

HYDER & ASSOCIATES MANAGEMENT REPORT

Volume XVIII Number III

Summer 2007

Don't Let Office Politics Undermine **EMPLOYEE MORALE**



What's one of the chief complaints of dissatisfied employees? The company is too political. Partisan bickering can undermine workplace morale as surely as it undermines Congressional effectiveness. Is your department becoming a hotbed of office politics? KEYGroup, a Pittsburg-based consulting firm, suggests you look out for these signs of politics run wild.

• **RED TAPE**

Is the company bureaucracy getting in the way of getting things done? KEYGroup suggests a two-fold solution. First, review processes and procedures, looking for ways to streamline – especially when it comes to required levels of approval. Second, look for opportunities to empower workers and give them leeway to make decisions about how their assignments should be handled. Strive to become less process-oriented and more results-oriented.

• **CIRCUITOUS COMMUNICATION**

Rather than talking face-to-face, do employees and supervisors rely on memos and e-mails – or worse, gossip and innuendos?

The solution: Create formal and informal opportunities for conversation. Leaders should insist that workers refrain from gossiping about their coworkers. The first step to resolving any conflict should be a direct discussion between the parties involved.

• **FAVORED TREATMENT**

Do “teacher’s pets” seem to get all the breaks? You can avoid the charge that you play favorites by creating standard performance and reward criteria and making clear that employees are measured against the standard rather than rewarded subjectively.

• **LOG JAMS**

Have projects come to a standstill because bickering factions can't find a workable compromise? To break gridlock, gather the troops and give all sides an opportunity to state their case. Require the factions to carefully consider each proposal, looking for common elements. Then try to devise a compromise.

Another option: Give each idea a short-term trial run to see which way works best.

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COMPLIANCE CORNER

NEW DATA SECURITY BILL Approved by Senate

The U.S. government is moving forward on approving a new data security bill. The personal Data Privacy and Security Act of 2007, introduced by Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) would require businesses to inform consumers of security breaches, allow consumers to obtain “credit freezes” on their accounts and prosecute businesses that don’t properly protect consumers’ information.

Discover the Two Keys to Becoming a MASTER OF PERSUASION

When people talk about how to motivate workers, most of the time what they really mean is: “How do we persuade workers to do what we need and want them to do?” Many managers answer that question by suggesting, demanding, urging, threatening, cajoling or begging – and their efforts are usually wasted. The key to mastering the art of persuasion is understanding these fundamental motivators:



WHAT EMPLOYEES HOPE TO GAIN.

What matters most to your employees? Be careful when you respond because the answer will vary from person to person. Some people want more money; others seek prestige; still others want challenges, respect, influence or acceptance. If you can find out what revs each employee’s motor, you’ll have a valuable tool to use in persuading workers to step up their efforts.

WHAT EMPLOYEES ARE AFRAID TO LOSE.

The other major motivator for most people is fear of loss – and its motivator that may be even stronger than the desire for gain. Most people, to some degree, fear change and risk. But many are also driven by the fear of failure or disapproval, or by the possibility of disappointing someone they respect. Still others may fear coming in second best. Again, if you can find out what your employees fear losing, you can use the information to craft an approach that will motivate them to act in their own interest – and yours.

— Source: Brian Tracy

FIGHT BURNOUT by Treating These Symptoms

You cannot lead a team very effectively if you’re burnt out. The symptoms aren’t always obvious, but if you pay attention to your feelings and behavior, you’ll be able to treat the problem before it gets out of control. Here’s what to look for, and what to do:



- **FATIGUE/EXHAUSTION.** If you find yourself often feeling worn out and tired, take a look at how much rest and exercise you’re getting. Be sure to schedule enough time in your day to take care of yourself physically.
- **EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION.** If you notice that you don’t have the enthusiasm or drive that you once had, or that you don’t even have the energy to get angry when it’s appropriate, you probably need to take some kind of break to replenish your emotional reserves. If you can’t take a lengthy vacation, try spending some time away from work doing things that are meaningful to you – listening to music, being outdoors, visiting an art museum.
- **ISOLATION FROM OTHER PEOPLE.** Do you find that you’re not paying attention to the accomplishments of those around you, especially people who expect you to provide advice and leadership? Make a point of looking for their positive achievements and praising them for their contributions to the organization.
- **FEELINGS OF BEING UNAPPRECIATED.** When your own efforts aren’t recognized or appreciated, your personal morale will suffer. Look for ways to share news of your contributions with people who ought to know.
- **OBSESSION.** If you find yourself becoming too focused on a single project or area of your work, force yourself to take a break and do something different to restore your balance.

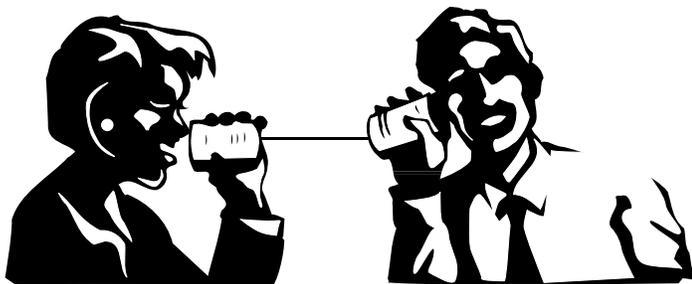
FAMOUS QUOTE

Employees who are unhappy on the job will pick one of two lanes. They will physically leave, or they will emotionally leave.

— Anna Krowiorz, Instructor at Lakeshore Technical College in Cleveland, Wis

SLOW DOWN YOUR LISTENING!

How many times do you find your mind wandering when someone is talking to you? No, you're not abnormal. And you don't have attention deficit disorder. Most people speak at an average rate of about 120 words a minute. But most people can *listen* about four times faster. So your mind fills in the gaps by thinking of other things. Be aware of this and *slow down your listening*. Force yourself to stay focused, so that you can really comprehend everything the speaker is saying.



TRENDS

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diverted from their normal duties, or contractors are hired to respond to data breaches, the company incurs additional expenses.

Kark also added that the increased public attention to security breaches is contributing to this price increase. "Forrester surmises that the two primary reasons for this increase have been the distractions caused by press coverage of data disclosures and the growing number of regulations and contractual obligations organizations must satisfy. Previously, when a company had a data breach, a response team would fix the problem and test the mitigation, and then the company would resume normal activities. Now we have to spend time on public relations efforts, as well as assuring both customers and auditors that new processes are in place to guard against such breaches in the future."

— *Source: Information Week, April 11, 2007*



SHARON HYDER, CMC, CRM ANSWERS YOUR MANAGEMENT QUESTIONS



How can you ensure that employees are receptive to feedback – especially when it's negative?

Giving negative feedback is usually very difficult for most managers. Try the technique of asking the person permission to offer your criticism.

By opening the discussion with "May I talk to you about how you handled that last customer?" or "May I suggest another way that you could approach this project?" you grab your employees' attention and make them a willing party to what you're about to say.



Hyder & Associates

BULLETIN BOARD

Hyder & Associates is celebrating its 23rd year in business this summer.

Sharon Hyder, founder of Hyder & Associates, thanks all our clients who made it possible.

Trends...

Security Breaches Cost \$90 to \$305 Per Lost Record



While security breaches can cost a company dearly, when it comes to a marred public image and a loss of customer confidence, the actual financial costs can be staggering.

The average security breach can cost a company between \$90 and \$305 per lost record, according to a new study from Forrester Research. The research firm surveyed 28 companies that had some type of data breach.

Senior Analyst, Khalid Kark in a report wrote: “After calculating the expense of legal fees, call centers, lost employee productivity, regulatory fines, stock plummets, and customer losses, it can be dizzying, if not impossible, to come up with a true number. Although studies may not be able to

determine the exact cost of a security breach in your organization, the loss of sensitive data can have a crippling impact on an organization’s bottom line, especially if it is ill-equipped, and it’s important to be able to make an educated estimate of its cost.”

Kark noted in the report that “it may seem like an impossible task to put a dollar value to your data breach exposure, given the variance in the numbers reported in the media,” he wrote. “You will be doing a service to your business if you are able to make reasonable assumptions about your business and develop an estimate.” Calculating the cost of a breach is murky territory and Kark did the survey to shed some light on the costs associated with breaches, which seem to be reported with increasing frequency.

A recent Forrester survey found that 25% of respondents do not know, or do not know how to determine, the cost of data security breaches. Kark said the majority of organizations will incur a wide array of associated costs, sometimes significant enough to even put them out of business. Lost employee productivity also is a significant cost. When employees are

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MANAGEMENT REPORT

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