

Ernst Enterprises Newsletter



3 SIMPLE STEPS TO IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY

The Cost Is Small, But The Gains Can Be Huge!

Business owners and managers are always looking for that "magic bullet"... the one-thing that is easy to do and will improve employee performance and productivity. In their search for that "one-thing," owners typically invest in newer and faster equipment or look for some new employee motivation program but forget about the basics of people management.

THE 3 STEPS

Step 1: Set definite, objective, and measurable performance expectations for every position.

I know this sounds simple, but we have found in many businesses individual performance is often expressed in general terms, and not letting employees know exactly what is expected of them in way of quantity and quality of output or deliverable. This lack of clear expectations leaves the results up to the judgment of each employee. As a consequence employees may be delivering less than their capabilities or equipment capacity.

When working with a client, one of the tests we use is to ask an employee if they can (a.) describe meeting performance expectations and (b.) describe exceeding performance expectations. If the employee does not know what exceeding performance expectations means how can they work to achieve it?

Step 2: Provide employees timely feedback on their actual results versus expectations.

Without feedback, how can your employee really know how well they are doing? Without feedback we lose the critically important opportunity to recognize and reinforce the correct behavior thereby

encouraging employees to continue doing more of the same. With timely feedback we also have the opportunity to correct weak performance much earlier.

It is our experience that managers often lack the skills to be able to give timely, frank, and effective feedback. Rather than encouraging high-performance they end up demotivating employees by seeming to be overly critical. Learning how to give timely and frank feedback is a critical skill managers must learn, and Ernst Enterprises is experienced at helping managers learn how to master this skill.

Step 3: Alignment of recognition and rewards programs and/or practices.

Often time our recognition and rewards systems discourage rather than encourage and reinforce the correct behaviors and results. To determine the correct alignment requires the ability to look objectively at your existing programs or practices and assess both the intended and **unintended** consequences of those programs or practices. For example if you give across-the-board pay increases, what is the message to your high-performers and what is the message to your weak-performers? The message is easily interpreted by that individual performance and contribution are not relevant.

TELLTALE SIGNS

Do you have high performers and weak performers receiving comparable pay increases? Have you had weak performers in your company for a long time whom you haven't found the key to motivating? Do you find that you work-around some employees because they have "bad attitudes" and/or it's easier to avoid them? ***If your answers to any of those questions are "yes", you probably have significant untapped opportunity.***

Call Dawn Bremer today at 847/456-6334 to schedule your productivity assessment. We have the expertise and experience to assess the opportunities in your business and recommend actions that can improve your employee's productivity.

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Sincerely,



Mark Ernst

Ernst Enterprises, LLC

