

LEADERSHIP MATTERS E-ZINE

Leadership Matters is a publication designed to explore the workplace issues today's managers and supervisors face.

Effective Discipline

THE FIVE MYTHS OF DISCIPLINE

Most managers and team leaders don't like the idea of having to discipline employees. Even though they know it is desperately needed, they still can't bring themselves to do it. They operate in the world of the five myths of discipline.

Myth 1: Ignore it until later; it might go away.

Myth 2: Focus first on the positive and dance around the issue. (This is what I call the Criticism Sandwich.)

Myth 3: Give the bad news quickly, and get them out the door; it will be easier for both of you.

Myth 4: Don't document the disciplinary action, so it won't be on their record - you don't want them to get in trouble.

Myth 5: Once you've talked to the employee, breathe a sigh of relief, your work is done.

Keeping them Engaged

The truth is that you can't dance around discipline. You have to treat employees with respect, even when it comes to discipline. The employee needs to be fully engaged in recognizing the issues and being a part of the solution.

Learning and performance professionals should know that engaged employees can make a dramatic impact on their company's bottom-line. Employees can't do that if concerns about their work behavior are ignored. There is no way that they can be fully involved with the team.

A recent study conducted by ISR, an employee research consulting firm, shows that there is a significant relationship between business results and the extent to which employees stay committed in company values, feel pride in working for the company, and are motivated to go the extra mile.

Case in Point

Lilia and Jeff have been model co-workers in the past. Lilia developed a dislike for the way Jeff started to leave some of his work at the end of the day for her to finish up. They begin to exchange barbs with each other every morning and this leads to more heated discussions. The rest of the team is getting distracted and taking sides. Productivity is slipping, and the rest of the employees don't understand why their manager is not doing something to discipline Lilia and Jeff on their behavior. Lilia and Jeff start slacking off in the process, and the team is not motivated to keep working hard when others are getting away with things. The team is disengaged.

Avoiding the Rut of Managing Among the Myths

Having a practice of effective discipline can motivate employees to be engaged with clear and fair expectations to be followed. You can prevent continued negative behavior. And, when company rules for discipline are clear, you empower yourself and your managers to handle conflict effectively and increase company productivity with more engaged employees. Finally, you can ensure the company complies with legal requirements.

Elements Your Training Plan Should Include

As a manager or training professional in a position to deliver effective training on discipline, you should be looking at the following elements:

1. Discipline focusing on behavior
2. Teaching self-discipline
3. Using positive-discipline to encourage self- discipline
4. Documenting the discipline

Find out how to train your managers on discipline with the *Effective Discipline* program.

Bring your managers out of the fog of discipline myths using techniques of effective discipline, communicating concerns about behaviors, minimizing defensiveness, reducing conflict avoidance, and focusing on solutions that employees are participating in. Improve morale, engagement, and productivity!

Check out *Effective Discipline* and other programs such as *Essential Skills of Communicating, Resolving Conflicts* and the complete Supervision Series. Go to: <http://rpchr.com/online-e-learning.html>

Quote for the Month:

The reality is that employees treat customers exactly the way their managers treat them. - Fortune Magazine

With appreciation,

Ken Ivey
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Sources: *Effective Discipline* (2006), Vital Learning Corporation.

Employee Engagement Boosts Bottom Line. *Training & Development Magazine*, (Sept. 2006).

Any room for improvement in your business?
