

Getting Acceptable

People who own or manage an ornamental horticultural business or a turf-grass oriented enterprise have the ability to manage more than their physical capacity will permit them to do. This requires the hiring of other people to assist them. These employees must now be managed as to acquire an acceptable job performance from each.

A person who works by and for himself alone is totally production oriented. When he hires someone to work for or with him his job changes. He now becomes concerned with a "people" problem. He must create an environment in which that person, he has hired, can produce at a maximum productivity level.

He must plan, organize, execute, control and coordinate time-consuming activities, materials, money and equipment. But, above all, he must create and maintain a high morale on the part of his employees. He must help them keep favorable attitudes towards the organization. He must crystalize elegant opinions in their minds. He must in reality be their assistant in accomplishing their assigned tasks.

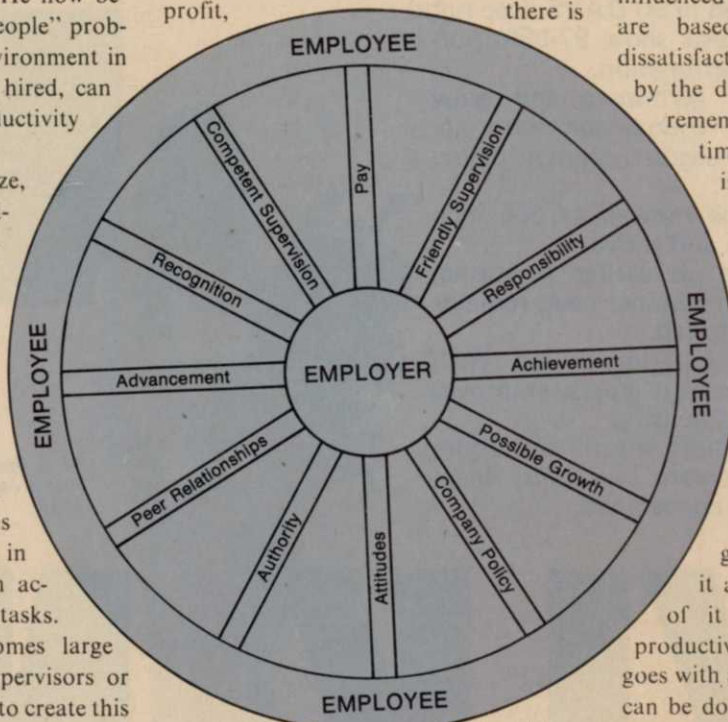
When a business becomes large enough to use first-line supervisors or foremen, then it is their job to create this environment. Top management, however, must make it possible for them to do this by extending the same type of treatment to the foreman as they expect the foreman to extend to the employees.

Top management attitudes are extremely contagious. When top management becomes gloomy, envious, or angry it takes only a very short time to detect the same feelings among the rank and file. When morale is the first consideration of management, it becomes evident that ordinary people can be trained to do extraordinary work.

The objectives of an enterprise such as a landscape contractor contribute greatly to the morale of the employees.

People just do not want to work for an organization that does not have significant objectives. It is not enough that the objectives exist but they must be known and understood.

When several objectives exist the order of their priority affect the attitudes of the personnel. For instance, if the objectives are (1) make a good product, (2) be a good place to work, (3) be an asset to the community, and (4) make a profit, there is



an entirely different psychological reaction than if they were arranged with profit as number one. In the latter case there is a mercenary attitude displayed by the company and the employees assume that they, too, can be mercenary even toward the company. This attitude is not as likely to be created in the former case, yet the importance of profit has not been affected.

Every managerial decision regardless of how small or insignificant has a behavioral consequence on the workers. To change seed suppliers can affect the behavior of the people. Rumors and specu-

lation of why this change was made can become paramount on the grapevine. Such reaction can often be averted if relevant information is plugged into the grapevine, before the decision is made.

Behavior is what personnel management is all about. The employee is constantly evaluating management by saying to himself: "Unless you can somehow affect my ability to satisfy my needs, you will not influence my behavior." Behavior is to a large degree influenced by attitudes. Attitudes are based upon satisfactions and dissatisfactions. These are measured by the duration of the time they are remembered and the frequency or times they are referred to during this duration.

Pay is a factor that is always involved in the work experience. It is essential and necessary but it is not a motivator. Pay, if anything, is a dissatisfier. If a person gets a raise he remembers it a very short time and talks very little about it. On the other hand, if he does not get the raise, he remembers it an awful long time and talks of it very frequently. Increased productivity very seldom, if ever, goes with a pay increase. A person's pay can be doubled and he still will not do any more work.

A motivator that excites people to want to come to work tomorrow and to try to accomplish more must be something that they can use on the job. Pay cannot be used on the job. It generally is never as much as the person wants. It must, however, be a going wage and one that satisfies the person's needs.

High pay generally creates great satisfaction on the part of the worker by permitting him to fulfill needs that he had never dreamed possible. Unfortunately, extremely happy and highly satisfied workers are not always the most productive. Strongly dissatisfied workers can be and generally are highly

Job Performance From Your Employees

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non-productive or even disruptive. It is, therefore, more important to concentrate on removal of dissatisfactions rather than trying to supply satisfactions particularly, those satisfactions that do not have lasting qualities or those that might lead to even greater demands and greater dissatisfactions.

Competent Supervision is something that people do not seemingly appreciate as much as they should. They do not remember it long and seldom speak about it, but they sure remember and talk a lot about incompetent supervision.

Supervision is having people do what we want done, when we want it done, the way we want it done and having them want to do it for us. Until they want to do it for us it will not be done. It is a form of leadership and leadership is the act of influencing people to want to cooperate towards goals that are mutually acceptable. Influence, want and cooperate are all essential.

The power or control that a supervisor has over his people is informal — it stems from the people themselves. When the subordinate has a good opinion of his supervisor and holds him in high esteem, he will permit him to have a great deal of control over him. When he has a poor opinion of him and holds him in low esteem, he will give him little or no control over him. When the subordinate has a good opinion of his supervisor he also wants his supervisor to have a good opinion of him.



A person, in order to follow a leader, must have the tools to do the job, the skill to do the job, but most important the willingness to want to do the job. If the tools are lacking, expediency can often be employed. If skill is lacking rapid learning can frequently be effected, but when willingness is absent there is no hope. The degree of willingness is completely a function of supervision and management.

Authority is involved at this point. Authority is always sanctioned towards a more powerful person. If the subordinate does not in his own mind conceive of the supervisor as being more powerful than he, then he will not permit that person to validate authority over him. To be an owner or manager permits a person the right to exercise authority, but it is the people under him who will decide if they are to accept the authority.

Authority can be validated by four different manners. (1) By position — I am the boss — I am the owner. A very weak method. One slight mistake in speech, attitude, or behavior will break this invisible line of power. (2) By technical expertise — when that person wants to learn all he can from the supervisor so that he is as competent as the supervisor. A good way — mistakes can be made that will be overlooked. (3) By rapport. Sympathetic and harmonious working relationships. Many people demand harmonious circumstances and a supportive atmosphere. This is an excellent way. (4) The learning process. This is when the subordinate learns that acceptance of the supervisor's decisions reduces his anxieties and that the judgment of the supervisor is more sound than his own. A very effective way, particularly with younger people. All of which take time to establish. The supervisor cannot buy or demand but must earn his position of authority.

Employees insist upon a supportive atmosphere, a condition whereby some one will listen to them and help them with their problems — personal as well as otherwise. If a young man starts to work for the first time, he often is making more money than he ever saw before. He goes out and gets married, buys a new car, new furniture and rents an apartment. Suddenly he realizes that he cannot stretch his paycheck to meet all his bills — he's in trouble.

He asks for help from his boss. He wants him to listen to him and help him. The boss can say "You got yourself in

trouble get yourself out." The young man immediately formulates an unfavorable attitude — low morale and little appreciation for the boss.

The boss could pay off the boy's indebtedness — the worst thing he could do. The boy would expect others to always bail him out of trouble.

The boss could go to the credit agencies and through his influence arrange for extended payments which the young man could handle. The boss now becomes a powerful person — authority and control are granted him; the boy's morale is good . . . he wants to come back to work . . . wants to accomplish and produce.

This all took time on the part of the supervisor. Managers should always realize that personnel problems can never be handled in small chunks of time. It does not take long to fire a man but this is not solving the problem because when a person is fired the supervisor is only trading one set of bad habits for another.

To find the time he needs is a manager's biggest problem. It is one place we are all endowed equally — everybody has the same amount of time — some seem to use it better than others. Another thing about time. It is irretrievable — once it's gone it's gone, never to return. It helps if the manager logs his time to see where he is using it. He is generally surprised at how many things he has done and the amount of

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time that he has spent on each item. He should go down the log and ask himself "What would have happened if I had not done this?" If the answer is "Nothing," he should never do it again since it is a time waster. It always helps to have a list each day of things that have to be done in the order of their priority. It is surprising how much more can be accomplished with a little planning.

Friendly Supervision is another thing. It means little to men. They prefer it but

do not demand it. Women on the other hand insist on it. They remember friendly supervision a long time and speak frequently about it, and they become highly dissatisfied if they are handled crudely or rudely.

Company Policy is an item that is seldom understood and where attitudes get deeply involved. People do not remember it or speak too often about it when it is good, but they sure remember and talk when it is not to their liking. Company policy is that indefinable area of sagacity in the conduct of company affairs that undoubtedly affects the formulation of attitudes.

Attitudes are positions we assume for a purpose. They are frequently preconceived viewpoints. They often evolve from past experiences, or hearsay. They are a readiness to react to a particular person or situation in an impulsive manner. They can range in intensity from a mild viewpoint to a deep conviction to a prejudice. They insulate a person from others' viewpoints because they cannot accept the other person's facts or even hear what they are saying.

When we are dealing with mild viewpoints we can use facts but deep convictions and prejudices are emotional and facts do not stand a chance. People can interpret a certain act or situation as favorable in the case of one person and unfavorably in the case of another.

Attitudes that are deep convictions or prejudices can be changed in a person only by some other person for whom they have a great deal of respect. If the person for whom they have the respect states his position, the other will weigh his comments often deciding that if this person holds such a viewpoint, then he, himself, must be wrong, and decide to accept his points as valid. A great deal of thought should be put into formulation of company policies and how they will be accepted by the personnel.

In this respect it is highly important that management be respected by the rank and file by doing everything else as near right as possible so that cooperative attitudes will be formulated and compatible opinions be crystalized.

Possible Growth is often an essential ingredient in successful management. Many people as they come to work for an organization have the hopes of improving their personal worth and status and want the opportunity to grow and help the company grow. This can be a driving force which can be in their minds at all times and something they talk about very often. If the opportunity is not present they generally leave the organization rather than fight it.

It is not always bad when people leave an organization. People who are not getting what they want from a work environment and are dissatisfied will often leave to try and find work that will "turn them on" so to speak. It is the people who become dissatisfied and "turned off" but will not leave, because of family or community ties or because they do not want to give up their vested perquisites or are afraid to look for another job, that develop incompatible attitudes that cause them to produce poorly and generally cause trouble.

Peer Relationships is something that bothers men less than women, particularly in the hourly pay brackets. Men would rather not have some one person getting treated better than they, but it's no big deal one way or the other.

In the case of women, however, — watch it. It means a great deal to them.

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If one woman is being treated better than the rest, there is going to be a great deal of dissatisfaction resulting in problems and reduced productivity.

Achievement or rather the measure of achievement is one of the prime motivating forces that can be used with people. Everyone likes to accomplish something and they like to know how much they have accomplished. It is something they do not remember for ever but while they do remember it, they talk a great deal about it. Records are to be broken and people are competitive and a measure of achievement causes them to want to come back to work tomorrow and see how much better they can do.

People often talk about the increased productivity with incentive pays such as piece work, and give all the credit to the opportunity of increased earning capacity. This is true to a certain extent but also inherent in all incentive pay schemes is a measure of activity. When this measure of activity is introduced into a simple hourly pay program, increased productivity is also experienced.

Recognition is a must in acquiring acceptable job performance. It is not something that people remember a long

time but they like it when it is earned and they talk and brag about it to their families and friends. It must, however, be genuine and not presumed to be flattery. The persons involved know when they have done a good job — management knows it also. Therefore, it must be given when earned and publicly, if possible. Supervisors should always remember to praise the person and criticize the job. The recipient of a properly given citation for earned recognition is always anxious to return to work and to compete for another such honor.

Advancement is a driving force. The goal of many people is for constant and consistent advancement. This is probably more true of people in the management hierarchy but also of many people who want to advance into management. People who advance as far as possible in one enterprise may leave to join another where higher positions are possible but while with the original organization have produced well and above the expected level just to reach the goal that they have coveted.

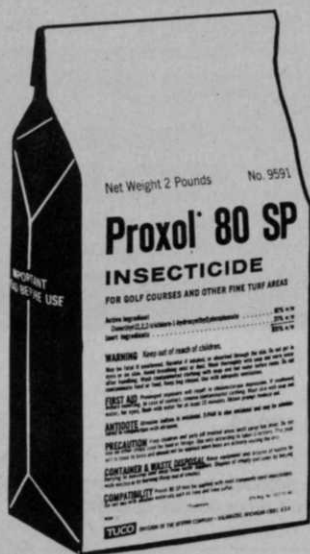
Advancement is remembered long and often but it should never be promised where or when the opportunity is not available because this can cause considerable acrimony, dissatisfaction, and problems. Management's aim in decision-making should be to reduce problems not increase them.

Responsibility when taken in its broadest sense is the epitome of motivation. Responsibility not for other people necessarily but for knowing how and being permitted to do a job well in one's own manner. People do not mind being told what to do but they want to decide how to do it themselves. They are proud of their skills and want to practice them. When people are given the opportunity of accomplishing a task by their own self-direction and self-control, they are enjoying their maximum motivation.

This is the reason that people generally work harder for themselves off the job than while on the job. People have a great deal of imagination, ingenuity and creativity that they like to use and enjoy the results. Responsibility is something that people remember a long time and talk a great deal about.

An interesting thing about the factors discussed here, all, except pay, are things that can be used on the job; all of them have more influence on productivity than pay; they are all, if not equally important, at least highly important; they complement each other, and none of them costs the company any real outlay of finances. By using these factors with an eye towards reducing or removing employment dissatisfactions, a manager can come closer to obtaining maximum productivity or acceptable job performance. □

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