



So, Do You *Really* Want to Change Behaviors?!

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We always tell our clients that they have just as much responsibility as we do when it comes to training. They don't always like to hear it, but it is true. Anytime in business when you want to change/enhance behaviors the responsibility is three-fold: the company, the participant(s), and the resource (US!). Here's how it breaks down:

1. The company needs to (1) acknowledge there is an opportunity (problem, issue, growth opportunity, etc.) and (2) understand clearly what they are looking for.
Example:** I own company Mitzi Inc. I have acknowledged there is a problem with the Purchasing Team. They don't get along, their numbers are down, there is conflict everyday, the manager in the department spends most of her time dealing with employee issues rather than leading the department, etc. (you get the picture). I meet with Sue the Manager. We flowchart and document exactly what we need the department to look, feel and function like. We then decide to figure out where we are against our vision. So, we do some focus group meetings, crunch the measurements in the department, review job descriptions against our vision and take stock of our current environment. Now, we have a good feel for what we need: **job realignment, some people need to be placed on a performance plan, we need to apply Lean Principles to increase efficiencies in the department and we need some Team Building training to get this group to a higher level of team function.

This step (*acknowledging there is a problem, creating a vision of what it should look and function like and doing a Gap Analysis – what your current needs are*) can be done internally or outsourced. We assist many companies with this step as it can be a difficult one to be objective about.

2. Good. You have a handle on what you really need to be functioning at your vision level. Now, you need to decide, “What are my options in accomplishing these goals?” Let's take them one by one.
⇒ **Job realignment.** You have no idea where to start. Some freebies for you: do the same thing you just did with the department to your positions.
 - Determine what positions you really need. Bring in other departments to determine if you are meeting internal customer and external customer needs with your department. Re-write job descriptions to fit the current needs of the company and customer.
 - Determine current staff's strengths and line up with needs.
 - Share your vision with staff, set clear expectations and re-train.
 - Give support and hold people accountable.

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- ⇒ **Some people need to be placed on a Performance Plan.** Don't just whine about it. Do it.
1. When you have an employee who is not performing to expectations you need to first determine how you, as their leader, might have contributed to the situation. Maybe your expectations were not clear, maybe you have not provided the training/skills that are required, etc.
 2. Your next job is to let the employee know they are not meeting expectations. Ok, not a fun meeting but it has to happen. Don't sugar coat it, just tell them. There is definitely some better ways to do this, if you are unclear or uncomfortable, give us a call. We can coach you through it.
 3. Let them give you feedback on why they are not performing. Is this going to sound like a bunch of excuses and defensiveness? Absolutely, but it will help to get it all out in the open so you can address it if needed. Stay focused on the fact that they are the one going on the Performance Plan!
 4. Next, see above: Share your vision with employee, set clear expectations, provide resources if needed, re-train, give support and hold them accountable. Simple right?

This step (*placing people on a Performance Plan*) is typically accomplished internally. An outside resource can assist with: Training (facilitation of the meeting/process, conflict management, employee motivation, accountability, etc.), designing a Performance Plan system for the organization, etc.

- ⇒ **Apply Lean Principles to increase efficiencies in the department.** If you have no idea what this means, call for assistance (800-577-4293 ☺). You need your department functioning like a well oiled machine. Typically there is a lot of waste in the office: traveling around for information, meetings, copies, 10 signatures for every document, logistical arrangement of people, and so on. If you want your department to be profitable, this is an area to look at.

This step (*apply Lean Principles in the department*) is typically accomplished externally. An outside resource can assist with helping you determine the optimum performance of the department and then applying Lean Principles to your process to help you get there.

- ⇒ **Team Building training to get this group to a higher level of team function.** There are so many options in accomplishing this goal. Here's what NOT TO DO: don't try to wing it. What I mean is do not try to throw a mandatory picnic together and expect everyone to play nice in the sandbox afterwards. You are wasting your own time and everyone else's.

This step (*team building training*) is typically accomplished externally. An outside trainer can assist with helping you determine the root cause of the conflict and design a training resource to help you change behaviors and maintain the new environment.

Now, let me summarize the responsibilities:

1. The Company (you):

- Determine what you really need (vision), assess where you are, acquire and coordinate resources to help you meet your needs.
- Communication. Throughout the whole process, the company needs to keep applicable people (staff and resources) informed on the who, what, where, how and WHY!
- Set clear expectations with everyone involved.
- Support initiatives.
- Accountability.

2. The Participants:

- Buy into new vision. Obviously this is critical and a very difficult step. Yes, it takes skill on the part of the leader to roll out a new vision in a way that accomplishes buy-in. If you don't have the skill, get it.
- Understand the expectations. If you are not sure, ask.
- Give feedback on barriers you see in the vision. Be proactive not negative in this step. No one likes a whiner.
- Be accountable. If you are really struggling, let someone know immediately. If you decide not to be accountable by choice, the company can choose to discipline you.

3. The Resource:

- To help a company change behaviors you, as a resource (internal or external), need to be very clear about the vision. Dive into the culture of the company as much as possible prior to providing a service. Get examples of the vision and of the current state of affairs.
- Design and provide resources that specifically meet the client's needs. Use company specific examples in training. Tie the training into the vision as much as possible so the participants can "see" it.
- Provide Next Steps to the company to help with long term behavior change. Next Steps might entail running a follow-up training 3 months in the future. It might be a lunch & learn to remind participants of the tools.
- Follow up with the company after providing the resource to assist with their accountability path.

So, there you are. If you *REALLY* want to change/enhance behaviors in your company, there are many critical responsibilities to go around to ensure success!