

Session: Managing Performance: Concepts and Realities

Panel:

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What are the biggest frustrations/challenges participants in this Roundtable face regarding managing the performance of employees?

- Long-term employees resistant to change
- Implementing a performance-based appraisal system
- Seasonal employee turnover
- Managing employees who are nearing retirement

Performance management is challenging; it comes with conflict. Remember the Mini-Max Principle: "The least you ask of an employee is the most you can ask of all employees!"

12 Workplace Conditions Known to be Associated with Productivity and Profitability

- Do I know what is expected of me at work?
- Do I have the materials and equipment that I need in order to do my work right?
- At work, do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?
- In the past seven days, have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?
- Does my supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about me as a person?
- Is there someone at work who encourages my development?
- At work, do my opinions seem to count?
- Does the mission or purpose of my organization make me feel that my job is important?
- Are my coworkers committed to doing quality work?
- Do I have a best friend at work?
- In the past six months, has someone at work talked to me about my progress?
- This past year, have I had the opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Supervising/Managing is all about coaching average and high achievers to be better; helping employees to reach the next level.

Managers must provide frequent and meaningful feedback in order to enhance performance and to coach employees to the next obtainable skill level.

Feedback Models:

Instructive Feedback Model

1. Describe the behavior.
2. Express how you felt about the behavior. (Helps to humanize the supervisor)
3. Specify what you want to have happen.

4. What are the consequences?

Positive Feedback Model

1. Describe the behavior.
2. Express how you felt about the behavior.
3. Ask how they did it. (To engage the employee in the conversation)
4. What was the positive effect?

Seasonal Employees:

- Crew leaders or team supervisors can be put in charge of the training for seasonal employees
- Establish performance standards for all employees.
- Everyone is expected to meet the established standard whether they are new or old employees.

How Establish Standard?

- Supervisors write own standards.
- Have staff help write standards.
- Have someone from Human Resources assist too.
- Important to get generation X'ers involved in helping write the standard as this generation tends to be very critical and must be involved in the process.

How do you know when it's time to terminate an employee?

-Evaluate if they are making progress up the learning curve.

-If an employee has an unsatisfactory performance appraisal, a progress plan should be created.

- Develop criteria for termination:
 1. Verbal warning (documented).
 2. Documented warning.
 3. Suspension/termination.

-If you continue to accept poor performance, you will lose your high achievers!

You should spend the most time with your best, most solid performers; when you invest time in your lowest performers then there is a managerial performance problem!

Post Summit Needs to Address:

1. Develop a system that reaches down through all the levels of an organization to communicate with the worker bees as to what the expectations are of them.
2. Prepare for the coming retirement boom by establishing better leadership development training programs for the young managers/supervisors.
3. How can we identify potential employees as the highly dedicated/motivated people when we are interviewing? Can we share interviewing methods of the State Parks and other recreation managers on the website?
4. How can we tap pre-retirees for their wisdom before they retire?

5. How can we better reward the technical staff who will never become supervisors? How can we promote good “technicians” who aren’t skilled enough to move up?
 6. A Best Practice may be a tool out there that helps organizations identify the “right” people who, with training/experience, will be ready for the next level of supervising people. Is there a test out there to determine what personalities make good supervisors?
 7. A regional workshop discussion could be about coaching/mentoring new supervisors, those in transition, to be good supervisors.
 8. Establish a hierarchy that works with training assistants into supervisor positions.
 - Task team assignments; work under supervision of someone.
- What are the **3 most important factors/ideas** to emerge from this session?
 1. Need for a mentoring program to coach new supervisors (across agencies)
 2. Managing – out under performers
 3. Limited discussion about the feedback models used/available to evaluate behavior/performance.
 4. Website could help network different training models for manager/supervisor positions
 5. Share interviewing methods on website.