



Leadership Evaluations for Higher Performance

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Exceptional leaders tend to share a common desire: knowing which problems exist in their organization, so their people, processes and systems can either be improved or removed. After winning the 24 hours of Le Mans, Mario Andretti was asked by a reporter what it felt like to drive a "perfect race." Andretti responded, "I didn't drive a perfect race. In fact I made tons of mistakes; I just caught them quicker than the other drivers." All of us make mistakes; chalk it up to being human. The people who consistently improve and evolve in this life are those who are willing to be honest with themselves and others and listen to constructive insight and then do something about it.

Working with National and International corporations, I have discovered the higher a leader's position in an organization the less honest people tend to be with that leader. The paradox is that the higher the position, the more his or her decisions impact hundreds or thousands of people. Therefore, would it not seem logical, that these leaders receive performance evaluations from the staff and the customer? It is, and it needs to be done for many reasons. Those few who implement these types of honest two-way interactions tend to have better bottom line profits to show for it. Leaders must set the example by creating these highly interactive types of cultures within their organizations. After all, accountability and performance improvement should go in both directions, shouldn't it? Leaders must not simply talk about "honest communication, trust, and tell people their door is open" they must prove it with their behaviors and set the example. What follows are the benefits of leadership evaluations, for the leader, the employees, the organization and most importantly THE CUSTOMER.

1. Leaders should meet face to face with customers and employees, asking them to be honest about their product and service from A to Z. One of my tenants of business is that "if it does not positively impact the customer, it has no value." Who better to ask how to improve then your customers or employees? This will be the best Return On Investment you will ever get.
2. Happy, involved, and trusted employees equate directly to happy, involved and trustworthy customers. In fact, it's impossible to have unhappy employees and happy customers. More than anything else, people want to feel valued and respected by their leader. Asking for their opinion and really listening will help achieve that.
3. My four steps to professional development are: Train, Coach, Counsel, and (as a last resort) Terminate. Where do you stand in this mix? Are you trainable, need coaching, require counseling, or are you not worth the investment and need to be terminated?
4. By opening yourself up to performance evaluations by others, you will quickly find out if you really are trusted, have good communication, and are a good leader. You will find

out if your management methods are effective or ineffective and why certain people require less input or more input from you. You will learn to understand them and who best to learn from than those you are leading. Ask your people how best to lead and manage them. They will tell you either by what they say, or more importantly, what they don't say. You will quickly know, see and feel if they are lying to protect their jobs and helping you save face.

5. You will show your customers and people that they matter and are important. And along the way you will learn some very valuable lessons about yourself

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