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SETTING GOALS & REWARDING ACHIEVEMENT AREN'T ENOUGH

By Carol Bergeron



As a leader you know first hand that establishing goals tied to those of the organization and rewarding their achievement generate impressive results at both individual and organizational levels. Care to dramatically improve those results? You can through the leadership practices you use in between goal setting and goal achievement. Try these out and let us know of others you have had success with.

One on One Check-Ins

From time to time employees get stuck and progress stops for a myriad of reasons. Employees may lack familiarity with an assignment and need help getting started or encouragement given their unique approach. They may apply solutions used in previous employment experiences that are ineffective in the current one. They may get bogged down with an unreasonable work load and need assistance in eliminating and streamlining work. Regular one on one conversation with each member of your team is a great way start addressing these issues.

Why not expand the one on one conversation to include personal challenges & frustrations and how to overcome them? Asking questions and listening prompt employees to think through the issues and their actions for themselves. It often leads to outlining next steps, increased responsibility and commitment. It builds and maintains trust, develops competencies, supports goal achievement and can affirm flexibility when the firm needs it most.

What is the optimal frequency of the one on one check-ins? The frequency may be a function of several things. For instance employees with a new manager will benefit from more frequent check-ins so that performance expectations are clear. This is also true when the organization is going through significant change and people are recalibrating where they fit in. Employees new to the organization or to the job get productive more quickly with frequent check-ins. Less frequent meetings are typical of employees who hold higher level jobs in the organization and team members who have effectively worked closely together in the past.

Group Interactive Sessions

Group, team and department meetings serve many purposes depending upon their design. Typical purposes include getting everyone focused on the same goals, reporting progress on individual assignments and team projects, updating each other so the right hand knows what the left hand is doing, recognizing important interdependencies and solving problems.

Consider asking each meeting participant to share his/her top 5-10 priorities. True, you may have touched on this in the one on ones. But in today's flat organizations, employees receive works requests from nearly every corner of the organization with little notice. You get an opportunity to reinforce priorities and "walk the talk of leadership". Employees learn to better prioritize their future work given increased exposure to a rational line of thinking.

Build on Both Approaches for Optimal Results

In a one on one conversation, your Customer Service Supervisor expresses frustration with the heavy load of customer complaints since the new product was rolled-out.

You ask "How many complaints are there?"

He answers "I don't know."

You respond "Well, go find out and let me know."

At your next one on one the CS Supervisor informs you there are 40 customer complaints.

You ask "How long has each complaint been open?"

He responds "Not sure."

You reply "Well, go find out. What else would be helpful to know if our goal is to reduce the number of future complaints and solve existing complaints received as quickly as possible?"

He responds "the most common types of complaints?"

You comment "Yes, and how about the most difficult to solve complaints?"

At your next department meeting, the CS Supervisor reports on progress made toward understanding customer complaints on the new product. He briefly cites the number of complaints, the average time open, the most common type of complaint and those most difficult to resolve. Other employees chime in with their input and comment on how easy some of the fixes are. They all agree tracking customer complaints should be done on a regular basis for not just the new product but for all products. Together they formulate a small team chartered to resolve the complaints and report back next month.

Mix and match one on one and group interactions for best results as they build on each other. Employees will stay on track, benefit by the consistent message you send on priority setting and appreciate your guidance and support in helping them help themselves with their greatest challenges.

WANTED: INPUT ON YOUR BEST PRACTICES IN ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PARTICIPATE TODAY!

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