Solutions

Online Performance Strategies for Managers and Supervisors from the Division of Personnel

"The problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."

Albert Einstein

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Quick Tip:

From the editors of *Solutions*

Lessons in Change Management
Employees are more apt to sustain change if they are given time to prepare in advance. Leaders must be the catalyst for change – and their behavior should exemplify their excitement about the change. In return, employees will often view change as a positive experience. Here are some tips to help support change:

- Implement organized and timely communication about the change – over communicate to increase the odds that everyone gets the same message.

- Make sure your management team fully supports the change and are viewed as change agents by others.

- Solicit input from employees on how to implement the change to promote "buy-in."

Looking for previous issues of Solutions? [**click here**](#).

FEATURE ARTICLE
Workforce Management

Beyond manipulating and motivating to leading and inspiring

By Jim Clemmer

"People do work for money -- but they work even more for meaning in their lives. In fact, they work to have fun. Companies that ignore this fact are essentially bribing their employees and will pay the price in a lack of loyalty and commitment."

- Jeffrey Pfeffer, "Six Dangerous Myths About Pay," Harvard Business Review

We've known for decades that money doesn't motivate most people to higher levels of performance. In his seminal 1959 book, *"The Motivation to Work,"* Frederick Herzberg identified money as a "hygiene factor." If we feel we're not fairly compensated, lack of money can de-motivate. But once we feel we're treated fairly, the promise of more money doesn't sustain higher energy and mobilize inspired performance.

Numerous studies over the last few decades have shown that when it comes to understanding what really energizes and mobilizes, there's a huge we/they gap between managers and frontline people. For example, in an article entitled *"Mastering the ABCs of Organizations,"* John R. Throop cites a study of computer programmers who were asked to identify the top 10 factors that provided the highest degree of motivation in their jobs. The programmers' top three were: full appreciation for work done; feeling that they were in on things; and, sympathetic help with personnel problems. The programmers' managers, when asked what these factors would be, predicted rather different priorities: wages, working conditions, and fair discipline.

When confronting morale problems, managers will often succumb to the "Victimitis Virus" and blame the declining work ethic, attitudes of entitlement, softening values, the welfare state, or any number of societal factors. But these factors -- which are mostly about doing the least work for the most money -- are more imagined than real. Studies show that people's real needs are much less mercenary than most managers believe. People want to take pride in their work, belong to a winning team, and be part of an organization they can believe in.

In fact, the morale crisis so prevalent in organizations today is primarily the result of disappointment in these needs not being met. Ultimately, the problem is a leadership vacuum. The hand-wringing, teeth-gnashing managers, frustrated by their organizational energy crisis, often ask "why don't people want to work any more?" But that's the wrong question, based on the wrong assumptions.

The question to ask -- with a long gaze in the leadership mirror -- is, "why don't people want to work here?"

Listen for the Why

"Ask People 'Why you do what you do?' Obviously things like money, meaning, and intellectual challenge are important, but the one I always listen for is 'I like helping people.' If that one is missing, I know I am speaking with a professional in trouble."

David Maister, author of *True Professionalism*

Beyond manipulating and motivating to leading and inspiring

Continued from Page 1

Managers try to motivate. Leaders inspire. Managers try to understand how to motivate people. Leaders try to understand why people aren't feeling motivated. Managers try to add more drivers to increase mobilization and energy. Leaders try to identify, prioritize, and remove the biggest resistors.

Internal vs. External Motivators

Many managers recognize that one of their key roles is "motivating" others. They also recognize that a key to motivation is empowerment. But it's too often a lot of empty "leaderspeak." For all that the popular "E" word has been bandied about in the last few years, not much has changed in many organizations.

There are many reasons why empty empowerment rhetoric is so widespread today. One of the most common is confusion about (or misapplication of) intrinsic or internal motivation (leadership) versus extrinsic or external motivators (management). In his article *"Empowerment: The Emperor's New Clothes,"* Harvard professor Chris Argyris outlines this difference:

> "If management wants employees to take more responsibility for their own destiny, it must encourage the development of internal commitment. As the name implies, internal commitment comes largely from within...by definition, internal commitment is participatory and very closely allied with empowerment. The more that management wants internal commitment from its employees, the more it must try to involve employees in defining work objectives, specifying how to achieve them, and setting stretch targets."

The power of using employee involvement to build internal commitment is both measurable and impressive. One organization made a massive effort to involve everyone in their planning process. (In our consulting work, there's an old adage that we frequently quote to clients: "If they help plan the battle, they won't battle the plan.") A year later, the company's absenteeism dropped by 300% -- and saved millions of dollars!

Jim Clemmer is an internationally acclaimed keynote speaker, workshop/retreat leader, and management team developer on leadership, change, customer focus, culture, teams, and personal growth. His web site is **www.clemmer.net.**

Planning
Measuring performance by objectives

In my experience working in Human Resources, I have had many opportunities to talk to various types of workers, supervisors, consultants, labor unions and employment attorneys. One common belief among most of these individuals (at least in terms of the average worker) is that employees should:

1. Know what is expected of them;
2. Receive feedback about whether or not they've lived up to those expectations; and
3. Be recognized for good performance.

However, when discussions arise about the use of performance appraisals to convey this critical information, few can agree on whether or not appraisals are part of the solution or simply another process to complete. Even those that think performance appraisals are effective still grimace at the thought of participating in a formal performance review.

The reality is that we all evaluate the performance of those we work with everyday. In most cases any supervisor, regardless of his or her level of experience, education, formal training or field of work, can tell you with little doubt who is performing well and who is not. The question is - if so many people agree that measuring, communicating and recognizing performance is a good idea, why do so many supervisors and employees dread them? While there may be many answers to this question, one of the most common (and obvious) is that there is often a lack of fair and consistent performance measurements for employees.

One of the critical components of assessing performance is to clearly outline, for every employee, clear and concise performance objectives to follow. Such objectives should be based on each employee's job requirements as they relate to the delivery of state services. These objectives should, to the extent possible, define measurable goals that help the employee understand what he or she must do to be successful and address specific priorities that have a real and significant impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of state services.

As we move into 2007, the Division of Personnel will begin working with many state agencies to develop mechanisms that assist supervisors with evaluating the performance of the employees they supervise. These new processes will make it easier to conduct performance appraisals and allow supervisors to focus their attention on developing and communicating the strong performance objectives employees need to be successful in their jobs.

Written by Paul Buckley
Pay, Leave & Reporting
Division of Personnel

Look for more information about this new process in future issues of Solutions.

"If leadership takes an awful lot out of you, it's not because you're doing it wrong. Quite the contrary, hard work is the work of a leader."
Alan Axelrod, leadership researcher

Integrity
The 7 Traits of effective leaders:
How many do you share?

Are leaders born or made? Can you learn superior leadership skills? No one is sure, but experts have noticed seven specific actions that successful leaders carry out, regardless of the organization they lead.

Effective leaders...

Make others feel important. If your goals and decisions are self-centered, followers will lose their enthusiasm quickly. Emphasize their strengths and contributions, not your own.

Promote a vision. Followers need a clear idea of where you're leading them, and they need to understand why that goal is valuable to them. Your job as a leader is to provide that vision.

Follow the Golden Rule. Treat your followers the way you enjoy being treated. An abusive leader attracts few loyal followers.

Admit mistakes. If people suspect that you're covering up your own errors, they'll hide their mistakes too, and you'll lack valuable information for making decisions.

Criticize others only in private. Public criticism only embarrasses and alienates everyone.

Stay close to the action. You need to be visible to the members of your organization. Talk to people, visit other offices and work sites ask questions, and observe how business is being handled. Often you will gain new insights into your work and find new opportunities for motivating your followers.

Make a game of competition. The competitive drive can be a valuable tool if you use it correctly. Set team goals, and reward members who meet or exceed them. Examine your failures, and celebrate your group's successes.

Workforce Management
Sexual Harassment – Individual Liability

In a case of first impression, the Missouri Court of Appeals has held that under the Missouri Human Rights Act (MHRA) there is individual liability in a sexual harassment case.

It is well established that an employer may be liable for sexual harassment if the employer fails to exercise reasonable care to prevent and promptly correct harassing behavior. However, if an employer has a sexual harassment policy and takes corrective action when it is made aware of improper conduct, the employer is not liable for the harassing conduct.

In the case of <u>Cooper v. Albacore Holdings, Inc. et al</u>., Tamara Cooper, Vice President of Human Resources, alleged that Gordon Quick, Chief Executive Officer, made sexual advances toward her at a dinner party. Rather than report Quick's conduct, Cooper never returned to work after the dinner party and contacted an attorney who sent a letter to the employer eight days later asserting allegations of sexual discrimination.

The Court held that when no tangible employment action is taken, an employer is not liable for a supervisor's harassing conduct if the employee unreasonably failed to take advantage of any preventive or corrective opportunities provided by the employer and the employer exercised reasonable care to prevent and correct promptly any sexually harassing behavior.

Because the employer had a sexual harassment policy in place and Cooper "unreasonably failed to take advantage of the preventative or corrective opportunities provided by Employer," the Court found that the employer was not liable for the supervisor's conduct.

However, the Court went on to review Cooper's claim that Quick was personally liable for his conduct even if the employer was not liable. The MHRA states that the term employer includes "any person directly acting in the interest of an employer." The Court held that a supervisor falls under this definition. As such, Quick could be held individually liable for his conduct despite the fact that the employer is not liable.

The moral of this case is that if a supervisor is accused of sexual harassment, the supervisor may be held personally liable for his or her conduct even if the employee failed to take the necessary steps for the employer to be liable under a Title VII claim.

Written by:
Frank Jung, Assistant General Counsel for the Office of Administration

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Help employees avoid the procrastination trap

Do you help your employees get motivated to complete important tasks or are you plagued with excuses and procrastination? According to author Gary Vikesland, "Procrastination zaps employee motivation when it interrupts workflow.

One characteristic of motivated employees is their ability to move from one task to another with ease and without long delays or "stall-time." Employees who easily move from task to task are known as having "flow."

Vikesland suggests the following tips to help your employees "flow" seamlessly from task to task and resist the urge to procrastinate:

First, discover if procrastination is linked to any of these *negative feelings*:

Apprehension: An employee may be fearful that he or she will not be able to complete the task satisfactorily. Explain to the employee that you selected them based on your confidence in their knowledge, skills and abilities. Also let the employee know that you will be there to help them if and when the going gets tough.

Resentment: An employee may become angry because you increased their workload and they feel overwhelmed. As a result, the employee places the project on their low priority list and doesn't plan to complete the project anytime soon. If you sense this resentment, coach the employee by explaining the significance of the task.

Reiterate why you chose them and the danger of not living up to work commitments. You can also gain the employee's support and buy-in by asking the employee how they plan to complete the task. This dialogue may reduce the amount of rebellion.

Despair: An employee may think the assigned project is a "lose-lose" proposition. If the employee completes the task quickly, more work will be assigned. On the other hand, they are weighing the consequences of not completing the task on time. The supervisor needs to help the employee move to a more positive outlook by explaining the employee's role and importance in the team's success.

Discover if procrastination is linked to any of these *negative thoughts*:

It has to be perfect: Perfectionism thinking can slow a project substantially until it takes a screeching halt. Supervisors can let their employee know that they expect "excellence, not perfection." Discuss the importance of having a balance between efficiency and quality.

I perform well under pressure: An employee may procrastinate because they like to work under pressure. They explain to you "It gets my adrenaline pumping to work under pressure, and it is exhilarating when I achieve a win at the last minute." Managers need to explain that leaving projects to the last minute places stress on the employee and coworkers. The employee may enjoy the adrenaline rush – his co-workers don't.

The Immunity Card: When the employee has several tasks to complete and doesn't know how to prioritize or multi-task. The employee feels justified in procrastinating with the excuse, "can't you see I am swamped, I am doing the best I can." In a case like this, the manager should help the employee establish realistic timelines and frequent report dates – and consider sending the employee to project management training.

Written by Kelly Levy
Adapted from
Gary Vikesland, MA LP CEAP
www.employer-employee.com

16 words or phrases you should avoid

1. **"And also."** It's usually redundant

2. **"And/or."** Outside the legal world, the phrase is unnecessary. Use one or the other.

3. **"Basically" and "essentially."** Rewrite your sentence without including those words, and you will improve it."

4. **"Being that" or "being as."** Those phrases are nonstandard substitutes for "because"

5. **"Consider to be."** Eliminate the words "to be," and your meaning will be clear and succinct.

6. **"Due to the fact that."** Convey your meaning with the word "because."

7. **"Each and every."** Use one or the other, but not both.

8. **"Equally as important."** You can say "equally important" or "as important as."

9. **"Firstly, secondly, thirdly."** Number lists with "first," "second," "third" and so on instead of using adverbial forms of the numbers.

10. **"Get" and "got."** Eliminate or replace those ugly and meaningless words whenever possible.

11. **"Kind of" or "Sort of."** Those phrases are fine informally. When you are writing more formally, use these instead: somewhat, rather or slightly.

12. **"Lots" or "lots of."** Avoid those words in favor of "many" or "much"

13. **"Nature."** Discussions of an urgent nature are really just urgent.

14. **"Per."** Per is acceptable in legal documents. Elsewhere, use "according to" instead.

15. **"Try."** Never ask others to try to do something. Ask them to do it.

16. **"Utilize."** The word "use" is a better choice.

The preparation and use of effective Position Description Forms (PDFs)

You probably don't think about Position Description Forms (PDFs) very often. However, in state government, it is the responsibility of many managers and supervisors to structure the organization, design positions, and assign work to deliver services in the most effective way. A vital part of this process is the preparation and use of position descriptions sent to the Division of Personnel.

When the Division of Personnel receives a PDF, an analyst compares the position's duties to relevant job titles. The analyst also looks at the level of authority, scope of responsibilities, allocation guidelines, class specifications and similar positions in the reporting agency, as well as throughout the various departments and agencies within the Uniform Classification and Pay (UCP) System. This review process is intended to maintain the integrity of, and equity within, the UCP System.

To accomplish this, it is essential that the analyst receives detailed and exact information about the duties and responsibilities of each position. The analyst doesn't have to be able to do the job – but he or she does need to understand what the job is doing.

While it may not be a concern now, at some point, many of you could be involved in the process of filling out or reviewing a PDF. As is often the case, time put in up front will help the process along. Presenting a well thought-out and concise PDF is in everyone's best interest; the Division of Personnel can complete the review sooner and let you get back to the business at hand.

Because dealing with PDFs is not something you do everyday, the following information is provided to help expedite the review process, and dispel some issues that may be driven by a misunderstandings of the classification process itself.

To help expedite the review process:

- Provide a current and accurate organization chart to create a frame of reference.

- Provide a narrative from the supervisor or manager describing how the functions performed fit into the unit, and how that unit's function relates to the functions performed by the larger section/agency around it.

- Offer comparisons in your unit, agency, or elsewhere in the UCP system that supports your request.

- Describe the distinctions between duties of similar positions within the unit.

- Describe your customers/clients and the impact of this job on the customer/client

- Define any initials/acronyms used in the description.

- Use language that provides a clear picture of what the position is actually doing. Frequently, the language used is indeterminate - it can mean different things to different people, and describe very different duties. For example, a support staff member could "audit" timesheets, i.e. review for correctness and completion, while an Auditor would "audit" a company's financial information. Other words that are often used to describe a variety of tasks are: reconcile, research, manage, analyze, coordinate - the list goes on.

- Do not assume that the analyst reviewing the PDF is familiar with the work you do, the tools you use, or other aspects of the job that you may take for granted.

- Plainly state why you think the position should be allocated to the requested class.

- When attachments are included, be sure to state their purpose and who it came from - incumbent, supervisor, manager, etc.

- Responsibilities v. duties - don't just say, "I am responsible for …." Describe the duties in that capacity - the process and how it is done.

- The description of the job should not be copied from a class specification or from someone else's work statement - It should be in the employee's and/or supervisor's own words.

Classification process issues:

- When a PDF is submitted for an existing position, there are four possible allocation actions - the position can (1) be correctly allocated, (2) reallocated upward, 3) reallocated downward or (4), be reallocated to another class on the same range.

- When agencies are affected by downsizing or shifting duties, the volume of work itself is not necessarily a factor in allocation. Ask whether the increased workload changes the position's level of responsibility, or if the new tasks are similar in scope to what the position is currently doing.

- Technologies change - are the duties the same, or does it change the level of the duties?

- PDFs for new positions should describe what the new duties are going to be, not what they were when previously performed by other positions.

- Position allocations are based on the duties performed - not how well the employee performs, the length of time an employee has been in the position or the employee's eligibility for a higher allocation.

- *This is not a salary process.* Classification should not be treated as a substitution for a pay increase.

Ultimately, the extra time you spend in creating a thorough, well-prepared PDF can go a long way in helping the Division of Personnel help you in a quick and efficient manner.

Written by:
Terry Roehl,
Employee Services, Division of Personnel

Perceptiveness
The 10 employment laws every manager should know

Overtime pay. Discrimination. Family leave. Harassment…Federal employment laws govern all of these issues – and many more – that every manager deals with at some point in their career. It's important to know the basics of how to comply with those laws. Here's a list of the top 10 most important federal employment laws:

1. Job Discrimination
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits you from discriminating in hiring, firing or pay based on a person's race, religion, sex or national origin. It also prohibits sexual harassment.
Resource: www.eeoc.gov

Action: Treat all employees and applicants equally, without regard to their race, religion, gender or any other characteristics not related to job performance. Demand the same from anyone you supervise and don't tolerate any kind of harassment.

2. Overtime/minimum wage
The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is the nation's main wage law. It sets the federal minimum wage at $5.15 an hour (many states have higher minimums). In Missouri, the minimum wage was raised to $6.50 an hour effective 1/1/07. The FLSA requires time and a half overtime pay for hourly employees who work more than 40 hours in a workweek. The FLSA also limits the hours and type of duties that teens can work.
Resource: www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages

Action: Always pay employees above the minimum wage and pay overtime when applicable. Contact HR when making major changes to employees' duties, which could make the employee eligible or ineligible for overtime pay.

3. Family leave
The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) says eligible employees – those with at least a year of service – can take up to 12 weeks per year of unpaid, job-protected time off for the birth of a child or adoption of a child or to care for themselves or a sick child, spouse or parent who has a "serious" health condition.
Resource: www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla

Action: When employees request leave, listen for requests that would meet the FMLA criteria. Employees don't need to use the words "FMLA leave" to gain protection under the law.

4. Age Discrimination
The Age Discrimination in Employment Act says you can't discriminate in any way against applicants or employees older than 40 because of their age.
Resource: www.eeoc.gov.types/age.html

Action: Never take a person's age or proximity to retirement into account when making decisions on hiring, firing, pay, benefits or promotions

5. Disability Discrimination
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits job discrimination against qualified people with disabilities (i.e., those who can perform the job's essential functions with or without a reasonable accommodation).
Resource: www.eeoc.gov/types/ada.html

Action: Never immediately reject applicants because you think their disability would prevent them from doing the job. When hiring, stick to questions about the applicant's ability to perform the job's essential functions; don't ask questions that would reveal an applicant's disability. Work with HR to create reasonable accommodations for disabled employees.

6. Military Leave
The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) makes it illegal to discriminate against employees who volunteer or are called to military duty. When reservists return from active duty tours of less than five years, you must re-employ them to their old jobs or to equal jobs.
Resource: www.esgr.org/employers

Action: Don't challenge a returning reservist's bid to get his old job back; courts typically side with employees in USERRA disputes.

If you are a supervisor or manager facing one of the areas listed on this page, please remember that your agency personnel or human resources office is available to provide more information and assistance as needed.

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7. Gender-Pay Differences
The Equal Pay Act (EPA) says employers can't pay female employees less than male employees for equal work on jobs that require equal skill, effort and responsibility.
Resource: www.eeoc.gov/types/epa.html

Action: Review department pay scales to identify possible equal-pay complaints. Different pay for the same job title is fine so long as you can point to varying levels of responsibility, duties, skill requirements or education requirements.

8. Workplace safety
The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) requires employers to run a business free from recognized hazards.
Resource: www.osha.gov

Action: Provide a safe work environment for your staff, and point out any noticeable hazards or potential safety problems as soon as possible.

9. Pregnancy Discrimination
The Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA) prohibits job discrimination on the basis of "Pregnancy, childbirth and related medical conditions." You can't deny a job or promotion merely because an employee is pregnant or had an abortion. She can't be fired for her condition or forced to go on leave.
Resource: www.eeoc.gov/types/pregnancy.html

Action: Treat pregnant employees the same as other employees on the basis of their ability or inability to work. Example: If you provide light duty for an employee who can't lift boxes because of a bad back, you must make similar arrangements for a pregnant employee.

10. Immigration
The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) makes it illegal to hire and employ illegal aliens. Employers must verify identification and workplace eligibility for all hires by completing I-9 Forms.
Resource: www.uscis.gov

Action: Managers should note that it's still illegal to discriminate against illegal aliens- via harassment or sub-minimum pay – even if you hire the illegal immigrant inadvertently.

Team Work
Be skeptical of "Yes Men"

No doubt you believe you're a fair, easygoing, approachable leader. But are you really? If you intimidate your employees, you will have a staff filled with "yes men" – people who tell you only what you want to hear.

Remember: Frightened people don't take initiative or responsibility.

How do you know if you're creating an atmosphere of intimidation and fear? You may be if one or more of the following statements are true:

Employees rarely ask you for advice. If it's been weeks since anyone on your team has approached you with a problem, you may have signaled that you don't want to be bothered.

You're usually the last to know when someone is in deep trouble – professionally or personally. Many small problems can snowball if left unattended. That may be happening if your employees are reluctant to share information with you.

Staff members explain their mistakes this way: "I didn't want to bother you with this." If this happens occasionally, it probably means that the employee bit off more than he could chew. If it happens often, it means your staff members are afraid to approach you.

Intimidating bosses create ineffective employees. Paralyzed by fear, employees do little more than the minimum required, hoping to fly under the boss's radar. The good news is that you can turn this situation around by applying the following strategies*:*

Reward those who offer you honest feedback, even if it's not what you want to hear – and let them know you're looking for the bitter truth. *Example:* "Alan, the last thing I wanted to hear today was that we're going to miss another deadline. But I had to know. It took some courage for you to come in here. I appreciate that."

Remain available to employees. Leaders who hide behind closed doors send the clear message that they want employees to "stay away." Guard against looking too busy. If you often find yourself rushing around or spending hours locked away in private, your employees will steer clear of you. This do-not-disturb strategy may help you work without interruption, but it will also keep employees from sharing important information with you.

Prepare for criticism from employees. Ask yourself, "Can I handle negative comments calmly, fairly and objectively?" If not, then don't ask. The worst thing you can do is ask for opinions and then argue with staffers about what they tell you.

Self-Direction
Fighting burnout

You can't lead a team very effectively if you're burnt out. The symptoms aren't always obvious, but if you pay attention to your feelings and behavior, you'll be able to treat the problem before it gets out of control. Here's what to look for and what to do:

Fatigue/exhaustion. If you find yourself often feeling worn out and tired, take a look at how much rest and exercise you're getting. Be sure to schedule enough time in your day to take care of yourself physically.

Emotional exhaustion. If you notice that you don't have the enthusiasm or drive that you once had, or that you don't even have the energy to get angry when it's appropriate, you probably need to take some kind of break to replenish your emotional reserves. If you can't actually take a vacation, try spending some time away from work doing things that are meaningful to you—listening to music, walking outdoors, visiting an art museum.

Isolation from other people. Do you find that you're not paying attention to the accomplishments of those around you, especially people who expect you to provide advice and leadership? Make a point of looking for the positive achievements and praising them for their contributions to the organization.

Feelings of being unappreciated. When your own efforts aren't recognized or appreciated, your personal morale will suffer. Look for ways to share news of your contributions with people who ought to know.

Obsession. If you find yourself becoming too focused on a single project or area of your work, force yourself to take a break and do something different to restore your balance.

Adapted from "The Secret to Motivating Yourself and Others," by Susan Rempel on the WCS Web site

"If passion drives you, let reason hold the reins."
Benjamin Franklin, statesman and philosopher