinates have an appreciation for the simple logic of the bipolar scale.

Disadvantages

The disadvantages of rating scales are many:

1. **Trait relevance:** It is inevitable that with a standardized appraisal system, some traits will have a greater relevance to some jobs than to others. For example, “initiative” may be unimportant in a tightly structured position, so a low rating on “initiative” might reflect that the employee had few opportunities to display initiative — rather than a lack of skill or drive in that area.
2. **Fairness/perceptual problems:** Problems of perceived meaning occur when appraisers do not share the same opinion about the meaning of the selected traits and the language used on the rating scale. For example, one appraiser might view an employee’s reporting problems to a supervisor as displaying initiative — while another might

perceive it as an excessive dependence on supervisory assistance. Even the terminology “performance exceeds expectations” or “below average skill” may mean different things to different appraisers.

In addition, one must watch for the halo or horns effect as well. Selective perception is the human tendency to make highly subjective assessments of a person’s capability — then seek evidence to support that view while ignoring evidence to the contrary.

3. **Appearance of objectivity:** Rating systems give people a false sense of security, protection and objectivity. Because of our desire to be objective, we create systems that use numerical scales (e.g., 1-5) to rate employees — and base pay and promotion decisions on that numerical information — often ignoring that the numerical score is based on subjective information. We forget that any rating is an indication of how ONE person applies a fuzzy criterion.
4. **Development issues:** Rating systems alone do not convey sufficient information for people to improve. Much more detail and documentation are needed regarding exactly what the individual must do and what changes are to be made.

Free-Form Essay

Overview

This system usually consists of a description, in the appraiser’s words, of the employee’s overall performance, including quantity and quality of work, job know-how, and ability to get along with other employees. The appraiser lists both the employee’s good points and shortcomings as well as suggestions for courses of action to remedy problem areas. This statement may be prepared by the appraiser alone or be done in collaboration with the appraisee.

Advantages

The free-form essay method allows appraisers to examine almost any relevant issue or attribute of performance. They are free from rigidly defined appraisal criteria and may place whatever degree of emphasis on issues or attributes they feel appropriate. Thus the process is open-ended and very flexible.

Disadvantages

Essay methods are time-consuming and difficult to administer. The varying writing skills of appraisers can further distort an already subjective process. It is difficult to compare results of individuals and to draw valid conclusions across an organization.

Results — MBO

Overview

MBO (Management By Objectives) methods of appraisal are results-oriented. They seek to measure employee performance by examining the extent to which predetermined objectives have been achieved.

Description

The use of management objectives was first advocated in the 1950s by Peter Drucker. The objectives are established jointly by the supervisor and subordinate. The employee is typically expected to identify the skills and tools needed to achieve results and is expected to monitor his or her own development and progress.

Advantages

MBO methods can give employees a satisfying sense of autonomy and achievement. Employees are judged according to real outcomes — not their potential for success or someone’s subjective opinion of their abilities.

Disadvantages

MBO methods can lead to unrealistic expectations about what can and cannot be accomplished. Both managers and employees must have excellent “reality-checking” skills in order to be able to set realistic objectives and to self-audit and self-monitor. Research indicates that most people lack the skills necessary to be their own “reality checkers.”

A further disadvantage is the inherent rigidity of objectives. In an era of constant change, flexibility is required of any organization that wants to survive. More flexible objectives may lead to less clarity and more subjectivity in the appraisal process.

Forced-Rank Comparisons

Overview

These are based on the selection of one statement that the appraiser thinks most accurately describes employee behavior from three to five alternatives. Each statement is weighted; therefore, employees with higher scores are deemed to be better than employees with lower scores.

Description

The core element of rankings is that employees are compared to one another and given a number that (supposedly) indicates whether they are better than, about the same or less effective than their colleagues. The criteria for ranking can range from specific and objective to fuzzy and subjective. The ranking is then often used to determine raises and promotions.

Advantages

In some environments, the competitive nature of the ranking system can encourage staff to push each other to greater productivity. Organizations that rely on merit assessments for pay and promotion decisions use the forced rank to determine the “top ten percent” that will be eligible for consideration.

Disadvantages

Ranking systems don't assess value and contribution, even in a best-case scenario. The value of an employee relative to peers is irrelevant to the success of an organization. What really matters is their absolute contribution to the success of the organization.

Ranking is virtually useless as a form of feedback. To develop our people, we need to provide specific, concrete feedback — not some nebulous ranking within a unit of undefined quality.

Ranking can be devastating to the morale of an organization. Ranking guarantees disagreement.

Legal Issues

Your company's performance appraisal system is central to nearly all personnel processes: hiring, promotion, demotion, transfer, salary, selection for training, etc. This book will not focus on all the legal ramifications; you need to talk to your legal counsel about such matters. This chapter is designed to give you a brief overview.

Employment Law

Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection 1978 is the controlling federal law in the area of performance appraisals.

Your performance appraisal must have no adverse impact on any of the areas covered by the law, such as employees':

- Race
- Sex
- Religion
- National origin
- Age
- Handicapped status

These are the major areas covered, but they may not describe all the areas protected by law when you read this. Consult your company's training guide or your personnel manager about any questions. Most well-run companies will train you in-depth in conducting performance appraisals and other related personnel issues as they hold much of the legal liability.

Your performance reviews must be workable, equitable, ongoing and as objective as possible, for you and your organization are expected to follow and meet all legal requirements. Lack of knowledge or ignorance of the law is no excuse for violations. You must understand that if a member of any "protected" group is adversely affected, the performance appraisal practice is illegal. All performance appraisal practices must contain measuring standards. What does this mean?

Special Tip: Questions about anti-discrimination laws and the current enforcement policies of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission can be directed to agency experts through a nationwide free information hot line. Dial (800) USA-EEOC. Calls made from a touch-tone phone will be answered by a recording, but you can talk to a specialist by dialing “2” after you hear the recording.

Measuring Standards

Measuring standards are valid when you can:

1. Prove content validity — a person must be able to perform this task to do the job.
2. Prove construct validity — you must show the relationship between rating scores and traits or skills needed on the job.
3. Prove criterion-related validity — you must show the relationship between rating scores and measure of job performance.

In other words, in order to be legal, a certain skill must be shown to be a valid, true and necessary requirement of the job. Discrimination against protected groups is allowable as long as the discriminating variable is legitimately related to the requirements of the work situation. For example, if the next level job on the factory floor demands the ability to lift 75 pounds above waist height, and a wheelchair-bound employee cannot perform this task, it is acceptable not to promote that person to do that job.

You must be able to consistently observe the employee performing the assigned tasks. Your rating criteria must be the same for all employees of the same grade/class/group. But be careful, because using numerical scores increases an organization’s liability to validate them. Just because something is expressed in numbers does not automatically make it legal.

Another important aspect to consider is the employee’s right to privacy. Employees must have complete access to their personnel files, but others should have controlled access. These records must be accurate, relevant and current. Discuss with your personnel department any questions you have in these areas, but keep in mind that job-relatedness and fairness are the two controlling principles whenever you put something in writing.

Substantial performance, or even average performance, should not be described in such a way that the employee believes his or her performance is better than it is. You do a great disservice to your employee and your team

when you praise what's less than adequate performance. Besides, you flirt with performance collapse. Employees soon lose confidence in you, their trust sags and respect falls.

Performance Standards

Written standards should be the basis of performance appraisals so that:

- It is clear to both supervisor and employees what needs to be done.
- Everyone can identify whether it is being done.
- Everyone can tell whether it's being done in an acceptable way.
- Everyone can know when corrective action will take place.

Performance must be described *accurately* and must be based on *documentation*. If an employee is terminated for poor performance, but previous reviews were either good or vague, the employee may have grounds for a wrongful discharge lawsuit. All performance appraisal feedback as well as any other employee communication must be free of sexual innuendo or sexual harassment.

Warning! Be careful of rating subjective qualities: attitude, cooperation, enthusiasm, initiative. Subjective ratings are difficult for you or your company to defend in court. Quantifiable areas such as deadlines met, calls made, items produced, quota achieved, etc., are much easier to defend and are more productive for you and your employee.

This excerpt is from *Inspire & Motivate Through Performance Reviews*. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

5 Ten Tips for Dealing With Aggressive, Angry Employees

1. **Remember to share the responsibility.** It's hard to be combative with someone who's on your side.
2. **Encourage listening; be informed.** It's amazing how much you can discover if you will tend to the words of others.
3. **Pay attention to excessive self-interest.** Winning is for everyone.
4. **A title or position within a company may grant control over people, but true authority involves respect.** Respect must be earned. Dictatorial leadership is not conducive to a team philosophy. Seek suggestions from the others.
5. **Anger is short-lived for most aggressive people.** There are individuals, however, who don't forget. Enemies created during the resolution of one conflict may be around for the next. Is that happening here?
6. **Deal with the situation immediately** — not later today, not next week. Do it now. Many performance problems reach crisis proportions as a result of delays in dealing with anger.
7. **Allow the employees to talk.** Listen. Don't interrupt. They want to be heard. Be sure you understand their position before stating yours.
8. **If anger is expressed in a staff meeting, ask the angry employee if he would like to discuss it now (publicly) or later privately.** Let him call the shots.

9. **Deal with the employee's feelings first.** Then address the underlying issue. "I can tell you're really annoyed. I'd like to hear what you have to say." When the discussion is concluding, check the feelings again to be sure they've been resolved. Ask him if he is satisfied or feels better. Be alert to tone of voice and non-verbal cues as you may not get a completely honest answer. If your employee is still upset, let it pass for now. Staying upset a bit longer may allow your employee to save face and justify his initial angry response.
10. **If the employee declines to discuss what's troubling him, try, "I understand you're hesitant to discuss this, but we'd both be better off to get it out in the open.** Let's come back to it (tomorrow or whenever)." Be sure to follow up.

This excerpt is from *How to Handle Conflict & Confrontation* by Peg Pickering. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

6 Leadership and Influence

When you think of influence, what comes to mind? Often you'll think of a political leader who exerts influence on his party members to gain acceptance for his or her point of view. You might also think of a business person trying to get employees to make an unpopular change in their work schedule. Both are examples of individuals using influence to convince others to take a desired course of action.

Influence Without Authority

Leaders in today's business environment are often called on to use influence to persuade co-workers or colleagues to take action on a specific project knowing that they do not have the formal authority to direct the activities of these individuals. The responsibility to use this type of influence falls on team leaders and individual leaders more frequently. Businesses may even be required to influence people in other parts of the company who do not work directly for them. In moving from a vision to an implementation plan, leaders must realize that people will not automatically take the desired action which has been outlined.

To develop your influence skills, it is necessary to think about influence as a process. Think about a salesperson who is preparing to close a sale. The major goal is to convince the customer to buy a product or service. The salesperson is trying to convince the buyer to take action. The very best sales people follow a specific process to "close the deal." The process of using influence in business has some of these same requirements.

Let's take a look at the elements of using influence as a process and then break them down, individually, to learn how to apply them in day-to-day situations.

How Leaders Approach Influence

Let's assume that you have been assigned the leadership responsibility for making an improvement in your company. A small team has been formed to assist you to accomplish this task. You would most likely become the leader of a corrective-action team.

In following the AIM model, you would have established specific direction for the team under the action planning required of all effective leaders. You have learned that by "just" communicating the plan, some team members are not beginning to take the desired action you see as necessary for the results to be achieved.

What approach would you take?

Four Steps to Increasing Influence

When a leader notices that an individual or team needs more specific direction, the following steps can help to convince the individual or team to take the desired action.

- 1. Understand the situation.** Make sure that you have the whole story. One method of ensuring that you have an accurate view of the situation requires you to test your perceptions. Utilize active listening to gather information.
- 2. Identify specific issues.** List the obstacles or barriers that are preventing individuals from taking action.
- 3. Develop a strategy.** Based on your clear understanding of the issues, make an action plan of how you will influence the individual(s). Include:
 - A specific objective to be achieved
 - Positive outcomes expected
 - Potential resistance expected
 - Execution plan? Where and when
- 4. Implement your plan, using appropriate style(s) of influence.**

Activating the Influence Model

Understanding the situation.

Utilizing perceptions can be an excellent method of assessing your work environment. This will help you gain an understanding of the barriers which can stand in the way of explaining why individuals are not producing results.

Check your perceptions on the next page ...

Increase Your Active Listening Skills

What Is Active Listening?

Active listening is the ability to hear a message clearly, using your eyes, ears and complete concentration. Consider these techniques for self-improvement.

- **Prepare to listen — send listening signals**
 - Welcoming signals — show that you want to talk to the person
 - Attention signals — both vocal and nonverbal, show that you are listening (“hmm,” nod your head, etc.)
- **Control distractions — barriers to listening**
 - Looking away, shifting objects, yawning, sitting at a distance, answering the phone, tapping a pencil, etc.
- **Listen to the entire message — take time to listen and probe for information**
 - “Tell me more.”
 - “What else should I know?”
 - “What makes this so important?”
 - “How did this situation come about?”
 - “For example?”

THE COACHING ROLE: INSPIRING AND MOTIVATING

- **Reinforce the communicator with nonverbal cues like nodding and smiling, and verbal ones such as**
 - “I understand.”
 - “That’s a powerful insight.”
 - “You’ve given this a lot of thought.”
 - “I would like to know more.”
- **Confirm the message — playback**
 - “If I understand you correctly ...”
 - “I hear you saying that ...”
 - “So, what happened is ...”
 - “The situation, then, is ...”
- **Continue to monitor your listening skills.**

Better Understanding Through Active Listening

1. What is said and done — day to day — is the most important part of communicating. Intellectual honesty, living what is said and acting cooperatively are essential to developing good communications.
2. One of the biggest obstacles to communication is the tendency to evaluate, to pass judgment on and to agree or disagree with statements before you find out what is meant.
3. When listening, look for what the speaker intends, not just at what is said. Examine whether anything is being said “between the lines.”
4. Ask more questions to see whether your listeners have understood what is intended. Have your instructions repeated, “to see if I’ve said what I meant.” Check for understanding at the time of talking.
5. Misunderstandings are inevitable, and, therefore, the kind of atmosphere needs to be created that will encourage people to ask questions when they don’t fully understand.
6. Where difficulties have arisen, try to keep the talking centered on the problem rather than on personalities.
7. Remember, how the other person sees the situation is very often right.
8. Where individuals disagree, get each to state the other’s position, each to the satisfaction of the other. You should do this in your individual communication as well.
9. Recognize that, in discussions, disagreements are normal and inevitable. Expect it, prepare for it and use it to obtain greater awareness of the various aspects of the problem at hand.
10. Take every honest opportunity to make the other person feel better or more important.
11. When talking, pause more often to think through what you are about to say. You create strong impressions by the way you phrase ideas, such as whether you make rambling or concise statements.
12. Tone of voice is more important than you think. Consider what impressions you are conveying with your voice.

Bases of Power Used to Influence Others

Power is the ability to influence others and change their behavior to achieve specific action. Bases of power may occur at every level of the organization and are not limited by a certain position in the organization. There are five bases of power available to leaders:

1. **Legitimate Power** is created by the authority or position given to a person in the organization. Legitimate power is usually recognized as a “right” to influence. This fits best within a supervisor-subordinate relationship.
2. **Reward Power** is based on the ability of a person to influence others through the use of rewards. The rewards work best to reinforce actions, not as “bribes” to force action.
3. **Expert Power** is based on the perception that the person has important knowledge or experience not possessed by another individual or team.
4. **Referent Power** is created by the desire of an individual or team to identify with the influencer. These are usually individuals who develop as role models because of their special traits and abilities.
5. **Coercive Power** is the opposite of reward power and is based on the ability of the person to use punishment to influence specific actions. Coercive power has little or no use in today’s empowered and customer-focused organizations.

Typical Bases of Power for Company Leaders

Business Leaders	Team Leaders	Individual Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legitimate power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expert power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expert power
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reward power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referent power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referent power
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coercive power	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reward power	

Maximize Your Use of Power to Influence Others

The use of power and influence has both positive and negative outcomes. The negative use of power and influence will create a win-lose environment. The use of power and influence is seen as manipulative and also creates limited results in terms of maximizing productivity. Individuals and teams often rebel against the use of negative power and influence and will only do “what is required” instead of “what is possible” when working toward goals.

The positive use of power and influence must focus on helping to achieve individual or team goals. It creates a desire in others in which they want to produce results — not just “what they have to.”

Expanding Your Positive Power and Influence Ability

The two essential power bases available to all leaders are expert and referent power. To maximize your ability to use these bases, consider these techniques.

Expert Power

Expand expert power by implementing the model of identifying the playing field for your company.

- **Products/Services** — Know your company products and services completely, including benefits, features, selling points, etc. Be prepared to make suggestions for improvements.
- **People** — Know the people with whom you work. Find out about background, experience, education. Utilize their expertise as well as your own.

- **Customers** — Know the marketplace and who are the users of your products and services. Find a way to talk to customers to get their assessments and requirements.
- **Competition** — Know who your competitors are — what their products are and how you can gain an edge over them.

Referent Power

Expand referent power by being a role model and inspiring others to want to become the leader you are.

Be a Role Model

- **Practice Peer Coaching**

Let your co-workers know what you think. Give both positive and constructive feedback.

- **Take the Initiative**

Assume responsibility for follow-up. Don't hesitate to initiate action.

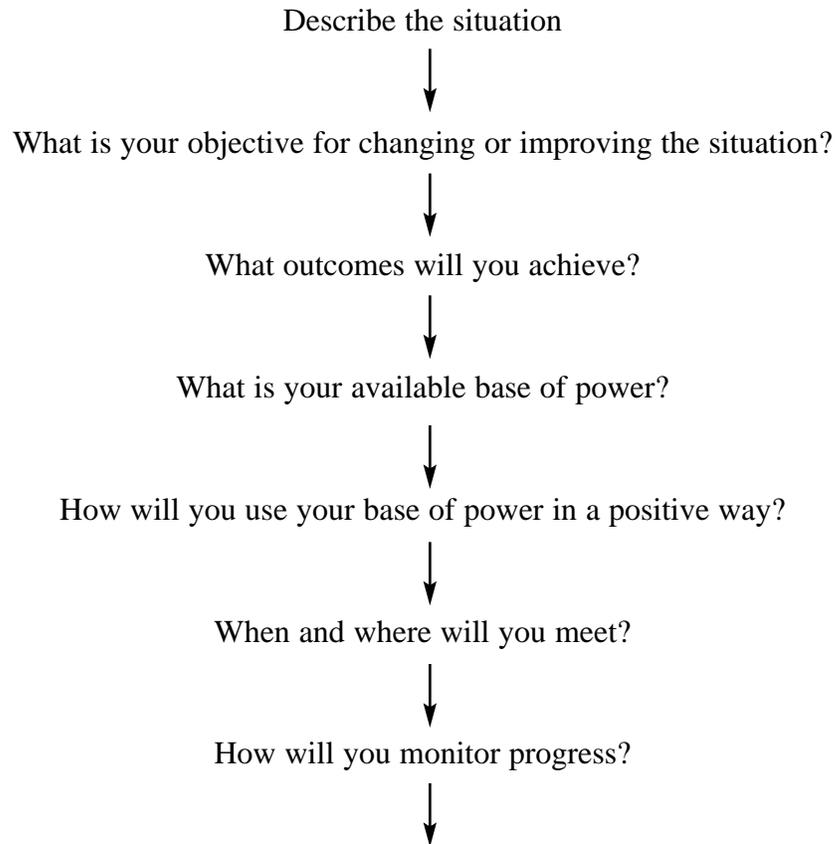
- **Engage in Breakthrough Thinking**

Go beyond incremental improvements. Look for quantum leaps.

Completing Your Influence Action Plan

Continue to work through the influence model by linking your perceptions, listening skills, and power base to a specific action plan.

Identify perceptions using Active Listening



Increasing Influence Without Authority

The need exists for leaders to increase their ability to influence employees at all levels. Some suggestions for applying influence at all levels involve a shift in the organization's work environment to encourage employees to take more responsibility.

Examples:

Current Situation	Vision	Closing the Gap
Top-down decisions	Decisions made at lowest level	Empower individual and team leaders
Limited exposure to business plans	Conduct quarterly business reviews	Begin interactive briefing for all employees
Lack of cross-functional communication	Departments are boundaryless	Create cross-functional teams at all levels

Personal Influence Exercise

1. Identify two people who influence you the most in your work. Why?
2. Identify two people who influence you least in your work. Why?
3. Whom do you think you influence most?
4. Whom would you like to influence most?
5. Whom would you like to influence more in your work?

Utilize the learning from your personal experience to increase your ability to influence individuals and teams in your day-to-day work.

This excerpt is from *Taking Aim on Leadership* by Peter Capezio and Debra Morehouse. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

7 Managing Time and Stress

After reading this chapter, you will know how to:

- Better control your time
- Handle stress
- Recognize the signs of trouble in your department

The limiting factor in any process is the scarcest resource. When you're a supervisor, time is often the resource that most limits how much you can accomplish.

Time is a quantity much like a bank balance. You must watch it and use it carefully. If you don't, you probably will find yourself burning the midnight oil, trying to get back that which has been irretrievably lost. It isn't the tasks you have to accomplish that break your back, it's the amount of time you have to do them.

There are three key things you must do to best utilize and control your time.

- **Measure it:** Keep a calendar so you know what's supposed to happen on any given day. Also keep a log, so you know exactly how you're really spending your time.
- **Manage it:** Set priorities. Decide when to do certain tasks and determine what tasks to delegate to others.
- **Accumulate it:** Set aside enough time to accomplish major tasks.

More and more, managers are taking work home that requires large blocks of their time. It's the only place where the phone doesn't ring nonstop, the boss doesn't want to talk about his golf game and employees don't need help with their problems.

Taking work home, however, has many hidden costs. These costs hide in the evenings and weekends you're too busy to enjoy your family. Furthermore, the point will come when even taking work home won't get the job done. You run into the law of diminishing returns. Time can't expand. You can't stretch it without something snapping.

And you can't determine the most efficient way to use your time if you don't know how and on what your time is spent from week to week. It's critical to make a list of the most important things you know you have to do every day for a week or month and compare it to your record of what you actually do. How closely do they match?

On the following page is a simple Activities/Work Log. Use this log or one of your own to keep track of your work activities for several weeks. Continue doing this long enough to include a representative sample of all the activities you're likely to encounter in your position as a supervisor. List each task you do during the day and how much time you spend on it. For instance, if you're delayed in finishing a task because of missing data or a malfunctioning computer, record this. Sort out activities that are really productive from those that aren't.

Take Control of Your Time

As you rise within your organization, the demands on your time will increase. You need larger blocks of time. You can't write an effective report in 10-minute increments over the next several weeks. You can't facilitate problem-solving teams by meeting 15 minutes once every week. The report could take 10 hours to complete, even for the first draft. Problem-solving teams typically meet for one to two hours at a time. It also takes concentration to sit down and plan the activities, products and goals you want from your staff. And if you spend too little time with your employees on an individual basis, they may feel slighted or charge off in the wrong direction.

But what can you do, for example, if your boss wants to talk about his son's last soccer game when you have several pressing tasks to do? Or when one of your people has a birthday party you must attend?

To manage your time more effectively, look at the things that waste your time AND the things you do to contribute to the problem. Circle the letter that most closely matches how you would react in the following situations.

1. Your boss at your previous job calls you at your new office to complain about his job. You:
 - a. Engage in a lengthy conversation, even though you have deadlines to meet. It's nice to be treated as an equal.
 - b. Tell your old boss you'd love to talk, but you're busy now and instead suggest having lunch together.
2. Your boss keeps giving you more work, and now you can't seem to get anything done because he keeps switching priorities. You:
 - a. Suffer in silence and do the best you can.
 - b. Tell your boss what you can and can't do and ask him to write the priorities down so you can both remember and refer to them.
3. One of your staff comes to your office, wanting to talk about a personal problem. You have a meeting in 30 minutes. You:
 - a. Grit your teeth and listen.
 - b. Acknowledge his emotional state and tell him that you can talk later.

Here's what your responses mean.

1. If you answered "a," examine why it's more important to you to discuss your old job than get on with the work of your new job. Having lunch (b) is a fairer option for both you and the company for which you now work.
2. Saying "no" is an important part of time management — even if you have to say "no" to your boss! Answering "b" will help you get a handle on your time much faster than suffering in silence.
3. You can't always be available to solve other people's problems. When employees are emotional, giving them some time alone is often a better option than taking up your time talking with them.

There's no such thing as a perfect world, but if you do any or all of the following, you'll make tremendous progress toward getting a grip on how and where your time is spent.

- Use the work log to find out exactly where your time is going now.
- Delegate as many tasks as possible. A good rule of thumb is if a job or task is done more than once, delegate it!
- Take advantage of technology like electronic calendars, faxes, teleconferencing, video conferencing, voice mail, the Internet. Consider it a good investment for you and your company to attend seminars on these technologies.
- Encourage people to make appointments when they want to see you rather than allowing them to stop by unannounced.
- Whenever possible, make decisions yourself rather than by committee.
- When you hold a meeting, establish a clear, concise agenda and send it out well in advance. Allow only the items on the agenda to be discussed.
- Arrange your day to take advantage of your own energy and creative strength. For example, don't make decisions when you're tired or ill. You'll probably end up having to make them again.
- Encourage your staff to be problem solvers and make decisions on their own. When they make mistakes, don't get angry. Help them figure out how to avoid making the same mistake in the future.
- Set aside a quiet time every day to review past, present, and future events so that you can learn, plan and create.
- Don't put off unpleasant tasks.
- Whenever possible, complete tasks at one sitting. Real energy is gained from completing things. It's better not to start a project at all than to get a quarter of the way through it and then leave with your attention stuck on an incompleting task.
- Handle each piece of paper only once. Make a decision on what to do with it when you get it.
- Make efficient use of "wait time." Read and catch up on correspondence while you're waiting for someone to call you or for a meeting to begin.

Successful supervisors are successful managers of time. If you have a secretary or assistant, make sure this person knows your No. 1 need is to have more time to focus on your high-priority tasks. Any efforts you make to acquire more time will pay off handsomely in the short and long run.

How You Can Get Larger Blocks of Time

One very effective way to get more time is to teach your staff to work, plan, and make decisions independently. Also, as much as possible, get the information you need electronically or on paper using e-mail, faxes, or written reports. It's much faster to read something than have it explained to you verbally.

Above all, don't make important decisions hastily. If you're wrong, you will have to make corrections, which generally takes a great deal more time than doing it right in the first place. If you take a little more time to plan your daily tasks, you'll save yourself large quantities of precious time downstream.

Arrange your day so you can handle all correspondence, e-mail, telephone calls, etc. during a block of time when you won't be interrupted.

Don't take a Band-Aid approach to time management. We are talking about a top-level process here. If you want more time for the important things, you have to make big changes. It's to your advantage to put as much thought and care into time management as a decision to change the work flow of your entire department.

If you've just come from another management position, be sure someone can replace you in your old post. Otherwise, you'll never totally get rid of the old position. People will call you every 20 minutes with problems. Remember, your new job needs and deserves all of your attention.

Bottom line: Let go. There's a tendency for those who have come up through the "trenches" to want to keep track of every detail because that's what makes them the most comfortable. Don't fall prey to this. You don't have time. That's someone else's job now.

How to Control and Reduce Stress

In addition to trying to control your time, you'll probably stand in the middle of a hurricane of activity every day. This whirlwind contains projects, people, electronic elements, communications and ideas — all in almost continual motion and threatening to overwhelm you by their sheer numbers. Is it any wonder that you often feel stressed out?

To take control of stress, you must first understand what causes it. In any stressful situation, there are two components you must deal with: the cause of the stress and its effect on you.

For example, if the IRS sends you a threatening letter that suggests a horde of agents is about to descend on you, you're probably going to feel stressed. The letter is the cause, and your feelings are the "effect" of that letter. Because you don't have all the data you need to deal with the letter yet, you're affected by stress.

Let's say that you call the IRS and discover that the letter was sent to you by mistake. The anxiety is gone; the stress is gone. Your call to the IRS and learning the truth caused your anxiety to go away. The effect was the relief of stress.

In your daily life, you'll find that you can reduce a lot of stress by handling one thing at a time. Make a decision and then work at it until it's finished or you've done as much as you can at that moment. If someone tries to get you started on something else, say "no"! When you've completed a task, move on to the next. Just remember, one thing at a time.

There are three typical responses to stress: resistance, avoidance, or confrontation. Circle the letter indicating your normal response to the following situations:

1. It's been one of those days. The computer system went down, your boss yelled at you, and traffic was a nightmare. You:
 - a. Resist and try to fight back by getting angry.
 - b. Avoid the stress by trying to pretend you don't feel pressured.
 - c. Confront the stress and adapt to it by recognizing that while on some days it doesn't pay to get out of bed, tomorrow will surely be better.
2. You were thrilled to be named the leader of the new project team, but now it seems that you can't get anything done. Everyone is coming at you, needing something. It's driving you crazy! You:
 - a. Resist and yell at everyone to leave you alone.
 - b. Avoid the stress by shutting your door and forwarding your phone to voice mail.
 - c. Confront the stress by developing a different way for people to communicate their needs to you (preferably in writing).
3. You've been given a job you're not sure you can do. You're afraid you would lose face if you told your boss about your concerns, but there's a lot riding on this — both for you and your company. You:
 - a. Resist the stress by plunging ahead and hoping for the best.
 - b. Avoid the stress by putting off the work.
 - c. Confront the stress by honestly telling your boss your fears and asking for help.

Resisting and avoiding stress are two surefire stress producers or, at the very least, they'll maintain a stressful condition. By confronting and adapting to stress, however, you move away from stress toward better mental and physical health.

THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM

When you're feeling stressed, stop and ask yourself if any of the following things are happening to you.

- Is something threatening my beliefs, values, security, or well-being?
- Am I trying to adjust to rapid change?
- Have I lost control of something and, therefore, feel vulnerable?
- Have my expectations not been realized?

When you determine what's truly causing your stress, take steps to alleviate the problem. Even if you can't resolve the situation immediately, taking control often relieves a great deal of the stress you're feeling.

Handling the Stress of a Troubled Department

Trouble at work is a top stress producer, especially if you're in charge of a troubled department. You feel you should have your finger on the pulse of the situation, but sometimes trouble appears before you even realize there's a problem.

When trouble exists in a department, it's often possible to "turn it around" before things get ugly — if you catch it early enough. How can you determine when things aren't going well before the whole place goes up in flames?

When things are going wrong in a department or even the whole company, there are warning signs. Review the following list often. Ask yourself, "Do these conditions exist here?"

- People operate in a state of fear. They're afraid to speak up. They are especially fearful about speaking up in front of management.
- The company has several small cliques that don't trust each other.
- No one is getting or giving training.
- People talk about each other rather than problems with their jobs.
- Work areas are sloppy, dirty, and disorderly. Machines, tools and materials are not properly stocked or well maintained.
- Absenteeism, sick time, and unaccounted absences are unusually high.
- Scrap and rework numbers are unusually high.

- No promotions are being given.
- Communications are guarded or not taking place except under duress.
- Good people are leaving the company to find work elsewhere.

If you detect any of these signs, call your people together to clear the air. Remember that any situation can be improved with real communication. The agenda for this meeting is quite simple. There are two basic questions to ask.

1. What's wrong with the department, team, or work group?
2. What can we do to fix the problems?

If several warning signs are present, be prepared for fireworks. This is where your patience, good will, and determination pay off. To prevent potential problems, establish three basic ground rules for the meeting.

1. Set a goal for the meeting. For example, if rumors and half-truths are causing a problem, get the department back on track by stopping all the rumors and half-truths or by finding out what's hurting the group and doing something about it. If you're having a problem identifying the goal, use your imagination and ask your employees to help.
2. Listen to anything and everything people have to say, except personal attacks. If these problems exist, address them privately with the individuals involved.
3. Don't settle for half-answers or generalities. If you don't get a clear answer to the question, "What's wrong with our group?" ask it again in a different way and keep asking until you get an answer that makes sense to you.

As the meeting progresses, write down the major points on a flipchart. Don't dispute or disagree with anything your employees say. Acknowledge their input thoroughly and move on. When you ask someone to communicate with you, don't complain if you don't like their answers.

If people want to shout and get angry, let them, but don't join in. You're the referee. You have to keep people talking so you can get to the bottom of the problem.

THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM

After your group has thoroughly discussed what's wrong, find out what the entire group and the individuals in it can do to handle the problems. Take each item listed on the flipchart and ask, "What part of this problem can we do something about?" Of course, there are some problems you and the group don't have the power to fix. Even if you can fix only part of a problem, it's a start in the right direction.

Never allow hopelessness to set in and never close a meeting on a note of futility. Assign tasks to people that will begin to make changes in the problems you've listed. Assign yourself tasks. Make everyone feel he or she can be a part of the solution.

Finally, agree to meet again and assess everyone's progress. Work with the situation as long as necessary or until you have enough momentum to put problem-solving in the hands of individuals and smaller groups.

Handling the Stress of Change

Change is another major stressor in the workplace, even if the change will make things better.

You can compare the process of change to a heart transplant. The body, like any organization, has strict operational rules. It has built-in methods of doing things and fights to maintain the status quo. There are mechanisms in the body that have been in place for a very long time. Moreover, this machinery has developed ways to protect itself against "foreign invasion" — change.

When the old heart fails and the new one is installed in the body, the body's protective mechanisms don't recognize this new heart as a good thing. Instead, the body perceives the new heart as a threat. The body attempts to reject and destroy it. Doctors — agents of change — introduce certain chemicals and medicines to overcome the body's old survival instructions. In this way, the new heart becomes a natural part of the body and aids in its continued survival. Even so, the body requires extraordinary care during and after the operation if it's going to live for any period of time.

Supervisors are also agents of change. When your company makes changes, your employees' protective mechanisms often won't allow them to see these as good things. It's up to you to provide the "medicine" and care while people "heal" from the changes being made. To continue the parallel, think of the situation in these two ways:

- The doctor gives the patient aspirin to reduce fever and control pain. The supervisor communicates all of the parameters of a coming change to prevent pain and upset.
- The doctor gives the patient digitalis to stimulate and regulate the heart. The supervisor gives employees as much control as possible to stimulate them to accept the change and to regulate the orderly implementation of change.

Whenever there's change, some people will do very well and require little care, while others won't survive at all. In either case, it's not a good idea for supervisors to take survival for granted during periods of change.

This excerpt is from *How to Supervise People* by Donald P. Ladew. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarTraining.com.

8 Managing Your Career

Now that you're familiar with how to develop new ideas, let's take the concept one step further by applying it to career management.

You already know that developing new ideas involves looking for a better way to accomplish goals, and that means change. Career management involves looking at what's working in your career-development strategy and what's not. It involves finding new approaches for meeting what can sometimes feel like impossible challenges.

Career management begins with you — not your teacher or even your employer. This chapter starts with a discussion of the question, “Are you truly managing your career or leaving it to chance?” It continues by describing ten steps to successful career management, five skills to help you advance in your chosen career, and three essential management areas to be mastered.

“In an uncertain world, embracing risk actually enhances security. In an uncertain world, new experience may be less risky than counting on the long-term. You’ll either be swept away by change or you’ll be an agent of change.”

— Bruce Tulgan

Ten Steps to Successful Career Management

Step One: Be a Self-Starter — It's Your Career

Staying proactive means relating your career plan to the challenges you're facing now.

Taking control of your career means first having the courage to acknowledge you have hopes and then finding the courage to pursue them. It's the only way to truly make a career plan your own. Once you have a plan, you'll be able to move toward accomplishing it.

When you run into a roadblock or obstacle as you pursue your dream, take a proactive approach. Rather than saying or thinking, "There's nothing I can do," ask or think, "Is my career/life dream still important enough for me to find the energy and time to overcome this roadblock?" If the answer is "yes," then identify all the ways you can resolve the roadblock. After you know your options, choose the one that appears to have the best chance of helping you attain your goal. If the answer is "no," identify what your new dream/goal is and how you will go about reaching it.

The remaining nine steps are all part of a proactive approach to career management. While it is difficult to plan for every eventuality, it is possible to have basic strategies for handling unexpected challenges that come your way. The best time to plan for the unexpected is before something happens, because after it happens, we're often too shocked, emotional, angry or devastated to think clearly.

Step Two: Plan for "What Ifs"

The goal of planning for "what ifs" is to help you understand that your future depends on the decisions you make today.

Planning also helps you avoid becoming complacent or hesitant. Considering "what ifs" makes you more sensitive to the signs that a "what if" is about to happen and prepares you to take positive action when it does.

THE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM

For instance, before we accept a position that we think will be wonderful, we should ask, “What if I’m wrong? What if I hate it when I get there?” We make the commitment ahead of time that regardless of what happens, we’ll stay a productive employee, give it a fair chance and then look for a better match. When we feel that the job we hold is one we would never choose to leave, ask, “What if I’m forced to change even if I don’t want to?” We can reassure ourselves that, even though it’s not pleasant, we do have choices, and we will survive unexpected change.

We tend to avoid planning for the “what ifs” because they often represent our worst fears, and most of us approach fears by ignoring them and hoping they’ll go away. Yet, fears rarely leave on their own.

One of the best ways of taming a fear is to define it, face it head-on, and develop a strategy for handling it.

Step Three: Give Your Best Effort Every Day

When we control what is within our power, the things beyond our control are easier to accept and manage. The choice of whether or not to give our best effort every day is completely within our control.

You owe it to yourself and to your employer to put forth your best effort, no matter what is occurring in your environment. If you are receiving a paycheck for a job, you are expected to perform. Not giving your best effort is the same as quitting without leaving. When we quit without leaving, we lose self-respect. We also give control of the choice to leave or stay to our employer, because when we don’t perform, she has the right to ask us to leave. If we are asked to leave before we’re ready, we usually feel even worse about ourselves. It can be an endless cycle, but one we can completely control.

Step Four: Determine What You Do Best and Do It

Whether you do what you love for full-time pay, part-time pay or as a volunteer, there’s always a way to bring what you love to do into your lifework.

When you’re doing what you love, your heart sings, your days are filled with purpose, you have more energy, and you’re more fun to be with. If you love to do lots of things and aren’t doing any of them regularly, pick one, identify all the ways you can do more of that one thing and then choose the way that best fits your schedule and lifestyle. Focusing will keep you from becoming overwhelmed, the biggest killer of initiative.

Step Five: Only You Can Decide

Successful career management means constantly responding to changing work environments. Nothing remains constant — especially during tough economic times. That’s why identifying your special career-management problem is so important. You can’t solve a problem you haven’t identified. Once you know what you’re dealing with, you can define your options and make the best decision possible at the time.

Remember, not deciding lets someone else control your destiny. Sometimes people hate to make decisions because they’re afraid of being wrong. When we make decisions, we either get the desired outcome or we do not. Either way, the results are opportunities to make future decisions that either move us toward our objective or improve our situation. Seeing results as opportunities for further action is the mental shift you must make.

Step Six: See Yourself as Others See You

When we can step out of ourselves long enough to see our situation through the eyes of others, choices previously hidden often become clear.

For example, if you don’t like your job and feel unmotivated to perform at a level of excellence, try looking at how your behavior is creating problems for your co-workers. It may not make you like your job any better, but it may help you find that motivation to change your actions so you stop punishing others for your dissatisfaction.

Step Seven: Remember It’s OK to Be Happy With What You Have

In our society, where better is often defined as “more,” it’s easy to get caught up in feeling that what we have is never enough.

So, if the job you hold enriches your life, perhaps it’s time to recognize that you’ve won the career race. Pat yourself on the back — you’ve achieved a goal most everyone else is still striving for!

Step Eight: Give Yourself Permission to Change

Change is really a matter of being willing to let go of rigid thinking patterns or habits that keep us from finding ways around roadblocks. It is dangerous to keep wishing things could be as they were one, two or 20 years ago.

If you eliminate the “C” and the “E” from the word CHANGE, you’re left with the word “hang.” Many industries are undergoing tremendous changes; people are expected to meet the challenge of change by learning and then applying skills they never thought they’d need. If we resist change, we put the noose around our own necks and “hang” ourselves. Refusing to change limits our options for career success. Deciding to change is proactive because the act of changing is the one quality that keeps us vital.

Step Nine: Define Yourself by Who You Are, Not by What You Do

When we define ourselves by what we do rather than by who we are, we set ourselves up for a major fall. If what we do is suddenly taken away (we’re fired or laid off or passed over for a promotion, etc.), finding a new job takes a back seat to finding ourselves and that prolongs the job hunt.

Remember, what we do is an important part of who we are, but it should not become the whole. A profession is part of our exterior image, like clothing. So, if you haven’t already done so, take time to discover who you are on the inside. Once you know the inner you, you’ll be able to survive any experience.

Step Ten: Aim for Balance

The most successful and happy people have clear goals for all parts of their lives, not just their careers. In addition to your career goals, set family goals, financial goals, personal goals and spiritual goals to help you bring balance and contentment to your life. Achieving balance can be difficult, but it can be done — especially if you prioritize these goals in order of importance and then refer to your list before you make a major decision. For example, if you truly believe that your family comes first, choosing to put your time and energy into family time rather than into a new promotion will be an easier choice.

Now that you’ve studied the ten steps for successful career management, use these suggestions to help you make the decisions that will help move you forward.

Focus on Skill Development to Advance Your Career

Successful career management means using certain skills. Other chapters in this book focus on being performance-oriented rather than task-oriented and how to clarify your mission, set goals, stay organized and motivated, and communicate well.

In addition to these important skills, let's look at five skills that everyone needs, no matter what his or her career choice is.

Five Skills Everyone Needs

Skill #1: Selling Ideas and Negotiating for Results

Whether you're trying to convince your company to give you a raise, implement your innovative idea for solving a departmental or customer service problem, or create a new position that allows you to help the company accomplish its important goals, sales and negotiation skills are critical to success. Yet, these are usually the last skills people think to develop — unless they've held positions in sales departments.

Selling and negotiating skills are really advanced methods of effective communication. You can have the best ideas in the world, but if you can't present them so others get excited enough to support them, your ideas remain just that — good ideas going nowhere. No matter what your position or career goals, you'll win more of what you want if you learn how to “sell” your ideas to others and to “negotiate” the details so everyone feels they have won. Use this career-management suggestion to help plan a strategy for selling your ideas more effectively.

Skill #2: Performance-Thinking Rather Than Task-Thinking

This may be the biggest challenge of all because performance-thinking is the opposite of what most of us were taught. Task-thinking is reactive — a problem arises or we see a need, so a task is created to solve the problem or meet the need.

In most businesses, task-thinking is the norm. One of the best examples on the corporate level is to look at how most organizations go about determining and making budget allocations. The executives tell department managers to project their budget needs for the coming year. This usually creates a frenzy of activity about how each department will get a maximum slice of the dollar pie. If dollars remain in the current year's coffer, managers go on a spending spree. After all, how can they get as much next year if they didn't spend what was allocated this year? This is the task-thinking approach to annual budgeting.

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The performance-thinking approach looks much different. When budget time approaches, executives and managers get together to determine first what major goals must be accomplished during the next budget year if the company is to achieve its mission. Then they look at what it is going to take — time, money, people, other resources — to accomplish those goals. Then they look at how they need to allocate dollars to various departments to ensure that the company achieves its mission and goals.

With performance-thinking, departments aren't penalized or rewarded for how they spent last year's allocations because the focus isn't on what gets spent. It is on what needs to happen if the organization as a whole is to maintain its competitive edge in its industry.

Performance-thinking involves looking at issues in new ways — ways that most organizations are only beginning to address by focusing on quality management and implementing self-directed work teams.

On a smaller, more personal-performance scale, every minute of every day we choose whether to use performance-thinking or task-thinking to accomplish our goals. If we are in customer service and let the number of customers we talk with be our evaluation criterion, we are using task-thinking, not performance-thinking. If our goal is to help find the right solution to the problem for every customer we speak with, we are using performance-thinking. The difference, of course, is how we define success — in terms of numbers reached or results accomplished.

Skill #3: Finding a Mentor — and Becoming One Yourself

Most people who achieve their goals in the corporate environment will admit they didn't do it by themselves. They looked for people who had achieved similar goals or who exhibited certain important success qualities and made these people their mentors.

But, that's not all they did! They went one step further than the average person. To keep from being pigeonholed into a job with no way out, they also looked for someone to mentor. There's always someone who sees the job you have as being a wonderful next career step. The key is to find that person and help him or her develop the skills needed to take your place. It takes courage — especially if your biggest fear is that you'll put yourself out of work — but preparing someone to take your place motivates you to find a way to get out of your pigeonhole and into a new career position.

Use this career-movement suggestion to help you fine-tune your performance-thinking skills.

Skill #4: Becoming Self-Disciplined

No doubt about it, successful career management takes a great deal of soul-searching, goal-setting, and self-discipline because every day brings diversions that can deflect us from our paths. The best way to become self-disciplined is to do it.

Skill #5: Determining Whether You Are Better at Building or Maintaining

If you're better at building, look for career opportunities where you can think of solutions, implement new ideas, establish new departments, take risks. If you're better at maintaining, look for opportunities that help you fine-tune and maintain what someone else sets in place. Building and maintaining are very different roles. However, both are critical to every organization. Remember, builders need to be able to do some maintaining — and vice versa. The key is knowing which is your primary skill. When you do, you will proactively look for opportunities to use this skill in ways that will make you stand out and help your organization accomplish its mission faster.

Three Essential Management Areas to Master

According to a highly respected government study, managers need to develop three special competencies to be effective in an information-based economy.

Skill #1: How to Manage Outside Resources

More and more people who work in large corporations will be working not as paid, full-time employees who receive salaries and benefits, but as vendors who are contracted to provide a specific service within a specific time frame and at a fixed cost.

Because vendors have a lot to lose if they fail to meet the specifications of the project they were hired to do, companies feel they can be held more accountable than full-time employees. And, because vendors pay their own benefits, the dollar savings to most organizations can be substantial.

The challenges for managers, though, can be staggering. First, managers need to know how to clearly identify the goals of the project, define the task and measure the results that vendors will be expected to create. Then, managers need to learn how to evaluate vendors (much like assessing candidates for a job) to ensure they contract with the right person or

company. Next, managers need a higher level of knowledge about negotiating performance contracts with vendors. Finally, managers will be highly visible in the process of vendor selection. If they choose right, they will be heroes. If they choose wrong, they could be out of a job. In short, as vendor services become more of the norm in doing business, a manager's role will go through significant changes.

Skill #2: How to Manage Multiple Projects

Managing multiple projects is a special challenge. As jobs are combined and layers of management positions are eliminated, the surviving managers will be expected to wear more hats, juggle more roles and ensure that more big projects get done right and on time. Process management will become more important, and managers will need to make decisions about which projects or tasks have the greatest impact on the organization's mission and make sure that these projects are done first. Managers who approach multiple projects as a time-management task will lose the battle. Managers who see this job as part of a process for accomplishing critical goals will win.

Skill #3: How to Use Computers and Software Programs

Knowing how to use computers is more than the ability to "hunt and peck" on a keyboard or move a "mouse" on a screen. It means being able to do more of your own work, depending less on others, and becoming knowledgeable about a variety of software programs that apply to your job and your industry. A good place to start is concentrating on learning everything you can about the capabilities of the software programs your organization uses. Today's manager must do whatever it takes to stay up to date with technology.

This excerpt is from *Think Like a Manager* by Roger Fritz. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

9 Developing People Power Through Delegation

“You see, really and truly, apart from the things anyone can pick up (the dressing and the proper way of speaking and so on), the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she’s treated. I shall always be a flower girl to Professor Higgins, because he always treats me as a flower girl and always will, but I know I can be a lady to you, because you always treat me as a lady and always will.”

— Eliza Doolittle in George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*

Like Professor Higgins, most managers unintentionally treat their subordinates in a way that leads to less-than-desirable performance. Many leaders have difficulty delegating responsibility. There seems to be the programmed feeling that the only way to get the job done right is to do it yourself. While doing it yourself may appear to work, it tends to be a breeding ground for apathy, noninvolvement, low motivation and loss of commitment and enthusiasm. Sharing the work can be a great motivator, thereby strengthening the organization. This chapter is devoted to the personnel development aspects of delegation.

The way managers treat their subordinates is subtly influenced by what they expect of them. If a manager’s expectations are high, productivity is likely to be high. If his expectations are low, productivity is likely to be low. It is as though there is a law that causes a subordinate’s performance to rise or fall to meet his manager’s expectations.

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J. Sterling Livingston of the Harvard Business School describes the “Pygmalion in Management Effect” this way:

- 1. What a manager expects of a subordinate and how he treats the subordinate will combine to profoundly influence the subordinate’s performance and his career progress.** What is critical in the communication of expectations is not what the boss says, but what he does. Indifference and noncommittal treatment communicate low expectations and lead to inferior performance. Most managers are more effective in communicating low expectations to their subordinates than in communicating high expectations, even though most managers believe exactly the opposite.
- 2. Superior managers create high performance expectations that subordinates can fulfill.** Subordinates will not strive for high productivity unless they consider the boss’s high expectations realistic and achievable. If they are pushed to strive for unattainable goals, they eventually give up trying. Frustrated, they settle for results that are lower than they are capable of achieving. The experience of a large printing company demonstrates this. The company discovered that production actually declined if production quotas were set too high, because the workers simply stopped trying to meet them. “Dangling the carrot just beyond the donkey’s reach” is not a good motivational device.
- 3. Less effective managers fail to develop high expectations for their subordinates.** Successful managers have greater confidence than ineffective managers in their ability to develop the talents of subordinates. The successful manager’s record of achievement and self-confidence grant credibility to his goals. Thus, subordinates accept his expectations as realistic and try hard to achieve them.

What Motivates Employees

Integral to the success of delegation is the development of employees' self-esteem. The use of self-esteem as a motivator is a recent phenomenon. In the 1930s the issue was irrelevant. Back then, the issues were money, security and survival — the very things that were in short supply. Recent distinct improvements in the satisfaction of these survival needs have brought with them a whole new set of drives. Workers have begun to complain about a lack of dignity and alienation and dissatisfaction, managers can no longer maintain that workers only care about getting a paycheck.

- Delegation helps people below you in the organization grow and thereby pushes you even higher in management. It provides you with more time to take on higher-priority projects.
- Find out what the talents and interests of your people are and you will be able to delegate more intelligently and effectively.
- Never underestimate a person's potential. Delegate slightly more than what you think the person is capable of handling. Expect them to succeed, and you will be pleasantly surprised more often than not.
- Clearly define what outcome is needed, then let individuals use their own creative thinking to determine how to get that outcome.
- Clearly define the limits of authority that go with the delegated job. Can the person hire other people to work with them? What are the spending constraints?
- Do not avoid delegating something because you cannot give someone the entire project. Let the person start with a bite-sized piece. After learning and doing that portion, they can accept larger pieces and areas of responsibility.
- Clear standards of performance will help the person know when he is doing exactly what is expected.
- Delegation is taking a risk that the other person might make a mistake. People learn from mistakes ... and will be able to do the project correctly the next time. Where would you be if no one had ever taken a chance on you?

The fact is that management experts and psychologists have shown that a salary increase is not necessarily the ultimate motivator. Unless you cannot live on your present salary, more money is often a weak incentive. In addition to providing money to live on, most people work every day to

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satisfy their need for structure and predictability in their lives. Look at the endless number of rich men who continue to work every day. Precisely because their basic needs are being met, workers today do not automatically accept authoritarian, dehumanizing styles of management.

Workers' priorities have changed. Statistics show that such benefits as interesting work, sufficient help, adequate equipment and information to get the job done and enough authority/independence to do the job are as important to workers as good pay. None of these newly demanded features is a tangible economic benefit. Rather, each of them is either a subtle or direct result of the need for self-esteem.

In the 1950s, Dr. Abraham Maslow defined and listed a hierarchy of human needs. It helps explain why people are motivated to act. Generally, people progress up the hierarchy. However, it is common to find an individual at varying levels of the hierarchy at different times of his life. Observing employees' needs will help you understand their self-esteem needs. Developing employees' self-esteem is vital to developing the delegating habit.

Maslow listed needs in this order, from most basic to most complex:

1. Bodily needs (food and shelter)
2. Safety (lack of danger)
3. Belonging (being part of a group)
4. Esteem (status and achievement)
5. Self-actualization (insight into one's self-growth)

Managers tend to think the lower needs are more important to their employees. Wages and job security fall into the category of bodily needs. In reality, workers say that being in on things and a sense of appreciation (esteem, belonging and self-actualization) are the most important to them. As a delegator, consider the needs of your staff members in regard to their motivation to accept your request. Consider the vast difference in these two requests:

1. "The Board of Directors has ordered another regional collection analysis. I'm sorry, but you'll have to contact each county chairperson to collect their totals and compile the various regional totals ... by tomorrow."

2. “The Board is really enthused about the campaign totals to date. They are really interested in analyzing our progress by region. We need to have updated regional totals to distribute at the meeting tomorrow.”

The first delegation request motivates but does so only through fear of reprimand with an implied sense of failure. Instead, the second request accomplishes motivation with an appeal to a sense of accomplishment and belonging to the group.

A thoughtful analysis of employee motivation and work style will greatly assist you in successfully delegating. Communicating clearly and in a positive way is also essential.

Ways to Enhance Employees' Self-Esteem

- Actively listen.
- Write down others' ideas.
- Accept others' opinions.
- Take ideas seriously.
- Accept differences in others.
- Give tangible rewards.
- Give the “OK” signal when you agree with others.
- Praise the specific task.
- Say “You are right.”
- Support others' actions.
- Recognize feelings.
- Give special assignments.
- Ask for help.

Communication

While communication appears to be simply a matter of voicing what you want while the other person listens, it is much more complicated than that. Each message must be encoded and decoded based on the words said, the attitude or tone projected and on other nonverbal cues subject to interpretation. A “simple” two-way communication is not simple at all. And one as complex as the delegation of work is ripe for miscommunication or misunderstanding.

Research indicates that we:

- Hear half of what is said
- Listen to half of what we hear
- Understand only half of that
- Believe half of what we understand
- Remember half of what we believe

Translated into an eight-hour workday, that means you:

- Spend about four hours listening
- Hear about two hours’ worth
- Actually listen for one hour
- Understand for about 30 minutes
- Believe only 15 minutes’ worth of information
- Remember just under eight minutes’ worth

The skill with which we communicate is integral to the success of the delegation process ... and to all skill development areas.

This excerpt is from *Delegate for Results*. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.

10 Conducting a Firing Interview

1. Do your homework.
2. If the situation seems to call for it, have a “friendly witness” present during the session.
3. Give clear, specific reasons for the termination. Put these in writing, signed by both parties.
4. Help the employee realize that once the consequences were explained, to him or her, continuation of the unsatisfactory behavior was the employee’s matter.
5. Focus the termination on unacceptable behavior, not on the person.
6. If it is acceptable, advise the employee of the implications of removing files, equipment or other organizational property, as well as revealing trade secrets to competitors.
7. Not all employees will take termination calmly, although the termination should come as no surprise. If the employee becomes upset, these steps will help:
 - a. Listen
 - b. Share
 - c. Continue

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- d. Above all, stay in control of your own emotions. There's no need for you to feel threatened by words.
 - e. If you are physically threatened, and there is no one with you, call in someone else immediately.
8. Know company policies.
 9. Let employees know where they stand with you. Will you provide references? A final word: Your anxiety about the termination session is both normal and healthy — it is a sign that you are a caring, feeling person, involved with a difficult task.
 10. Help employees realize that termination is painful for everyone; you and the organization would like everyone to succeed — and you wish them well.

This excerpt is from *Inspire & Motivate Through Performance Reviews*. If you liked this chapter, you can find the complete work in our resource store at www.NationalSeminarsTraining.com.