

COACHING AND MANAGING FOR RESULTS

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Managing for results is a critical challenge. By keeping a few factors in mind, you can smooth the road somewhat through this complex process.

All performance is caused by just six main factors. When faced with a performance problem, make sure you have honest answers to the following questions.

- ✧ **Aptitude:** Does the employee possess the inherent ability to acquire and use the necessary skills in your company environment?
- ✧ **Skill Adequacy:** Does the employee have the right skills? Does the employee have a high enough level of skill?
- ✧ **Resources:** Does the employee have the tools, materials, space and TIME to do the job well?
- ✧ **Expectations and Goals:** Does the employee clearly understand exactly what needs to be done, by when, in what amount? Does the employee understand the impact of his or her work on the company and its customers?
- ✧ **Motivation:** Is the employee interested in this type of work? (Remember, being able to do something does not mean that the person is WILLING to do something.)
- ✧ **Rewards:** Does the employee care about the specific rewards and recognition that you offer?

If the answer to any of these questions is "NO", or "Not exactly", then it will be difficult to get good performance—even with the best coaching in the world. While all six factors don't carry the same weight for everyone, it is a fact that if even ONE of these factors is missing, then getting consistently good performance will be very difficult.

Finally, keep in mind that some of these factors are within your control as a manager, while others are controlled by the employee. Managers can impact the following factors:

- ✧ **Skill Adequacy:** provide training
- ✧ **Resources:** planning, organizing the work, buying tools and equipment, hiring more workers

- ⌘ **Expectations and Goals:** adequate training, clear job specifications, orientation and performance feedback
- ⌘ **Placement:** Managers must make good hiring decisions and place people in jobs that match their interests and capabilities
- ⌘ **Rewards:** Managers must find out which rewards are of real value and interest to the employee and provide them.

Factors that are in the control of the employee are:

- ⌘ **Aptitude:** Employees must discover their natural aptitudes and gifts and nurture them. They must also be thoughtful about choosing careers that are complementary to their strongest aptitudes.
- ⌘ **Motivation:** People motivate themselves. Managers may think that they motivate people, but really all that we can do is provide an environment and set of tasks that are compatible with the employee's needs and interests. If I am a person who is proud of my skills, give me a job that allows me to show my excellence. Even fear (such as threat of being fired) doesn't motivate good work. Instead, fear creates what is called "malicious compliance"--people who do only what you tell them as long as they think that you're watching.

IF WE WANT RESULTS, WE'VE GOT TO ASK FOR THEM

Sometimes, even good people fail to meet our performance expectations. Certainly, each of us can remember instances when our own performance fell short of what was needed or expected by our manager.

Faced with this situation, it is important for managers to remember the first, most basic rule of performance management:

If we want results, we've got to clearly and directly ask for them. If we don't get them, we must collaborate with the employee and figure out why, fix the problem, and then expect a change.

But, holding people accountable for results can feel harsh or unsympathetic. After all, management books tell us we need to be understanding and compassionate.

The basic idea we have to hold on to is a belief that other people really are capable of delivering effective results. It is our responsibility to be clear about our expectations and to work with people to put all the supports in place that they need. Once the supports are there (materials, training, clear outcomes defined, etc.) then it is up to the individual to perform the job.