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Helpful Resources From Your Employee Assistance Program

Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership in "The Leadership Challenge" by James Kouzes and Barry Posner have become a global industry standard for business leadership. According to Wiley publishing company, winner of the 2009 Forbes award for Best Big Company, businesses stewarding these practices saw a net income growth of 841 percent, compared to companies with anemic leadership, resulting in a growth rate of negative 49 percent.



1. Model Success

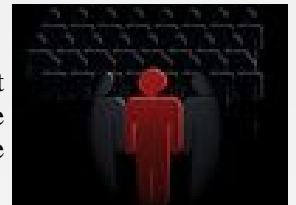
A leader sets the standard of excellence. A leader establishes principles as to how peers, customers and constituents are treated. A leader must inspire others and help them achieve smaller goals as the foundation for achieving larger goals. Successful leaders serve as an interface between workers and bureaucracy. They give their subordinates direction while fielding all negotiations with higher-ups.

2. Inspire Vision

Leaders have faith in themselves and others. They must believe that they can improve things. Leaders must create a shared vision for the future. A leader must get others involved and be enthusiastic about the company's future. A leader makes everyone involved feel like they are a part of something greater than themselves. A leader has an iron grip in a velvet glove. A leader must have a good degree of self-confidence and persuasive abilities.

3. Embrace New Challenges

Leaders do not accept things as they are just because they have always been that way. Leaders are not afraid to initiate potential improvements. Leaders accept the inevitable setbacks along the way and use them to further inspire growth. Leaders embrace the new and let go of the old. A leader will take calculated risks to achieve lasting improvements.



4. Empower Others

Leaders encourage collaboration and cultivate morale. They create an atmosphere of mutual respect in which people are treated decently on a consistent basis. Leaders enable others by emphasizing their strengths instead of being a scavenger of their weaknesses. Leaders ultimately make people feel positive and empowered to reach their goals. Leaders encourage people to ask for help when they need it without feeling ashamed. Leaders help to bring out the best in others.



5. Raise Morale

Leaders foster hope and commitment. Leaders make others feel good about themselves by recognizing their collective as well as individual contributions. Leaders motivate people to be determined enough to accomplish their objectives. Leaders let people know that they are an important and integral part of the whole. Leaders work to maintain positive, healthy, professional relationships that result in increased productivity.

By Tracy Stefan; March 04, 2011
eHow contributor

Deer Oaks EAP Services, your Employee Assistance Program, is always available to you and your dependents. If you are struggling with children, finances, or just want some practical advice on health or the mind-body connection, contact Deer Oaks at:

1 (210)614-2273 and (210)615-8880

eap@deeroaks.com

www.deeroaks.com

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What Video Games Can Teach Us About Work Motivation



Why will people happily spend hours playing video games, but lack motivation when it comes to their jobs? Millions of people get "addicted" to games like Angry Birds, but it is quite rare for people to become "addicted" to their jobs.

A recent study of employee motivation by psychologists Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer, discovered that the strongest source of motivation for many workers is the idea of "small wins" - making positive progress in your job. Making progress did more to enhance day-to-day work motivation than did extrinsic incentives like bonuses or other rewards.

In their new book, "The Progress Principle," Amabile and Kramer studied dozens of workers in a variety of companies, asking them to fill out daily surveys that asked them to describe one event from the day that stood out in their minds. They also assessed employees' attitudes about their jobs, their motivation, and performance. An analysis of more than 12,000 daily surveys found that small events, such as making progress in your job, solving a vexing work-related problem, or getting positive recognition from a supervisor or colleague increased motivation and satisfaction at work. On the other hand, a setback to making progress was de-motivating.

The authors recognize that they identified the progress principle that video game designers had stumbled upon long ago: people are motivated to make progress - to reach that next level, to advance to the next tier. Just as in games, people are happy and motivated by accomplishments.

Interestingly, Amabile and Kramer found that top-level leaders and managers were unaware of the important role of progress in motivating workers - ranking it near the bottom of motivational techniques.

How can leaders use this newfound "progress principle" to best advantage?

Here are the keys:

- **Become a Catalyst for Progress.** Keep employees moving forward, recognize the small wins, and confront problems and setbacks directly. A leader's job is to remove the roadblocks to progress and success.
- **Provide Support.** The leader's task is to support the team and make it easier for individuals and teams to be successful.
- **Monitor Progress and Provide Feedback.** Amabile and Kramer studied the best practices of leaders who support progress and provide managers with a checklist for encouraging daily progress.

Published on November 11, 2011 by Ronald E. Riggio, PhD in Cutting-Edge Leadership ;

Reference: Amabile, Teresa & Kramer, Steven. (2011). The Progress Principle: Using Small Wins to Ignite Joy, Engagement, and Creativity at Work. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

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Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have related to their employees and making EAP referrals. As always, if you have specific questions about referring an employee or managing a workgroup issue, feel free to make a confidential call to the EAP for a management consultation.

- Q.** I am a new supervisor who is replacing another leadership staff member who retired. Employees had a great deal of respect for my predecessor. How do I efficiently and quickly gain their trust? I know that this also is the first step toward gaining a great deal of respect in the future.
- A.** Understanding the meaning of trust can help you practice behaviors and set standards for yourself that will win the hearts and minds of your employees. Trust means reliance on and confidence in the truth, worth, and reliability of a person. Consider how these values translate into supervisory practice, and you'll gain trust. Every new supervisor has the battle half won when it comes to gaining trust. This is because employees want to be led by someone they trust. To get on the fast track, establish relationships with your employees that demonstrate you can be counted on for support when the going gets tough. When times are tough, your employees will have faith in your ability to support them. This will deepen their trust in you. Be a consistent communicator, along with making yourself accessible. This will remove the mystery between you and your employees, a frequently overlooked obstacle to building trust. Be truthful with employees. Doing so will build their confidence in you. Keep commitments and appointments and only promise what you are certain you can deliver. This will show employees that you are reliable.
- Q.** What's the difference between stress and pressure? Sometimes I think employees feel pressure at work, but not unmanageable stress. Employees should seek support from the EAP, but not for the "normal" sense of urgency that everyone feels to get things done, correct?
- A.** Stress, pressure, force, strain, and distress are terms frequently used in mental health and workforce-management literature to define different work-generated tensions and the degrees of severity faced by employees. These definitions are rather fluid among authors. Every employee experiences these work tensions differently and managing them is a learned skill. Encourage your employees to use the EAP for any perceived personal need, even if you judge the degree of work stress they face to be much less than what they perceive it to be. As employees adapt to stress, they tend to naturally elevate their tolerance level for more of the same. Your EAP can do the sorting out after they arrive for a confidential assessment and the help that they may or may not require.
- Q.** Do economic downturns affect employee safety and wellness? Can the EAP play a role in helping employees reduce injuries?
- A.** During periods of economic downturn, employers naturally place constraints on resources. Employees may be reassigned, layoffs occur, new hires are delayed, longer hours are worked, and taking over a coworker's assignments may happen more often. This added stress increases the risk of employee injuries from worry and anxiety about the future of their positions, job security, or roles in the company. Increasing communication between you and your employees can help. Keep the information flowing. According to Gallup, 30% of workers worry about their job security and even more about benefits. This is double the number of employees who worried about such issues in 2008. Encourage employees to use EAP resources and consider opportunities for the EAP to help your employees manage stress and anxiety.

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