

The second installment of The Morale Fairy's newsletter includes more information from The Morale Fairy herself! Many of you were kind enough to send comments and suggestions about our first issue and they were greatly appreciated!

It's as Simple as a Smile

By Paulette Wagner

Who is the “Greeter” at your workplace? Who makes people feel welcome to come to work? If you don't have such a person you certainly aren't alone. Most companies don't consider the need for making employees feel appreciated for coming to work. Some are fortunate to have a receptionist who has a cheery personality and greets workers and visitors alike. Most aren't so fortunate and the atmosphere in those places is definitely less positive.

There is a distinct reason Wal-Mart is known for its greeters. While we make jokes and laugh about them, Wal-Mart knows those people are one reason shoppers come to the store. Many churches and Chambers of Commerce have people at the door welcoming everyone with a smile, a greeting and a handshake. Members, and especially visitors, note the positive feelings of the organization that has learned the value of smiling. People want to be greeted and made to feel welcome.

The personal touch, eye contact, and smile that has made Wal-Mart a success works at the workplace, too! But the role of “greeter” is slightly different. Other than the receptionist, in most workplaces there is no official “greeter.” There is, however, a definite need to have one.

If you are an employee, you can set the tone for your coworkers by greeting each one with a smile. The simplest and most incredibly effective way of letting people know they are appreciated and respected is to look them in the eye and smile. Even more effective is to look him or her in the eye, smile and say “Hello” or “Good Morning” as well as the person's name. This simple act can set the tone for the entire day! By smiling, saying hello, and using someone's name, you affirm that person, and you set a positive tone for your relationship.

If you are a supervisor, manager, or executive this process is even more critical. You set the tone for the workplace. People respond to you and your reaction to them. The Gallup Organization has studied thousands of workplaces and has analyzed the practices that work best. In one of their recent articles, “The Impact of Positive Leadership,” Tom Rath states the impact of positive leadership is important because “When leaders display

positive emotions, others take note -- and take action.” The mood and atmosphere reflect that of the leadership. Positive, friendly greetings by bosses and managers lead to a more productive workplace where workers feel appreciated and are willing to make the effort to do what is necessary.

Who is the “Greeter” at your workplace? Who makes people feel welcome to come to work? There certainly needs to be one, and it should be YOU!

Quotes:

"One of the greatest gifts you can give to anyone is the gift of attention." -- Jim Rohn

"Treat everyone you meet as though they're the most important person you'll meet that day." -- Roger Dawson

I've learned...

That under everyone's hard shell is someone who wants to be appreciated and loved.

I've learned....

That everyone you meet deserves to be greeted with a smile.

(Source unknown)

Smiles:

A programmer was crossing a road one day when a frog called out to him and said, "If you kiss me, I'll turn into a beautiful princess." He bent over, picked up the frog and put it in his pocket. The frog spoke up again and said, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a beautiful princess, I will stay with you for one week." The programmer took the frog out of his pocket, smiled at it and returned it to the pocket. The frog then cried out, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a princess, I'll stay with you and do ANYTHING you want." Again the programmer took the frog out, smiled at it and put it back into his pocket. Finally, the frog asked, "What is the matter? I've told you I'm a beautiful princess that I'll stay with you for a week and do anything you want. Why won't you kiss me?" The programmer said, "Look I'm a programmer. I don't have time for a girlfriend, but a talking frog, now that's cool."

'Execution' in business - Opinion By John W. Howard, Ph.D.

"Business Execution" has become the latest catch word of the book-and-seminar meeting industry. Google the words, you'll get 122,000,000 hits!

Ralph Welborn, in his new book with Vince Kasten, *Get It Done! A Blueprint for Business Execution*, says, "It's a big, big problem. Consider this statistic: More than 64 percent of C-level executives from 250 midsized-to-large companies in the United States and the European Union have said that being able to execute, to react quickly to changing business opportunities and technologies, is critical for their success. Yet nearly 80 percent of them said that it is nearly impossible to achieve." They go on to say you will never close the execution gap, just reduce it.

In another "execution" tome, Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan (*Execution, the Discipline of Getting Things Done*) focus on the effect that people, especially leaders, have on execution within a business. They use stories about specific leaders and their effects on business outcomes to illustrate the differences between companies with great execution and those with poor execution. In some cases, they point to changes in leaders that caused a change in the company's ability to execute, and the consequences.

Given the acknowledged importance of the topic, the high probability of differences in execution being differences in leadership and our own strong bias toward empirical data, it would be interesting to see a study based on the Profile XTTM and the Checkpoint 360TM that is looking to identify the differences between the leaders of companies with famously, verifiably good execution, and the leaders of companies with execution challenges. Volunteers, please step forward!

Call Center Working to Improve Sales Force with the Profile XTTM

An inbound call center for a neutraceutical and supplement manufacturer was experiencing turnover as high as 500 percent a year. Sales performance among its 60 agents varied widely, with top performers producing as much as six times the average sales of marginal performers.

Ten top performers and eight marginal performers were identified in a current study. The 18 agents were instructed to complete the Profile XTTM online during paid working

hours. However, two of the marginal performers were terminated before completing the assessment, leaving six in their group providing data.

A success pattern was generated using a concurrent pattern from all 10 in the top-performer group. All agents in the study were matched to the success pattern for top performers. The average match-to-pattern for the top performers was 86 percent, while the marginal performers averaged 73 percent. This 13-point spread between the group averages provides evidence that the pattern is discriminating between top performers and marginal performers.

If this pattern had been used when the sample agents were hired and if the company had used a criterion of 75 percent match-to-pattern or better to select for hire (see Proposed Criterion 1 in the graph), they would have hired all of their top performers in the sample but would have reduced their hiring of marginal performers by 50 percent.

If they had used a more stringent criterion of 82 percent or better to select for hire (Proposed Criterion 2 in the graph), they would have missed 20 percent of the group who became top performers, but would have reduced their hiring of marginal performers by 83 percent! The issue of setting criteria and the factors that should be considered in the process has been discussed in earlier articles in this newsletter (see Volume 3, Issue 6), but the issue of which criterion to use will likely be decided by some intersection of the need to fill seats and handle calls, with the size and characteristics of the pool of available candidates for the sales positions.

If, over time, the bottom 25 percent of the current sales force could be replaced with people who perform at the level of the current top performers, the effects on total sales would be profound. These increases would also be expected to affect profitability to an even greater degree, since the sales increase would come without proportionate increases in fixed costs. Eventual return on investment in the assessment process would likely be in multiples above 10:1.

The call center is now conducting additional differential studies of the sales force, using the Profile Sales Indicator™, and the Customer Service group in the call center, using the Profile XTTM, looking for possible additional improvements in the selection process.

"No country, however rich, can afford the waste of its human resources."

~Franklin D. Roosevelt

All articles written by John Howard, Ph.D., except where noted.

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