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COACHING EMPLOYEES

MANAGING UP AND DOWN THE ORGANIZATIONAL HIERARCHY

I. UNDERSTANDING JOB PERFORMANCE

1. A Model

Performance (individual or organizational) =

(Ability x Motivation x Role Clarity) x System variables/ x Situational

characteristics variables

1. Definition of terms
2. Job performance – The quality and quantity of employee job behavior and productivity, whether the employee is producing goods or providing services.
3. Ability – The technical, intellectual, physical, and personal competencies required to perform the activities involved in producing quality goods and providing quality service.
4. Motivation – The desire or willingness to exert continuously one’s personal best effort in the performance of one’s job duties.
5. Role Clarity – The degree to which the person understands what to do on the job, when to do it and what it is supposed to look like when finished.
6. System variables/characteristics – Those bureaucratic structures, policies and procedures, and those material and equipment characteristics that influence performance, but are not controlled by the individual employee.
7. Situational variables – Those uncontrollable (and often unexpected) occurrences that influence performance but are not controlled by the individual employee or the organization.

C. With the simple model, Performance = (Ability x Motivation x Role Clarity) x

System x Situation, we are now ready to diagnose and ameliorate performance related problems, and/or look for ways to improve currently acceptable performance. In conducting an analysis, one can look at the specific activities or elements pertinent to each of the five performance-related factors.

1. EFFECTIVE COACHING
2. Three Important Beliefs For Effective Coaching
3. 1. When an organization employs a worker, the organization is not

 buying the person or his/her mind or values. Organizations are merely

 renting the worker’s behavior

2. If managers want to know why people do what they do, ignore their

 motives and attitudes and look at the consequences for their behavior.

3. Workers, for the most part, do not do self- destructive or illogical

 things on purpose. These workers do what they think is right at the

 time.

###### Barrier To Effective Coaching

1. Managers have a tendency to attribute most instances of subordinate non-performance to inherent, unchangeable qualities of the subordinate. For example, when managers attribute subordinate non-performance to a “bad” attitude, they place themselves into a trap of non-management.

As a result, when the human resource fails to improve his/her performance, replacement of the human resource seems to be the most appropriate corrective action. This can be costly!

###### Coaching Process

There are two steps in the coaching process: coaching analysis and the face-to-face coaching discussion.

1. Coaching Analysis: Why Is Unsatisfactory Performance Occurring?
2. *Identify the Unsatisfactory Performance.*

Don’t focus on results here. Focus on the behavior that gives you the result.

 When identifying unsatisfactory performance, keep asking yourself “why” until you come up with a specific behavior(s) causing the discrepancy.

In describing the problem behavior, be as specific as possible and have examples. Know what the problem behavior looks like and know what the non-problem behavior looks like.

1. *Is It Worth Your Time?*

Managers often pounce on a single occurrence of unsatisfactory performance because “you don’t want them to get bad habits,” or “when you give an inch they take a mile.”

Managers may spend their time on issues unrelated to work. Just because you think an issue is important does not make it important. The reasons for why it’s important should be functionally related to the management of subordinates or to the business as a whole.

1. *Do Subordinates Know Their Performance Is Not What It Should Be?*

If a worker thinks he is doing O.K., he/she has no reason to change what he/she is doing. One of the reasons subordinates don’t do what they are supposed to do is because they think they are doing it.

You may discover that subordinates frequently do not know how many errors they are making or how many days they were late for work. Or at times, they will know they are doing things wrong, but they won’t know that it is a problem. They think everybody else is performing as poorly as they are.

1. *Do Subordinates Know What Is Supposed To Be Done?*

If subordinates do not know what you want, they won’t supply it.

Part of not knowing what is supposed to be done is not knowing

when it is to be done. An even more critical aspect of what is

supposed to be done is what it is supposed to look like when

completed.

Subordinates not knowing what is supposed to be done is often the

result of inadequate poor orientation or training.

1. *Are Their Obstacles Beyond The Subordinate’s Control?*

Managers should pursue this question early rather than later as they are prone to do. They will likely find performance obstacles without talking to subordinate (by observation).

If factors beyond subordinates control are causing nonperformance, this is the manager’s problem, not the subordinate’s (e.g., interference by higher levels of management & others’ failure).

You may not be able to eliminate some of these obstacles, but you may help lessen their effect on performance. You can teach your

subordinates strategies/skills for overcoming these obstacles.

1. *Do Subordinates Know How To Do It?*

If you want to know whether employees know how to do something, don’t ask, “ Do you know how to do that?” If you get the answer “yes,” you still don’t know. Ask the employee to describe what it is they are doing or better yet, give them a chance to demonstrate while you observe.

1. Very little learning may take place in training due to a number of problems.
2. *Do Negative Consequences Follow Performance?*

Maybe performance isn’t occurring because a negative consequence follows it. (Workers who do nasty jobs well get to do more nasty jobs.)

To eliminate this reason for nonperformance, the manager has two alternatives: remove the negative consequence or provide more positive consequences to counterbalance the negative consequences.

1. *Do Positive Consequences Follow Nonperformance?*

One of the reasons subordinates don’t do what they are supposed to is because it’s followed by a positive consequence.

Unwritten rule in business is “If you have important things to do, go to the people you can count on.” When applying this rule, co-workers are learning “the less you do, the less you are asked to do.”

Remove positive consequences for nonperformance and add

positive consequences for performance. Once the employee starts

to improve his/her performance, then you can start to be more

considerate (e.g., talking about outside interests, buying coffee or

lunch).

1. *Could Subordinates Do It If They Wanted To?*

If the answer is no, then the poor performance is due to a lack of ability. Either TRANSFER or TERMINATE the employee unless you decide to live with the unsatisfactory performance. If the latter is the case, you may wonder why you ever bothered.

If the answer is YES, then the poor performance is due to a lack of motivation. REDIRECT the behavior of subordinate through a COACHING DISCUSSION.

1. Coaching Discussion: Getting the Subordinate to Change His Behavior
2. *Purpose and Premise*

The purpose is to redirect subordinate’s behavior to solve a performance problem. To get the subordinate to start doing what he/she should be doing or stop doing what he/she shouldn’t be doing.

 The premise is that the subordinate could do it if they wanted to do it.

*b. Steps in the Coaching Discussion*

1. Step 1: Getting Agreement that Problem Exists

Most critical step-takes about ½ the total time spent in discussion.

Important part of first step is not telling subordinate that there is a problem or letting them know that a problem exists*. The most important part of the first step is actually getting agreement that a problem exists*. The only way to know this is when the subordinate actually says, “yes, I agree that a problem exists.”

Two reasons that convince subordinates that a problem exists are negative consequences to others and negative consequences to them because of subordinate‘s nonperformance.

Let the subordinate tell you what the consequences are for his/her nonperformance. Ask them questions that make the subordinate arrive at the consequences to others and themselves. DON’T TELL THEM!!

Don’t become intimidated or irritated by the subordinate’s silence. Don’t answer your own questions. Use silence to your advantage.

## Step 2: Mutually Develop Alternative Solutions

Purpose of step 2 is to identify what the subordinate could do differently so as to bring about the desired result.

It’s important to recognize what subordinate is doing now isn’t working. Don’t settle for the subordinate saying things like, “I will try harder.” Specify what “try harder” means.

In this step, there is mutual solution generation (both the manager and the subordinate generate alternatives). If the subordinate is unable to develop his/her own alternatives, the manager should help the subordinate generate alternatives through thought transmission (asking questions).

There is no evaluation or selection of alternatives in this step.

1. Step 3: Mutually Discuss and Agree On Action To Be Taken To Solve Problem

Mutually agree on which alternatives will take place and when, using thought transmission (asking questions).

At the end of step 3 thank the subordinate for agreeing to solve

the problem and specify a time when you will meet again.

Make sure the subordinate realizes that follow-up is an

essential aspect of the coaching process.

1. Step 4: Follow-Up To Insure That Agreed Upon Action Has Been Taken

There are two reasons for follow-up. First, follow-up is designed to recognize achievement, if a subordinate is doing what he is supposed to be doing. Second, follow-up is also used to ask, “how can I help, ” if a subordinate is not doing what he is supposed to be doing.

### Step 5: Recognize Any Achievement

Be timely in your recognition of achievement. When in doubt do it NOW! As a manager, you want a clear connection between the desired behavior and recognition.

Some managers working to correct performance problems expect to go from failure to success overnight. This rarely, if ever, occurs. Managers must use successive approximations (small steps) in changing subordinates’ behavior. You should recognize and reinforce even small steps toward the desired behavior. (Nothing breeds success like success!)

Don’t ignore improvements even if it’s failing less. Some managers seem to have a problem with this concept because they believe that recognizing improvements in failing and thanking subordinates for failing less is really condoning failing. This is clearly a perceptual difficulty because as they fail less they achieve more. A change in perspective is needed here.


# THE ART OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK IN ORGANIZATIONS

1. **FEEDBACK: THE BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS**
2. **What is feedback?**
3. **Why do we give feedback?**
4. **HOW DOES FEEDBACK INCREASE PERFORMANCE?**

1. **Primary functions of feedback.**
2. **Difference between teaching and coaching.**

1. **GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK**

1. **Focus on specific behaviors.**
2. **Keep it impersonal.**
3. **Focus on the effects of the behavior.**
4. **Keep it goal-oriented.**
5. **Make it well-timed.**
6. **Ensure understanding.**
7. **Tailor the feedback to fit the individual.**
8. **THE DEFENSIVE EMPLOYEE**
9. **Recognizing the signs of defensiveness.**
10. Sources of information in face-to-face communication.
11. Non-verbal leakage.
12. **Dealing effectively with defensiveness.**
13. Recognize it is normal.
14. Never attack a person’s defensiveness.
15. Allow time for a more reasoned reaction to take place.
16. Realize that you cannot help some people because their defensiveness may be

 at a dysfunctional level.

1. **MAKING NEGATIVE FEEDBACK MORE EFFECTIVE**
2. **Make sure the behavior is controllable by the individual.**
3. **Give the negative feedback in private.**
4. **Make the negative feedback objective in content.**
5. **Provide negative feedback first then supportive feedback.**
6. **Don’t gunnysack.**
7. **If you engage in destructive feedback, apologize as soon as possible.**
8. *Lead by example.*
9. **Other techniques.**

1. Keep the feedback as simple as possible.
2. Don’t focus on too many behaviors at once.
3. Write the feedback down on a piece of paper.
4. Bounce the feedback off another supervisor who is not emotionally involved.
5. Watchyourbody language and use of space when giving the feedback.
6. **GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVELY RECEIVING FEEDBACK ON ONE’S**

 **PERFORMANCE**

1. **Elicit feedback from others.**
2. **Listen to the feedback as it is given.**

1. Active Listening
2. **Check out the feedback to make sure you heard it correctly.**
3. **Clarify your understanding of the feedback.**
4. **If the feedback does not fit with your self-image, bounce it off other individuals whom you trust and get their perceptions concerning the situation.**
5. **Decide what you are going to do with the feedback, then do it!**

### MANAGING UP

Managing Up refers to the process of consciously working with your boss to obtain the best possible result for you, your boss, and your company.

#### TEN KEYS TO SUCCESS

1. **FOCUS ON COMPATIBLE WORK STYLES.**
2. Readers vs. listeners.
3. High vs. low involvement managers.
4. **DEVELOP MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS.**
5. Be proactive and craft a statement concerning your job expectations.
6. Know the boss’s language.
7. **KEEP THE BOSS’S GOALS, PRIORITIES, AND PRESSURES IN MIND.**
8. Be part of the solution and not the problem.
9. Be accessible: physically, mentally, and emotionally.
10. **KEEP THE BOSS INFORMED AND BE HONEST.**
11. Don’t report everything you do and shield the boss from surprises.
12. Memos that make good use of the boss’s time.
13. **TAKE INITIATIVE.**
14. Set yourself apart by doing more than is expected.
15. Look for ways to add value to what the organization is doing now and in the

future.

1. The fear of failure can hold you back.
2. **BE DEPENDABLE AND KEEP YOUR PROMISES.**
3. Increase your competence: staying on top of current developments in the field, knowing where to get answers to tough questions, and reading industry publications.
4. Give realistic performance previews.
5. Don’t aim for perfection.
6. If you are overextended, meet with your boss immediately.

1. **NEVER PRESENT A PROBLEM TO THE BOSS WITHOUT A SOLUTION.**
2. Squeaky wheel syndrome: Here comes trouble.
3. Upward-Leaping Monkeys.
4. Try to handle problems yourself and anticipate problems before they happen.
5. **STAY CALM WHEN ARGUING WITH THE BOSS.**
6. Express your ideas to the boss in a positive, non-threatening way. Show the boss

how your idea will benefit the boss. Appeal to one of the boss’s main priorities.

1. Choose your battles with the boss carefully. Ask yourself: how much difference will this make in my work life? Is this a permanent or transitory situation? Is it worth making enemies over? and Is there a realistic chance of winning?
2. Timing is a key.
3. If you can’t win, give up and if you don’t win, don’t hold a grudge.
4. How can you control your emotions?
5. **NETWORK!**
6. Luthans’ (1988) study concerning effective versus successful managers.
7. **NEVER UNDERRATE YOUR BOSS!**

**Luthans’ Real Manager Study (1988)**

Luthans (1988) studied more than 450 managers in answering the question, “are effective managers successful managers?” The answer he found was no they are not. Effective managers are usually not the ones promoted rapidly through the organizational ranks. (Less than ten percent of the managers in this sample were both effective and successful.) The managers that were promoted rapidly through the organizational ranks were the best networkers.

He found in his study that all managers (successful, effective, average, etc.) engaged in four managerial activities:

1. Traditional management: planning, organizing, & controlling.
2. Communication: exchanging information & processing information.
3. Human resource management: motivating, disciplining, managing conflict, staffing, & training.
4. Networking socializing, politicking, & interacting with outsiders.

However, he found that the emphasis given each of these activities differed between effective (those managers with the highest quality and quantity subunit performance, and the highest subordinate satisfaction and commitment) and successful managers (those managers who were promoted most rapidly). Effective managers spent the majority of their time on communication activities whereas successful managers spent the majority of their time on networking activities.

This research challenges the traditional assumption that promotions are based upon performance. It vividly demonstrates that to get ahead in an organization you need social and political skills. It’s like the old saying, “It’s not what you know. It’s who you know.” This research also points out that to be an effective manager you must manager your human resources well (i.e., communication & human resource management). You must give a lot of time/attention to your people.

Implications:

1. Successful managers more likely to face the Peter Principle (i.e., getting promoted to a level where they’re incompetent).

2. Successful managers are more vulnerable when upper management changes (i.e., they’re now judged more on their competencies than their relationships).

3. Effective managers face the problem of “you’re so good your irreplaceable” and as such, don’t get promoted. These managers need to train their replacements if they want to move up.

Additional Behavioral Differences Between Effective and Successful Managers:

1. Effective managers are humble and believe in a just world.

2. Successful managers more likely to promote their team’s accomplishments to management

3. Successful managers more likely to ask for feedback from their managers about how they and their teams can improve (i.e., engage their bosses in mentoring relationships).

**LUTHANS’ REAL MANAGER STUDY (1988)**

 **Percentage of Time Spent/Day**

 **Managers:** **Average Successful\*** **Effective\***

**Four Management Activities**

1. ***Traditional Management*** 32% 13% 19%

 (planning, decision-making, & controlling)

1. ***Communication*** 29% 28% 44%

 (exchanging & analyzing information)

1. ***Human Resource Management*** 20% 11% 26%

 (motivating/reinforcing, disciplining, training,

 staffing, & managing conflict)

1. ***Networking*** 19% 48% 11%

 (politicking, socializing, & interacting with

outsiders)

***\*Definitions*:**

Successful managers were those managers who were promoted rapidly through the organization’s ranks.

Effective managers were those managers who had both high-performance work groups and satisfied/committed subordinates.

**Source**: Luthans, F. (1988). Successful vs. effective real managers. Academy of

 Management Executive, 2, 127-132.