

Personnel Practices

The more freedom you can give people to do a job the way they'd like to, the more satisfaction they'll get from it.

Supervisors are supposed to be smarter than other people, and, in some respects, they probably are. But if you insist on doing all the thinking for your operation, if everything has to be done your way, what's left for the people who work for you to be proud of?

There ought to be something in every job that's satisfying to the person who does it. Unfulfilled people can be just as serious a problem as inefficient methods.

Creating a climate that gives people some independence - without losing control - takes a lot of management skill. It also hinges on the content of a job and the judgement and ability of the person handling it. Here are some of the techniques that may be helpful.

MANAGING BY OBJECTIVES - giving especially capable people a clear idea of the results you want to achieve and leaving the methods to them.

SUGGESTING METHODS - rather than dictating them -

with the understanding that people are free to devise something better.

CONSULTING PEOPLE affected by a problem or a proposed change and asking their ideas - regardless of whether you think you need them or not.

ENRICHING JOBS - by delegating decisions as far down the line as possible. If a worker is capable of being trained to make a certain decision intelligently, why have it referred to a supervisor? If a supervisor is capable, why refer it above him?

GUIDING YOUR PEOPLE to think of constructive suggestions you may already have in mind, rather than simply presenting them yourself.

ELIMINATING NEEDLESS RULES, and allowing people as much freedom and mobility as possible as long as they produce good results and don't interfere with others.

Supervisors who successfully practice these things will foster excellent morale among their people. If they can do it without abdicating their own responsibility - without losing control of the situation - they'll also get excellent results. ■

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