

Management Ideas



FOR STILL BETTER

RESULTS

RELATIONS

REPUTATION

a monthly newsletter to key executive-leaders
on practices, possibilities and ideas generally
for stepped up performance
edited by
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on problem-solving and creative ideas

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3122 THE GATEKEEPERS: In one major corporation, for example, a vice-president officially appointed gatekeepers in letters by stating:

In every large organization there are a few individuals who have a special talent for knowing what is going on in a particular technical field and in keeping others informed of these advances. These have come to be known in management literature as "Gatekeepers." We have begun a program to identify and recognize these individuals....

...I would like you to write a two-or three-page memo on recent activities and advances in your field of interest. This should not be a primer, but should be addressed to someone already familiar with your area. During the year, as many advances are made and come to your attention, I would appreciate a short note outlining what has happened and what effects this will have on (the company) as you know it.

Get acquainted with those others in the Corporation in your field and include them on your distribution list of documents you generate your own divisional use.

3123 PREVENTING CANCER: Fifty per cent of cancer incidents can be avoided, says Cancer specialist Dr. M.S. Venkataraman. **How to do it,** he tells, in the form of a readable booklet, available in English and Tamil. A page thereof is given below. Cancer Institute, Adyar, Madras 600 020 will give permission for any of the Readers to print this booklet in local languages and distribute widely:

CANCER CAN BE CONTROLLED BY

1. AVOIDING TOBACCO
2. SEXUAL HYGIENE
3. REDUCING ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL CANCER - PRODUCING AGENTS
4. DIETARY FACTORS
5. SCREENING PROCEDURES

YES, AND FIFTY PERCENT OF CANCER CAN BE AVOIDED THUS.

DO'S AND DONT'S IN CANCER PREVENTION

1. Avoid tobacco in all forms
Keep your mouth and teeth clean
Avoid Bad Dentures
Attend to unhealthy and sharp teeth
This will help in avoiding oral, throat, lung, foodpipe cancers.
2. Maintain proper genital Hygiene
Beget one or two children and not more
Have treatment for genital infection
Have an annual checkup and PAP Smear
This will help prevention of uterine cancer
3. Learn the technique of self examination of the Breast.
If there is a family history of Breast cancer get yourselves screened,
Have an annual check up.
Breast cancers can thus be detected early.
4. Balanced diet, rich in fibres, green vegetables and low in fat may help in lowering the incidence of stomach and intestine cancers.
5. alcohol should be consumed, if at all, in moderation
6. Unless necessary, avoid having unnecessary radiation exposures like X-ray.
7. Avoid over-weight and anaemia.

3124 HUMAN PERFORMANCE:UNCONVENTIONAL WAYS: Unconventional techniques for boosting human performance - such as sleep learning, mental practice of motor skills, and certain components of accelerated learning programmes are being seriously considered.

Research evidence has shown that material presented to subjects when they were in lighter stages of sleep seemed to bolster their ability to learn or recall the same material when awake.

Also, mental practice, such as watching champion athletes perform and mentally repeating their moves, "is effective in enhancing the performance of motor skills: "Mental practice helped to boost subsequent performance of those skills over the performance of control groups. Scientific evidence suggests that mental practice results in even greater gains when combined with physical practice.

Parapsychological techniques such as extrasensory perception and "mind-over-matter" abilities have not yet been scientifically supported.

Some unconventional performance-enhancement techniques are given a mixed rating. For example, studies reviewed by the report show that biofeedback - a technique that allows an individual to monitor his or her physiological state and correlate it with learning or physical performance - helped reduce muscle tension. These studies, however, did not show any reduction in general emotional or mental stress, a benefit often claimed for the technique.

3125 MANAGING CREATIVE PEOPLE: According to the noted management psychologist, Dr. Mortimer R. Feinberg the following guidelines will help manage creative people.

PROBLEM

You've just brought on board a smart, very creative new employee. She's done a great job so far, but you're worried that she's not happy with the job. Her response to the criticism, praise and incentives that you offer is different from that of other staff members.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given their special talents, creative people often require special handling. In many cases they are at their best when they "break the rules" - when they extend or reshape policy and reinterpret or even overlook instructions. But most observers agree that they do need good supervision. Here are five guidelines for managing creative types:

1. GEAR THE PRESSURE TO GOALS. Many creative people need the reassurance of "gentle pressure on the reins." But this is different from the kind of pressure that forces haste or nonstop concentration.

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Creative people often work best in fits and starts. They need to set their own pace. Fixing some definite goals and an approximate time limit is enough to provide the necessary sense of urgency.

2. LET THEM KNOW WHERE THEY STAND. Creative employees need feedback constructive criticism, for example, or praise for good work. They hunger for evaluations of their efforts. The problem is that appraisal of creative efforts is often difficult because results may be indefinite or long-postponed.

Your best tactic is to talk informally with your creative people from time to time, demonstrating your interest in their problems. Also, let them know the importance of the results of their efforts. And convey the reactions of customers and others whenever such information becomes available.

3. DEFEND THEM AGAINST THE ATTACKS OF OTHERS. If you've decided that putting up with some of your creative employees' eccentricities or even shortcoming is worth it, you may have to defend that decision to the rest of your staff. Ofcourse, there's a limit to this. But when a defense seems appropriate, list their accomplishments, especially ones related to the project at hand.

4. GIVE THEM TIME ALONE. Often, creative people's best ideas occur to them during an idle period following concentration. That's when their unconscious mind presents their conscious mind with insight and illumination.

5. SHOW TOLERANCE FOR FAILURE. A truly creative atmosphere requires that people be able to present radical, even unworkable ideas without being judged harshly. When you ask people to experiment with ideas and to innovate and create, you must give them a wide margin for error. If you do not, their fear of failure invariably will prevent true initiative. Remember that for truly creative people, many apparent failures are merely steps toward eventual success. Remember, too, Thomas Edison's remark on his, 1,000 failures to develop the light bulb: "Now I know 1,000 ways that it will not work."

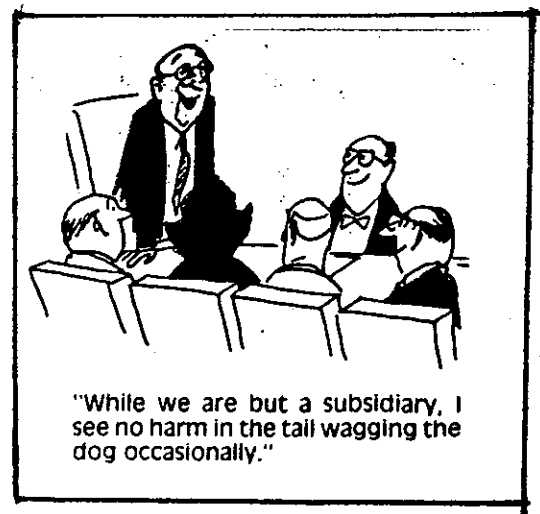
3126 LAUGHING MATTER?

A 10-year-old boy was protesting to his mother when he was told he had to take his younger brother fishing with him.

"The last time I took him we didn't catch any fish," was his complaint.

"I'll talk to him," replied his mother, "and I promise he won't make any noise, this time."

"It wasn't the noise, Mom," the boy replied. "He keeps eating all the bait."



Nothing can deter him

MADRAS.

Mr. Visheshwar Datt Saklani, the short, frail-framed Chipko volunteer, is highly respected in the Tehri-Garhwal district of Uttar Pradesh. The Union Ministry of Environment and Forests honoured him with the Vrikshamitra award in 1986. It was a recognition for his determined effort to raise towering oak forests on the denuded hills, around his native village.

But hardly 30 years ago, when he began his planting mission in Pujargao village in Satyon he was ridiculed by the people of the region. They considered it a useless effort, and called him a "mad forester". There were objections from the forest personnel also. "It was a tough challenge to plant the hills with oak, and to protect them. I had several encounters with the people while guarding the trees, and was beaten up on several occasions," recounted the 67-year-old veteran.

The oaks he planted years ago, are stately trees today, and the lofty oak grove stands as the sentinel of the mountain village. Its verdant canopy bears the batterings of the torrential rain, and the spongy ground cover formed by the fallen leaves holds the run-off water for future use.

Clothing the 400-hectare steep slopes overhanging the village, a mini-forest with 45,000 trees protects and binds the thin layer of soil, retains moisture and provides fodder, firewood and leaf-manure for the people. "It prevents landslips and provides us water even during the hottest months when all the springs in the region turn bone-dry. Our women need not trek long distances to fetch water," said Mr. Saklani. His creased face got animated, and hands wove patterns in the air as he spoke.

The forest has created a perennial spring, which is the sole succour for the villagers. They now look at the forest with awe and reverence. Many others in the district want to emulate his example. Those who scoffed at him and opposed him are his admirers today. "The broad-leaved oaks directly meet the day-to-day needs of fodder and firewood. The water resources in the Himalayas are based on trees such as oak and rhododendrons, which provide the most productive humus to retain moisture," he said. Conifers and non-fodder species like chirpine and deodars, according to him are attractive to commercial interests but are of no use for the villagers.

Mr. Saklani started planting oak in the barren slopes with a missionary zeal to create a memorial for his late wife and brother. His brother was a revolutionary freedom fighter, who was shot dead when he was 29 years old. Mr. Saklani's



Visheshwar Datt Saklani

wife, who was suffering from tuberculosis, was ostracised by the people, and the couple moved into the forest nearby. The oak trees gave her fresh air to breathe, and brought great relief to her. Mr. Saklani loved the tall oak trees that comforted his ailing wife. After sometime, she died.

The saddened Mr. Saklani vowed to dedicate his life to planting oak trees in memory of his beloved wife and brother. It all began in the Fifties. Everyday, he would sow the seeds for raising nursery, plant three to four seedlings and look after the earlier planted ones. He would also encourage others to grow trees. There were plenty of vacant slopes (panchayat, private and forest lands), and he continues his work religiously. In 1985, he brought about 50 kg of oak seeds and was planting the young seedlings in new areas. An active Chipko volunteer, he goes to all the villages in the hill district on foot and mobilises the children and women for the afforestation movement. He is continuing this noble task despite opposition from certain forest officials and influential villagers in the region. — Agriculture Correspondent.