

Five Ways To Alienate Your Employees: A Manager's Guide To Investigating Errors

Are you a manager with too much time on your hands? Do you go home at the end of an eight hour day with boring regularity, leaving a clean desk and a clear conscience?

When rare errors occur in your organization do your employees openly discuss what went wrong so that you can find the root causes. Do they then compound the problem by volunteering to implement solutions?

If you work in the drug, medical device, or any other FDA regulated industry, then you must be particularly troubled. When the FDA inspectors show up and ask for your Corrective And Preventive Action files, are your's too thin? Do the inspectors leave your company too quickly in search of someone else to inspect?

If all this sounds familiar, then you are not alienating your employees enough. Your employees have too much trust in you. They are too willing to share their experiences because they have no fear of retribution from you when you decide on corrective actions for errors.

Wouldn't you rather have NO discretionary time in your life? Here are five sure-fire tips to create more fear in your employees and keep them from ever sharing facts openly during problem solving discussions.

1) Blamestorm, don't brainstorm. When you investigate errors, focus on the people, not the business process. Frame your questions around the assumption that the employees are at fault. When you write up your corrective actions, use such terms as "Employee needs to be more alert" or "Employee assigned to be retrained". Your employees will never realize that these terms are business-speak for "This employee is a negligent moron."

Your corrective actions should never include engineering or procedural changes. These changes are a waste of time because they address basic business processes. After all, management designed the business process, and so couldn't possibly be wrong.

2) Don't use a Standard Operation Procedure for investigating errors. Use a different method for investigating errors every time. This makes so many good things happen. First of all you will never have to worry about getting better at root cause investigations. How could you, if you use a different technique every time?

Another advantage is that your employees will never know what's going to happen. Predictability allays fear. You don't want that to happen. You want to show them who's boss.

3) Assume that none of your employees want to do a good job. You'll be surprised how people will live down to your expectations. Sure, you might get disappointed. Every once in a while someone will overcome your expectations and actually contribute a thoughtful suggestion during problem solving sessions. But those occasions will be rare. They will feel your attitude and will cover up problems just like you assumed they would.

4) Don't be concerned about fear in the workplace. W. Edwards Deming, the famous quality guru, insisted that managers must drive out fear. But why should employees fear you? After all you're a nice person and besides, you are just doing your job.

Forget that Deming said that fear arises from the structure of the employee – manager relationship. Forget that in the mind of the employee the manager has all the power in the relationship. Forget that the manager determines the employee's raise, that the manager can hire, that the manager can fire.

You don't have to drive out fear from your relationship. You don't have to build trust on a daily basis. You don't have to meet simple commitments that you make to employees. If you say that you will meet an employee at a particular time to discuss something of concern to him, don't worry about it. You're the boss. He'll understand it if you just blow him off.

5) Management By Walking Around. Stay parked in your office all day and don't get out where your employees work until the next crisis comes up. Make sure your employees only see you when you storm out of your office with a problem and an attitude.

Don't try to build relationships when you have time for a calm discussion about something the employee thinks is important. You want to give the impression that you're overloaded with important manager stuff. You can't waste time with their problems.

Follow these five simple principles and you'll never have to worry about having any free time on your hands. Your root cause solutions will never start

to build on each other to form a solid operational foundation that prevents future errors.

Your desk will be stacked to Biblical proportions with uncompleted projects. Your email in-box will explode out of your computer monitor almost daily with complaints about the latest error in your department. Eight hour days? Forget it. You're going to be living at work.

About the Author

Norm Howe, Senior Partner at Validation and Compliance Institute, consultants for FDA regulated industries. He got his BS at UC, Berkeley, and a Ph.D. in chemistry at UCLA. He has held many management positions, most at BASF. vcilc.com

Source: www.isnare.com

Source: <http://articles.exospy.com>