Hard-Hitting, Results-Oriented "Accountability Management Workshop" Creates Competent, Effective Managers

Some managers are managers in name only. True managers model the "Eight Core Competencies of Management" that separate effective from ineffective managers.

By Mac McIntire

Thousands of companies spend millions of dollars trying to implement profit-enhancing, culture-changing programs designed to improve quality, customer service or teamwork.

Unfortunately, in most cases these huge capital outlays produce few results and very little actual improvement to the company's bottom-line. There are, however, some companies who achieve significant benefit from their organizational improvement effort.

Many years ago I was a nationally recognized speaker on the, then popular, topic of Total Quality Management (TQM). There were many management gurus who espoused the benefits of implementing TQM practices in organizations. Numerous organizations were heavily involved in the TQM process. But I had a contrary view of TQM at that time because of the huge investments some companies were making in a process that wasn't working for them. As a result, I often spoke at TQM conferences immediately after the proponent keynote speaker sharing my divergent view of TQM.

During those speeches I would ask people in the audience at my presentations to stand if their company was involved in a major productivity, quality, customer service, or team improvement initiative.

I asked those standing to tell me how many company employees were assigned full-time to the improvement process in their organization. I then asked how long their improvement effort had been going on. I made a flipchart of the answers to show how many man-years had been utilized in the improvement effort thus far. I would have liked to have asked how much money had been spent on the improvement effort, but I didn't think the people in my audience would know the answer.

Finally, I asked those who had been standing to remain standing if their improvement effort had achieved significant results in productivity, quality, customer service, or team work at their company. I wanted to know if the thousands of man-hours and hundreds of man-years had brought about major improvement to the bottom-line of their company.

You may be able to guess the results. I did this exercise in hundreds of presentations and invariably 80% of the people sat down. Eighty-percent of the people in companies represented in those meetings felt their company had not achieved significant results from their organizational improvement effort.

Although that is sad, focusing on the 80% is less important than discovering what the 20% of companies who succeeded did to achieve their positive results. I wanted to know about the successful companies, not the failures.

From these informal surveys I began to investigate what made the 20% successful versus the 80% of companies who waste their money on improvement initiatives. What I discovered should not be surprising. In those organizations where significant gains were made two common elements seem to be primary determining factors in their success. I believe these same two elements can be found in every successful company. I call these two elements *Ethics of Success*.

Ethics of Success

What I learned is productive companies have a **high ethic of communication**. Successful companies realize how important communication is to getting productive results. In fact, they don't just communicate, they *over* communicate. They leave nothing to chance. They ensure every employee knows what is going on in the organization and knows exactly what is expected of them. They assure cross-functional communication and coordination occurs throughout the organization. They use a variety of methods and modalities to ensure nobody is missed or left in the dark when it comes to knowing what is going on.

The second common trait among successful companies is they exude a **high ethic of accountability**. They don't leave quality performance to chance. They make sure things get done. They measure and monitor their work, communicate how well or poorly they are doing, and take corrective action when deficiencies arise. They recognize the accomplishments of their employees and tie compensation and rewards to

exemplary performance. They make sure every employee accounts for his or her stewardship. In other words, they actually *manage* their company and employees.

Everything in management boils down to how well or poorly managers communicate. Planning, organizing, delegating, and controlling all revolve around effective communication. Effective coaching, counseling and discipline require great skills in communication. All performance management practices require efficacious communication. The extent to which a manager communicates with his or her employees is directly proportionate to the extent to which those employees are motivated to do the work.

But effective communication alone does not result in high performance. Employees must also be held accountable for their performance. If work is not being measured and monitored, it is not being managed. When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported back, the rate of improvement accelerates.

Eight Core Competencies of Management

Innovative Management Group offers a three-day intensive management training program that focuses on these two essential components of business success. Our *Accountability Management Workshop* provides managers with effective skills and tools so they can model the *Eight Core Competencies of Management*™. These competencies are what separate *real* managers from those who are just managers in name only. If a manager is lacking in any of the eight competencies, he or she is not managing as competently as one should.

The eight core competencies of management are:

1) The ability to **identify what performance you want** from your employees;

2) The ability to clearly **communicate your performance expectations** to your employees so they know exactly what is expected of them;

3) The ability to **hire the kind of employees you want** or, if you can't find the employees you want, to **train the employees you have** so they can give you what you want;

4) The ability to **provide employees with the information, tools, and resources** they need in order to perform to your expectations;

5) The ability to **measure and monitor employee performance** to assess whether or not they are giving you what you want;

6) The ability to **provide employees with helpful feedback** so they know exactly how well they are performing;

7) The ability to **appropriately reward and recognize employees** who give you what you want or to **coach, counsel and discipline** those who don't; and

8) The ability to **provide career counseling or developmental opportunities** to your employees so they can give you more of what you want in the future.

At the core of the *Accountability Management Workshop* is a powerful explanatory model called the *Ladder of Commitment*®. This insightful model explains how to get high levels of enthusiasm and commitment from employees by addressing the things that matter most in the workplace.

To perform well employees need information about the goals and direction of the business. They need clarification of their roles, responsibilities, performance expectations and authority level in order to perform to exemplary standards. They also need accurate feedback so they can either continue their productive actions or cease off-purpose performance that is below standard.

Additional Tools Provided

During the workshop participants are given other helpful diagnostic and intervention tools to better manage their employees' performance. IMG's *Consistent Service Model*® provides a clear, step-by-step process to ensure quality service delivery occurs consistently at every level of your organization. Our *Six Block Model*™ shows managers how to discern the true root cause of performance problems so the managers can focus their energy on correct interventions. The *Field of Play*™ lays out exact performance expectations, standards and boundaries so there is no confusion on what performance is required.

Finally, almost one-third of the workshop deals with teaching managers how to give effective performance feedback to employees. Obviously there is no accountability if people are not held accountable. A major part of management accountability is meeting face to face with employees so they can report on their work-related stewardship. Managers who fail to regularly meet

with their employees one-on-one to address performance issues are not really managing.

One of the great drawbacks to management training and a primary reason why managers often fail to implement what they learn is the lack of time at work to alter their management practices. Most managers today are working managers. They not only manage, they also have to perform tasks and produce output similar to their employees. Thus, they are required to both *work* and *manage*. Unfortunately, given limited time during the work day, most managers tend to focus on getting the work done and neglect the management aspects of their job.

The *Accountability Management Workshop* is designed so participants not only learn the eight core management competencies, but they actually create their performance management structure and framework <u>during</u> the session. This means less "office time" outside of the training is spent on the administrative tasks that are required to establish the foundation of a comprehensive performance management system. Most of the "work" necessary to manage people is accomplished in the *work*shop. Managers leave the session fully prepared and ready to manage. They leave holding themselves accountable to perform their role and truly become competent managers. §

Innovative Management Group has been offering the highly effective *Accountability Management Workshop*™ to companies for over twenty years. We know how to create accountable managers and employees at every level of your organization who focus on the things that matter most in your business. We ensure everyone within your company knows why they exist and what they need to do to achieve the strategic objectives of your enterprise.

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