

3 Ways to Supercharge your Supervisors



The attitudes and behaviors of your people managers play a critical role in your company's success. When your managers are putting forth their best effort, the more likely it is that you'll, in turn, get the best performances out of the rest of your employees. Here are three ways to supercharge your supervisors:

1. Transform them into teachers. Today's people managers must be more than team leaders — they must also be teachers. Attentive managers look for situations that will help subordinates learn how to work smarter and more efficiently.

Typically, learning occurs most readily when rewards are applied as close to the intended behavior's occurrence as possible. Thus, train managers to look for moments when employees are being successful and to immediately recognize those efforts. Managers should praise them in the presence of others and regularly. Low-cost rewards such as the occasional free lunch or gift card can also be highly motivational.

2. Turbo-boost their reaction times. Be sure people managers address problems right away. The operative word there is "address," and its meaning may vary depending on the nature of the trouble.

For minor difficulties, just leaving a friendly voice mail or carefully worded email may do the trick. But for more serious conflicts or dilemmas, a thorough investigation is important, followed by face-to-face meetings documented in writing. In either case, it's imperative not to let problems fester.

3. Turn off their micromanagement switch. While people managers need to keep an eye out for good and bad behavior, they shouldn't micromanage. Those who perch atop employees' shoulders, checking every detail of their work, are as bad for a business as rude customer service or defective products.

Why? Because the more people managers micromanage, the more they communicate the wrong message — that they don't believe employees can get the job done. Micromanaging not only lowers morale, but also hinders efficiency, as the manager is basically spending valuable time doing the employee's job rather than his or her own.

In the day-to-day grind of keeping a business running, people managers can understandably get worn down. If yours need a lift, consider reinforcing the points above in training sessions or during performance evaluations. For further information and other ideas, contact us.