

THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by **DOR**

Helping you to manage your company's most valuable resource -- your employees.

January 2008

CASE 1 Motivating employees

➤ **Q. I struggle to motivate some of my employees. I just can't seem to find the right combination of incentives. On the other hand, most of my employees are enthusiastic and produce well. As for the few employees who struggle, can you offer any tips of motivating them?**

A. Much as has been written about motivation and how to get employees excited about their work. All this has been to the benefit of employees and work organizations. But there has been a downside: the mistaken belief by managers that all employees can be motivated and incentive-induced to become top performers, and if they can't, the manager is to blame. Once you have taken all reasonable steps to provide an effective and productive work environment, the rest is up to your employees. Your organization is in partnership with employees, who must ultimately take the ball you hand them and run with it. Some will perform well and others will not. Many supervisors are too hard on themselves as they struggle to find the secret to motivating all employees all the time. The best type of motivation is self-motivation.

CASE 2 What bothers them?

➤ **Q. I am a new supervisor: Can you advise me on what behaviors to avoid that upset employees most, but which they are not likely to complain about until they have grown angry and resentful?**

A. Help your employees by avoiding the following behaviors that will upset them, but which you are not likely to hear complaints about until employees are completely fed up:

- Asking employees to involve themselves with a project or task and then suddenly asking them to stop and jump to another.
- Proclaiming the tasks that you ask employees to take on as emergencies that need to be addressed immediately.
- Correcting employees in front of their peers.
- Making promises that you aren't certain you can keep.
- Accepting credit from top management for projects completed by your staff.
- Making inappropriate jokes, remarks or innuendos.

Most of these behaviors have one prevention technique: being aware of how you use the power naturally afforded by your position.

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Employee Assistance Program
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