

INSPIRE

On Leadership

Summer 2016

Set Employees Up For Success

In my previous column, I provided a framework for the annual performance conversation. The key word is 'conversation.' Employees want to talk WITH their leaders! Employees also have an interest in talking with their leaders regularly about their performance, not just once a year. We are seeing more and more of our customers shifting toward a continuous coaching model, in lieu of the annual review.

With this in mind, ongoing conversations (as well as the annual review) will be more meaningful if they are tied back to intentional planning. Planning is the first step in maximizing the performance and fulfillment of your employees. During the planning phase, you will want to create clarity around two things:

1. What are the **roles and responsibilities** this employee is intended to fulfill? Take a look at your position description for each role? How detailed is it? Is it written in such a way that your employees can go home each day confident in what they have accomplished? Beyond a written description, it is also helpful for your employees to know you expect a "whatever it takes"

approach to serving both internal and external customers. The written description is a guide for the major part of the role.

2. What are the **goals** for this employee for the year? Goals can be written for special projects, for professional development and for correction of something that is currently below expectation. You will want to ensure your goals are **SMART: Specific; Measurable; Agreed-Upon; Realistic; Timed.**

An example of a goal that is not SMART: Improve your communication skills.

An example of a goal that is SMART: To improve your communication with customers, effective immediately, return all customer calls and emails within 24 hours or receiving them, and have zero typos on all written documents.

Make sure to schedule time for planning. Employees appreciate this intentional leadership!

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