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| Title : | SUPERVISOR ESSENTIAL SKILLS |
| Description : | LEARNER GUIDE |

Participant's Manual

INTRODUCTION

1. COMMUNICATION SKILLS
2. SKILLS OF AN EFFECTIVE SUPPERVISOR
3. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS FOR SUPERVISORS
4. PLANNING
5. DELEGATION
6. TEAM BUILDING
7. TRAINING PEOPLE
8. INTRODUCTION TO COACHING
9. WHY HAVE PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS
10. DEALING WITH DIFFICULT EMPLOYEES
11. CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

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Introduction

Go to the last page of this workbook and write down 3 expectations that you have from this training programme. Record these 3 expectations on the “Training Evaluation Document” of part 1 and return to the next section of the manual on completion.

Continue here when you completed with this activity.



Firstly, a supervisor is a first line manager within the organisation and is part of the management team of the organisation, thus it is definitely essential for the supervisor to have great supervisory skills. This would mean having to fulfill the roles of a supervisor as an organisation achieves its objectives through the ‘role structure’ of the organisation. Therefore, the roles that a supervisor has within an organisation have a strong influence on how he behaves. This in turn determines the way he dresses or speaks and has different behaviour and reactions in many ways. Therefore, a good supervisor with good supervisory skills is able to handle the different roles in the organisation.

1. Communication Skills

Being an effective communicator takes real skill. Communication skills have to be developed, honed and added to on an on-going basis. They are the heart of interpersonal skills and the greater your awareness of how it all works, the more effective your communication will be.

To be effective in business, you have to communicate well. To be a good manager, you have to communicate exceptionally well.

We will be looking at basic communication dynamics, learning skills to improve your communication, using effective communication to improve and promote interpersonal relationships, creating an effective communication strategy.

1.1 Communication Core Skills - The Essentials

- **Communication is Individual**
- **How Communication Happens**
- **What can get in the way of Effective Communication**
- **Conflict Resolution**
- **Improving Communication Skills**



1.2 Communication is Individual

We're Not All The Same

When you look at communication, presentation skills are not all there is to it. Far from it. Everyone communicates differently and sees the world differently. The greatest skill you can have in order to instantly and significantly improve your communications skills is to understand the other person's point view and how they see the world. Then you can adjust your own communication to take that into account.

1.3 Change Yourself to Change Others

Alongside this has to be the knowledge that the only person you can be sure of changing in any communication is you. Therefore, the most effective way to be in charge of what happens in any communication dynamic is changing what you do. When you can do this you are well on the way to promoting better relationships.

1.4 You are the Only One of You

There's never one right way to communicate. Authentic effective communication always happens when we reply on those things we know to be true about or for ourselves. Remember your personal style probably says more for you that all the words you use can.

1.5 What's Already Working?

Most people tend to look at what's wrong with themselves and other people rather than focusing on what already works. Remember, something (more than one thing, of course) has to be working well for you to have got this far already!

1.6 How Communication Happens

A. Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication

Interpersonal skills. Everything communicates. Remember! If you aren't clear about what you mean and what your intention is, the other person (or people) could easily (and sometimes deliberately), misinterpret what you mean.

What you do matters as much as what you say. It's now accepted that the words account for only 7-11% of a communication. Your behaviour will 'read' unconsciously to other people and you can certainly be more in charge of the reading matter!

Language is one of the most powerful reflections of how we think and feel about ourselves and others. You need to be aware of the padding, justifications and excuses you use and whether they are appropriate. You can make a big impact simply by changing some of your language and developing your verbal skills, this way you can significantly improve your communication skills.

B. Communication Cycle

There is a neat communication cycle we've come across that can help you understand how to make communication work better. It means that you can take responsibility for every stage on the Communication Cycle:

Spoken - Heard - Understood - Agreed To - Act On - Implemented.

Be aware of where you or others tend to fall off the cycle.

What can get in the way of Effective Communication?



1.7 Here are some Common Barriers to Effective Communication.

a. We all make Too Many Assumptions

Be aware of the assumptions you make, especially making something up and then acting as though what you made up was true. Notice if you alter your behaviour with certain people because of the assumptions you make about them. Also be aware of the assumptions you think other people make about you.

Assumptions aren't necessarily 'bad'. Sometimes it's important to let people keep their assumptions (or some of them at least!) about you.

One effective way to deal with assumptions is to say to the other person, 'I've assumed such and such. 'Is that true?' or 'I'm making an assumption here about... Do you agree?'

Good communication in the workplace is often sabotaged by too many unconfirmed assumptions.

b. Patterns/Reverting to Type

We are pattern-making beings, which is good. However, sometimes we get so used to behaving and responding in certain ways that it's hard to see that there's any other way of doing things. When the pressure is on or we are under stress, even our best intentions may go out the window as we revert to type.

Habits, patterns, routine ways of thinking and behaving are difficult to change. Noticing your patterns at least gets you aware of them! One way to practice this is to see how many communication habits and patterns have crept into your workplace. Try not to judge them. You can always decide if you want to change them or not.

c. Needing to Be Right

This is one area we all know about - the need to be right and in turn for the other person to be wrong. One skill that does need practice is to let go of needing to be right. Think of it as presenting information or a point of view rather than having to bludgeon someone else with your arguments.

If you want to promote effective relationships, this is one of the greatest communications key skills you can have is to be able to change what you want from a communication. You may have started out wanting the other person to agree with you, but by giving that up you can change your want to letting them know you understand their point of view.

1.8 Conflict Resolution

a. Conflict

One of the purposes of conflict is to arrive at a resolution, so if you avoid conflict, the problem usually (though not always) gets worse. The earlier you can identify that there is a problem and intervene, the better it will be. Good communication skills require you to be able to resolve conflict.

b. Agreement

Find something (anything will do) in the other person's argument which you can genuinely agree with. This is a great way to take the wind out of someone's sails and ensure you don't get drawn into an insoluble argument. People usually won't listen until they feel heard.

c. Bridge Building

Really listen to what the other person is saying - they usually give a lot of information without realising it. Building bridges by making an offer can help enormously, as can changing what you want.

d. 'I' not 'You'

Use 'I' statements, not 'You' statements to avoid blaming. This also means that you take responsibility for how you feel, rather than making the other person responsible for making things all right for you.

1.9 Improving Communication Skills

Be a Good Influence

a. Attitude

You can change the direction of a communication if you change your attitude. There is no one attitude that's the 'right' one to have, though being direct and clear certainly helps.

b. Effective Listening and Responding

You can have tremendous influence on a communication as the listener and the responder. When we get little or no response from the listener, we often project our assumptions onto them about what they are thinking (and usually we assume they aren't thinking good things about us!).

c. Be Positive

Use affirmation and encouragement to get the best out of people. Notice when others do things well (even if it's part of their daily routine). This shows you're being attentive; most people respond well when they know that others are aware of what they do.

Quite simply, the workplace can be a far better place to be if you consciously sprinkle your communication with positive feedback.

d. The Importance of Basic Communication Skills

What's most important is that you don't leave the business of communication to chance. Raise your awareness, develop your skills and you'll be a role model for effective communication.

2. Skills of an Effective Supervisor

The owners of companies, especially large companies, do not have the time to supervise each and every employee who works for them. They hire supervisors to ensure employees are using company time productively and effectively. The employees will follow the lead of their supervisor, and if the skills the supervisor have are effective, it will show in the department's overall performance.

a. Supervisor

- A supervisor is team leader, coach, overseer, area manager or facilitator in a company or a department of a company they work for. The job of the supervisor is to properly instruct the employee on how to perform their work duties. When employees' productivity is down, the supervisor will be held accountable by their superior.

b. Time Management

- The supervisor is responsible for assuring that the employees are using their paid work time to do company work. Companies do not like to waste money, and wasting time is wasting money. Therefore, the supervisor must monitor the employee occasionally, and ensure they are using their time effectively. Productivity is what the company pays for, and if an employee is surfing the Internet, or taking personal calls all day, they are not using their work time to be productive.

c. Controlling the Working Environment

- When problems arise with workers, an effective supervisor will rectify the situation immediately. When co-workers are in an intense environment, they tend not to work well. The supervisor will need to use her skills to come to some type of resolution that will not keep productivity of their department down. If a supervisor does not have the skills to ease tension, this is can cause higher management to question their supervising skills.

d. Delegate Tasks

- An effective supervisor will delegate [jobs](#) and use their authority ethically. Everyone knows that the supervisor in their department is their boss, so the supervisor does not have to broadcast this daily. If an employee slacks on the job, this will be an instance when the supervisor will have to use his authority in a positive way, to get the employee to perform, and to perform well. Also, the supervisor will know which employees can handle what task, and appropriately delegate their tasks if they become overwhelming.

e. Motivational Skills

- An effective supervisor has good motivational skills. Employees often need to be motivated to perform well on the job, especially when they are handed a task they believe they will not succeed with. An effective supervisor will boost up their confidence, and tell them they can do the task with no problem. Motivation skills are also necessary for the supervisor in cases when an employee is facing hardships, death, or other personal issues outside of work. The supervisor should motivate the employee to continue to work as they have been working, letting them know that things will get better with time and patience.

2.2 Effective Supervisor Skills

Managers need supervisors that they can trust to bring out the best in a staff. A supervisor may have a management style that is not the same as the manager that they report to. Whatever their style, effective supervisor skills are necessary for creating a winning team.

a. Delegating

- Take a look at your staff and identify their strongest areas inside the workplace. Use the strengths of your employees to alleviate your workload and create an atmosphere of responsibility. If you have an employee who constantly battles you over company policy, assign them compliance issues for your team. Once your employees have an active role in the tasks assigned to the team, you will be able to create more employee involvement and responsibility.

b. Check Their Work

- Delegating tasks to your employees does not mean that you walk away and leave them unsupervised. You are still responsible for the team's attitude, abilities, moral, wins and losses. Make sure that the delegated work continues to meet the standards set by the company. To make sure the standards are met, have a system in place that creates a minimum standard and tell your employees exactly what is expected of them.

c. Empower Your Staff

- Give your staff the freedom to resolve specific issues or situations independent of you. After you set the specific scenarios for your staff to solve, let them know that you will not intervene and that they bear the full responsibility for outcomes.

d. Keep Them Informed

- When there are changes or adjustments happening in the company, when possible, communicate with your staff as quickly as possible about the changes. You can attract and keep your staff's respect by involving them in the change issues that directly affect their positions and work environments.

e. Identify Your Leadership Challenges

- The best leaders understand that they are not the expert in every subject that comes up. Engage your staff to identify your leadership areas that need more work. Do you have a problem with follow through? Do you micromanage? Are you constantly unavailable? A simple office survey or anonymous comment box can provide a great source of information for supervisors.

f. Open and Honest

- Many supervisors believe that admitting a mistake diminishes their authority; the truth is that most employees respect supervisors that admit their mistakes. As a supervisor be open and honest about situations that you have mishandled or misunderstood. Make sure your staff understands that you accept responsibility for your mistakes and for ways to remedy them.

3. Effective Communication Skills for Supervisors

Supervisors must develop effective communication skills to enable them to better supervise their employees and to do a better job themselves. Employees look to supervisors to provide them information, listen to their concerns and keep private conversations about performance confidential. Supervisors must learn to listen, speak with respect and treat all employees equally in regard to the information they have to share about the workplace to be able to communicate effectively.

a. Respect

- A supervisor must show respect to her employees when communicating with them. Respect means not talking in a condescending manner or in an authoritarian tone.

b. Open Communication

- Supervisors should encourage employees to communicate with them, without fear of retribution.

c. Listen

- An effective communication skill for a supervisor is the ability to listen to what his employees are saying.

d. Share Information

- Supervisors must share information regarding workplace issues or announcements equally with all employees and not just a select few.

e. Confidence

- To communicate effectively, a supervisor must maintain discussions with employees regarding their performance or concerns as confidential.

4. Planning

4.1 Quick Look at Some Basic Terms

Planning typically includes use of the following basic terms.

NOTE: It's not critical to grasp completely accurate definitions of each of the following terms. It's more important for planners to have a basic sense for the difference between goals/objectives (results) and strategies/tasks (methods to achieve the results).

a. Goals

Goals are specific accomplishments that must be accomplished in total, or in some combination, in order to achieve some larger, overall result preferred from the system, for example, the mission of an organization. (Going back to our reference to systems, goals are outputs from the system.)

b. Strategies or Activities

These are the methods or processes required in total, or in some combination, to achieve the goals. (Going back to our reference to systems, strategies are processes in the system.)

c. Objectives

Objectives are specific accomplishments that must be accomplished in total, or in some combination, to achieve the goals in the plan. Objectives are usually "milestones" along the way when implementing the strategies.

d. Tasks

Particularly in small organizations, people are assigned various tasks required to implement the plan. If the scope of the plan is very small, tasks and activities are often essentially the same.

e. Resources (and Budgets)

Resources include the people, materials, technologies, money, etc., required to implement the strategies or processes. The costs of these resources are often depicted in the form of a budget. (Going back to our reference to systems, resources are input to the system.)

Whether the system is an organization, department, business, project, etc., the basic planning process typically includes similar nature of activities carried out in similar sequence. The phases are carried out carefully or -- in some cases -- intuitively, for example, when planning a very small, straightforward effort. The complexity of the various phases (and their duplication throughout the system) depends on the scope of the system. For example, in a large corporation, the following phases would be carried out in the corporate offices, in each division, in each department, in each group, etc.

- *NOTE: Different groups of planners might have different names for the following activities and groups them differently. However, the nature of the activities and their general sequence remains the same.*
- *NOTE: The following are typical phases in planning. They do not comprise the complete, ideal planning process.*

1. Reference Overall Singular Purpose ("Mission") or Desired Result from System

During planning, planners have in mind (consciously or unconsciously) some overall purpose or result that the plan is to achieve. For example, during strategic planning, it's critical to reference the mission, or overall purpose, of the organization.

2. Take Stock Outside and Inside the System

This "taking stock" is always done to some extent, whether consciously or unconsciously. For example, during strategic planning, it's important to conduct an environmental scan. This scan usually involves considering various driving forces, or major influences, that might effect the organization.

3. Analyze the Situation

For example, during strategic planning, planners often conduct a "SWOT analysis". (SWOT is an acronym for considering the organization's strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats faced by the organization.) During this analysis, planners also can use a variety of assessments, or methods to "measure" the health of systems.

4. Establish Goals

Based on the analysis and alignment to the overall mission of the system, planners establish a set of goals that build on strengths to take advantage of opportunities, while building up weaknesses and warding off threats.

5. Establish Strategies to Reach Goals

The particular strategies (or methods to reach the goals) chosen depend on matters of affordability, practicality and efficiency.

6. Establish Objectives along the Way to Achieving Goals

Objectives are selected to be timely and indicative of progress toward goals.

7. Associate Responsibilities and Time Lines with Each Objective

Responsibility are assigned, including for implementation of the plan, and for achieving various goals and objectives. Ideally, deadlines are set for meeting each responsibility.

8. Write and Communicate a Plan Document

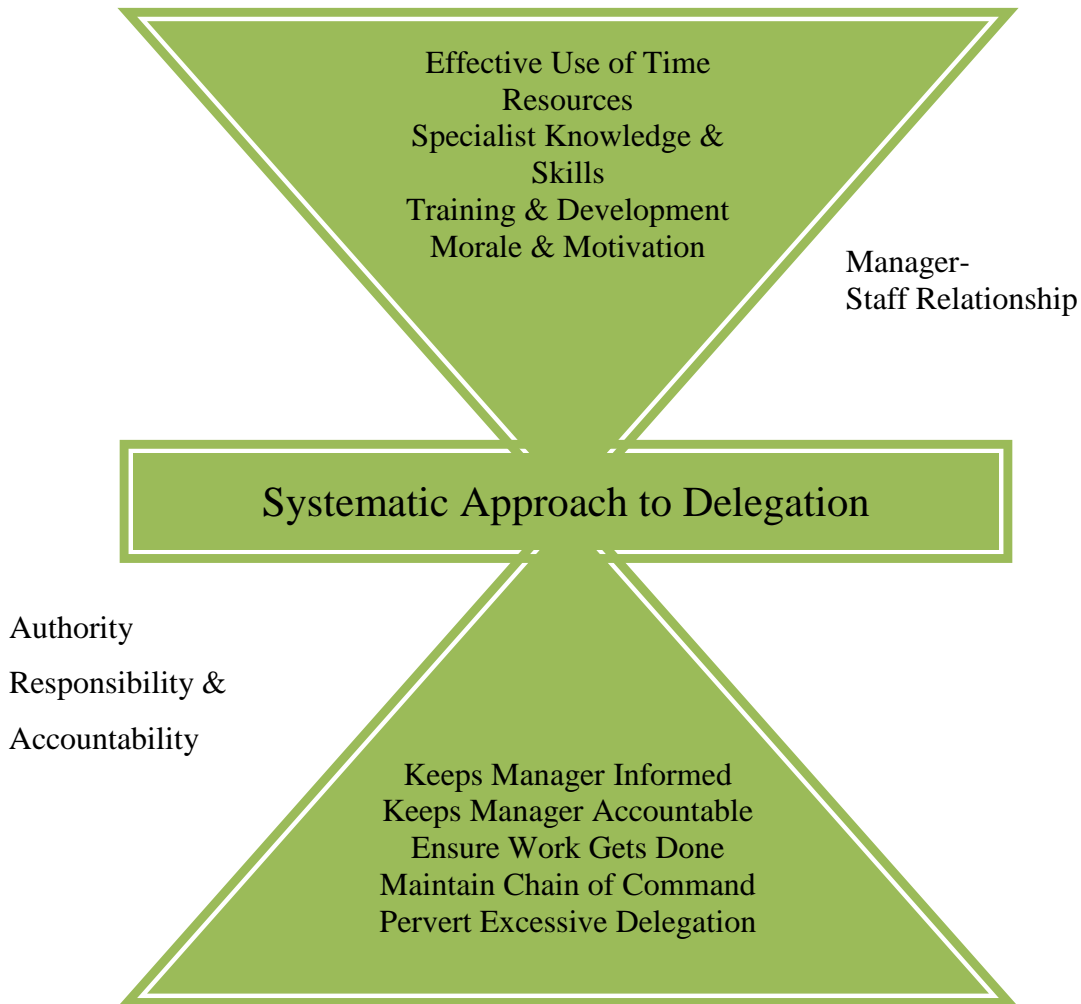
The above information is organized and written in a document which is distributed around the system.

9. Acknowledge Completion and Celebrate Success

This critical step is often ignored -- which can eventually undermine the success of many of your future planning efforts. The purpose of a plan is to address a current problem or pursue a development goal. It seems simplistic to assert that you should acknowledge if the problem was solved or the goal met. However, this step in the planning process is often ignored in lieu of moving on the next problem to solve or goal to pursue. Skipping this step can cultivate apathy and skepticism -- even cynicism -- in your organization. Don't skip this step.

5. Delegation

5.1 Delegation versus Control



5.2 Approaches to Leadership

Qualities or Traits Approach

Functional or Group Approach

Leadership as a Behavioral Category

Leadership Styles

Qualities or Traits Approach

- 'Great Person' Theory of Leadership
- Leaders are born and not made

a. Innate Characteristics and Personality Traits

- Self Confidence
- Intelligence
- Initiative
- Focus on the Individual in the job and not the job

b. Functional or Group Approach

- Focus on the Functions and Responsibilities of the Leader
- What the Leader actually does and the group
- Leadership skills can be learned and developed

c. Functions & Responsibilities (Krech et al)

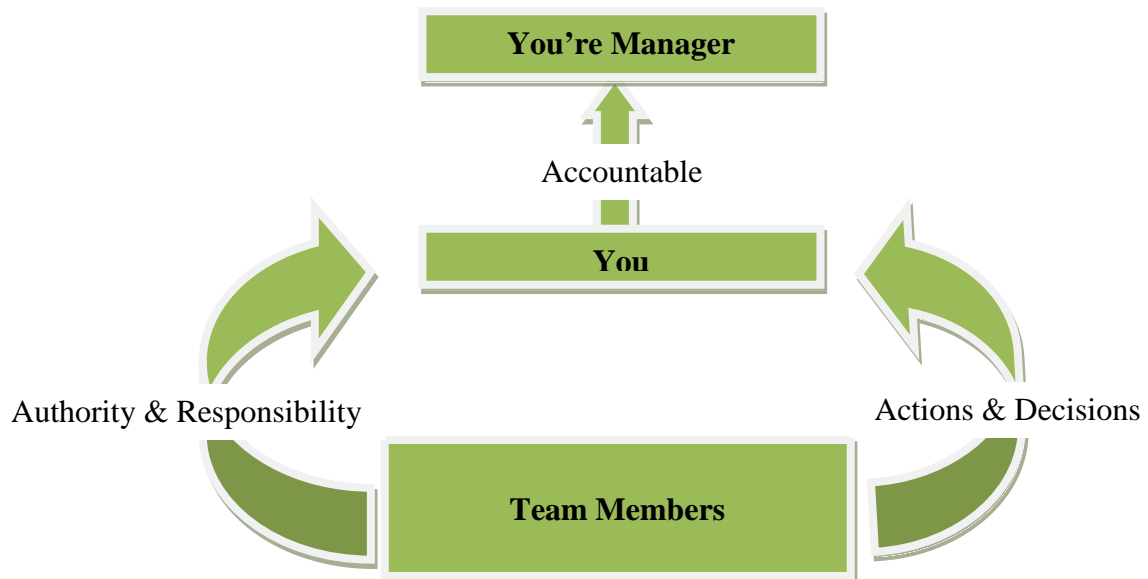
1. Executive
2. Planner
3. Policy Maker
4. Expert
5. External Group Representative
6. Controller of Internal Relations
7. Purveyor of Rewards and Punishment
8. Arbitrator and Mediator
9. Exemplar
10. Substitute for Individual Responsibility
11. Symbol of the Group
12. Ideologist
13. Father/Mother Figure
14. Scapegoat

5.3 The Process of Delegation



Three key Term
5.4 Accountability

- This cannot be delegated - you are responsible at the end of the day
- However you can make a subordinate responsible to you



a. Authority & Responsibility

- Authority and Responsibility are an integral part of the delegation process

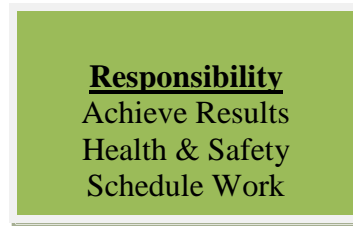
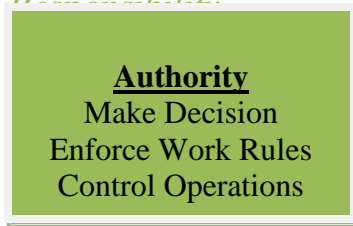
b. Authority

- The right that you give to another person to do tasks that you might otherwise have done

c. Responsibility

- The obligations that you give to another person to make certain decisions or perform certain tasks to defined standards

Authority & Responsibility



Needs to be matched & balanced

Allow freedom from excessive monitoring

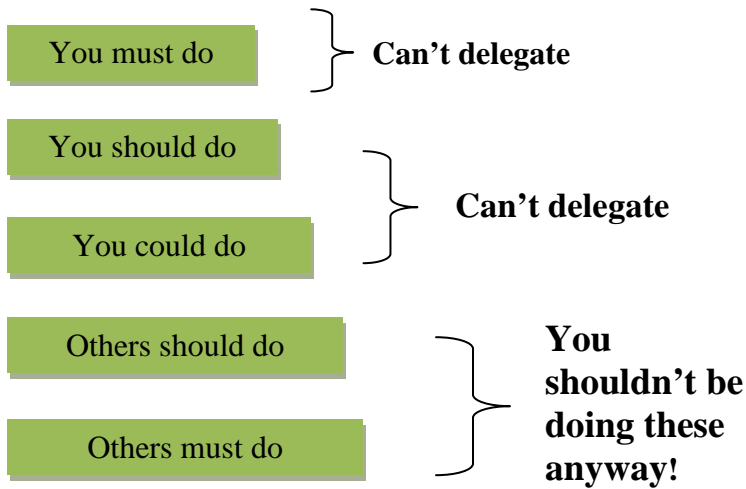
d. Authority

- Make Decisions
- Direct Staff
- Enforce Rules
- Exercise Discipline
- Control Operations

e. Responsibility

- Achieve Results
- Time-Keeping
- Records
- Reports
- Scheduling Work
- Health & Safety Standard

5.5 What can be delegated?



a. Tasks to Delegate

- Routine Jobs
- Tasks that others can do as well or better than you
- Tasks that will challenge and develop staff

b. Tasks not to Delegate

- Confidential
- Staff Appraisals
- Disciplinary Matters
- Giving Rewards
- Technical
- If you alone have the skill

c. Why Managers Don't Delegate?

- Fear of losing control
- Fear that others may do a better job
- Perception that it takes too long
- Lack of confidence in staff

d. Why Managers Should Delegate?

- Releases Time for Other Tasks
- Strengthens the Overall Organization
- Develops Followers

e. When to Delegate?

- When you have too much to do and can't keep up with your own work
- When you need time to concentrate on higher priority tasks
- When the tasks in question could be more readily performed by someone else
- When it opens a development opportunity for your team

5.6 The Delegation Process



a. Clarification of Objectives

- Policies & Procedures
- Communication Structures
- Coordination

c. Agreement of Responsibility

- Clear Terms of Reference
- Sense of Commitment

- Freedom to address doubts and concerns

d. Support & Training

- Does the manager need to provide support on the task to be delegated in the short to medium term?
- If so, what form of support is needed?
- What training is required to ensure the objectives are achieved?

e. Monitoring & Review

- Monitoring procedures ensure that the task to be delegated is being performed effectively
- Jointly agreed review sessions help to empower the employee to perform the task while still ensuring that appropriate supervision is put in place

f. Freedom of Action

- The employee to which the task has been delegated must feel free to act and take the necessary decisions to perform the task in question
- The manager must respect this freedom while ensuring clear definitions exist on where this freedom is located and to where it is not

g. Reward Management

- Clear relationship to reward structures
- Bonus Payments
- Opportunities for Personal Development
- Opportunities for Promotion

Summary

- Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement
- Delegation is the transfer to a subordinate the responsibility for carrying out a particular task while at the same time providing the necessary authority to achieve that task
- The four main approaches to Leadership
 - Traits
 - Functional
 - Behavioral
 - Style
- Three important key terms in the process of delegation are
 - Accountability
 - Authority
 - Responsibility
- Take time to understand what tasks can be delegated and why
- There are six many characteristics of an effective delegation process
 - Clarification of Objectives
 - Agreement of Responsibility
 - Support & Training
 - Monitoring & Review
 - Freedom of Action
 - Reward Management

6. Team Building

Team members, who work well together, produce positive business results and enjoy themselves while working. Unfortunately, not all teams work well together - a fact that has sparked intense interest in techniques for improving teamwork effectiveness.

Teambuilding refers to activities that improve the effectiveness of a team by building better working relationships, better understanding and alignment among members, improved communications, and improved trust. This article outlines the four most often employed methods of teambuilding and makes suggestions about when each method might be appropriate for a particular team that is having difficulties.

6.1 There are four fundamentally different approaches to improving the level of teamwork in an organization. These are:

- a. **Personality-based teambuilding**
- b. **Activity-based teambuilding**
- c. **Skills-based teambuilding**
- d. **Problem solving-based teambuilding**

a. Personality-based Teambuilding

In personality-based teambuilding, members of the team fill out a personality questionnaire and then learn about their own personalities and the personalities of their fellow team members. The team then uses the results as a basis for discussion, developing action steps, and participating in various development experiences.

The underlying rationale for this approach is that if team members better understand each other (such as differences in how team members perceive, make decisions, and react to events), they can then learn how to better communicate and deal with each other, thus enhancing team effectiveness.

b. Activity-based Teambuilding

In activity-based teambuilding, teams carry out challenging tasks, usually in outdoor settings (e.g., an experiential “ropes” course, or an outdoor adventure, such as white water rafting, mountain climbing, a survival course, or boot camp). These activities require groups to work together to achieve success. The exercises are built around specific needs of teams and include group problem solving, risk-taking, trust, or paradigm breaking.

The underlying philosophy of this approach is that if team members experience success working together in a challenging outdoor experience, they will then be able to transfer these teamwork lessons to the work setting and become a more effective team.

c. Skills-based Teambuilding

In skills-based teambuilding, team members participate in workshop sessions that require them to learn and practice specific teamwork skills (e.g., dealing with conflict, reaching group consensus, learning how to give criticism, or running effective team meetings). These workshops include skills that can be applied immediately in the workplace.

The teambuilding aspect of this approach is maximized when intact teams participate together and make commitments to use these new tools to improve the way the team functions. The underlying philosophy with the skill-building approach is that the most likely reason groups don't work together well as a team is because they do not have the necessary skills. Thus, the obvious first step in building better teams is to have teams practice using teamwork skills in facilitated workshop settings, increasing the likelihood they will use these skills in the work setting.

d. Problem Solving-based Teambuilding

In problem solving-based teambuilding, team members jointly work together (usually in a retreat setting and led by an outside facilitator) to identify and then solve the barriers to effectiveness that the group is experiencing. The underlying rationale with this approach is that camaraderie and teamwork can occur if the outside facilitator helps the group successfully surface and then address (rather than avoid) the various barriers to team effectiveness.

6.2 Which Approach is Best?

As you might expect, no simple answer to this question exists. The right teambuilding approach depends upon the team and the type of problems the team is experiencing. However, below are five general guidelines or “rules of thumb” regarding the use of teambuilding interventions.

- a. **Not all teams need teambuilding.** If a team is functioning well, an investment in teambuilding is not necessary. This fact may appear to be common sense, but many organizations put all their teams through the same teambuilding experiences, regardless of whether the individual teams had a need or not.
- b. **Not all team problems should be dealt with by a teambuilding intervention.** For example, problems caused by a poor team leader should be dealt with through private one-on-one coaching or by a management decision to replace the leader. Likewise, many teams have one person who was responsible for much of the dysfunction on the team. In these instances, this person should be handled by management through the usual performance management process, rather than by taking an entire team through a teambuilding experience.
- c. **Skills-based teambuilding is the first choice.** The preferred teambuilding method is the skills-based approach. Many dramatic improvements in team functioning have occurred by conducting training sessions with an intact team and then guiding the team to use these skills with each other during the training session itself.
- d. **The teambuilding approach depends on the type of team.** “Temporary” teams (teams that are formed to work on a problem and then disband when the problem is solved) and “permanent” teams (teams that stay intact over a long period of time) require different teambuilding approaches. For temporary teams that are having difficulty working together, the “problem-solving” teambuilding intervention is the first choice, which is the most practical and simplest intervention for this type of team. Most temporary teams have members that are not dedicated to the team full-time. They have their regular jobs in the organization and they work on the team as an additional duty that may require working together for one or two days a month until the team goal is achieved. This type of team does not work together on a daily basis and, therefore, doesn’t have to get along well with each other frequently. For this reason, interventions such as outdoor ropes courses, skill-based workshops, or personality testing are not worth the investment of time and resources. If the team is having trouble, a problem-solving retreat usually works well.

When it comes to “permanent” teams (e.g., leadership teams, self-directed teams, etc.) that are having problems, one or more teambuilding approaches will work. As a rule of thumb, the “skills-based” approach to teambuilding works best since these team members must learn the skills to get along with each other on a daily basis over a long period of

time. However, during the life cycle of a permanent team, the team members experience ups and downs in their ability to work effectively together. Therefore starting with the skills-based approach and then later (e.g., a year or more later) taking the team through an outdoor experience, a personality-based team building experience or even a problem solving retreat works well. In particular, with mission-critical teams such as a leadership team, a problem-solving retreat every year or two, or an occasional outdoor adventure can serve to “recharge” or “reenergize” even the best functioning teams.

- e. **The teambuilding approach depends on the type of teamwork problem the team is facing.** If the team problem is inertia (the team is “bogged down” and not getting anything accomplished), a problem-solving retreat is preferred. If the problem is lack of trust, various outdoor activities have been highly effective in helping people understand and deal with trust. If the problem is the team cannot reach consensus and cannot resolve conflicts, the skills-based approach provides the skills needed to resolve these problems. If members are talking behind each other’s back and not being open with each other, the skills-based approach or an outdoor exercise can help focus and help deal with these issues. If members are not getting along well with each other, the skills-based, personality-based, and outdoor activities, in that order of preference, provide the team with the support needed.

There is one final success ingredient that cuts across all four types of team interventions: a strong and committed leader. It is vital to team advancement to have a leader who clearly stands behind the intervention and who communicates the expectation that teambuilding lessons must be applied and sustained over time. A weak leader more often than not leads to poor long-term intervention results; a strong leader increases the chance that the intervention will succeed.

Conclusion

Teams of people working together to improve the business have proven to be one of the best ways to run a business. The more successful the teams are at working together, the better the business outcomes and the higher the satisfaction of the team members. When team members do not work together well, organizations can, unfortunately, experience the opposite effect: lack of consensus, wasted meetings and meeting time, mediocre or poor execution of work tasks, and low morale. The four types of teambuilding interventions presented here, when employed in the right way for the right type of team problem, can considerably improve team performance.

7. TRAINING PEOPLE

The following five assumptions underlie the andragogical model of learning, which Knowles now calls a model of *human* learning, and they can guide ETDP practitioners in crafting successful learning programs:

7.1 Why Adults Learn

- Adults are self-directed learners.
- Adults build on prior experience.
- Adults respond to a need to perform more effectively.
- Adults want real-world applications for learning.
- Adults are motivated by internal factors.



7.2 Understanding How People Learn

Before you coach /teach/train or designate someone else to do so, there are several other principles to keep in mind about how adults learn.

No single way of presenting information suits everyone. One person may learn best by listening. Another may be visual and prefer to read instructions or look at a diagram. Someone else will need a demonstration.

7.3. Identify learners needs and problems

When learners have difficulty with learning it is very likely that it is caused by several factors that are controllable if the ETD Practitioner can identify the problems.

These problems are generally referred to as Blocks to learning.

Blocks in learning can be caused by:

a. The learning environment

- Noise, interruptions

- Not sufficient equipment
- Too warm; too cold

b. Physiological blocks

- Poor hearing or vision.
- Tiredness.
- Illness.
- Fear of humiliation and failure.
- Fear of being too old to learn.
- Problems with kids, colleagues, spouses, parents etc.

c. Lack of Motivation

'Lack of motivation' has an effect on all the stages of learning.

d. Unsuitable Work Environment

There are three aspects of the work environment that can create blocks to learning:

- The learner's relationship with the boss or supervisor/ETD practitioners.
- The learner's relationship with colleagues/fellow learners.
- The learner's job itself.

In the working environment more issues are relevant.

With the boss or supervisor. The boss's attitude to the learner or learners is as important as theirs to him or her.

Does the worker feel valued? If not, they may feel that the training is some sort of slur on their competence and capacity to do the job.

Do they feel important to the company, or mere appendages? If they do feel like appendages, then they cannot perceive that the training they are receiving is an investment in them.

Relationships with colleagues or workmates are important too.

- What are they doing?
- Have they had more or less training?

Although poor working relationships are damaging in themselves, good ones can also create problems.

As a Coach/ETD Practitioner you have a responsibility to create an environment with suitable resources for learning.

e. Inappropriate Subject Matter

The best-planned learning experience can fail just because it is or seems to be irrelevant to the learner.

f. Past Experience

The experience people bring to any learning event is important in several ways.

There can be potential conflict between past learning and what the ETD Practitioners are asking people to learn now.

g. Self Image

From the ETD Practitioner's perspective, the learner's self-image comprises two elements:

- the sum of their experiences
- self-esteem

h. Inadequate Study Skills

The block to learning here is lack of study skills, or lack of skills appropriate to a particular learning experience.

Study skills mainly comprise of:

- reading in depth
- reading for information at speed
- answering questions
- taking notes
- summarizing
- examination routine

- planning time
- allowing time to study

Graduates may additionally be versed in:

- research skills
- questioning skills

For other, non-academic types, study skills may be comprised of:

- observation
- imitation
- use of checklists

i. Memory

We've probably all met the situation where a learner has remembered with total clarity a few bits of a training session, but forgotten all the rest - often resulting in some major misunderstanding. This leads in turn to learners becoming suspicious of training - and with some justification.

Learners remember:

- the first thing learned
- the last thing learned
- anything that seemed vivid or exciting

7.4 Conducting training

Coaching happens as part of the teaching and training process or after the initial teaching was done. It is therefore important to review how teaching/training process.

Whether you are conducting training as part of further education or in an organisation the process is the same.

7.5 Planning and Preparing to train

Before begin the actual teaching/training, the learning climate needs attention; both the ETD practitioner and the learner have to prepare themselves for the work; and the training site, materials, and equipment must be readied for the training to begin.

7.6 Creating a Climate of Trust and Positive Expectations

The learning climate is a critical factor, particularly in one-on-one training. How you plan and prepare sets the tone for the entire process.

Human beings are naturally motivated to learn but the entire issue of emotion cannot be overlooked.

Safety is an important component to address in creating an environment that meets the learner's emotional needs.

They must feel comfortable to ask questions and make mistakes without feeling stupid or inadequate. People will perform according to what is expected of them, either positively or negatively. The power of expectation alone can influence the behavior of others.

When we communicate to others our high expectations of them, their self-confidence grows, their capabilities develop, and their accomplishments multiply.

7.7 An Eight-Step Training Protocol

- Arouse curiosity and prompt speculation.
- Perform the task silently.
- Describe the task and place it in context.
- Perform and explain the task, step by step.
- Exchange roles with the learner.
- Observe the learner's performance and give feedback.
- Let the learner practice independently.
- Conduct periodic checks and monitor progress.



Step One: Speculation

Human beings are naturally curious. We all possess internal motives that can be channeled effectively into educational pursuits. Intrinsic sources of motivation include curiosity, competence, and identification.

We are attracted by what is unclear or uncertain, and as we search for and achieve clarity, we experience satisfaction, which then promotes further curiosity.

At the same time, we're driven to reach competence. We develop interest in areas where we achieve or excel. We also identify with people we respect and whose respect we want, and we subscribe to their standards.

In this first step, arouse the learner's curiosity and help him or her establish a frame of reference for the actual training that will follow. Take advantage of natural motivation by asking the learner to guess how to do the task, procedure or about the particular things that should be considered when completing the task.



Step Two: Observation

Have the learner watch as you perform the entire task. Don't explain or answer my questions during this step.

The learner is to focus attention *visually* on the task at hand. When people try to watch and listen at the same time, their concentration is diluted.

After you've completed the demonstration, ask the learner to explain what you did. If you have more than one learner, ask them to work in pairs and discuss what they saw, then share their observations with you and the rest of the group.

If a learner has difficulty understanding your demonstration of the task or procedure, repeat the process.



Step Three: Explanation

To reinforce the visual presentation, now explain the task or procedure, giving an overview of the entire job.

Explain the reason(s) for doing the task and how it fits into the big picture, including other people or departments that will be affected.

This step provides a framework by addressing both the *what* and *why*. Once again, the learner's attention will be concentrated on one perceptual modality, the aural.



Step Four: Demonstration

In a step-by-step manner, show how the task is done, stressing key points along the way. Here you combine aural and visual as the learner listens and watches you perform the work.

The difference between this and Step Two is that you are now proceeding more slowly and methodically. Check for understanding by asking open-ended questions as you demonstrate.

Don't ask, "Do you understand?" because that will elicit only a yes or no response. (Most likely yes, either because the learner believes he understands what you're doing or because she's afraid to admit she doesn't understand.)

Questions that start with *What* or *How* are very effective in discovering whether the learner truly understands the procedure.



Step Five: Role Reversal

This step offers an interesting twist to the procedural training model. When you're comfortable with the learner's level of understanding, switch roles.

Ask the learner to become the ETD practitioner for this step. You follow the learner's instructions on how to perform the work.

If the learner directs you incorrectly, either do the task as instructed and use the resulting negative consequence as a learning tool, or stop and explain why the instruction is incorrect and what could result from that action.

It's an added plus that people are likely to master what they teach.

8. Introduction to Coaching

Coaching is the process by which learners/employees gain the skills, abilities and knowledge they need to develop themselves professionally and become more effective in their roles/jobs. When you coach learners/employees, you increase both their performance and their potential to do more in the future.

Coaching is designed to boost performance levels. Coaching begins with an assumption:

Most learners are eager to do well, to please their ETD practitioners/lectures and to achieve goals.

Coaching continually seek to expand everyone's *knowledge* base and *skill* level.

Knowledge is the ability to organise information into a context and put it in a workable perspective.

Skills embody the application of this knowledge in performing a task or a job.

Essential Vocabulary

It is important to get familiar with all the terms we will be using in this learning programme.

The following table acts as a glossary of terms.

| TERM | DEFINITION/DESCRIPTION |
|---------------------|--|
| Coaching | The methods that seeks to maximise learners/employees performance by conscientiously considering individuals and their unique talents and abilities Coaching is a process rooted in consistent and honest communication between coaches and learners/employees, is solution orientated is collaborative and seeks positive outcomes to any and all situations |
| Coach | An ETD practitioner/manager who shapes the environment by emphasising the continual growth and development of learners/employees knowledge and skills. A coach communicates and encourages learners/employees on a one-on-one bases to maximise performance to realise their full potential both personally as well as professionally |
| Continuous learning | The dynamic process created by ETD practitioners and coaches to expand knowledge and the growing of skills for all involved |
| Corrective coaching | A designation applied to particular coaching efforts in situation where learners/employees attitude and behaviors |

| TERM | DEFINITION/DESCRIPTION |
|------------|--|
| | point to serious problems |
| Delegating | An essential coaching technique that allocates more responsibility to the learner/employee |
| Mentor | An individual in a business setting who assumes a relationship with a learner/employee on a lower part of the organisation hierarchy for the purpose of groom the individual for a particular position. This is accomplished by imparting useful lessons learned, offering advice, and provide some counselling |
| Mentoring | A more informal relationship that coaching, rooted in passing on wisdom and know-how from one person to another. Applicable in business settings. |
| Counseling | A no punitive disciplinary process, normally a one-on one meeting with a problem learner/employee. The purpose of the meeting is to get the learner/employee to acknowledge the difference between actual performance and expected performance, identify the source of the problem and to develop an action plan to bring performance up to minimum expectations, if not higher. |
| Counselor | Trained individual to deal with specific problems |

8.1 The Role of the Coach

In order to be a coach you must lead by example, delegate important responsibilities, listen to and freely communication with all individuals that is part of the coaching process.

Coaching is all about self-development and coaches should be coachable.

Your aim is to secure the best performance from your learner/employee by leading them to realise their full potential. Sometime the coach will walk a fine line between offering support and encouragement and pushing a bit.

Coaches are expected to maintain a very high ethical standard

The three P's in coaching:

P eople
P erformance
P ositive outcomes



8.2 The duties of a coach

Besides teaching and training, as coach you are responsible for:

- Acting as a role model for higher performance
- Creating a learning or working culture in which learners have reason to be motivated
- Clarifying expectations associated with tasks, assignments and projects
- Providing feedback on your learners' behaviour that will put them on the right performance track and keep them there.
- Conduct assessments of performance
- Providing the training and resources learners need to develop
- Praising to reinforce positive performance

Make sure you understand what motivates learner and employees. Know the difference between being assertive and being aggressive.

8.3 Five Principles of Coaching

a. Gathering Information

A good coach knows how to get information from the learner without making the individual feel he or she is interrogated.

Information is important to make decisions and to help to identify skills deficiencies. It is also about finding out what interests and aspirations are in order to help you the coach to stimulate performance.

b. Listening

Asking the right questions will mean nothing if you do not listen to the replies of an individual.

A good coach is able to listen, pay attention to the nonverbal signals and body language of a speaker.

At the same time the coach is able to know how to use body language to communicate interest in what the learner is saying.

Being aware of what's happening around you

A coach you should frequently talk to learners to see if there are moral problems or other causes of distress that could influence performance and learning ability.

c. Instructing learners

A good coach knows how to teach, train and develop learners individually or in groups. It is important to conduct a training needs assessment to determine gaps in knowledge that must be filled.

d. Giving feedback

A good coach knows how important feedback is in improving performance. There is not such thing as too little time to provide positive feedback and to praise for a project/assignment well done.

8.4 The Delegating Process

Take the time to plan how you're going to present the assignment, including your requirements, parameters, authority level, checkpoints, and expectations.

It's a good idea to write down these items and give a copy to your delegate to minimize miscommunication.

It's easy to assume the practitioner knows and understands your motivation, but quite often, the practitioner perceives that advantage is being taken instead.

To prevent this, identify the benefits to the practitioner and be sure to communicate these benefits clearly.

When you sit down with your practitioner to delegate the coaching assignment, follow the seven steps described below.

8.5 How to Delegate the Coaching Task

- Give an overview of the assignment
- Explain the coaching assignment in detail
- Alleviate the new ETD practitioner's concerns
- Solicit input from the chosen ETD practitioner
- Ask for commitment
- Arrange for follow-up
- Define the resulting reward and recognition for successful task completion



Step One: Give an Overview of the Assignment

Start by explaining to the ETD practitioner the importance of the assignment and why you have chosen him or her for these coaching responsibilities. Refer to the list of assumptions you prepared earlier and to the criteria selection matrix to help you identify and communicate the specific qualities and skills that ideally qualify this person. Be sure to stress the ways this new assignment will benefit the learners.



Step Two: Explain the Assignment

Describe the new responsibility in detail, outlining tasks and subtasks, defining necessary parameters, and setting performance standards for the ETD practitioner and the learner(s).

Make certain the person understands the level or degree of authority that is being conferred. Let the practitioner know to whom he can turn for help and other resources.

In addition, be sure to notify those affected by the practitioner's increased authority.



Step Three: Clear Concerns

At this point, it's a good idea to anticipate and clear any concerns the practitioner has about this new responsibility.

Assure the designated coach that you will make sure he/she attends a training program and receives the appropriate tools and resources to do the job.

Also address the time demands created by this new assignment and any necessary reassigning of the practitioner's current responsibilities to other workers until the coaching assignment is complete.

A practitioner who already feels overwhelmed may worry about completing the work already expected.

It's your responsibility to help establish priorities and relieve some of the pressure by getting someone to share some of the employee's routine tasks for the duration of the coaching assignment.



Step Four: Request Input

Ask the practitioner to share questions, reactions, concerns, or suggestions. Ask what problems or barriers he or she anticipates that you have not considered.

You might also ask the practitioner to suggest how the workload can be redistributed during this interim period.

Listen to the practitioner's comments and respond empathetically.



Step Five: Ask for Commitment

This step helps to get the practitioner to buy into the assignment and will help you determine if the practitioner does indeed understand your expectations.

Be encouraging and express your confidence in the practitioner's ability to succeed in this new assignment.



Step Six: Arrange for Follow-up

Establish checkpoints, deadlines, and ways to monitor progress. You will want to meet periodically with the practitioner to monitor his or her growth and progress as a coach and to receive feedback about the progress of the practitioner(s) being trained.

Remember that delegating means letting go. When coaching begins, keep in contact with the coach and observe the checkpoints the two of you established. But don't hover or micromanage.



Step Seven: Define the Rewards

At this point in delegating, describe the reward and recognition the practitioner can expect when the coaching has been successfully completed

9. Why Have Performance Appraisals?

Over the last few years, the use of 360 Degree Feedback has grown within the business sector. However, before we discuss the merits and challenges of 360 Degree Feedback it is important to gain a familiarity with the area of performance appraisal. In particular, what are the considerable advantages of performance appraisals?

9.1 Performance Appraisal offers several advantages.

a. Individual

At an individual level performance appraisals offer a number of advantages.

These include:

- Recognition of past effort
- Developmental requirements can be uncovered

Research has consistently demonstrated that these advantages are extremely important for an individual. To illustrate, without recognition for past efforts it can be difficult to consistently motivate an individual to engage in future developments.

b. Team

In addition to the benefits achieved at an individual, a number of team benefits come straight to mind. These include:

- Alignment of effort with objectives
- Motivation of team members

To illustrate, the effectiveness of any team is clearly aligned to the set objectives of the team. As a result, if there is no opportunity to feedback to the team in a

trusting and transparent setting the team will not know where they collectively are in relation to those objectives.

c. Organization

The resultant advantages to organization thus become evident:

- Development of staff
- Achievement of key objectives
- Best and focused utilization of human resources

d. Overall Benefits of Appraisals

- Increased employee performance
- Greater control of work
- Improved motivation and commitment
- Increased information flow
- Better relationships within & across the organization

9.2 Roles within Performance Appraisals

The simplest form of performance appraisals involves two individuals – the manager and the employee. Both individuals need to adopt clear roles from which certain advantages emerge.

a. Manager's Role in Performance Management

- Set Objectives with Employees
- Manage Rewards and ensure Fair Compensation for a level of Job Performance
- Offer Accurate, Timely, Regular & Specific Feedback

b. Advantages to Managers

Through Performance Appraisal, Managers can:

- Translate business goals into individual job objectives and standards
- Monitor performance and offer feedback
- Communicate and seek agreement on objectives
- Coach employees on how to achieve their performance objectives
- Identify employees strengths and weaknesses
- Generate and agree development plans to best serve the organizations and individual needs

c. Employee's Role in Performance Management

- Set Objectives with Manager
- Improve Performance
- Be actively involved in their Development

d. Advantages to Employees

Through Performance Appraisals, Employees can:

- Openly discuss performance with managers
- Be provided with a development tool
- Reinforce and sustain performance
- Improve existing performance
- Determine career progression goals
- Identify training needs
- Link rewards to performance

9.3 The term "Performance Management" is often used in two contexts:

1. A way of maximising performance of an individual, team or organisation
2. A process for dealing with underperforming individuals (or teams).

Whilst the underlying principles are always the same, the way in which they are implemented varies between the two contexts.

| Maximising performance | Poor performers |
|--|---|
| Usually collaborative between management and staff | Involves more confrontation |
| Can be informal, with written records only recording revised targets | Is a formal process with each step being written down |
| Is a cyclical process, one of constant improvement | Is a process that escalates into disciplinary proceedings, possibly concluding with termination of employment |
| Often involves analysis of the process | Often involves analysis of one individual's behaviors/attitudes |

Conclusion

Performance Management is a term used to improve team performance, based on the principles of measurement, appraisal, action and monitoring. However, it can be manifest in very different forms depending on whether the aim is to further improve good performers, or deal with underperformance. Performance Management can also apply to individuals, teams, groups or organisations.

10. Dealing With Difficult Employees

All managers will have to deal with difficult employees during their careers. First, there will always be difficult employees. Second, it's your job as the manager to deal with them. If you don't deal the problem, it will only get worse.

10.1 Why Are Difficult Employees Like That?

Difficult employees are that way simply because it is a behavior that has worked for them in the past. They may not know any other behavior or they may choose this behavior when they think it will be most effective. You will be successful in dealing with difficult employees only to the extent that you can make these undesirable behaviors no longer effective for them. In many ways, it's like dealing with children. If every time a child screams, its parents give it candy, what will the child do when it wants candy? It will scream, of course. The same is true for the employee who "blows up" whenever anyone disagrees with him. When he does that people stop disagreeing with him and he thinks he has won.

10.2 How Can A Manager Deal With Difficult Employees?

- Evaluate
It is important when dealing with difficult employees to act quickly. Often you will need to act almost immediately to neutralize a dangerous situation. However, it is always appropriate to think before you act. Clearly if an employee comes to work with a gun, you will need to act more quickly than when someone complains that another employee is always taking credit for her work. In either case, take the appropriate amount of time to evaluate the situation before you act. You don't want to make it worse.

Recognize that most employees can be "difficult" from time to time. This can be caused by stress on the job or away from it. Some employees are difficult more often than others. It is not always your least-productive employees who are difficult. So take a moment to evaluate each situation for the unique situation it is.

- Do your homework
Always act on facts. Don't base your actions on gossip or rumor. The person spreading the gossip is a difficult employee in their own way. If you have not seen the inappropriate behavior yourself, look into it. Ask the people reportedly involved. Collect all the facts you can before you act.

Don't use the fact that you haven't seen the inappropriate behavior as an excuse to delay doing something. It is important to act promptly.

Make sure you aren't part of the problem. It will be much more difficult to remain calm and impartial in confronting the difficult behavior if you are partly

responsible. If that's the case, be sure you acknowledge your role in it, at least to yourself.

- **Develop a plan**
You're a manager. You know the value of planning. This situation is no different. You need to plan the timing of the confrontation. You need to select a quiet, private place where you won't be interrupted. You need to decide whether you need to have others, like an HR representative, present in the meeting. Plan the confrontation and then make it happen.

When you have prepared, it is time to act. You do not need to act impulsively, but you must act quickly. The longer an inappropriate behavior is allowed to continue, the harder it will be to change it or stop it.

- **Confront the problem**
Don't put it off. It may not be pleasant, but it's an important part of your job. It will not "fix itself". It can only get worse. You have planned this confrontation. Now you need to execute.
- **Deal with the behavior, not the person**
Your goal is to develop a solution, not to "win". Focus on the inappropriate behavior; don't attack the person.

Use "I" statements like "I need everybody on the team here on time so we can meet our goals" rather than "you" statements like "you are always late".

Don't assume the inappropriate behavior is caused by negative intent. It may be from fear, confusion, lack of motivation, personal problems, etc.

Give the other person a chance to develop a solution to the problem. They are more likely to "own" the solution if they are at least partially responsible for developing it.

- **Try to draw out the reasons behind the behavior**
As you talk with the difficult employee, actively listen to what they say. Stay calm and stay positive, but remain impartial and non-judgmental. Ask leading questions that can't be answered in one or two words. Don't interrupt.

When you do respond to the difficult employee, remain calm. Summarize back to them what they just said, "so what I understand you are saying is", so they know you are actually listening to them.

If you can find out from the difficult employee what the real source of the inappropriate behavior is, you have a much better chance of finding a solution.

Sometimes these confrontations will go smoothly, or at least rapidly, to a conclusion. Other times it will require several sessions to resolve the problem.

- **Repeat as necessary**
Minor problems, like being late for work, you may be able to resolve with a simple chat in your office with the employee. An office bully, who has used that behavior successfully since elementary school, may need more than one confrontation before a solution can be reached. Be patient. Don't always expect instant results. Aim for continuous improvement rather than trying to achieve instant success.
- **Know when you are in over your head**
Sometimes the underlying issue with a difficult employee will be beyond your capabilities. The employee may have psychological problems that require professional help, for example. Learn when to keep trying and when to refer the employee to others for more specialized help. Your company may have an EAP or you may need to use resources from the community.
- **Know when you are at the end**
While the goal is always to reach a mutually acceptable solution that resolves the difficult employee's inappropriate behavior and keeps your team at full strength, sometimes that is not possible. When you reach an impasse and the employee is not willing to change his or her behavior then you need to begin termination procedures in accordance with your company's policies.

10.3 Coming to a Solution

The desired result from confronting a difficult employee's inappropriate behavior is an agreed upon solution. You know that this inappropriate behavior will continue unless you and the employee agree on a solution. The employee needs to know what is inappropriate about their behavior and they also need to know what appropriate behavior is. The need for a manager to communicate clearly is always high. It is especially important in these situations. Make very sure the employee understands the requirements and the consequences.

11. Conflict management in the workplace

A conflict can be defined as an ongoing state of hostility between two or more people or groups. Conflict management on the other hand is the short or long-term management process used to resolve issues where either party is being stubborn, inflexible, difficult, or whatever.

In most instances, conflicts between staff members and managers are silent. Staff members do not express their views or feelings of conflict openly in front of their immediate manager and prefer to voice their concerns or bad feelings about their manager to their colleagues, family members or friends. If you are currently facing a conflict situation in your working environment, have you looked at the root cause of this conflict?

There are a number of sources of conflict and here are just a few:

- Poor communication channels.
- Friction between two or more people/departments.
- Friction between employee and manager.
- Lack Job recognition and employee development.
- Lack of support from management.
- Operational changes to business.
- Lack of information.
- Lack of resources.
- Salary negotiation deadlocks.

11.1 What a manager should be doing!

The factors above influence conflict situations from occurring. As a manager you should have measures in place to avoid these types of situations occurring. These factors mentioned above are just a few that occur mainly in the business world.

Poor communication channels lead to employees feeling frustrated as changes that occur in the company are not communicated from top to bottom. A poor relationship between employees or managers and employees leads to a feeling frustration amongst the lower ranks which later results in a conflict situation when the employee vents their frustration verbally.

Placing effective quality management processes and procedures in place as well as developing a good relationship with your employees will lessen the risk of a conflict situation occurring.

11.2 Techniques for managing conflicts

I have developed a process called the **5 A's** technique of managing conflicts are they are as follows:

- Assessment.
- Acknowledgement.
- Attitude.
- Action.
- Analysis.

a. Assessment

The assessment phase is the investigative stage when dealing with conflict situations. In the assessment phase you need to investigate and gather all information related to the conflict. These will include the following:

- What is the conflict?
- Who is responsible for the conflict?
- Is there a history of conflicts with this person / department?

b. Acknowledgement

Once you have conducted a thorough assessment you need to acknowledge the conflict. If a conflict exists between a manager and an employee, the manager must inform the employee of the conflict at hand and advise them of the procedure for resolution of the conflict.

At this point the manager must begin the formal conflict management resolution protocols which include the following:

- Arrange a meeting between themselves and the employee.
- Inform the employee of the time, date and venue for the meeting both verbally and in writing by means of an email request for a meeting.
- Inform the employee that they may appoint a facilitator to act on their behalf during the meeting. This would only occur if there were hostile interactions between the employee and their manager.
- Send the employee an agenda for the meeting.
- Human resources labour representative should be present at the meeting.

If for example there was a conflict between two departments, the same would apply as above however you would nominate an independent facilitator to chair the meeting to ensure that it does not get hijacked or detoured.

c. Attitude

Both parties must participate in the process with the right attitude. Going into a conflict management situation with a negative approach has a strong possibility of failing. The attitude must be one of wanting to resolve the issue at hand and clear a way forward so that both parties can continue working together.

d. Action

During the resolution period of resolving a conflict a fair number of action points will be recorded which must be completed in an acceptable timeframe. Taking action and giving feedback are the two critical key success factors. If you do not take the necessary action the conflict situation will resurface on a higher scale.

An example of this might be where a manager and employee have a conflict between them. The facilitator advises that they should conduct a one on one session weekly to build on their relationship. The action point is to conduct the one on one. Failing to do so will result in a conflict situation. Both the manager and employee will have the opportunity to give one another feedback.

e. Analysis

Once the conflict situation has been resolved, it should be analysed to determine what caused the conflict situation to begin with and what measures can be put in place to stop this type of situation from reoccurring. The problem in most conflict situations today is that no post conflict management analysis takes place.

In conclusions

Develop and implement a sound quality management function and improve your one on one interaction with your employees and conflicts within your department will become a thing of the past. Communication is the key most important ingredient for avoiding conflict situations.