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One Minute Ideas

Delegation Tips:

1. Give person a "whole" task to do.
2. Make sure the person understands the outcome.
3. Identify progress feedback dates.
4. Identify outcome measurements.
5. Thank and reward.

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Achieving Potential

August 2011

The theme of this month's edition of our monthly newsletter "Achieving Potential," is DELEGATION AND RECOGNITION.

This issue focuses on businesses with employees. However, if you are a sole proprietor you may gain some insights in dealing with human relations that can help you with your business.

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Recognition of the Happy Wanderer.

Quin Jerome is Sales Director with a clothing company. He is a talented talker and entertains major clients on a regular basis.



One summer he was deputized while the CEO was on vacation and found an entry in his planner that just said "11:00 -12:00 Wander." The CEO's personal assistant clarified that it meant walking the production floor to talk with the machinists. "But I don't know what to say to them!" said the gifted raconteur.

Curiosity is the real key to uncovering performance that deserves recognition. Managing By Wandering About (MBWA) is a technique first recognized in the 1980's by quality guru Tom Peters. He found that some successful organizations got that way by encouraging managers to get out from behind their desks on a regular basis. With the emphasis on wandering, which is a slow process of following your nose, you will find yourself being drawn towards areas of the business you might not otherwise visit.

You may find yourself speaking to people who are hidden away from the light of day. By asking the who, what, where, when, why, and how questions, you will discover things about your own business that would never have been revealed to you otherwise. It is not that your managers are hiding anything; they just want to let you know what they think is important and they edit out what they consider to be trivial.

These examples represent the acorns that you will want to nourish. How can others copy well-focused behavior in the company if it is not captured, highlighted, and praised?

MBWA is in itself a form of recognition. If the senior woman or man can spend some of their valuable time talking to employees and asking their opinions, the employees must have value. Asking your people for their opinion about management decisions, company policy, and rumors can reinforce this feeling. Keep an open mind about their answers, understand their perspective, and calm their uncertainties.

Simple questions can open up enormous opportunities. "What one thing could I do to help you with your job?" will always get a cheeky answer about swapping salaries but is usually followed up with something simple, like: "We need better lighting" or "We need an electric fan in the summer" or "Can I replace the missing wheel on my chair?"; none of which will break the bank, but all of which will improve their work experience.

Asking, "What and who makes a difference to the performance of your department?" will start to reveal some of the activities that should be emulated throughout the business. People will be named who are seen as role models in their approach to their work and to their colleagues. Remember that work is not all about hard graft. A good proportion of work is a social experience, which should be as good humored and pleasant as possible to bring out the best qualities of your employees.

How can you link these ideas to successful outcomes in your business?

Recognition as Part of Performance Management

Performance Management is a system developed out of the best practice of top performing organizations to provide managers with a structured approach to the key retention criteria.



Simplistically, most people will feel motivated and will want to stay in their job if their manager:

- pays attention to their work
- provides them with a job to match their skills, knowledge and experience gives them opportunities to grow and develop
- judges their performance objectively

Most Performance Management processes contain critical opportunities for recognition.

Appraisals

Traditionally, the annual appraisal is the only meeting during the year when an average or better worker will meet his or her boss to discuss performance. People with poor performance can and do have a regular audience with their manager; sometimes on a weekly basis. Your appraisal form is the document that is held on file as a record of how good, bad or indifferent you might have been. For some, this may be the only time in the year that they receive plaudits and even these may be guarded comments because of the close link in everyone's mind between appraisal and pay raise, despite repeated denials. Too much praise might raise expectations of a large pay increase. Poor performers, however, frequently receive far more than their fair share of management attention throughout the year.

If paying attention to our employees is one of the greatest motivators,

when did we decide that high performers need less motivation than poor performers? Of course they don't! Many of the top performing companies in the world have introduced regular coaching and mentoring sessions to supplement the appraisal system and to give all employees a regular opportunity to talk about their job, their performance against their objectives, their motivation, and their aspirations.

Coaching

Often you can see situations where managers act as spectators. Their behavior, plus the words they use along with their body language, would not be out of place at a soccer or baseball match. They would be sitting in the stands eating a hot dog, throwing down a beer, and belting out criticism at the players (their staff) on the field. There is almost no connection between the manager and the staff other than they just happen to be sitting in the same building.

This image is used to point out the profound difference between the manager as coach and the manager as spectator. A coach works individually with players, helping them to overcome setbacks and obstacles to progress forward. They know and understand how their players respond to different types of motivation and how their family life and health impact their performance.

The majority of coaching is done on a very frequent basis. You simply don't wait for the big match to deliver your advice to the team in the way the manager as spectator' does. You work very closely with everyone in the team, understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your players before they are tested under pressure.

Do your people follow the leader or react to the Boss?

Development Delegation: How to Kindle the Inner Spirit

If you manage others, one of your most important roles will be to develop the resources that you have at your disposal. That includes the people themselves.

Here is a six-step guide to developing people through delegation:

1. Kindle The Inner Spirit. The first step in developing others is the belief that everyone in the team is capable of growth and development. We demonstrate that belief by being genuinely interested in what they are doing and helping them discover ways in which they can build on their strengths. In this way, developmental opportunities open up almost by themselves. "In everyone's life, at some time, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into flames by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who re-ignite the inner spirit." - Albert Schweitzer

2. Get To Know Your Team's Strengths. The biggest disasters in people management arise when we fail to recognize the natural abilities of our team. It's what happened to Rabbit when he went to school. When Rabbit first went to school, he was delighted with what the instructor told him. "Rabbit, you have fine legs. You hop well, spring well, and jump well. With some guidance, you can be an excellent jumper." Rabbit loved every minute of the Hopping class and excelled. Then the Head Teacher said: "But Rabbit, you don't swim or climb trees well at all. You must stop the jumping class and concentrate on swimming and tree climbing." So, Rabbit left the jumping class that he loved and went to the swimming class and tree climbing class that he

hated. After a while, miserable and dispirited, he begged his parents to take him out of school. "If only I'd been allowed to stay in jumping class," he thought. - Donald Clifton and Paula Nelson

Moral of the story: Develop what people are already good at and you'll help them excel.

3. Find Jobs That Match Your Needs and People's Needs. The art of delegating lies in finding a match between the potential of the individual and the needs of the business. When you find that match, you hit on a win-win situation: you gain and the individual gains. By contrast, when you delegate jobs that don't need to be done, or to people who don't have any real interest in them, or can't do them, or don't want to do them, you simply de-motivate and frustrate. As a result, people become convinced they're inadequate and lacking in any real talent. "Don't try and teach a pig to sing. It wastes your time and annoys the pig." - Donald Clifton and Paula Nelson

4. Agree to a Delegation Plan. When you decide to delegate a job to someone in order to develop his or her strengths, it is important to create a delegation contract, so you both know what is expected of each other. This contract can include anything you want but useful areas for agreement include: time scales, levels of freedom, levels of authority, constraints, methods of working, worries, and how others are affected. You are unlikely to be able to do this without sitting down with the delegate to agree to the contract and then having regular chats as things progress.

5. Let Them Go. Unless your delegation contract stipulates a very tight amount of control by you, you must let the person get on with things without unnecessary interference. Okay, that may sound risky, and it is. After all, the delegate may mess up. That's a risk you have to be prepared to take since this may be the only way they're going to learn. But unless you let them go, they won't be able to stretch their wings and fly. Delegation is an act of faith on the part of both you and your delegatee. "Giving people self-confidence is by far the most important thing I can do. Because then they will act." - Jack Welch, CEO of General Electric

6. Keep Your Eyes On. Working out how near or far you need to be in a delegating relationship is the true art of managing others. Too close and you do not give people enough freedom to take risks and learn; too far and they lose hope. One rule is to take your hands off but keep your eyes on. This relationship is similar to parents teaching their children to swim. At the start, they stand right next to them with their hands under their tummies. They never let go. Then gradually as the children begin to gain in confidence and skill, they move back. First they let one hand go, imperceptibly, then the other hand. Then they take a step back. Then another. And eventually they move out of reach to the side of the pool. In the end they leave the children alone and get out of the pool. But they never take their eyes off them.

Developmental delegation is by far the most important of all the acts of delegation. It is delegation with a purpose. It grows the one resource that is free and unlimited, your own staff. When it works, you increase all your assets at a stroke and both you and your delegatee are the richer for it.

Motivational Quotes

"Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity."

-George S Patton

"Surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority, and don't interfere."

-Ronald Reagan

"No person will make a great business who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit."

-Andrew Carnegie

For results **YOU** can count on, contact Performance Development Strategies, LLC at 914-953-4458 or Email: grant@pdstrategies.com

Make it a GREAT day,

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