

Managing Performance

Week 6

Managing Poor Performance & Coaching

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Part 1: Managing Poor Performance

Discipline and Grievance

- Are two sides of the same coin
- Discipline procedures – when the employee is allegedly at fault
- Grievance procedures – when the employee thinks the Organisation or manager is at fault and they have been treated unfairly

Contracts of service and for services

- A contract of service is an employment contract
- A contract for services is a self employed or freelance contract. There is no employment relationship or protection !
- This material now focuses on contracts for service (employment contracts)

A note about contracts of employment

- There are two sections in your employment contract:

Express terms – the written ones (for example – your pay and place of work)

But also

Implied terms – assumed to be there.

Employer and Employee

- The employer:

Safe workplace (law and common law)
trust and respect (not to undermine the employee)

- The employee:

To obey 'reasonable instructions'
To work 'diligently' and to further the employers business
To advance / guard Health and Safety
To work flexibly

Managing employees – ending contracts

- Conduct (see below)
- Capability
- Statutory ban
- Redundancy
- AOSBR – any other substantial business reason

Managing poor performers – a model

Do they know (have you talked to the employee)?



Discuss the issues informally with them

If no result - agree action / improvement plan

If not met – **identify the cause of the problem**

The cause of the problem:

Either the employee:

1. Cannot do the job (capability)

OR

2. Won't do the job (conduct)

The solutions:

- (1) Capability: train / coach. Review the job requirements
- (2) Conduct: **Don't train** – manage them; if necessary use the disciplinary process

Discipline procedures: Why have them

- To clearly set standards
- Top set expectations in terms of behaviour – so that employees understand the 'rules'
- To provide 'clarity' to managers
- To ensure consistency in approaches; and in dealing with staff
- To comply with the law –
- To put employees 'back on track' !

The case for a grievance process

- To enable alleged 'grievances / concerns to be communicated to managers
- To provide a method of communication and a process – to prevent a 'grapevine'
- To allow issues to be recognized and addressed by senior managers
- To prevent bullying / harassment etc

Managing discipline: key issues

- In writing
- Consistency – treat all employees the same
- The concept of 'Natural Justice'
- Role of Senior managers – example and practice
- Notify / communicate with employees (what will happen next)
- Refer to and use the guidance given by ACAS

ACAS Guidelines – note these are guidelines only

- Call a meeting
- Hold a meeting
- Give the results / decisions

The 'sanctions': the following are possible

- An unofficial warning
- Verbal warning – on files
- Written warning
- Final written warning
- Dismissal

Part 2: Coaching

Thoughts for Discussion

- Most employees already know what they should do and how to do it.
- Performance management is simply a matter of expecting tasks to be done correctly and on time.
- If the problem does not go away, the employee must be stupid, lazy, or have a “bad attitude.”
Therefore, punishment is called for.

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The Need for Coaching

- Too many managers use a negative approach to managing behavior.
- Alternative: conflict avoidance – and overload the good workers.
- Sometimes the only time the supervisor talks to a worker is when there is a problem.

Coaching – A Positive Approach

- An active and positive management approach.
- Employees should know:
 - What to do
 - How to do it
 - Problem solving
- Participative Management
 - Workers have a voice in their work.

PM and Coaching

- Performance appraisal
 - The first step
- Performance management
 - Employee goal setting
 - Coaching
 - Rewards
 - Individual development

Definitions of Coaching

- No single accepted definition.
- A mutual discussion leading to improved performance and positive relationships.
- A process to encourage employees to:
 - Accept responsibility for their actions
 - Achieve and sustain superior performance
 - Work as partners in achieving organizational goals and effectiveness

Supervisor's Role in Coaching

A supervisor:

- Should be motivated to see the work group succeed.
- Can use all information on hand.
- Has opportunity to coach and counsel.
- Has authority to carry out coaching.
- Is responsible for unit's effectiveness.

HRD Professional's Coaching Role

- Provides training for coaches.
- Provides training to correct performance problems.
- Provides organizational development support.
- Coaching *is* an HRD intervention.

Coaching to Improve Poor Performance

- Defining poor performance
- Responding to poor performance
- Conducting a coaching analysis
- Using the coaching discussion

Defining Poor Performance

- Definition: "Specific, agreed upon deviations from expected behavior."
- Performance must be evaluated against some standard or expected level of performance.
- Standards and expected levels of performance must be known by the supervisor and the worker.

Types of Standards

- Absolute
 - Same scale or standard is applied to all subordinates.
- Relative
 - Performance is evaluated relative to the performance of others.

Deviant Workplace Behavior

- Production deviance
 - Working slowly, leaving early
- Property deviance
 - Sabotage, lying about hours worked
- Political deviance
 - Showing favoritism, gossiping
- Personal aggression
 - Harassment, abuse, stealing, etc.

Responding to Poor Performance

- *Causal Attribution Theory*
 - People assign causes to behavior.
 - Different actions are likely based on internal versus external attributions.
- *Fundamental Attribution Error*
 - Assumes or attributes behavior comes from a cause *within* a person.
 - Supervisor may overlook other causes.

Coaching Analysis

- The process of analyzing the factors that contribute to unsatisfactory performance.
- Deciding on the appropriate response to improve performance.

Steps to Follow in Conducting a Coaching Analysis – 1

- Identify the unsatisfactory performance.
- Decide if it's worth YOUR time and effort.
- Find out if the worker knows that their work is not satisfactory.
- Does the worker know what is to be done?

Steps to Follow in Conducting a Coaching Analysis – 2

- Are there obstacles beyond the worker's control?
- Does worker know HOW to do the job?
- Does a negative consequence follow effective performance?

Steps to Follow in Conducting a Coaching Analysis – 3

- Does a positive consequence follow nonperformance?
- Can the worker do the job if he/she wants to?
- Can the job or task be modified?
- What if the problem persists?

The Coaching Discussion – 1

- Kinlaw's Approach:
 - Confronting or presenting
 - Using reactions to develop information
 - Resolving or resolution

The Coaching Discussion – 2

- Fournies' Approach:
 - Get agreement with worker that a problem exists.
 - Mutually discuss alternative solutions to the problem.
 - Mutually agree on actions to be taken.
 - Follow-up to measure results.
 - Recognize achievement when it happens.

Critical Points for Both

- You need specific objectives or goals.
- Goals must be mutually understood and agreed upon.

What if Coaching Fails?

- Transfer the employee to work that the employee can do.
- Terminate for sub-standard performance.
- Have adequate documentation of coaching efforts to support termination!

Maintaining Effective Performance and Encouraging Superior Performance

- Must reward good performance.
- Use:
 - Goal Setting
 - Job redesign
 - Worker participation
 - Job ownership

Manager-Coach Responsibilities

- Provide evaluation
 - Self-evaluation can be difficult.
 - People often focus on their weaknesses.
- Manager-coach can:
 - see the big picture.
 - make suggestions for improvement.
 - reinforce company values.

Skills Needed for Effective Coaching

- Communication skills
- Interpersonal skills

Communication Skills

- Writing
- Speaking
- Active listening

Writing Skills

- Acceptable grammar and spelling.
- Clear and concise style.
- Example: Facts, Discussion, Recommendation (FDR).

Speaking Skills

- Specific and descriptive.
- Focused on the issue at hand.
- Polite and respectful.
- Focused on the problem, not the person.
- Objective, not based on feelings.

Active Listening

- More than, "I hear you."
- Must listen for what the other person is trying to say.
- Specific techniques are needed.
- It is NOT easy!

How to Listen Actively

- Mirror back what the individual says:
 - “So you think that you are doing the right thing. Is there more?”
- Paraphrase and summarize:
 - “So you feel you are doing the job the way you were taught to do it, and that any quality errors are not your fault. Is that right? Is there more?”

How to Listen Actively – 2

- Use open-ended questions to get information:
 - Can't be answered with simple yes or no.
- Use closed questions to get a yes or no answer.
- See Tables 10-2 and 10-3.
- Active listening takes a lot of work!

Interpersonal Skills

- Show respect for the individual.
- Focus on the present and future.
 - Not on the past!
- Be objective.
- Plan ahead.

Interpersonal Skills - 2

- Affirm the efforts of others.
- Be consistent
- Build trust
- Demonstrate commitment to and respect for others
- Integrity, Integrity, Integrity!!!

Effectiveness of Coaching

- Hard to measure objectively.
- Can be measured in many ways.
- Some coaches ARE better than others.
- Others need to keep working to improve their coaching skills; good coaching skills *can* be learned.

Performance Appraisal Interview

- 1

- Major source of employee feedback.
- Gives employee the chance for feedback and participation in the process.
- Allows the coach to affirm his/her support.
- Provides opportunity for constructive criticism – both ways.
 - Focus on the problem, not the “personality”

Performance Appraisal Interview –2

- Time to mutually set next period's goals and objectives.
- Provides mutually understood basis for improvement.

Training the Supervisor/Appraiser

Effective training:

- Helps the appraiser to be credible.
- Promotes acceptance of appraisal.
- Helps provide accurate feedback.
- Assists the supervisor in demonstrating support for the employee.

Organizational Support

- Organization needs to support their coaching and performance management efforts.
- Takes time, training and money.
- Needs to be part of the corporate culture.
- Needs to be linked to compensation, rewards, and promotion systems.

Coaching in a Nutshell

- Worker participates in discussions.
- Worker helps set goals for improvement.
- Feedback is specific and behavioral.
- Coaches are supportive and helpful.
- Supervisor needs to know the worker's job.
- Coaches need support and training.

Summary - 1

- Managers must ensure effective employee performance.
- Positive coaching provides a great opportunity for individual improvement.
- Allows worker to:
 - accept responsibility
 - achieve superior performance
 - work towards organizational goals

Summary – 2

- Good coaches needs:
 - Effective communication skills
 - Effective interpersonal skills
 - Integrity
 - Effective performance appraisal skills
- Is it any wonder that good coaches can be hard to find?