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Gallup Pakistan HR Newsletter

Management Edition:
Tips and Tricks for Effective Management of Employees

IN THIS EDITION

Welcome

to Gallup Pakistan's 10th edition of a series of HR Newsletters. In this series we principally aim to encourage empirical understanding of HR problems faced by organizations today**. By disseminating international and local research findings, Gallup Pakistan aspires to create a knowledge hub that HR practitioners in Pakistan can benefit from. In this regard, we would be borrowing extensive research from other member countries as well.**

In this edition we endeavor to bring to our readers an understanding of **Management** skills that can help managers handle their workforce better and utilize individual skills efficiently. The first article **"What Great Managers Do to Engage Employees"** from **Harvard Business Review**, discusses recent research from Gallup USA about engagement levels of employees and provides tips to managers in light of the results. The second article **"5 Biggest Mistakes Managers Make that Hinder a Lean Startup"** from **Fast Company** highlights some of the common mistakes that managers make when a company is trying to operates as a lean start-up, with limited capital and a focus on initial customers**.** Finally, **"When You Have to Coach Remotely"** from **Harvard Business Review** provides three practical tips to overcome the obstacles presented when managers have to coach their employees remotely**.**

Don't forget, your valuable suggestions and ideas are much awaited and appreciated. Also, we are open for partnerships with other teams working in similar domain. We look forward to a successful journey.

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Harvard Business Review

Contributor: James Harter and Amy Adkins

What Great Managers Do to Engage Employees*

Gallup USA's latest report provides an in-depth look at what characterizes great managers Organizations need to understand what managers are doing in the workplace to create or destroy engagement. In a study of 7,712 U.S. adults, Gallup USA asked respondents to rate their manager on specific behaviors. These behaviors – related to communication, performance management, and individual strengths – strongly link to employee engagement and give organizations better insights into developing their managers and raising the overall level of performance of the business.

"Managers account for as much as 70% of variance in employee engagement scores."

1. Communicate Richly

The study found that consistent communication – whether it occurs in person, over the phone, or electronically – is connected to higher engagement. For example, employees whose managers hold regular meetings with them are almost three times as likely to be engaged as employees whose managers do not hold regular meetings with them. But employees value communication from their manager not just about their roles and responsibilities but also about what happens in their lives outside of work. The Gallup study reveals that employees who feel as though their manager is invested in them as people are more likely to be engaged. A productive workplace is one in which people feel safe – safe enough to experiment, to challenge, to share information, and to support one another.

*This article has been extracted from Forbes Online resource and can be accessed at: https://hbr.org/2015/04/what-great-managers-do-to-engage-employees/

Great managers have the talent to motivate employees and build genuine relationships with them. Knowing their employees as people first, these managers accommodate their employees' uniqueness while managing toward high performance.

> ***"Employees whose managers hold regular meetings with them are almost three times as likely to be engaged as employees whose managers do not hold regular meetings."***

2. Base Performance Management on Clear Goals

Performance management is often a source of great frustration for employees who do not clearly understand their goals or what is expected of them at work. Yet, when performance management is done well, employees become more productive, profitable, and creative contributors. Engaged employees are more likely than their colleagues to say their managers help them set work priorities and performance goals. They are also more likely to say their managers hold them accountable for their performance.

3. Focus on Strengths over Weaknesses

Researchers have studied human behavior and strengths for decades and discovered that building employees' strengths is a far more effective approach than a fixation on weaknesses. A strengths-based culture is one in which employees learn their roles more quickly, produce more and significantly better work, stay with their company longer, and are more engaged. In the current study, a vast majority (67%) of employees who strongly agree that their manager focuses on their strengths or positive characteristics are engaged, compared with just 31% of the employees who indicate strongly that their manager focuses on their weaknesses.

FAST COMPANY

Contributor: Michael Balle AND Daniel Jones

5 BIGGEST MISTAKES MANAGERS MAKE THAT HINDER A LEAN STARTUP*

From focusing too much on costs to ignoring gaps in their teams' skills, managers often make these mistakes—and they're holding your lean startup back.

Lean is not that hard, to be honest—you just need to get a few things right!

1. TRYING TO SELL TO NEW CUSTOMERS RATHER THAN TAKING CARE OF EXISTING CUSTOMERS

Many managers feel that existing customers are owned, so they worry about acquiring new ones, but the truth is that reselling to a loyal customer is much, much cheaper than acquiring a new one. By reselling to every customer you can build a stable business, which will in turn attract new customers with word of mouth and reputation.

2. FOCUSING ON COSTS RATHER THAN CASH

Most of the reporting management structure is built on the P&L sheet and the fiction of the bottom-line. As a result, your managers are constantly fighting to lower cost decisions at the expense of generating cash for the business. Every one of these decisions burdens your company with unnecessary cash spends—and the chances are, you yourself are rewarding your managers for making your company slower and fatter on the fiction that they're "reducing costs."

*This article has been extracted from Forbes Online resource and can be accessed at: http://www.fastcompany.com/3028205/bottom-line/the-5-biggest-mistakes-managers-make-that-hinder-a-lean-startup

3. LOOKING FOR SYSTEMIC, SYSTEMATIC SOLUTIONS RATHER THAN TACKLING CONCRETE PROBLEMS ONE AT A TIME

The feeling is that, first, if it ain't broke don't fix it; but then when we've come to terms with the fact that it is broke, let's find a once-and-for-all solution. That's plain silly. Operational problems are local and detailed and we'll learn more by solving them concretely and specifically one by one rather than by looking for hyper-solutions to issues we don't fully understand. Don't reform: make it work!

4. IGNORING THE FACT THAT IT ALWAYS COMES DOWN TO INDIVIDUAL SKILLS GAPS

Each specific situation needs a degree of good judgment to be handled smartly and this requires constant training to deepen both the understanding of the fundamentals of the job and the context of every situation. By focusing on processes rather than accepting that a process is the sum of what people do, managers ignore their own employees and miss the most fundamental source of innovation and productivity: people's smarts and initiative.

5. DISMISSING MORALE AS A GAME-CHANGER

Just as existing customers are often considered owned, managers feel that employees work for them because they have to. This is absurd as history has proved time and time again how big a difference morale can make. How hard can that be? Every time someone acts on a new idea or decision ask yourself: Is this improving common trust or, on the contrary, damaging it? What you allow will continue.

Contributor: Mark Mortenson

When You Have to Coach Remotely*

Coaching is hard enough to do when you're sitting face to face with an employee. It becomes even more challenging when two people are working hundreds or even thousands of miles away.

It's challenging, in large part because you don't have a shared context. Not sharing context also reduces trust, which is one of the cornerstones of effective coaching. You lack information about the people on the other end of the line, and vice versa.

When you coach, you aren't just comparing stated objectives with a list of accomplishments. You're helping people better understand the consequences of their actions and see when there is a disconnect between what they wanted to accomplish and what actually happened. It requires you be able to put yourself in their shoes and interpret various situations. That is harder to do from a distance.

So what's a manager to do?

There is no quick fix. Even the most cutting-edge technology cannot provide all the information we get when we are face to face. Nevertheless, there are some things you can do to improve the situation:

1. **Get It Out In The Open**
2. **Formalize The Informal**
3. **Find A Sounding Board**

*This article has been extracted from HBR Online resource and can be accessed at: https://hbr.org/2015/04/when-you-have-to-coach-remotely

TIPS TO IMPROVE REMOTE MANAGEMENT

1. The first step is to have an honest and open discussion about the challenges that you (collectively) are up against. Acknowledging the problem gets you both on the same page, sets expectations, and helps you understand each other's behaviors.

2. To coach effectively from a distance you need to use structure and put in place processes to compensate for the things that don't come easily. First, set up and stick to regular meetings. Plan ahead and set a fixed schedule for how frequently you will interact. Second, spend part of your time together establishing a shared context. The purpose is to gain a more well-rounded understanding of what they have to deal with in their day-to-day work life.

3. If possible, seek out someone in your reports' location who can serve as a sounding board. This should be someone you trust who can help you understand the environment your distant report is in and assess whether your recommendations make sense in that context.

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