Dealing with the Current Team

By Harold Chapman

ACHIEVE COMMITMENT

Is there a sense of commitment to each other among your staff members? If asked, would each member of your staff identify the staff as his or her first team, or would the department over which they manage be your staff member's first choice? In most cases, the answer will be the latter. Managers see the functions over which they manage as their team. The managers hire and mentor their people, and the managers' direct reports tend to be the ones the managers spend most of their time with at the office. Consider this possibility when a manager keeps an office with his or her team rather than keeping an office with the staff. This separation typically occurs when the staff hasn't achieved commitment to the direction of the business. The staff doesn't have a shared sense of purpose to drive a higher level strategy. With the lack of a shared sense of purpose, the manager will seek to optimize the function.

ACCOUNTABILITY AMONG THE GROUP

One thing a company can do to create accountability within the team is to do what we refer to as a Stop-Start-Continue exercise. This is when the team sits together and tells the other members of the team the following:

1. Things the department or department head is doing well and should continue doing.
2. Things the department or department head should start doing because it would positively impact the team member, the department, and the company.
3. Things the department or department head needs to stop doing because it negatively impacts team members, the department, and the company.

This exercise can create anxiety for some members of the team, but at the end of the exercise everyone on the team knows what everyone else is thinking about, what needs to be done, and who needs to be doing it. The final step is for management to create an improvement plan for him or herself and have everyone hold the manager accountable to the result. The accountability should be in real-time, but one can also make it part of the staff meeting conversation to ensure people are actually following through on their commitments.

Another extremely important form of accountability is one of holding each other accountable to achieve the results of the strategic plan. Assuming the team has been involved in developing the plan together, no excuse should be acceptable for failure to execute the plan. Missing targets and ignoring results is unacceptable. If the strategic plan isn't important enough to enforce, why spend the time to create it?

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	Can get "IT" done	Can't get "IT" done
Does get "IT"	**Quadrant I:** •Leaders •Top 10% of org •Over-pay them •Keep them happy	**Quadrant II:** •Good soldiers •Find "a place for them" •Ensure proper fit •Don't put non-leaders in a leadership position
Doesn't get "IT"	**Quadrant III:** •Cancer •Remove them immediately from the organization	**Quadrant IV:** •Poor performers •HR process removes them from the organization

Figure 1: Welch's Quadrants

Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, detailed a model with four quadrants (See Figure 1). It shows a contrast between those who "Can Get It Done" through others, those who "Can't Get it Done" through others, those who "Do Get It," and those who "Don't Get It." "It" in this case would be your company's vision, principles, philosophies and strategic plan.

The Group that Can Get It Done and Do Get It are the leaders. They are the top 10% of the organization and as such, should be overpaid and happy. They are the Go Getters and are valuable to the organization. As such, they are the ones an organization needs to keep. If the organization loses them, HR practices need to be reviewed. At this point, one needs to consider whether or not performance is being appropriately incentivized and whether or not he or she is continually dealing with poor performers. Keep in mind the number one reason people leave organizations is due to the direct supervisor's failure to hold people accountable.

The Group that Can't Get It Done and Does Get It are our soldiers. These soldiers need to have a place that suits them. This group of people is not leadership. They don't want to be leaders, so they shouldn't be placed in leadership positions in which they will fail. We have often seen great engineers promoted to management without the leadership skills or desire to be a leader. In those cases, a valuable engineer is lost and a terrible manager is gained. In many cases this person is fired and not demoted. This engineer can get things done on his/her own but not through others.

The Group that Can't Get It Done and Don't Get It are the poor performers. HR processes are designed to deal with these people. These folks are typically Goof Offs. They must be removed from the teams or they will contribute to the loss of the Go Getters.

The final Group is the group that Can Get It Done and Don't Get It. A company's worst nightmare. This group of folks has shown results but don't embrace the company's vision, principles philosophies, or strategy. They get things done in spite of how those things are done. The Can Get it Done and Don't Get Its have people listening to them and doing what they say. These people can do a lot of harm to an organization. This group is considered CANCER and must be removed from the

organization immediately. The longer the delay, the more damage these people can do to the culture of the organization, which will, in turn delay a successful start to becoming World-Class.

GOOF-OFFS vs. GO-GETTERS

Have you ever heard someone say, "As long as that guy has a job, I don't have to worry about being fired?" This statement usually comes from a low performer. This low performer is looking at the lowest performer as a measure of how much the goof-off can get away with before being fired. Allowing this to happen in a team will result in a very low performing work team. If we have differing levels of performance on the team, which we always will, then a certain level of differentiation must occur. If we don't practice the art of differentiation, we risk losing our highest performers.

Mike Huszar introduced the concept of focusing on the Go Getters to me many years ago. This concept is the basis for building and maintaining a high performing workforce. The premise is that three groups of people exist in every organization. Group one is the majority of the workers. They are competent and will do what is expected of them. Group two (Goof Off's) is the lower performing five to ten percent of the organization. They will do as little as possible. Group three (Go Getters) is the top performing five to ten percent of the organization. The Go Getters will give us 100% day in and day out without having to be managed. We could not run the business without them, and we should over pay them. Each group is watching how we deal with the other groups. The competent will trend toward Goof Offs if they are allowed to remain with the company. This results in an overall lower performing team.

The Go Getters are watching how we deal with the Goof Offs. If we don't deal with the Goof Offs, the Go Getters will think we are blind idiots or, even worse, they will think we don't care. In either case, the Go Getters will try to do less, but it is not in their nature, so they continue to work hard and just lose respect for us for not dealing with the issue of the Goof Offs. On the other hand, if we deal with the Goof Offs by placing the proper heat under them, the Competent will work to get away from the heat, and the Go Getters will respect us for addressing the Goof Offs. If we don't actively live this philosophy, we will slowly create a team of mediocre performers. At that point, our chances of becoming World-Class are so remote, we will kill ourselves trying to get there and lose some high performers in the process. There comes a time in this team evolution when the bottom ten percent is fully competent and there is no need for the "heat." We have experienced this situation often and enjoy the accomplishments produced by such a team.

Have you identified the goof-offs and cancers on your team? If so, are you addressing the issue? Are you dealing with the issues of commitment and accountability? If you answered no to any of these questions, Drive, Inc. can help. We have experienced professionals that can lead you through this process. For a no-obligation introduction meeting, please contact Paul Eakle at paul.eakle@driveinc.com or 865-323-3491.