

Execute Leadership



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Winning isn't everything	Leading sales performance (1)	Leading sales performance (2)
Give away the wool, not the sheep	If you show me yours, I'll show you mine	A two-way street
Show me the evidence	Switch off and switch on	



Winning Isn't Everything

I understand a fury in your words,
But not the words

- William Shakespeare, *Othello*

Anytime you have two or more people together in the workplace, you have potential for conflict. A large chunk of a leader's time is spent dealing with conflict. Conflict does not have to be associated with anger, violence or even ill feeling.

Conflict can occur any time there is a difference of interests, understanding, values or beliefs, style, opinions or perceptions. The consequences of conflict can be anger, sadness, frustration, stress, disappointment, violence, waste, confusion, etc. And it can also be the source of clarification, alignment, engagement, understanding and acceptance.

It is generally accepted that there are five approaches to dealing with conflict. There is no single 'best' way - the situation and the consequences of how the conflict is addressed will indicate the best approach for each situation. As a leader, people will take their cue from you and respond to conflict as lead by your approach.

DO NOTHING when:

- An issue is trivial or there is something else to do which is far more important.
- You have absolutely no chance of winning.
- Winning the point will cause more trouble than it's worth.
- Tempers need to calm down to allow a clear perspective.
- Someone else can handle the situation better.
- You need to gather facts about the situation.
- You need to clarify your own thoughts about the situation.



BE DIRECTIVE when :

- An emergency calls for quick, decisive action.
- There are non-negotiable points with which people must comply.

CONCEDE when :

- You are in the wrong and you need to be seen to be reasonable.
- The issue is more important to others than it is to you.
- You need someone to do something for you.
- You need to cut your losses if you are losing and your situation will not get better.
- You need to gain favours for another time.
- The relationship is more important than you being right.

COMPROMISE when :

- You need a temporary settlement to a complicated issue.
- Time is running out and you need a workable solution.
- You are up against an equal with an opposite goal.
- Your point is important but not worth the time and hassle of being more assertive.
- Your personal goals and the relationship are both of equal importance.

COLLABORATE when :

- Each person's position is too important to compromise and the relationship is important.
- You need to learn something from others.
- You need to unify different points of view.
- You need to get total commitment from all.
- It is important to repair a damaged relationship.

Leading Sales Performance 1

A leader is not an administrator who loves to run others, but someone who carries water for their people so that they can get on with their jobs.



Robert Townsend, Former CEO, Avis

Many organisations which traditionally have been reactive sales and service providers have been forced through increased competition to change to a proactive sales and service culture. To lead the change from reactive to proactive, it will help if you establish a performance management process. This will work better if it is a two-way process, i.e. the team member has input in the performance management process.

(THIS FRAMEWORK FOCUSES ON SALES AND SERVICE ACTIONS, HOWEVER, THE SAME FRAMEWORK CAN BE ADAPTED FOR ACTIONS COVERING ALL FUNCTIONS)

CLARIFY PURPOSE

- Explain why the organisation is asking for changes and moving into a more proactive sales and service culture.
- Discuss the sales and product targets for the organisation as a whole and our team in particular.

EXPLAIN EXPECTATIONS

- Ask team members to ask questions and to discuss their thoughts and feelings about what is happening.
- Explain the results expected of them and of others in the organisation.
- Explain the key sales and sales management actions for you and them.
- Define your role as trainer/coach, facilitator and sales manager in the sales and service culture.
- Discuss the specific, sales performance indicators, i.e. clarify how you will be assessing the implementation of the new and different ways of proactive sales and service.
- Negotiate sales behaviour or action goals including the frequencies of the actions, e.g. daily, weekly, monthly.
- Negotiate financial goals and/or product volume goals.

MONITOR PROGRESS

- Discuss how you will:
 - review efforts and results with them individually on a weekly basis.
 - expect them to provide evidence of their sales actions and results on a weekly basis.



- expect them to report on their efforts and results at a weekly sales team meeting.
- Explain how you, as team leader, will be reporting on team results to your manager on a monthly basis.
- Explain that the team meeting is an opportunity for all of us to discuss our performance and to suggest ways to improve sales actions and sales results.

ASSESS

- Working together, continually assess how well the team member is performing their sales and service actions.
- Agree any additional training, coaching or other support they require.
- Re-negotiate their action goals as the team member becomes more confident and competent.

PROVIDE RECOGNITION AND FEEDBACK

- Provide weekly and monthly acknowledgment of individual efforts and results.
- Summarise the efforts and results of all of your people and discuss the summary with staff and management.



Leading sales performance 2

We may affirm absolutely that nothing great in the world has ever been accomplished without passion.

Georg Wilhelm Hegel, 1770-1831, German Philosopher, *The Philosophy of History*

What is the nature of the sales and service culture within the area you lead? Have you created an environment which is conducive to optimising sales and service or one which limits the achievement of sales and service outcomes?

This checklist will help you answer those questions and point the way to lead improvements in sales and service performance.

OUTCOMES

- ☐ Are your overall sales and service outcomes clear to staff?
- ☐ Do all staff understand and accept their role in contributing to these outcomes?
- ☐ Are the desired outcomes perceived by staff to be realistic?
- ☐ Are your sales and service goals periodically reviewed to ensure that they are consistent with customer expectations?

RESOURCES

- ☐ Do people have enough time to achieve sales and service goals?
- ☐ Are there enough people to provide the level of required sales actions and desired service levels?
- ☐ Are there sufficient and effective tools, job aids, equipment, and other resources to achieve the desired level of service?
- ☐ Are your resources being spent in areas important to your customers?

BEHAVIOUR

- ☐ Can the behaviours that lead to sales and service outcomes be performed? Do your people have the required competence?



- ☐ Are you assisting people to implement new behaviours by providing training, coaching or mentoring?
- ☐ Does something in the systems and procedures prevent the behaviour from occurring?
- ☐ Are the desired behaviours observable/measurable?
- ☐ Are you aware of how your staff perceive the desired sales and service behaviours? What are their attitudes and beliefs about these behaviours? Are they counter-productive or productive?
- ☐ Are you asking people to compromise their own values?
- ☐ Will the behaviours you are targeting result in outcomes that your customers will perceive as value added sales and service?

RESULTS

- ☐ Are both quantitative and qualitative results measured?
- ☐ Are both outcome and process results measured?
- ☐ Are results linked back to appropriate individuals and appropriate behaviour?
- ☐ Are customer satisfaction and customer-focused results measured and reported on with the same sense of urgency as financial and productivity results?

FEEDBACK - INFORMATION

- ☐ Is the feedback related to a goal?
- ☐ Is the feedback immediate?
- ☐ Does the feedback go direct to the appropriate person?
- ☐ Does the feedback go to all relevant levels of the organisation?
- ☐ Is the feedback graphically displayed?
- ☐ Does the feedback indicate how the result is important to the customer?

FEEDBACK - MOTIVATION and DEVELOPMENT

- ☐ Are both right results and right effort being reinforced?
- ☐ Are both improvement and achievement being reinforced?
- ☐ Is the reinforcement specific?
- ☐ Is it timely?
- ☐ Is it tied to a sales and service goal?
- ☐ Is there a proper mix of tangible and intangible, monetary and non-monetary rewards?
- ☐ Are rewards based on outcomes that are important to customers?
- ☐ Is non performance quickly and supportively resolved?
- ☐ Is the performance issue described specifically?
- ☐ Are open-ended, future oriented questions used?
- ☐ Does feedback and follow-up take place after the discussion?



Give Away The Wool, Not The Sheep

The old idea of a good bargain was a transaction in which one man got the better of another. The new idea of a good contract is a transaction which is good for both parties to it.

Louis Dembitz Brandeis, 1856-1941

U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Business - A Profession

Never get angry. Never make a threat. Reason with people.

Don Corleone

The Godfather

He who will not reason, is a bigot; he who cannot is a fool; and he who dares not is a slave.

William Drummond, 1553 - 1610

Scottish Poet

Academical Questions

Negotiation is a vital management skill in today's industrial and commercial environment. Leaders at all levels need to be able to negotiate with their employers, their employees, union representatives, buyers, suppliers, customers, government officials and the general public.

Every day in a manager's life, something will require negotiation. It is a constant part of successful leadership and is a characteristic of enlightened cultures.

Negotiation usually involves looking for compromise - finding solutions which reasonably meet the needs of both parties. In fact, when one party is not prepared to work for compromise, negotiation usually breaks down.

Execute Leadership



Never lose sight of the big picture. Today's concession might be tomorrow's gain. Are you winning the battle but losing the war?



As with most things in life, preparation is the key to success. Here are a number of things to do **before** you begin to negotiate:

- Clarify the matters to be negotiated. What is, and what is not, up for negotiation?
 - Define your objectives - from those you would **like** to get through to those you **must** get.
 - Establish the desirable outcomes for both parties. List the maximum objectives - what would be the ideal result for both parties? List the minimum objectives - the point at which neither party will accept anything less.
 - Put a priority on your objectives. Anticipate the priority the other party will put on their objectives.
 - Consider what concessions you might make and what you require in return.
 - List the facts you know about the situation. Separate facts from assumptions. Check the validity of your assumptions. What assumptions might the other party make?
 - Decide what information you require and what information you are going to disclose.
 - Research in detail all your facts. Sort out inferences and opinions. Make sure the information you present is irrefutable. Identify those facts which will help your case and weaken the case of the other party.
 - Decide how the other party will use the facts about the situation and prepare points to counter them.
 - List the issues for you and the other party. What are the common issues, hidden issues, and non-issues.
 - Divide issues into major and minor, difficult to settle and easy to settle, monetary and non-monetary, long term and short term.
 - On each issue decide your position and that of the other party.
 - List their perceptions about the situation and the basis for these perceptions.
 - What are the meanings and beliefs that could be driving their position?
 - What are other meanings and beliefs that could be applied in this situation?
 - Determine what you would need to say or show to change their perceptions to ones more favourable to your objectives.
 - Define personal needs and wants and organisational needs and wants for both parties.
- If You Show Me Yours, I'll Show You Mine**

Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

John F. Kennedy, 1917-1963, Thirty-fifth president of the United States



There are certain circumstances in which the leader will lead best through negotiation. Successful negotiators believe that everything is negotiable. Is it? There are situations where this may not be so, but it is a useful attitude to adopt. Obviously, the leader who believes everything is negotiable is less likely to give up in the face of strong opposition than the leader who does not hold this belief.

Here are some tactics for conducting successful negotiations. The range of choices open to both parties and the type of consequences you are prepared to accept will determine which tactics you choose. Be careful - what you put out you'll get back eventually.

- Be direct. Know what it is that you want and ask for it.
- Allow plenty of time to conduct negotiations. Don't put pressure on yourself which may cause you to seek less than you need. Rushed decisions are usually poor decisions.
- Promote trust by demonstrating your willingness to co-operate especially early in the proceedings. Look for other options. Attempt to make all parties feel that they can win something. Declare a desire to seek win/win outcomes.
- Ask the other party to state their opening offer first.
- Make your first requests high, but within the limits of the other party's ability to meet your requests. State your major requests at the beginning and use the minor issues as options for later trade-offs. Introduce unimportant issues as important ones and concede them later to give the other party a sense of gain.
- Ask the other party to join with you in resolving the issue. Ask how you can assist them to meet their needs. Ask them how can they assist you to meet your needs.
- Ask them to explain the rationale behind unreasonable requests.
- Ask them how their requests are fair to all parties and/or all stakeholders affected by the possible outcomes.
- Show how your requests are fair to all parties and/or all stakeholders affected by the possible outcomes.
- Test the climate by asking hypothetical questions. What if....? Suppose that I were to....? Say if you were to....? What would happen if we were both to? If I was prepared to do.... would you be prepared to do....?
- Propose suggestions which advance the negotiation.
- Respond to their proposals with counter proposals.
- Re-present your same proposal but in a different form - one which incorporates the expressed interests, requests and limitations of the other person.
- Clarify time limits, financial limits, limits of authority and any other limits early in the negotiation process. Set conditions before making offers.
- Trade requests - exchange things you need for things they need.
- State the benefits for them if they accept your proposal.
- Combine an unacceptable request with a request that they are likely to concede. Make one conditional upon the other.
- Ask them what could be other ways to view the situation that would serve all of us better?
- Ask them what other meanings could be attached to the situation?



- If close to achieving your objectives, but in a deadlock situation, suggest that you split the difference.
- Overwhelm the other party with lots of information so as to end their argument before they begin.
- Identify the objections the other party holds and explore with them the reality of these things happening.
- Say, "If you do thisthen we have a deal".
- Agree what you have agreed - summarise it and write it down. Agree on an action plan.

A Two-Way Street

All seems infected to the infected spy,

As all looks yellow to the jaundiced eye.

Alexander Pope, 1688-1744, English Poet, *Essay on Criticism*

Ever wondered about the value of the formal performance appraisal system? Is it something you enjoy doing as either the appraiser or the appraised? How do your people view their formal performance appraisal? From my mail, not too many people rate it highly. Here is a chance for you to show leadership and provide a more meaningful exchange about performance – of you and your people.

When a manager is conducting a performance appraisal it is usually the performance of the other person which is under scrutiny. This makes it a one-way exchange when it probably should be a two-way exchange with the performance of both people under appraisal. This will certainly make it a fairer process in the eyes of the people whose performance is being appraised. It will also make it easier to sell the process to your people, to lead them to engage in the process. Here is a simple process for conducting performance appraisals. Both people conduct a self-appraisal as well as appraising the performance of the other person.

Things related to my/your core roles, key functions and key tasks which I/you do well :
Things related to my/your core roles, key functions and key tasks which I/you could do better :

Execute Leadership



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Things I believe that I am/you are capable of taking on in the next 12 months:

Areas in which I/you could develop and/or things in which I/you need training, coaching or mentoring :

Things I/you do which help effective work relationships :
Things I/you do which do not help effective work relationships :



Assets and liabilities of my/your personality :

Procedure

- ☐ Prepare 4 copies of the format – 2 for you, 2 for the other person.
- ☐ Do this first on yourself and then on the other person. They do the same.
- ☐ Meet and discuss both analyses of you first. Note things that you could do better.
- ☐ Now discuss both analyses of the other person. Note things that could he or she could do better.
- ☐ Meet in 4 weeks to review progress. **Show MeThe Evidence**

Criticism comes much easier than craftsmanship.

Zuexis, c. 400 B.C., Greek writer.

I was once engaged by a national broadcasting organisation to conduct a review of the effectiveness of its management group. Over a period of about 12 months, I interviewed each manager separately and documented their responses to a range of questions.

One question was, “Do you believe that you are effective as a manager?” Not surprisingly, each one of the managers answered yes to the question – 100% yes’s. (A yes or no response was then followed by several other questions relating to their own evaluation.)

However, when asked to comment on the effectiveness of the rest of the management group, many of them were quite scathing in their comments. My dilemma was that having interviewed all managers, I hadn’t been able to find the bastards who were letting the side down.



This is an interesting phenomenon we come across constantly. Everybody believes that they do a good job. It is always **someone else** who is incompetent or puts in a sub-standard performance. This perception occurs at all levels up and down the organisation.

This is one of the main impediments to improving individual performance. No one has convinced the individual that they need to improve. We like to say that awareness precedes all learning. So for a person to learn, you must first convince them that they are deficient in some aspect of their performance.

It pays to keep in mind Abe Lincoln's "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still." So the trick is to have the person accept his or her deficiencies in performance and want to do something about it.

When assessing and providing feedback about performance, keep it balanced. Even the most troublesome of employees must be doing something right even if it is only spelling their name right or turning up for work on the right day of the week or breathing frequently.

Again you can show leadership through this innovative way to improve performance. Say it in your own way, but stick to the themes.

- ❑ I'm taking time out to get everybody's opinion about how well we all do our jobs and how effectively we work together. I'd like to find out your view and tell you my view. I have a view on how well you do these things and I'm interested in your view on how well I do the same things. If I don't get feedback from you and the others about how well I do my job as a manager, then I feel that I am missing out on some valuable information. Equally, I feel that you can benefit from feedback from me. Does that make sense to you? Is that fair?
- ❑ I'm asking all of us, including me, to do a self-analysis under three headings. One – job performance. Two – personality. Three – work relationships - how we get along with others.
- ❑ I would like us all to take an unusual perspective. That is, put yourself in the shoes of others and guess what they would say about you.
- ❑ We will then use this information to help identify personal targets for each of us.
- ❑ In about 3 months, I will meet with you all individually to discuss examples of progress – yours and mine.



JOB PERFORMANCE	
Things I do well (from the perspective of others)	Things I could do better (from the perspective of others)

PERSONALITY TRAITS OR CHARACTERISTICS	
Things about me which people find helpful	Things about me which people find unhelpful

WORK RELATIONSHIPS	
Things I do which foster effective work relationships	Things I do which detract from effective work relationships

Switch off and switch on

We generally need someone to show us things which should be apparent to the eyes of all.

Francisco Algarotti, 1712-1764, Italian writer and scientist



Leadership is not just about dealing with the big issues. You will also need to display leadership in helping your people deal with personal issues. How you deal with these issues will show you as a leader in the eyes of others.

When the performance of a good worker deteriorates for no apparent reason, there is a good chance that they have a personal problem weighing heavily on their mind. There are many factors which affect a person's job performance, but off-the-job problems are more often the cause of poor work performance than many managers realise.

These are problems related to some event occurring in their personal life such as death or illness in the family, divorce or the break-up of a relationship, problems with their children, financial difficulties, etc.

What a person does in their private life is of course their concern, but if it starts to affect their performance at work, it becomes your concern. Some action is required on your part, but this needs to be handled carefully and with sensitivity.

Your major purpose is not to provide a solution - it is highly unlikely that you can. Your main aim is to let the person know that she or he can talk to you about it if they want to and that you will listen and act as a sounding board. As professional counsellors will tell you, just letting a person 'get it off their chest' helps them feel much better about their problem. Time to put on your 'counsellor' hat and show leadership of a different kind.



- ☐ Be wary of imposing your solution on their problem - be prepared to do more listening than talking. Demonstrate that you really are listening by paraphrasing things they say and acknowledging how they might be feeling and how you would feel in the same circumstances.
- ☐ Begin by acknowledging their previous good performance.
- ☐ Let them know that you value them as a person and as a worker.
- ☐ Tell them that you have noticed a change in their behaviour. Describe the specific changes.
- ☐ Describe how you see these changes affecting their work and the work of others.
- ☐ Ask them how they feel they are currently handling their job. Reach agreement on your view and their view of their job performance.
- ☐ Check if there are any problems at work which are affecting them.
- ☐ Tell them that their private life is their business, but when it starts to affect their work it has to become your business.
- ☐ Assure them that anything you discuss will be kept strictly confidential and that no record of this conversation will be kept.
- ☐ Re-assure them that every one of us has personal problems which affect us at some time or other. If possible, cite an example of something which you had to deal with which really got you down.
- ☐ Encourage them to open up and discuss what it is that is distracting them.
- ☐ Ask them if they need some time off to deal with the problem.
- ☐ Ask them if they need help in dealing with their problem.
- ☐ Ask them if they would like to 'brainstorm' some actions they could take to help resolve their problem.
- ☐ Help them develop an action plan.
- ☐ Let them know that you will be supportive and that you can make allowances, but that their job performance needs to return to normal.
- ☐ Suggest appropriate professional counselling such as Lifeline.
- ☐ Suggest that you meet again in a week's time to see how things are.
- ☐ Invite them to talk to you about it at any time.

<Fig 17.1 – 59.tif>One Bad Apple...

Friendly counsel cuts off many foes.

William Shakespeare, 1564-1616.

English dramatist and poet, King Henry IV

Reason and emotion are each the other's counsellor and complement....Whoever takes counsel of one of them only, and neglects the other, is thoughtlessly forfeiting a part of the aid that has been granted for our guidance.



Marquis de Vauvenargues.

French soldier and moralist, Reflections and Maxims.

If you have a person whose performance is unacceptable, you will need to show leadership in dealing with it quickly.

Counselling a staff member whose job performance is unacceptable is an uncomfortable process for both the manager and the person. Which is probably the main reason many managers avoid doing it. Here is a process to follow which will make it easier on both of you. And help demonstrate your willingness to take the lead to resolve the problem.

SETTING UP A MEETING

- Approach the person in private or out of earshot of others.
- Explain that you would like to meet with them to discuss their job performance.
- Explain that you will be doing this with other team members as well.
- Explain how you will prepare for this meeting and how you would like them to prepare for the meeting.
- Agree a specific time, date and place to meet in private.

PREPARATION (By the manager)

- List some areas of performance in which you would like the person to improve.
- List specific things that you would like this person to do new or different and better in each area.
- List the areas in which the person is performing effectively.
- List specific examples of things that they have done effectively.

PREPARATION (By the team member)

- List the aspects of their job which they think they do well.
- Cite a couple of examples in each aspect which demonstrates how effective they are.
- Identify aspects of their job which they think they could improve.
- Identify the specific things that they could do new or different or better in each aspect.
- Identify what other things would need to happen to enable them to make those improvements.
- Identify what training or coaching assistance they require to make the improvements.
- Identify what they would like the manager to do more of or less of to help them make the improvements.



THE COUNSELLING SESSION

- Explain that this is an opportunity to improve the quality of work life for both of us.
- Say that all of us have different perceptions about various things that happen in the workplace and this is an opportunity for a frank and honest exchange of our perceptions.
- Explain how you will conduct this meeting - the format and your expectations.
- Discuss the areas of their job that they do effectively and the examples of specific things in each area.
- Ask them to discuss their view of the things that they do effectively.
- Reach agreement on the things that they do effectively.
- Discuss the areas in which you think they could improve and specify the things which you would like them to do new, different and better.
- Ask them for their view of what they could improve and the specific things they could do new or different and better.
- Agree a list of things for them to work on to show improvement.
- Discuss their view of the support they believe they need to make these improvements.
- Agree things which you (the manager) will do new or different and better to support their efforts.
- Agree what actions you will take to support them in the achievement of these improvements.
- Discuss your and their feelings about this session.
- Schedule a specific time, date and place to review how both of you have implemented your agreements.
- Thank them for their time and contribution. Nip It In The Bud

Those who do not prevent crimes when they could, encourage them

Cato the Elder, 234 - 149 BC

Roman soldier, statesman, and administrator

Plutarch, The Parallel Lives: Cato the Elder

One of the least comfortable tasks a leader has to do is to speak to an employee who is being disruptive, producing poor quality work or violating agreed guidelines for behaviour. Most managers do not enjoy this situation and, thus, many shirk it. But bear in mind that it is also highly uncomfortable for the wayward employee. In fact, you can use this discomfort to your advantage.



Simply put, people act to experience pleasant circumstances and act to avoid unpleasant circumstances. You need to make it very clear that both of you have to make certain choices and that each of those choices have consequences - pleasant and unpleasant. Make it clear that one consequence for the employee is that while they continue to misbehave you will continue to counsel them about it. As soon as they improve their behaviour, you will stop counselling them. It's their choice.

Inaction on your part will show you as a poor leader in the eyes of other staff. You will be seen as weak and ineffectual and your credibility will suffer. The longer you let it go the worse it will be. Make it easier on yourself by **preparing** yourself before you actually discuss the problem with the employee - it will really help your confidence.

Answer these questions about the problem situation :

- With whom does it occur?
- When?
- While talking about what topic or while doing what job?
- Where does the situation occur or where could it recur?
- What specifically does the employee do or say or fail to do or say?
- What specifically do you do or say or fail to do or say?
- What are the consequences if the problem is not resolved?

Consider :

- (1) for you
 - (2) for the employee
 - (3) for the team
 - (4) for the customers - both internal and external.
- What outcomes do you desire to resolve this situation?

Consider :

- (5) your needs
 - (6) their needs
 - (7) the teams' needs
 - (8) the customers' needs - both internal and external customers.
- What are the possible and probable consequences of speaking up for both of you?
- It will help you to actually write down what you will say to this person.

Complete whichever of these statements will work best for you:



When you..... When I..... When.....

I would prefer..... I want..... I need..... I would like

If you do..... If you do not..... If you will Then I will

Invite the person to meet with you in private and tell them that there is a work issue that you need to discuss. Tell them it is something that you need to resolve, but that you can't resolve it without their co-operation. Suggest to them that you will go first and ask them not to interrupt until you have finished. Tell them that they will have their turn and that you will listen to them.

When you have both had your say, begin the process of negotiating an outcome acceptable to both of you. You need to discuss some of the consequences, needs and outcomes previously identified. Say What?

That man (is) far best who can conceive and carry out with foresight a wise counsel; next in order (is one) with the sense to value and heed such (wise) counsel; while he who can neither initiate it (counsel) nor avail himself of it when thrown in his way, is to all intents and purposes worthless and good for nothing.

Hesiod, eighth century BC

Greek poet *Works and Days*

Okay. So you have a 'problem' employee and you have decided to exercise leadership and try to resolve the problem. You've done your preparation (see 'Nip It In The Bud')

Now what do you actually say? Here are some questions and statements to consider. Remember that these are only guidelines and that you will need to adapt them to your situation.

- Here is a possible opening :

"John, there's a situation happening here at work which I need your help on. I'd like to talk it over with you and see if we can find a solution.



I suggest that I'll describe the situation as I see it and then I'll get your view and then see if we can work something out. I ask you not to interrupt until I finish and I'll do the same for you when it's your turn. Is that fair?

I'm not here to give you or anybody else a hard time, but I am paid to try to manage this section. I don't like having to do this any more than you probably do, but this situation is affecting others and myself."

- Now using the information from your preparation, describe the situation as you see it. Be specific.
- Describe the consequences of the problem as you see them for all the stakeholders, i.e. all the people who are being affected by this situation.

Here are some other things you might say :

" John, I can only go by what I see or what I hear. But I may get it wrong. So, rather than jump to conclusions, I would rather talk it over with you and get your view."

"How do you see the situation?"

"How do you feel about the situation as I see it?"

"How do you feel about the consequences as I see them?"

"Is there anything that I'm doing or not doing that is contributing to this situation?"

"Is there anything that others are doing or not doing that is contributing to this situation?"

"Are there things happening outside work which I don't know about which are contributing to this situation?"

"What do you see as causing this situation?"

"What do you think needs to happen to resolve this?"

"These are the things, as I see them, that are causing the situation"

"How do you feel about my view? Am I being unfair?"

"What I think needs to happen is this...." (from your preparation, describe what you would like to happen in the future).

"Look, for the reasons I mentioned earlier I need you to :



- do less of this.....(describe the specific improvements)
- do more of this.....
- start doing this.....”

“What help do you want from me? What things do you want me to do to help resolve the problem?”

Agree some actions that both of you will take and set up a time next week to review the situation.

Thank John for his time and his contribution.

<Fig 20.1 – Cartoons Vol 1 017.tif>choices and consequences

As long as a man stands in his own way, everything seems to be in his way.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), American essayist and poet, Journals, 1909-1914, quoting Henry David Thoreaux

Man is not the creature of circumstances. Circumstances are the creatures of men.

Benjamin Disraeli (1804-1881), English Prime Minister and novelist, *Vivian Grey*, 1826

Some of your people will be underdeveloped in relation to their level of maturity, life wisdom and awareness. As a leader, sometimes you will need to take a person aside and develop their understanding of how life works.

Let me remind you of Newton’s Third Law of Motion again. You remember – every action has an equal and opposite reaction. This can be a useful notion to put into the minds of any recalcitrant people you may have in your workgroup. While you are at it, you might also introduce the notion of ‘choices and consequences’ as they are quite closely related.

It may surprise you but many people don’t appear to hold these notions at the forefront of their consciousness as they travel through their worklife. Many people appear not to have made the connection between the choices they make and the consequences they experience. Their problems, their frustration, their



disappointments, their anger, their unmet wants, etc are all the fault of somebody else, not them. It seems to me that the connection between choices and consequences and the implications of Newton's law are strong beliefs of more enlightened and developed people and that they appear central to their whole being.

If you are attempting to influence the behaviour of one of your people who is disrupting others or who is constantly presenting as a problem person, it may help to have a discussion with them around the choices they are making and the consequences they are experiencing.

Here is an example of how you could lead this discussion with this person.

This is only a part of the discussion. You will need to pre-empt this and follow it with other discussion. Obviously this is only presenting what you could say.

"Mark. Let me just digress for a moment because I don't think we're really getting anywhere.

Look. I don't really enjoy these discussions any more than you do. In fact, I'd rather not have to have them.

Like it or not, it goes with the territory. It's a part of what I am paid to do. If you like, it's a consequence of my choice to take on the job of a manager.

That's what I would like to talk to you about. Your choices and your consequences.

Whether you agree or disagree with me about why it's happening, one consequence we are both experiencing is the discomfort of conversations of this nature. I'm sure you've got better things to be doing than sitting here talking to me about your job performance. I know that I have. Would that be right?

I guess the situation for me is that every time you do something that is unacceptable, I'm going to choose to continue this consequence. I'm going to give you a hard time. Every time.



Now I'd rather not do that. But you're part of the choice and you're part of the consequence. When you comply with the same requirements that the rest of us choose to comply with, then I'll back off and stay out of your face.

I'd like you to think about the things that have happened to you over the last 12 months. The things that pissed you off. The things that got you angry. I'd like you to think about the choices you made and the reasons you made those choices that contributed to those situations.

Day in and day out you, me, all of us, make choices about things we do and things we say. Everyone of those choices produces some kind of consequence. If you don't like the consequences you are getting, change the choices you are making. You know that there is a saying – if you don't like the harvest that you are reaping then consider the seeds that you are sowing. It's all in your hands really. It's your choice

Think about this as well, Mark. Every action you take causes a reaction somewhere, sometime. If you don't like the reactions you are getting from me or others, you've got two choices. Change the reactions of the others or change your actions. Which is easiest? Which is within your control. Again, it's up to you. It's your choice."

Approach with caution

When people talk about a leader who they rate highly, the word 'approachable' is often used to describe him or her. What does being approachable mean? What does it look like to your people?

Whether other people see you as approachable is determined by how you respond to requests for information or context, to requests for the rationale behind a decision that you have made, to requests for help to solve problems, to people passing on undesirable news, to interruptions. It is determined by how you engage people in conversation, how welcome you make them feel, how important you make them feel, how you respond to challenges to your views on things, how you respond in times of stress (remember – anyone can hold the rudder when the sea is calm). In short, how you respond to people in their eyes determines whether you are approachable or not.

When someone approaches you about something think how you are looking to them.

Avoid frowning or sighing heavily or ignoring them by making them wait. Turn to them, smile, stop what you are doing and give them your attention. (If they



come to you with issues they should resolve, see 'Get the monkeys off your back' in Management In Action - Motivating).

Here are a number of different responses which send a clear signal about your approachability.

Helpful responses

- “Yes, Steve, I am busy right now. If it's not urgent, can we talk about it in, say, an hour from now. I'll call you when I'm free.”
- “Yes, Helen, I am busy right now, but if you think it's important enough to bring it to my attention, it must be important. Come in, sit down, let's talk.”
- “Hi Harry. How are things going? Gee... it's a while since we've had a chat. Say... have you got time for a coffee. C'mon, I'll shout you one and then we can catch up.”
- “Yeah, sure Julianne. Look I know it must look like a tough decision from where you sit. In fact, I don't like it much either, but let me explain the context and I'll think you'll see that given the circumstances this is the best way to go. I don't agree with it, but I accept the reasons for it so I am going to support it.”
- “George. Your face tells me that you don't think too much of what I've just said. I'd like to hear your view and understand your reasons. Look if there's a flaw in my thinking, I'd rather know than not know. Likewise, if I see a flaw in your thinking I'd like to discuss it with you. Is that fair?”
- “Hi Suzanne. Problem? No. That's OK. As I've been telling all of you for some time now, I really see that my main role is to support what you are doing. If you have a problem and you can't resolve it then it becomes my problem too. So make yourself comfortable and tell me the story.”

Unhelpful responses

- “No, no, no. I've just got a million things to do. One more won't make any difference will it?”
- “**YOU DID WHAT?** Aagh FOR CRYING OUT LOUD YOU IDIOT!”
- “Mary...**That's** my decision. Now if you don't like it, you'll have to lump it. Anything else?”



- “Look, Mark. If all you are going to do is whinge then go and whinge to somebody who cares. I’ve told you what I think and that’s it. End of story.”
- “For heavens sake Suzanne, it must be bloody obvious even to you that I’m busy right now. (Big sigh) What’s the problem now?”
-
- OK Mike. I’ve listened to your story and I really don’t know what you expect me to do. You’ve created the problem. I mean that was a pretty dumb thing to do wasn’t it? I really don’t need this right now you know. I’ve got some really important stuff to deal with at the moment. Is this really the best way for you to spend your time? Just get on with it.”
- “**What? When?** Just what I bloody well need right now. Thanks for nothing. Yeah, leave it with me. DAMN!”

<Fig 22.1 - 003.tif>Now listen here, old chap

[box]

Diligence is a great teacher.

Arabic Proverb

[end]

If you work in an environment where safety is paramount, strong leadership is required.

WHEN IT COMES TO SAFETY, it makes a lot of sense to employ a policy of ‘zero tolerance’. You might think that this is too extreme for your workplace. That may be true in a workplace where there are no or few hazards, where the likelihood of harm or damage is low, where the severity of harm or damage is low. But think it through. There are incidents of death or serious injury where the chance of this was one in a million. How will you go when explaining the death or injury to someone else when it becomes obvious that the cause was known and tolerated?



‘Sorry about that. We knew of this situation but we thought we would tolerate it.’

‘Well you win some and you lose some, don’t you? Ha, ha!’

Zero tolerance is a clear and simple policy to promote in the workplace. Set the leadership example yourself. Every time you see a hazardous situation or practice, speak up. Your people will soon get the message that you are very serious about safety.

One of the main reasons for a manager or team leader not to speak up when unsafe acts or non-compliance occurs is not knowing how to approach the conversation.

Here is a simple framework you can apply when you observe an unsafe act or non-compliance with a safety procedure:

- **Attention.** Get their attention safely. Wait until the moment is safe to distract them from what they are doing unless they are in immediate danger. ‘Steve. Excuse me for a moment. I would just like to get your opinion on what’s happening here.’
- **Observation.** Comment on what the person was doing safely and unsafely. ‘I can see that you’ve given some thought to doing this safely because you have got your boots and gloves on. That’s good. I see that you are not wearing your safety glasses. I’m concerned that you might cop an eye injury and do yourself some serious damage—maybe lose an eye.’
- **Explore.** ‘You’re an experienced worker, Steve. You know the drill. You must have a reason for not wearing the glasses. What do you say?’



- **Agree the action.** 'When you are doing this particular job, what do you reckon the correct safety drill should be? Why do you reckon this is important?'
- **Ask for a commitment.** 'Steve. Can you give me a personal guarantee that you will always wear your safety glasses when required in future? Is that fair?'
- **Thank the person.** 'Thanks, Steve. I appreciate it. Sometimes it bugs me that I have to wear safety gear too, but I do it because I know that it is in everybody's best interests. We go lax on one guy then others start doing it and then one day ... BANG! Someone is blinded for life.'

<Fig 23.1 - 195.tif>

My Way Or The Highway

There is no wisdom like frankness.

Benjamin Disraeli, 1804-1881, English Prime Minister and novelist, Sybil

You are just about at the end of your tether. You have tried every reasonable way to get this person, one of the 'difficult people' to comply with a particular practice, but to no avail.

However, you won't be beaten. You are going to give this 'dip' (difficult person) another opportunity to get with it. And you know that the best leader is one who can generate voluntary compliance.

This 5-step approach is adapted from the excellent and highly recommended book, "Verbal Judo – the gentle art of persuasion" by George J Thompson and Jerry B Jenkins (William Morrow and Company, New York). Dr George is a very interesting dude. He is a former college English literature professor, holds black belts in both judo and tae kwan do and, at age 35, became a rookie cop on the streets of Kansas.



As George says, “Nowhere did I learn these principles more clearly than on the streets as a cop...”.

Try this approach with ‘difficult people’. Put yourself in their shoes first to see the world the way they see it. Do this to help decide your strategy using this model. As hard as it is to accept sometimes, in any given situation everybody does the best they can according to their operating beliefs at that moment. The problem being of course that some peoples’ beliefs are limiting, unhelpful, under-developed, narrow, counter-productive, anti-social, etc.

You may use any or all of steps 1 to 4 depending on the situation and the responses you elicit before you move to step 5.

1. ASK (Ethical Appeal) and/or
2. SET CONTEXT (Reasonable Appeal) and/or
3. PRESENT OPTIONS (Personal Appeal) and/or
4. CONFIRM (Practical Appeal)
5. ACT (Determination of Appropriate Action)

1. ASK (Ethical Appeal)

- ☐ Speak calmly using a soft tone.
- ☐ Couch your words as a polite request.
- ☐ Describe specifically what it is that you are requesting the person to do.
- ☐ Use the word ‘please’.

2. SET CONTEXT

- ☐ Make use of the power of ‘why’.
- ☐ Explain why you are saying what you are saying.
- ☐ Give reasons, policy and procedures for what you are requesting.
- ☐ Show the connections between your request and the impact on others.

3. PRESENT OPTIONS



- ☐ Describe specifically the options available to both of you.
- ☐ Describe specifically the consequences related to each option.
- ☐ Paint a picture of your desired outcome from their perspective – describe how he or she benefits.
- ☐ Be clear that it is their choice.
- ☐ Allow them to save face.

4. CONFIRM

- ☐ This step confirms whether or not the person will co-operate.
- ☐ Ask, “Is there anything I can say or do at this time to earn your co-operation? I’d really like to think so.”

5. ACT

- ☐ Your choice of action will now be dictated by the level of co-operation.
- ☐ Be transparent with the way you arrive at decisions. Share your reasoning.

Horseplay (Monkeyshines, That Is)

It is better to bend than to break.

Aesop, c. 620 – c. 560 B.C., Greek fabulist, *The Oak and the Reeds*.

Humour is just another defence against the universe.

Mel Brooks, Comedian, writer and director, Rows, *The Book of Quotes* (Dutton, 1979).

(Burnout) is one of the greatest dangers facing us. If you lose your sense of humour and the ability to step back, you will go nuts.

Sam Missimer, Vice President, Clancy-Paul Associates, *Computer and Software News*, April 17, 1987.

Twenty five years ago, we had more intermittent stress. We had a chance to bounce back before we encountered another crisis. Today, we have chronic, unrelenting stress.

Geneva Rowe, Psychotherapist, *Newsweek*, April 25, 1988”.



Funny word 'horseplay' if you stop and think about it. HORSEPLAY. Horses playing? A play about horses? A play for horses? A play starring horses?

Horseplay means rough, rowdy or boisterous play (Collins English Dictionary). Or, if you prefer, Roget's International Thesaurus has buffoonery, buffoonism, clownery, harlequinade; clownishness, buffoonishness; foolery, tomfoolery; shenanigans, monkeyshines.

So my question is, "To what extent should a leader allow monkeyshines in the workplace?" Now I know that this is not a burning question in the minds of most managers and, if you're still with me, you're probably wondering where this is going. To tell you the truth, as I compose this very sentence I don't know myself, but hang in there and we'll see what happens. Have faith.

What degree of tolerance should a leader extend to horseplay in the workplace? None - zero tolerance - if personal injury, damage to property or equipment, violation of other people's rights or loss of quality, service, productivity or efficiency is possible.

However, consider this view. People at work are subjected to various degrees of stress. At its worst, stress is a killer. Less dramatically, it affects people's health, it affects relationships in and out of work, it contributes to poor decision making, it contributes to low motivation, it contributes to staff turnover, it contributes to inefficiency, waste, rework and errors and loss of productivity.

People need to be able to let off steam in the workplace. Laughter is the one of the best stress release responses available to we humans. (It may be available to animals as well – consider hyenas, monkeys and kookaburras as just a few that come to mind, and I reckon I've seen the odd dog grinning too – but it doesn't appear to be as widespread).

Humour, especially when directed at oneself, can be a great way to diffuse a tense moment or to allow an avenue for stress to be released. A happy, unstressed workplace is usually a more productive workplace. Provided none of the above consequences are possible, it will probably pay a leader well to turn a blind eye to the odd bit of horseplay in the workplace.

As the Readers Digest has told us for decades, and as was recently scientifically verified, humour is the best medicine. So next time you spot a bit of **harmless** horseplay show your human side and join in the fun. Respond rather than react. If the monkeyshines (what a neat word) transgresses the boundaries, put on your leader's hat and agree with your staff what is acceptable and what is not.



<Fig 25.1 - 069 TIF>

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He is author of the best-selling book series, '*You Lead, They'll Follow*. How to inspire, lead and manage people. Really.', volumes 1, 2 and 3 published by McGraw Hill and sold world-wide including translations in Chinese and Portuguese. Described by HR Magazine as "...an absolute treasure". Featured 8 times in *Management Today's* monthly National Top 10 Best-selling Books. His column, *You Lead, They'll Follow*, has featured weekly in *Business News* since January 2004.

These books are not about theory. They are about practice. They are based on discussions with over 5,000 managers, team leaders, service providers and operators dealing with real problems and issues in real time.

A Fellow of the Institute of Management Consultants, Daniel has worked as a management consultant / facilitator since 1979 in Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Dubai (UAE). He has worked with over 600 work groups (ranging in size from 5 to 100) from small, medium and large organisations, from board room and chief executives through all levels of management to frontline operators and service providers. He has worked in most sectors of commerce and industry, private and public sector from all States and Territories of Australia.

The list of organisations he has worked with includes BHP Billiton, Westpac, Hamersley Iron, AMP, NAB, ICI (Orica), Commonwealth Bank, BP, ANZ, Wesfarmers, Shell Oil, Woodside, John Holland Asia, Argyle Diamonds, Chamberlain - John Deere, Swan Brewery, Burswood Entertainment Complex, Singapore Prisons, Guthrie Group (Malaysia), RAC, Bank of Western Australia, Bank of Queensland, Suncorp, Fremantle Ports, Donhad, Underground Services Australia, Bank Danamon (Indonesia), Australian Broadcasting Corporation, Water Corporation, Department of Justice, Department of Immigration and Multi Cultural Affairs, Department for Community Development, Mindarie Regional Council, City of Wanneroo, Shire of Murray, Waste Management Association of Australia. He has also worked with many small businesses.

He has spent, literally, tens of thousands of hours listening to and exploring the important thinking, perspectives, factors, issues, solutions, strategies, behaviours and actions driving successful business performance, growth, continuous and sustainable improvement.

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