

## HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT ----- PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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### Abstract

*Performance Management (PM) is a term, which we hear frequently in HR and management circles. Basically it is what it says – the ability to manage the performance of employees at work. In this article, we shall discuss about the skills needed for effective management of performance of employees by leaders.*

### Introduction

It is being observed the concept of leadership is undergoing a rapid metamorphosis. This is bringing about a major change in the way the leaders function. The leaders are classified on the basis and style of their functioning, their core areas of expertise and their functional flexibility. Top-down leadership was one of the celebrated styles of the leadership for a long time, which is gradually losing its luster. It is now getting replaced with much better alternatives. Unlike earlier times, the present subordinates are inquisitive to know the nitty gritty of the senior management's functions. A mere passing instruction by the senior management and the worker's nodding to it is not the story of the day. Gone are the days when the leader used to be visualized as loner in command and a group of people following him/her – which is the typical design of a top-down leadership. Most organizations today are phenomenally complex than the simple hierarchies of yesteryears. The evolutionary changes brought about by the new forces like globalization and technology have made the erstwhile old styles obsolete. Present life picture of leadership is entirely different. It

demands a synchronized organizational mobilization of information and knowledge about the state of affairs. Instead of being led by one leader and blindly banking on the performance of that leader, the need of the hour is total organizational performance. The quest for total organizational performance gives rise to a new domain in the arena of leadership i.e., performance leadership.

### High Performance Leadership

Warren Bennis, the doyen of leadership, feels that the top-down leadership is no longer effective in producing business results. The perfect tool to fill the void is the high performance leadership. High performance leadership may be defined as the process of transforming the existing performance management process of an institution so as to more fully engage the talents and energies of everyone in the organization. The workplace environment has assumed a sea change since the past decade. Today, the worker wants information on the vision and mission of the company and its strategy to achieve the same. They want to run their own show without over-regulation of the senior management. Hence a

leader, to be successful has to assume the role of a performance leader instead of being an authoritative or a top-down leader. He should act as a catalyst more of listening and less of talking. The secret of evolving as a successful performance leader is to imbibe the concept of shared leadership i.e., equipping every employee with the ability to lead while being led.

**Skills Needed:** There are a number of skills needed to ensure effective performance management. These are:

**Contracting:** The skill of contracting is to ensure that both manager and employee are aware of what each other's need and expectations are. It is the skill needed to agree how best they are going to work together what each expects in the way of behaviors and also what is and is not allowed. In other words, the period of contracting is where a manager should outline the expectations and the boundaries. It should be a two-way process and is a sure way of creating focus and understanding. This produces motivation for both manager and employee.

**Building Rapport:** All managers should have a basic knowledge of behavioral analysis and should have awareness and should have an awareness of their own behavioral style and preferences. Through this knowledge they will know their perceived strengths and weaknesses and, importantly, how they potentially come across to other people. The manager should know the style of their employees and adapt their own style accordingly to build rapport more easily. Building rapport builds motivation. The manager who expects everyone to adapt to the manager's style will quickly lose rapport and potentially respect from the employees. This could be very demotivational.

**Use of the Skill/Will Matrix:** Managers should know how best to interact with an

employee by taking into consideration their capability and their motivational state. An excellent model is the skill/will matrix. This outlines which developmental intervention a manager should take after taking the skill and the will into consideration. For example, if in a given context, an employee has got high skill and high will, a very directive approach in that they are constantly told what to do, will cause frustration and demotivation. A more facilitative or coaching approach is needed in this situation, in order to utilize that person's obvious skill and motivation. However a coaching approach with someone who has low skill and low will (perhaps a brand new employee) would not work because this is someone who does need a directive approach. Getting the right approach produces motivation and performance.

**Coaching Skills:** Coaching is fast becoming pre-requisite for all managers, supervisors and team leaders. Gone are the days when a manager was completely directive managers now have to know where and when to coach and they should be able to coach well. Coaching involves a number of skills including listening, questioning and the ability to motivate and energize. Simply by listening to an employee trust begins to build and the employee feels valued. Questioning raises awareness and ensures focus and clarity, which again builds trust and motivation. Coaching should be used to support the employee to identify and understand their work objectives and also to support the employee to work out the best way they can achieve these objectives. Coaching is not an easy skill to learn but effective coaching can produce excellent motivation and productivity.

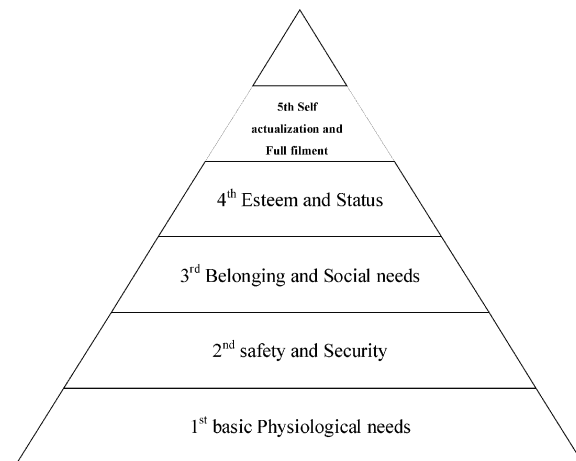
**Giving and Receiving Feedback:** People are not very good at delivering feedback in general. It is easier giving someone praise than it is to tell them constructively that perhaps they

could improve their skills and or their behaviors in some ways. People are also not very good at receiving constructive criticisms in that they can be very defensive. Managers have to be trained in these skills so that when they give feedback, whether it is positive or negative, it produces motivation and either a re-enforcement or a change of behavior.

**Motivation Skills** This is an area where many managers are given little training as such they struggle with the skills. To go into all the various models of motivation in this short article is not possible and it is my belief that some of the models only confuse as opposes to enlighten. I have found two models very useful in helping me understand what it takes to motivation individual.

**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs** This is a well-known model that you will find in any textbook on coaching and motivation. Basically Abraham Maslow described a basic set of needs that people need. These are:

- Physiological – food, water, sleep, warmth.
- Safety/Security – freedom from fear and violence, shelter, job security.
- Belonging – friendship, being in a family, group or team. Social acceptance.
- Self-esteem – self-respect, status, being valued by others.
- Self-actualization – the need for challenge, variety and growth.



Most people in the work situation will be above the physiological level and safety/security level, provided there is no immediate threat to their job. The majority of people will hover around the belonging level, through self-esteem many will aspire towards self-actualization. If the management of the employee is not effective then the employee can get stuck in the safety/security level, where they fear for their job or in the belonging level, where they crave acceptance from both management and peers.

Good management raises the employee to the self-esteem level by valuing their efforts through praise, reward and well-delivered constructive criticism. Once an employee is established in this level, effective management seeks to raise the level again towards self-actualization by delegating new tasks and delivering training in new skills that will enable the employee to grow. This self-organizations should be timing to get their employees to – and then keep them there! The role of manager is to ensure that at all times they are aware of where an employee sits on Maslow's Hierarchy and have a plan in place to enable the employee to move up the hierarchy. If an employee is seen to be “slipping down” the hierarchy then the manager should know exactly what steps to take

and what skills to use to get the employee back up the hierarchy. This way the employee will be kept motivated and performance will remain high.

Being valued: Praise is the most powerful form of feedback and as managers we do not use it enough. We seem to have an attitude that says, “Why should I praise someone for doing a job that is expected of them?” What does it cost to say two small words – “thank you?”

We all need valued in some form or other and it does not take very much for the manager to say “thank you” or “well done”.

### High Performance Leadership Matrix

The given matrix suggests few dos and don'ts of the high performance leader with reference to its interface with the employees. The performance leadership matrix suggests that the performance leaders vary in their habits and frequencies of meeting with the people and entertaining their views. As such everyone does not excel as a high performance leader.

The first quadrant of the matrix suggests those leaders who ignore other's viewpoint and put forth their own viewpoint. This is typical case of top-down leadership, or loner-led leadership. He exhibits certain unsought characteristics like dictatorial and dominant. He shows least interest in listening to others. He believes only in his saying. This blocks the way for all those ideas, which could have been contributed by his followers. The results would depend only on the success of one person. The aspect of team dynamics is absent in this case. Which in turn raises the chances of failure.

The second quadrant includes those performance leaders who neither put forth their viewpoint nor they entertain others. This creates a barrier of communication and a block to the

idea generation. This includes the isolated and aloof leaders who have low trust in their employees and do not prefer shared learning. The fourth quadrant leaders are those who have no viewpoint from their side but they probe onto another's viewpoint. This indicates the leader's nature of beings confronting and a habit of shifting responsibility and his quest to explore understanding of various ideas of his employees. This is a healthy way of developing a learning culture in the organization and making the staff feel their responsibility in the decision-making process. Still, this is far from the high performance leadership.

The third and the much-wanted quadrant in this context is the one, which is reserved for the high performance leaders. One may be said to be on the right track to become a successful high performance leader when he has a curiosity from within to probe another's viewpoint as well as the tendency to put forth his own viewpoint. This gesture shows that the organization is witnessing conservations that add value to the cumulative performance of the firm. It creates a challenging and dynamic environment within the organization. It gives rise to vibrant debates and develops a culture of joint problem solving. This facilitates in synchronized organizational increment.

Ignoring another's Viewpoint	Dictatorial, dominant, no listening, little Ownership Q1	Isolated, little communication, low trust, no shared Q2
	Performance conversations, challenging, vibrant debate, joint problem Q3	Confronting, transfer of ownership, explores understanding, increase learning Q4
Probing Another's Viewpoint	Putting a viewpoint	No viewpoint

## Developing Leadership Skills for Performance Management

1. Leadership Motivation Assessment  
:- How motivated are you to lead?
2. Leadership Motivation Tools  
:- Find the passion to lead
3. Information Gathering  
:- Information is inspiration
4. Building Expert Power  
:- Leading from the front
5. Task Allocation  
:- Picking the right person for the right situation
6. Leadership Styles  
:- Using the right one for the right effectively
7. Mission Statement & Vision Statements  
:- The power of purpose
8. Successful Delegation  
:- How, when, why

## Ten point checklist-- Necessary qualities to make a successful Leader, in the 21st Century

1. A sound ethical compass: If the boss's values are undemanding, the institutions will also be wobbly. That may not put it out of business, but it means the institution will have to pay a premium for talent. Good people do not like working for organizations whose values they mistrust.

2. The ability to take unpleasant decisions: Many judgments must be made on the basis of ambiguous information. Leaders often have to deal swiftly with conflicting demands without

being sure of their facts. That calls for a strong stomach.

3. Clarity and focus are essential requirements for making those awkward judgments. Leading a large institution, and dealing at speed with a host of complicated and many-sided issues, is an immense intellectual challenge. In order to survive the clamour for time and attention, a leader must also be able to screen out unnecessary noise and to focus on what really matters.

4. Ambition. The best leaders are empire-builders who want to create something that outlasts them. That is different from ego-boosting personal ambition.

5. Effective communications skills are a relatively new requirement, the result of the increasing intrusion of the outside world. A good corporate leader should talk convincingly, which is not always the same thing as telling the whole truth.

6. The ability to judge people is an essential pre-requisite, given the importance of human capital. Judging who will work best in which slot is one of the key tasks of leadership. Like so many aspects of the top job, it requires intuition as well as experience.

7. A knack for developing talent is needed to build a stock of future leaders. People learn far more about the art of leading from a good mentor than from a great book.

8. Emotional self-confidence. Accumulating a pool of talent requires an ability to work with people who may be better at their job than you are at yours, and to guide to motivate them. Leaders who are jealous of their followers do not inspire loyalty. Self-confidence also allows people to admit to weakness and ask for help

without feeling defensive or inadequate. Successful leaders need to be able to say, I don't know what to do next, without losing the respect of their colleagues.

9. Adaptability will prove invaluable when things go wrong. Surviving a reverse calls for resilience and flexibility. The key is an ability to reframe: to reshape a problem so that from some angles it can look like a success.

10. Charm is not a quality taught on MBA courses, but few get to the top without it. A bit of luck helps too, though that may prove hard to manage.

### **Building a Successful Team by a Leader :**

1. Assemble a heterogeneous team, including diverse ages, genders, functional backgrounds, and industry experience. If everyone in the executive meetings looks alike, then the chances are excellent they will probably think alike too.

2. Meet together as a team regularly and often. Team members that do not know one another well do not know another's positions or issues, impairing their ability to argue effectively. Frequent interaction builds the mutual confidence and familiarity team members require to express dissent.

3. Encourage team members to assume roles beyond their obvious product, geographic, or functional responsibilities. Devil's advocates, sky-gazing visionaries, and action-oriented executives can work together to ensure that all sides of an issue are considered.

4. Apply multiple mind-sets to any issue. Try role-playing, putting yourselves in your competitor's shoes, or conducting war games. Such techniques create fresh perspective and

engage team members, spurring interest in problem solving.

5. Actively manage conflict. Do not let the team acquiesce too soon or too easily. Identify and treat apathy early, and do not confuse a lack of conflict with agreement. Often, what passes for consensus is really disengagement.

### **Summary**

#### **Becoming an Exceptional Leader**

The old-fashioned view of leadership is that leaders are marked out for leadership from early on in their lives, and that if you're not a born leader, there's little that you can do to become one.

That's not the way we see it now. The modern view is that through patience, persistence and hard work. You can be a truly effective leader, just as long as you make the effort needed.

### **Conclusion**

Effective PM is vital if organizations are to get the best from implementation of PM rests with management and it is vital that managers are trained in not only process of PM but also the skills, and particularly the "people" skills that are essential to make PM work. Failure of leaders to contract effectively, build rapport, coach and motivate will result in demotivation, frustration, a lack of productivity and potentially a high staff turnover.

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