The Nuts and Bolts of Being a Supervisor

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Webinar
Fred is involved in a wide variety of general and special education, labor relations, and employment issues including IEP development, due process hearings, contract negotiations and administration, unfair labor practice charges, union representation, elections, and employment discrimination matters in both the public and private sectors.

Mr. Dorsey specializes in municipal labor relations, representing cities and towns in contract negotiations, prohibited practice hearings and discrimination litigation, and education law, representing boards of education in special education, student expulsion, transportation and residency hearings, in addition to conventional labor relations and employment litigation matters. Mr. Dorsey has been recognized by New York Magazine as one of their “New York Area Best Lawyers” in the area of special education law; selected by his peers to be listed in The Best Lawyers in America 2014 in the practice area of education law and was also named the Hartford Education "Lawyer of the Year“ by the Best Lawyers 2014.
General Supervisory Considerations

• People are looking to you to set the tone; let people know your expectations
• It is easier to start tough and soften than *vice versa*
  – You must be a supervisor first and a friend second (or third or fourth!!)
• “Open doors” are good; ownership of problems is bad
• **No good deed goes unpunished!!**
Effective Managers

Manage themselves and the people they work with so that both the organization and the people profit from their presence

Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D.
Effective Managers

• Must look at people as individuals and provide each what he/she needs

• Talking Parrot – Woman buys a parrot for company – to have someone to talk to; after a day the parrot hasn’t said a word; Day 2 - get a mirror; Day 3 - get a ladder; Day 4 - get a swing; Day – 5 the parrot died, but on his death bed asked, “Don’t they sell any food down there?”
Effective Managers
Move Right on the Comfort Zone
Effective Managers

• Learn how to manage their time effectively; take a time management class!

• Provide time for themselves
  o Self–discipline
    ▪ Emotional reactions are your own responsibilities
    ▪ Everyone has the same amount of time; you determine how effectively that time is used

• Can communicate well both orally and in writing
Effective Managers

• Are never content with the status quo
  o Strive for higher and higher achievement levels
    ▪ Does not mean a negative attitude or grumbling
    ▪ Does mean a willingness to be different and take risks
    ▪ The difference in time and energy it takes to put up with old problems instead of coming up with new solutions is surprisingly small – the difference is ATTITUDE

John C. Maxwell
Effective Managers

• Have the proper vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eliminate These Words</th>
<th>Add These Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I can’t</td>
<td>1. I can</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. If</td>
<td>2. When</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Doubt</td>
<td>3. Assume(expect the best)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. I don’t think</td>
<td>4. I know</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. I don’t have the time</td>
<td>5. I will make the time</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. I’m afraid</td>
<td>7. I am confident</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. I don’t believe</td>
<td>8. I do believe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. (minimize) I</td>
<td>9. (promote) We/You</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. It’s impossible</td>
<td>10. Have faith</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

John C. Maxwell
Keys to Effective Management

• Set Goals
• Constantly Acknowledge Positive Actions Employees Take to Meet Goals
• Constructively Reprimand Employees for Actions Inconsistent with Goals
Setting Goals

• Put them in writing whenever possible
  – Should be short and concise; a project, not a departmental philosophy
  – Put in language that can be understood by your employees
  – Make them both qualitatively and quantitatively measurable

• Give to and discuss with employees; be sure they are understood

• Review on a regular basis
  – If need to review often, goal is too broad
Acknowledging Actions Taken to Meet Goals

• People who feel good about themselves produce good results
• Money alone will not motivate employees to perform well
  – Even if it did, you don’t always (ever?) have it to give out
• Tell People **Up Front** You Will Let Them Know How They Are Doing
Acknowledging Actions Taken to Meet Goals (cont.)

• On at least a daily basis, find something each employee is doing right and acknowledge it
  – Don’t wait; praise it when you see it!
  – Tell people directly and specifically what they did right
  – Tell them you are happy about what they did and how it helps the organization/department
  – Give them a moment of silence to let it sink in
  – Encourage them to keep it up
Reprimanding for Actions Inconsistent with Goals

• Tell People **Up Front** You Will Let Them Know How They Are Doing

• Upon learning of (seeing) a mistake/improper conduct
  – Be sure you are in an area away from other employees
  – Always confirm the employee’s understanding of goal(s) and be sure you have been acknowledging the employee’s positives
  – Again, be immediate and specific about your complaint
  – Let the employee know
    • your feelings, *e.g.*, disappointed, angry *etc.*; provide a moment of silence to let it sink in
    • how you feel about him/her; that you value him/her as a worker
    • it is not the person, but the person’s behavior, with which you are displeased
    • let it go; it is over
Evaluation and Disciplinary Procedures

Two Types of Disciplinary Incidents

1. Rules Violations
2. Performance

• Each must be handled in a different fashion
Rules Violations

• Fact oriented
• Needs confirmation
  – Publication of rule
  – Knowledge of staff
• Timing very important; don’t wait except to investigate
• **Consistency** a must (Here’s a SECRET- all employees are not the same)
Specific Offences

A. Insubordination
   1. Must have an order or published policy
   2. Must show knowledge (or opportunity) of order
   3. Order cannot be unreasonable or safety issue, e.g., jump off roof or commit an illegal act

B. Alcohol or Substance Abuse
   1. Possibly protected by law as disability
   2. Treat symptoms, not disease
Performance

• Place on notice
• Suggest ways to improve
• Update regularly, always within 90 days
• Keep up the pressure to perform
• All such notices are "evaluations" and should be given to employee; check collective bargaining agreements ("CBA") for need to provide to union

• Documentation, DOCUMENTATION, DOCUMENTATION

(See Attachment 1)
Four Types of Disciplinary Actions

A. Verbal Warning
B. Written Warning
C. Suspensions (without pay)/Demotions
D. Termination
Verbal Warning

• Needs **written** confirmation in personnel file; check CBA for need to provide to union

• Not a counseling session

• All prior similar counseling sessions/disciplines should be reflected in written confirmation
Written Warning

• Should reference any prior, similar counseling sessions, verbal warnings or suspensions (??)

• Must put in personnel file and should be given to the employee; check CBA for need to provide to union
Suspensions (without pay) / Demotions

- Should reference all prior disciplines
- Must put in personnel file and should be given to the employee; check CBA for need to provide to union
- Good practice to have a "hearing" before suspension without pay
- Can require action from a higher authority

(See Attachment 2)
Termination

• The “Capital Punishment” of labor relations

• Requires pre-termination (Loudermill) hearing

• Can require action from a higher authority and is almost always appealable in some fashion
Compassion does not equal successful discipline!!
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