THE SUPERVISOR/HR NEWSLETTER

Helpful Resources from your
Employee Assistance Program

AUG
18

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2018 Supervisor Excellence Webinar Series & Leadership Certificate Program

Managers/supervisors who attend 5 of the 6 webinars will receive the Deer Oaks 2018 Leadership Certificate. Attendance is captured when viewing each recording. There is no other registration needed.

Session Recording Links

Preparing to Lead Effectively
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/8571220193555391745?assets=true

Relationship Excellence for Managers
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/8528081955655269121

How to Motivate Employees from Different Generations
https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6833217767937705729

Building Partnerships

The ideal leader is a person who builds internal and external partnerships. These partnerships reflect new types of relationships among people in a wide range of roles.

Inside the Organization

Internal partnerships include direct reports, coworkers, and managers. More information on each type of partnership follows.

1. Partnering With Direct Reports

Traditional bonds between employees and organizations have changed. Employees no longer expect that their organizations will provide them with job security. As security has diminished, so has blind loyalty. Most high-potential leaders see themselves as free agents, not traditional employees. Their ideal leader is a person who develops win–win relationships and is sensitive to their needs for personal growth and development. In return, they feel a responsibility to deliver value back. They see the leader of the future as their partner, not their boss!

Managers of knowledge workers—people who know more about what they are doing than their managers—must be good partners. They won't have a choice! If they are not great partners, they won't have great people.

2. Partnering With Coworkers

Successful leaders will share people, capital, and ideas to break down boundaries. Since the CEO is rewarded by the success of the organization, the CEO knows that people need to be shared so that they can develop the expertise and breadth needed to manage; capital needs to be shared so that mature businesses can transfer funds to high-growth businesses; and ideas need to be shared so that people can learn from both successes and mistakes.

While these advantages are easy to see from the vantage point of the CEO, they can be difficult to execute. Leaders will need to develop skills in negotiation and win–win relationships. They have to learn to share people, capital, and ideas. In some cases, they may choose to experience a short-term loss so that the organization can achieve a long-term gain. In the past, many leaders have competed with colleagues for people, resources, and ideas—and been rewarded for "winning" this competition. In the future, leaders will need to collaborate as partners with coworkers.

3. Partnering With Managers

The changing role of leadership will mean that the relationship between managers and direct reports will have to change in both directions. Many leaders will be operating more like the managing director of a consulting firm. They will be partners leading in a network, not managers leading in a hierarchy. At the consulting firm McKinsey and Company, a director may often have less detailed knowledge about a client than a more junior partner. Leaders are trained to challenge their managers when they believe that the direction they are being given is not in the best interest of the client. This philosophy teaches leaders to have very responsible relationships with their managers.

Future leaders will work with their managers in a team approach that combines the leader's knowledge of unit operations with the manager's understanding of larger needs. Such a relationship requires taking responsibility, sharing information, and striving to see both the micro and macro perspectives. When direct reports know more than their managers, they have to learn how to "influence up."

Outside the Organization

Leaders must also partner with customers, suppliers, and competitors. More information on each type of partnership follows.

1. Partnering With Customers
As companies have become larger and more global, there has been a shift from buying stand-alone products to buying integrated solutions. One reason for this shift is economy of scale. Huge retail corporations do not want to deal with thousands of vendors. They would prefer to work with fewer vendors who can deliver not only products, but systems for delivery that are customized to meet their needs. Also, many customers now want network solutions, not just hardware and software.

As suppliers' relationships with their customers continue to change, leaders from supply organizations will need to become more like partners and less like salespeople. This trend toward building long-term customer relationships, not just achieving short-term sales, means that suppliers need to develop a much deeper understanding of the customer's total business. They will need to make many small sacrifices to achieve a large gain. In short, they will need to act like partners.

2. Partnering With Suppliers
As the shift toward integrated solutions advances, leaders will have to change their relationship with suppliers. For example, more of IBM's business now involves customized solutions incorporating non-IBM products and services. While the idea of IBM selling non-IBM products was almost unheard of in the past, it is now common—to the benefit of customers and of IBM itself. The same trend is occurring in pharmaceuticals and telecommunications.

In a world where a company sold stand-alone products, partnering with suppliers was seen as not only unnecessary, but unethical! The company's job was to "get the supplier down" to the lowest possible price to increase margins and profitability. Today many leaders realize that their success is directly related to their supplier's success. In fact, some include commitment to suppliers as one of their core values. They seek to transcend differences and focus on a common good: serving the end user of the product or service.

3. Partnering With Competitors
The most radical change in the role of leader as partner has come in partnering with competitors. Most high-potential leaders see competitors as potential customers, suppliers, and partners. Most organizations that rely on knowledge workers have varied and complex relationships with competitors. When today's competitors may become tomorrow's customers, the definition of winning changes. People have memories. Unfairly "bashing" competitors to ruin their business could have harsh consequences. While competitors should not expect collusion or unfair practices, they should expect integrity and fair dealing.

The six trends toward more partnering are reinforcing each other. As people feel less job security, they begin to see suppliers, customers, and competitors as potential employers. The fact that the leaders need to learn more about these other organizations, build long-term relationships, and develop win–win partnerships means that the other organizations are even more likely to hire the leaders. This is often seen as a positive by both organizations. As the trend toward outsourcing increases, it's difficult to determine who is a customer, supplier, direct report, manager, or partner.

The leader of the future will need to be skilled at managing these relationships. In many ways, telling direct reports (who know less than you do) what to do is a lot simpler than developing relationships with partners (who know more than you do). Working in a silo is simpler than having to build partnerships with peers. Taking orders from managers is simpler than having to challenge ideas that don't meet customer needs. Selling a product to customers is simpler than providing an integrated solution. Getting the lowest price from suppliers is simpler than understanding their complex business needs. Competing with competitors is simpler than having to develop a complex customer–supplier–competitor relationship.

The challenge of leadership is growing. Many traditional qualities like integrity, vision, and self-confidence are still needed. However, building partnerships is becoming a requirement, not an option, for future leaders.

Source: Chronister, M. (2015, November 18). Get more engaged! Six fun team building activities that work. Retrieved March 9, 2016, from https://www.teambonding.com/

Ask Your EAP!

The following are answers to common questions supervisors have regarding employee issues 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. The EAP phoned to say my employee was a self-referral but wanted to sign a release so I could learn of his participation. Nothing else was permitted. I am glad he self-referred because I was considering a formal referral for attendance issues. Should I still make one?

A. You could still make a formal supervisor referral, but you can also wait to see if the attendance issues clear up. Consider letting the EAP know about attendance issues, however. The release signed by your employee is obviously limited, so do not expect follow-up reports, etc. Note that the release may be rescinded at any time, leaving the EAP without the ability to communicate with you. It will not be able to acknowledge follow-through with recommendations or share status of participation. Still, none of this will interfere with your ability to manage performance. If attendance issues continue, decide whether to initiate a formal supervisor referral, in which you can request more structured communication (but not clinical information) or take corrective action, as you and your advisers deem appropriate.

Q. I read that rude behavior at work is getting worse. Is this overblown? Haven't employees always shown a bit of rudeness periodically? What can supervisors do, and is there a role for the EAP helping overcome this sort of problem?

A. Rude behavior is incivility at work, a topic that has received increased attention because surveys show it has grown worse. Approximately twice as many employees complain about rudeness today than they did 20 years ago. One poll showed that nearly half of employees intentionally decreased their work effort in response to rudeness, intentionally decreased time spent at work, intentionally decreased quality of work, lost time worrying about and stewing over incidents, avoided the rude person, and admitted declines in commitment to the organization. Twenty-five percent said they took out their frustrations on customers! Obviously, rudeness takes a toll on the bottom line. A positive workplace that reduces rudeness is not an accident. A strategic approach that includes education, awareness, and proactive and supportive policies, like those that address other organizational risks, is worth considering. And, of course, EAP referral when needed is appropriate. Start with a sit-down assessment with your EAP to design a customized approach that fits with your work culture. Learn more: https://hbr.org/2013/01/the-price-of-incivility.

Q. I think of the EAP as a productivity program rather than a counseling office, and I convey this viewpoint to employees. It distinguishes the program from a mental health service, which most people are familiar with. Can this view reduce stigma?

A. Your view of EAP is consistent with the business rationale for such programs and with that usually mentioned in policies that establish them. Such a viewpoint may increase the number of employees seen for personal problems, especially among troubled workers, some of whom pose greater risk to the organization. Direct appeal to reduce the stigma of seeking help for personal problems, however, is also part of the solution to maximize utilization and impact. So a balance of viewpoints is ideal. If employees only view the EAP as a "counseling office" for "personal problems," the stigma of seeking help can reduce motivation to participate. However, if the added focus on productivity improvement and work quality is well-promoted, these factors will work synergistically for the benefit of all.

Deer Oaks EAP Services