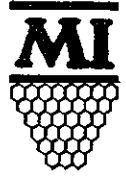


Management Ideas



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
N. H. ATTHREYA MA PhD
author, educator & consultant
on problem-solving and creative ideas

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3153 MOTHER TERESA ON LOVE
- 3154 IACocca'S COMMANDMENTS OF MANAGEMENT
- 3155 WHEN IN THIS DILEMMA
- 3156 HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT...
- 3157 LAUGHING MATTER?

3153 MOTHER TERESA ON LOVE: Love is the first material Mother Teresa uses in serving the poor of Calcutta, the calling for which she was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1979. She says we should look to our families for love because it begins at home:

Do we really know the poor in our own families? Maybe they are not hungry for bread and are not homeless, but are you sure there is no one who feels unwanted, unloved? Where are your father and your mother?

One night we saw a boy with beautiful long hair sitting on the sidewalk. I said to him, "You should be with your parents. This is not a place for you on this cold night." He looked straight into my eyes and said, "My mother doesn't want me because I have long hair." Did that mother not know the poverty, the hunger that existed in her own home?

This is why I ask, do we really know our poor? Do we really know how poor WE are? Let us look at our own families, for love begins at home and in our own communities.

Sometimes I find it difficult to smile at my Sisters. It is easier to smile at people outside than to smile inside your own home. I remember when more than 40 professors came to our Motherhouse. These professors asked, "Tell us something, Mother, that will change our lives." And I said, "Smile at each other." Then one of the professors asked, "Tell me, Mother, are you married?" And I said, "Yes, and I find it sometimes very difficult to smile at Jesus, for He can be very demanding!"

3154 IACOCCA'S COMMANDMENTS OF MANAGEMENT: In his second book "Talking Straight" Lee Iacocca talks of eight commandments of management. "They're my distillation of fortytwo years in the business world."

1. Hire the Best. Nothing will make a CEO look better than a talented management team. When I'm asked about how I turned Chrysler around, I always make the point that I didn't do it by myself-a lot of smart, dedicated people did it. Actually, since according to Time Magazine my ego is as big as all outdoors, I should probably take credit for having done all of it by myself.
2. Get Your Priorities Straight and Keep a Hot List of What You're Trying to Do. No matter how complex a business is, and ours is pretty complex, I believe you should be able to write down your top priorities on a single sheet of 8½-by-11 paper. It's always amazed me to see how many companies, even small ones, devote hours of effort and literally tons of paper to detailed plans of what they want the company to do over time. There are a lot of different names for them-Long-Range Strategic Plans. Ten-Year Business Plans, Five-Year Profit Plans, and so forth. I guess if you've got a big staff and lots of extra time on your hands, it's not going to hurt you. But I've never seen a long-range business plan that couldn't be boiled down to a single page of priorities.
3. Say It in English and Keep It Short. Everyone has seen examples of bureaucratic double talk in written communication. You know what I mean-a long-winded document that takes the reader through two dozen options and alternatives and ends up with any one of six or seven different conclusions. Most of us associate this phenomenon with government bureaucracies. But take my word for it, a lot of double talk exists in corporations as well.

There are three factors behind the mumbo jumbo. First, the almost uncontrollable desire to tell all you know on any given subject. Second, the love of adjectives and adverbs over nouns and verbs. And third, the desire to impress your audience with your depth of vocabulary. I once read a fifteen-page paper that was tough to understand. I called in the author and asked him to explain what was in the tome he had written. He did it in two minutes flat. He identified what we were doing wrong, what we could do to fix it, and what he recommended. When he finished I asked him why he didn't write that in the paper the way he'd just said it to me. He didn't have an answer. All he said was: "I was taught that way." And he was an M.B.A. to boot.

Write the way you talk. If you don't talk that way, don't write that way.

4. Never Forget the Line Makes the Money. The political maneuvering between staff and line organizations is a wasteful and costly exercise. Every chief executive has got to come to grips with how he parcels out authority and accountability between these two groups. So I have a single axiom that helps me remember how to managae these often conflicting organizations.

When the chips are down, it's the line organization that makes the money; the staff doesn't make a dime. I view the role of the staff as primarily to help the CEO do his job and to act as a catalyst to the line. If you really want to get a line group motivated, just float up a "staff idea" with the right amount of "Why didn't you guys think of that?"

5. Lay Out the Size of the Playing Field. I'm a strong believer in letting line operations "operate"-delegating to good people and then letting them do the job. But, you might ask, if the key managers are running the business, what's left for the CEO to do?

I think a big part of my job is what I call "defining the envelope," or setting the limits within which line management can operate on a relatively freewheeling basis. It's similar to a parent telling a child: "Play in the backyard but don't go past the gate and don't climb over the fence and don't invite anyone over." The child has the run of the yard, but the parent has prescribed limits on where he can go and what he can do.

As a CEO, I set limits. I set limits on the total amount of capital that can be spent-but not necessarily on how to spend it. I set limits on the number of executives I want on the payroll-but not who they are. I set limits on the amount of R & D spending I'm willing to support-but not the projects that are funded. And I establish the company priorities, which represent the limits or parameters that set the direction of the whole line effort.

6. Keep Some Mavericks Around. All CEOs should worry about getting fed a single point of view: that is, a party line that has been filtered, refiltered, homogenized, pasteurized, and synthesized-what we call "cooking the pudding." Without differences in viewpoint, and openness to constructive expression of these differences, a corporation can be led into a lot of bad decisions. There is a real risk in telling the CEO only what he wants to hear and never having any disagreements in his presence.

To guard against this risk, I've always tried to keep some smart people around me who are contrarians, who for whatever reason will not accept very much at face value and are not impressed by the rationale that something is being done in a certain way because it's always been done that way.

7. Stay in Business During Alterations. A lot of CEO surveys indicate that long-range planning and strategic planning are seen as among the most important responsibilities for a CEO. I'm not going to argue with that, but I've always felt that making sure you're maximizing earnings today is also a key responsibility. It's easy, I think, for an organization to get mesmerized by long-range plans. On paper, at least, they're neat and squared-off-and always work.

8. Remember the Fundamentals. I have always been a fan of Vince Lombardi, the late great leader of the Green Bay Packers. Although his teams had a fairly versatile offensive game, at least for that period of time, their real strength lay in their adherence to the fundamentals of playing solid football: blocking and tackling, good play execution, and mental discipline. They weren't the fanciest football team of their day, but to watch them run a power sweep with the linemen pulling out and blocking was to see a thing of beauty. It was also a devastatingly effective offensive weapon.

When all is said and done, management is a code of values and judgments. And that's why, in the end, you have to be yourself.

Which brings me to the best rule of management: Pick a style that you're comfortable with and stick with it. You can have role models, but don't try to be somebody else. Be yourself, stay natural and dammit, smile once in a while!

3155 WHEN IN THIS DILEMMA: When you have to promote one key staff member over another, you also may be choosing between one resignation letter and the other. The person who's been passed over very often feels slighted and would rather leave than continue along what she considers to be a limited career path.

So how do you keep a valuable employee whom you've passed over? Here is some practical advice from Dr. Mortimer R. Feinberg:

* Take the bull by the horns. Don't hedge. The employee needs to hear your true assessment of her potential. To downplay the issue or to delude the disgruntled employee would be a mistake. It ultimately harms not only the person being passed over but, more important, your own credibility. This is hardly license to be cruel or harsh. Rather, you want to go out of your way to be fair and open yet at the same time succinct and tactful. You want to put this troublesome personnel issue behind you so that the department can move forward. In all such matters the best interests of the company have to take priority.

* Stop the bull in its tracks. Fuller's decision to decline all of the offers that would have allowed him to remain with the administration was extreme. You often can persuade a passed-over employee to stay by using a carefully constructed and properly presented offer.

When dealing with the passed-over employee, you want to convince her that it's really to her advantage to remain in your tent. When you sit down to meet with her, indicate how far she already has advanced and suggest, while making no specific promises, how much further she conceivably can progress.

* Guide the bull to greener pastures. Before you meet with the passed-over employee, try to come up with some alternative assignments and opportunities in-house.

The alternative job responsibility should be credible and challenging. If the individual is looking for more company or industry exposure, as many upwardly mobile employees are, see if the alternative can't offer some of this improved visibility.

Many of the best alternatives may lie outside your own department. Offer to speak to managers of other appropriate departments on the employee's behalf, and then do it as soon as possible. If a lateral move to another department can be arranged, at least the employee will remain with the company.

Travel opportunities are another related inducement. To the East Coast staff member who feels hopelessly desk-bound, the chance to travel to a West Coast regional office or to attend a national sales conference in Hawaii can be highly appealing.

A final note of caution. Many managers, in allowing a valued staff member to walk out the door, feel a measure of personal guilt. This is unfounded. Running a business may require some turnover-your personal fondness notwithstanding. The leave-taking is hardly meant as a personal rejection.

3156 HAVE YOU EVER NOTICED THAT.....

If you are not leaning, no one can let you down

The harder you work, the luckier you get!

Whatever you assume to be true will become real for you.

You must give up the way it is...to have it the way you want it.

There is no growth without discontent before it starts.

You get treated in life the way you train people to treat you.

If you don't make a choice, someone will choose for you.

Your success is measured by your ability to complete things.

Some people tip-toe through life so they can arrive at death safely.

It's not enough to aim, you must hit.

The best way to escape from a problem is to solve it.

It's easier to say what we believe than to be what we believe.

You can love someone and still not like the way they act.

Life is what's coming, not what was.

If you don't change your beliefs, your life will be like this forever.
(Is that good news?)

3157 LAUGHING MATTER?

Joey: "My mother always offers me two choices for dinner."

Billy: "Mine does too. I can eat it or go to my room."

Edited, printed and published by N.H. Atthreya of MMC SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, 3E1 Court Chambers, 3rd Floor, 35 New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020. Xeroxed by Dakes Copy Service Pvt.Ltd., Apeejay House, 3rd Floor, 130 S.Bhagat Singh Marg, Bombay 400 023

By Subscription only - Annual subscription Rs. 150/-