

THE *Front-line Supervisor*

Presented by **DOR**

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

July 2008

CASE 1 What do good managers have in common?

➤ **Q. What makes a good manager of employees? What common traits do the best managers possess?**

A. The Gallop Organization has examined this issue quite thoroughly through a massive in-depth survey based on interviews and studies they conducted with about 80,000 managers. They arrived at a set of four characteristics worth knowing and thinking about. What is interesting is that "attitude" of the supervisor is directly or closely associated with three out of the four. That's an argument for examining any personal issues and how they help or impede you ability to be a good manager. Supervisors have a resource to help them address these issues – the EAP! The four common denominators are wanting to see employees grow and succeed; matching the right people to the right roles; defining desired outcomes while being willing to give people the latitude to accomplish them in their own ways; and focusing on what's best in people, not what's worst. (M. Buckingham and C. Coffman, 1999, *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently.*)

CASE 2 When changes don't last.

➤ **Q. My employee tends to be stubborn and unable to see others' points of view. She is too blunt; for example, she'll say, "You're wrong!" rather than "I believe that..." She talks down to others. I correct her, but any changes don't last. I think she is insecure. Would counseling help?**

A. Your employee has a habit of communicating with others that is difficult to change, but it's doable. There could be many reasons for her communication style, but your focus should be on correcting it, not guess its cause. You need more leverage than simply fussing at her in return for short-term corrections. Consider holding her accountable by incorporating change in her performance reviews. Meet several times during the year to reinforce progress. Using the planned approach is important. Other leverage may include a corrective letter to create an impression and provide motivation for change. A supervisor referral to the EAP is also appropriate; EAP sessions would help her improve faster, would reinforce progress, and would make those changes last.



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