

THE KENNA COMPANY HELPING LEADERS SELECT & ENGAGE HIGH IMPACT PERFORMERS

How to Be a More Effective People Manager

Management is hard these days. Those of us who manage people are often torn between the people and our own tasks and projects.

Recently, I conducted a workshop attended by about 40 managers from the same company. They were from various departments and the topic was “*Improving Communication Skills*”. During the beginning of the workshop I asked the managers if they all had employees reporting to them. They did. I then asked them to describe their responsibilities to these employees. Their list was long. Some of the responsibilities included coaching, directing, helping solve problems, teaching, demonstrating, providing feedback, and so on. I then asked each of the managers to write down the average percent of time they spend each week doing those things with employees. The highest was 15%; the lowest was 0%.

Scary! We then talked about why it is so difficult to devote time to employees. They mentioned their own personal workload, meetings they are required to attend, lack of emphasis by their own manager, projects, teams or task forces they serve on, e-mail, voicemail, one or two ‘problem employees’ who take up a lot of time, lack of management training and a stack of URGENT stuff that shows up on their chair or in their inbox each morning.

I reminded the managers that just a few days prior I had conducted a similar workshop with many of their employees, and that I had asked those employees “*What do you need from your manager that you’re not getting?*”? The employees’ list had a familiar ring to it: goals, direction, feedback, motivation, training, coaching, attention, a pat on the back from time to time, a good relationship and more information about the company.

Continued on page two – **Manager**

Note to My (Invaluable) Assistant:

I’m done reading this issue of ‘*Promoting Excellence*™ sent to us by The KENNA Company. Please route it right away to:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

Encourage Employees to Communicate Profitable Ideas

I once worked for a great company called Marion Laboratories (now, after many mergers the company is called Aventis Pharmaceuticals). I call it ‘great’ because of its inspired leadership (especially the founder Ewing Kauffman—Mr. K), entrepreneurial spirit, and its strong culture focused on treating people fairly and rewarding those who produced results.

One entrepreneurial program that produced amazing results was called the ‘*Spirit Suggestion Program*’. The concept was simple. Anyone in the company **from bottom to top** could contribute suggestions to make or save the company money. People were encouraged to provide as much detail as necessary to evaluate and implement their ideas.

All good ideas were rewarded with cash or stock in proportion to the value of the idea, along with a certificate of thanks for sharing the suggestion. The awards were presented personally by Mr. K. Millions of dollars were made and saved because of the program.

How about your company? What are you doing to make it easy and appealing for people to speak up and share their ideas?

I then asked the employees about the implications of not getting these things from their managers. Some said they believe they'll end up quitting or moving to a different department, some said their performance suffers, some talked of resentment or bitterness, some talked about lack of loyalty. Most said it negatively impacts them or their performance.

Although the managers I'd met with recognized their responsibilities to their employees, they became very quiet upon hearing that employees identified their failure to spend the time as a management weakness. After letting the implications sink in, I shared a recent study that reported 74% of employees consider their managers 'poor' at people management.

So what's a manager to do? The first step is to realize the importance of spending quality time with your staff. They depend on you. This is true even at the upper levels of management. In fact, some of the executives I've coached over the years used my services because they weren't getting the advice and support they needed from their own managers.

Next, take control of your calendar. Identify tasks you are doing that can be delegated or even eliminated. Be brutally honest with yourself. Often, I work with managers who admit they are spending time on tasks that have minimal impact on their business. It's like a sales person continuing to call on prospects who never buy anything.

Employees need time and effective communication with their managers. And managers need to make time for this to happen. When communication is frequent and effective, stress goes down and job satisfaction goes up—for both the employees and the managers.

If you find any of this hard to understand or to implement, please give me a call. I'd like to help.

Joe McKenna

(816) 943-0868

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high impact performers**

www.kennacompany.com

Motivational Thoughts

Continuous improvement is better than delayed perfection.

- Mark Twain

You can educate a fool, but you cannot make him think.

- The Talmud

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation and go to the grave with their song still in them.

Henry David Thoreau

Success is the accomplishment of predetermined goals...so set your goals high.

- Anonymous

Key Personal Skills: Self-Management and Personal Accountability

“Based on analyzing the attributes (personal skills) on over 400 TriMetrix job benchmarks, self-management and personal accountability appear in the top 7 in the following job categories: Executive, CEO, Vice President, Technical, Customer Service, Managers, Supervisors and Outside Sales.

Summary: The facts are on the table. If you want to go down in history as a great achiever, you must master both self-management and personal accountability. If you are not happy with last year's results, I suggest you look at your talent along with your mastery of these skills.”

Bill Bonnstetter, CEO, Target Training Int'l

Note: The TriMetrix™ evaluates 23 Attributes, 6 Motivators and 8 Behaviors in individuals who complete the assessments. The TriMetrix is used to help employers understand job candidate fit for jobs plus better understand select workforces (example—a sales force) and individuals (for use in personal and professional development). Call us for more information on the products or training 816-943-0868.

**Assessment report samples are available
at our website under assessments.**

When Employees Go Bad: Stop The Cyber-Stalkers!

(Note: Although we hope this won't happen to you, it is part of the new reality)

You've fired an employee. Next thing you know, you're getting obscene e-mails and phone calls from people you don't know who say they met you in a chat room.

Sounds made up, but it's not. It's called cyber-stalking, and it's a new technique used by disgruntled employees to "get even" with their former employers or colleagues. In some cases, cyber-stalking can be just an annoyance. In other cases, it can result in big issues like Internet "denial-of-use" attacks.



If anyone in your company is being targeted by a cyber-stalker, take these steps to stop the harassment:

1. **Make a log.** Keep track of every occurrence including the date, time, and a brief description of what happened. For example: June 21, 2003; 3:35 p.m.; obscene e-mail.
2. **Gather evidence.** Try to trace the attack back to the harasser. E-mails can be traced by following the sender information back to the Internet Service Provider (ISP) and asking or subpoenaing the ISP to match the sender with its customer data, as well as to verify its connection logs. Chat-room stalkers are more difficult to pinpoint, but can be found with help from a well-trained Information Technology (IT) professional. Some companies even use private detectives with specialized skills in Internet-based evidence gathering.
3. **Determine a course of action.** Once a case has been built, decide whether to seek legal action such as a civil suit or criminal charges. Sometimes the best way to stop cyber-stalkers is to call them on the phone and say, "We know who you are, and we know what you're doing." Unfortunately, unless the cyber-stalking case involves fraud, computer crime, or a threat of physical violence, few law-enforcement officials are likely to become involved in addressing the issue.

- Adapted from *Network World*



Did You Get the Massage? Rewarding Results Works!

Hopefully, your organization is successful and your employees are working hard. If so, are you acknowledging their efforts? According to Abraham Maslow, a management guru, all of us need to feel appreciated.

One of my clients had a great way of rewarding results. She hired a Chair-Massage Therapist come to the office and give a 15 minute massage to every employee who wanted one. (Why would anyone NOT want a massage?) The owner of that 85-person group received written thank you notes (not just e-mails) from 20% of the staff! Many others verbally expressed their gratitude.

Think this thoughtful gesture increased organizational productivity and loyalty?

You bet!

Poor Hiring Decisions Cost \$

A 'poor hire' costs over 3 times the employee's salary for most companies. A pharmaceutical executive I recently met with told me every sales rep who leaves during the first 12 to 18 months costs their company \$250,000—in direct costs! (Recruiting, training, COBRA benefits and so on add up in a hurry.)

Even 'poor hires' who aren't fired and don't quit cost money through their poor performance, lost productivity and negative impact on morale.

Are you certain you're making the best possible selection decisions? Call us at (816) 943-0868 for a free consultation, or check out the hiring tips on our website at www.kennacompany.com.

When Employees Set Their Own Standards

When Andy Heck played football for head coach Lou Holtz at Notre Dame, he switched positions on the offensive line. It was a tough transition.

One day, watching game films with the assistant coach, Heck complained about a negative grade the coach gave him for a play that Heck thought was OK.

"Andy, I don't think you're an average player," the assistant coach said, stopping the film. "Do you want me to grade you as an average player so your mark will be positive? Or shall I grade you as a great player, in which case your performance on that play was a minus? You choose." Heck chose 'great player', and, according to Coach Holtz, "immediately elevated his personal standards."



Heck became Notre Dame's team captain and enjoyed a solid professional career with the Chicago Bears. Holtz believes Heck's response that day to his coach's question launched his remarkable success.

Suggestion: Challenge employees to set their own standards. Their motivation to succeed will be stronger than if they're just working on goals others have imposed upon them.

Source: *Winning Every Day: The Game Plan for Success*, by Lou Holtz, Harper Business, 10 E. 53rd St., New York, NY 10022.

"I know this much: If we get the right people on the bus, the right people in the right seats, and the wrong people off the bus, then we'll figure out how to take it someplace great."

Jim Collins in *Good to Great*

Note: Have you read *Good to Great*? If not, I highly recommend that you read it. That book can change your business... to something greater.

Website of the Month



www.entreworld.org

This is a premier online resource for small business owners and entrepreneurs. Large business will benefit, too. Its search engine delivers useful information, guidance, contacts and other resources.

About The KENNA Company

Founded in 1996, we provide leaders with services and products that help their companies select and engage high impact performers.

One of the services our clients value is a job benchmarking process using The TriMetrix System. This comprehensive set of tools can help you accurately benchmark jobs, assess candidates' strengths and weaknesses compared to those job benchmarks, and provide development tools to strengthen employees' impact.

Wondering if The TriMetrix™ System can help you hire employees that are a great fit for your job openings? Call now to find out!

(816) 943-0868

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