

WHO CARES

Excerpt Chapter 5- Managing Your Direct Reports

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Better Systems for Managing People

Who Cares

Excerpt

Chapter 5 – Managing Your Direct Reports

In chapter 8, we will talk about managing your people from a corporate viewpoint. There, we will cover the importance of an effective corporate culture, how you can define such a culture, how to cultivate it and dynamically maintain it for the health, wellbeing and productivity of your people. Here, we will discuss how you can manage those people who report directly to you, regardless of the management culture around you.

Managing Your Direct Reports – Definition

So you have people reporting to you. What does this mean?

- You have people to delegate things to.
- You have people whose work performance and behavior you have to supervise.
- You have people for whom you must be available to help when requested or as required.
- You have people you must ensure get adequate training, as required, for professional development.
- You have people with whom you have to conduct an annual performance and compensation review.

All of these statements are true and most of us exercise these activities with varying degrees of success. But we are not going to talk about these here, at least not directly. We're going to talk about motivation, managing your people so that they not only know what it is they must accomplish, but they are also enjoying the trip, because any other way to manage them is not as productive and not as much fun.

A few years ago I was invited to make a presentation to a group of Information Technology professionals, to kick off their annual department strategy meeting. I was sitting with their Vice President, while his people were taking their seats (about a hundred). We were discussing productivity.

"The trouble is, I don't know how to measure it" he said, "It's too complicated, too many variables". I couldn't believe my ears. I had been working with this person as a consultant, off and on, for some years. The assignments had varied but most of them were related to productivity in some way. I was upset that he was having difficulty with this question, and even more upset that he hadn't asked me to help him with it. Out of spite I said to him.

"Oh that's easy, George, I can measure it for you this morning".

After he introduced me, I began my presentation with a simple quiz. "How many of you like to get up on Monday morning and come to work? Hands up!" Three people raised their hands. I turned to my client and said, "George, your productivity is about three percent".



OK, so it was a bit cute and cryptic, but not as simplistic as it may seem, because our observations have proven that you have the best productivity when your people are enjoying themselves (motivated), while pursuing your objectives. This doesn't mean that you have to entertain them or let them do whatever they want in order to be having fun. It means that you can, and should, hold them each accountable to you for managing their interest in their work. The remainder of this chapter is about how you can establish a simple management process that will consistently encourage your direct reports to do this.



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