

JUICY WORK NEWS

Updates from The Learning Advantage

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THE Learning Advantage

Mobley's Musings

I hear complaints from people about making a request and feeling like the request goes into a black hole. This is definitely a pet peeve of mine. How hard is it to acknowledge the request and offer a response? I would rather hear a 'no' than to hear nothing. At least with a 'no' I can find another way to have my request fulfilled.

When I worked for Hewlett Packard we conducted a customer survey and to our surprise found that customer satisfaction was less related to how quickly the problem was fixed than to how communication was handled. Customers sometimes had long waits on repairs but if they were kept informed of the progress they were more satisfied than customers who got a quick repair but no communication.

People complain about their managers being micromanagers. I ask if they keep their manager informed. The best way to deal with a micromanager is to share lots of information. Often the negative behavior is because they don't trust that the work will get done on time with high quality so they ask lots of questions to make sure that the work is getting done.

I realize that despite our best efforts we can miss deadlines. The key is to let people know as soon as you realize you won't finish in time. Even though they won't want to hear that you've missed the deadline, they will feel better about you than if you say nothing and they don't know if it is done or not. Not knowing is anxiety producing and does not build trust and positive relationships.



Strength

Development: Growth that Feels Good

All too often, employee development can feel like a search and destroy mission. Organizations train managers to identify, target and extinguish employees' deficiencies. And since everyone has weaknesses to some degree, any search is certain to turn up areas for improvement. But in our zeal to identify and correct deficiencies, we may neglect the opportunity to recognize strengths and build on them. Whether you are thinking about this as a manager or for your own career building on strengths is motivating and effective.

Development shouldn't only be about fixing the negative; in fact, I'd suggest that building on the positive is more important for

Words to live by are to under promise and over deliver.

Sandy



Sandy Mobley

Ask Sandy

A few of my clients have gotten bigger roles and have strong performers on their teams. They want to give them space to learn and grow and worry that if they don't manage closely they may fail. They were asking me how to think about the balance of autonomy and close monitoring.

Being someone who learns best by doing, I appreciate having the space and autonomy to try things rather than having someone more senior lay out the process and steps for me to implement. I have found I don't know what I don't know until I get into the

work and that's when I learn the most.

A consideration in letting people try something out is whether they are juggling glass balls or rubber balls. If you drop a rubber ball there aren't any long-term considerations. Dropping a glass ball is a different story.

Can you build in time to correct a mistake before damage to the person or to the company's reputation? If not, you can help the person learn by working with them along the way. Set milestones and deadlines for review of parts of the project so that you can provide as much autonomy as possible while making sure the deadline is met with high quality.

If the project is a rubber ball, let people try and be encouraging about their progress. Help them learn by asking questions to make them think rather than just telling them how to do it. Help people assess what they are doing well and where their learning edge is so they can be more effective in building new skills.

A key is to have your people feel trusted, challenged and supported.

Learning for Leaders – Give your people freedom to grow and learn in a safe and supportive environment.

Coaches Corner – Ask clients what they are doing that they could delegate to others. Find out how they view risk.

creating an engaged, productive team than working on a deficiency. Employees have more motivation to develop and deploy a skill that aligns with their career interests and their best selves. The payoff for leveraging strengths is higher for the organization and the employee.

Read more.



If you have questions you'd like Sandy to address in future newsletters, email them to sandy@learningadvantageinc.com

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