Expecting the Best: The Power of Clear Expectations in a Turbid Environment

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Today’s Expected Learning

1. How to initiate the dialogue process?
2. What are expectations?
3. Why are they important?
4. How to develop good expectations?
5. Workshop tools;
   - Power Point presentation w/video clips
   - Individual exercise; “How would you feel if?”
   - Samples of actual, created expectations
   - How this relates to Strategic Plan and Evaluations?
   - Team exercise; Establishing Clear Expectations worksheet
The idea formed from...

- Books such as:


- Published article (2005) 8 pgs.

- “The Iceberg Concept” developed (2006)

- Workshop Exercises, samples (2009)
Strategic Elements Above the Surface

Cornerstone

Learning Organization
Discover Culture
Repeat Message
Recalibrate Systems
Measure Performance
Celebrate Results
Empower Teams
Strategic Planning
Build Systems

Trust

Strategic Elements Below the Surface:

Leadership Principles
Core Values
Clear Expectations
The Leader's Vision

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Clear Expectations state...

- What do you expect of yourself?
- What do you expect of others?
- What do others expect of you?
“You have to expect things of yourself before you can do them.”

Michael Jordan
Life can be turbid

- We want clarity but often get murkiness, uncertainty.
Sometimes it’s hard to see
Unprecedented Times

- Furloughs, layoffs, reductions in force, hiring freezes
- Many retirements, knowledge loss
- Cost of living up 21%, wages up 2% in the past 5 yrs.
- Budget constraints, doing more with less
- Deficit of $84 billion in DW/WWT by 2020.
- 1 in 5 employees are disengaged, drain revenue – $300 billion/yr.
- Only 24% of manager’s discuss employees strengths
- But 62% of manager’s focus on weaknesses or ignore employees.
What followers want in leaders

- **Honesty** - 85% (the foundation of society/public service)
- Forward-looking – 70%
- Inspiring – 69%
- Competent – 64%

(Based on the percentage of people selecting this character)

Data compiled from ongoing study since 1983 by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner. Authors of “The Leadership Challenge”
What employees really want...

#1 - I know what is **expected** of me.

#2 - At work I have the opportunity to do what I do best everyday.

#3 - In the past seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.

Gallup Survey, 2000 - 2012
Expectations...

- Impact hiring decisions
- Impact performance decisions
- Reflect the vision
- Support the values
- Influence the relationships
- Solidify trust
- Affect the bottom line

“Either people strive to live up to their potential each day or they don’t.”

(Rosen, HR Magazine, 2009)
Expectations...

- Drive emotions, thoughts, behaviors and performance.
- Affect personality, spirituality and relationships.
- Are what you think “should” happen in life.

But...

- We live in broken world with messy relationships.
- Wrong or unrealistic expectations can be very disappointing and frustrating.
- How would you feel if...? (Let’s do this exercise together)
**What if** you were scheduled to have a meeting with your boss at 2:00pm, you arrive on time, then...

- He shows up late at 2:10, takes a work call at 2:15, permits a co-worker in his office at 2:20, goes to the restroom at 2:30, takes a personal call from a friend at 2:40, permits another person to interrupt at 2:50, ends the meeting at 3:00 without discussing what you came to talk about and says, “Sorry, that’s just the way it goes around here.”

- How would you feel? ____________________________
- Write an expectation for your boss.______________
(The Pygmalion Effect) Self-fulfilling prophecy

- Everyone has expectations of themselves, their boss, spouse, children, team mates, direct reports, etc.

- Expectations are communicated consciously or unconsciously and people pick up on cues.

- People perform in ways consistent with expectations.

Rosenthal, et.al. 1968
Pygmalion Effect (Rosenthal 1968, Jacobson 1992)

- Students perform better if they are expected to do so.
- Reality can be influenced by the expectations of others.
- Teacher ratings relate to student learning outcomes.
- How we think affects how things turn out.

Susan Boyle video

Paul Potts video
Four Pygmalion factors

- Climate – Tone of voice, body language, eye contact
- Input – Challenging assignments, expanded skills
- Output – Allowing employees to speak, offer opinions
- Feedback – Positive reinforcement, constructive criticism, recognition, reward

Paul Potts video
Rosenthal found...

- What you expect is often what you get.
- Those who expected high performance, got it.
- Individuals who have high standards, achieve them.
- Negative reinforcement achieved negative outcomes.
- You can beat them or empower them. (enable)
So, who set the best expectations?

- 902 wins, 371 losses (.709)
- 3 NCAA titles
- “The General” Bob Knight

- 957 wins, 297 losses (.763)
- 4 NCAA titles
- “Coach K” Mike Krzyzewski
Whether you think that you can, or that you can’t, you are right.

Henry Ford
Performance

- Performance is related to what you expect to get.

- Our Performance Evaluations must be about expectations.

- Expect little, get little.
  Expect the best, get the best.

Mary Lou Retton – 1984 Olympics
“Need a 10, get a 10”
Teams vs. Individuals

- Team performance depends more on you than them.

- Success of teams = individual expectations being met.

- Leaders often fail to communicate expectations.

- Confidence in government leaders is at all time low.
  - 46 % in 2003
  - 35% in 2008
  - 21% in 2011 (Record low)
  - 12 % in 2013

“Without confidence, people will not perform.”

~Howard Schultz
Why is confidence so low?

Answer - Trust is missing.

“Trust is confidence born of the character and competence of an individual or organization.”

S.M. Covey, 2008

So... How do we increase trust to build confidence?
Trust requires...

- Consistent behavior - actions match values
- Minimum surprises
- Carefully planned, off-site activities
- Casual, caring conversations
- Being completely honest and open
- Mutual dependency

“In order to accept your help, the other person has to believe in your good intentions, not that you will make him/her look incompetent in the eyes of a third person.”

Von Krogh, et al. 2000
Mutual Dependency

- Makes a group into a team
- Is getting to know each other
- Allows for successful team accomplishments
- Is required to build trust – the bond that holds relationships together

“It is clear that a group can function only if its members are able to depend on each other.”

Smith and Berg, 1987
Dialogue: two-way communication

- Tell me what is important to you...
- Tell me about your career goals, aspirations...
- Tell me what would really help you to achieve your goals...
- How can I help you improve your job, or career?

- Supervisor meets with employee without interruption
- Supervisor asks employee and then reverse roles
- Listen, write down responses
- Think, Talk, Agree to expectations, Realize it
The 3-R’s

- Reliability – the extent to which you keep your promises to other people.

- Reputation – The extent to which you act consistently to build trust.

- Relationships – The extent to which you connect to others over time.

“Leaders touch a heart before they ask for a hand.”

John Maxwell, 2008
So... How do you separate the person from the problem?

Say....

“I truly believe in you and your potential.”

“I value you but have certain beliefs on how to manage.”

“Because of this, I need to let you know that your performance isn’t living up to your potential.”

“I know that you are capable of more.”

“I need your help, here is what I expect.”
Leaders must...

- Have the conversation, confront privately
- Set **clear**, realistic expectations early
- Involve others in decisions
- Persuade
- Model the way
- Show they care
- Coach for success
- Focus on learning
- Delegate, let go
- Be authentic (AL’s)
MCES

- How we believe about what the Department is (Mission) and what we honestly think it can become (Vision) has a powerful effect on how things turn out.

- MCES is not a building, a treatment facility, a pump station, or a policy manual.

- MCES is not as I’ve heard... “a s--- plant,” or “a dump.”

- MCES is YOU! It’s YOU who creates, innovates and shapes the future. Don’t wait for someone else to do it.
Expectation Reward Matrix  D. Lussier, 2010

![Expectation Reward Matrix Diagram](image-url)
“People live up to the expectations that are set before them. When expectations are set high and people have the necessary resources at their disposal, great things can happen.”

(Wodrich, 2009, AWWA Journal)
Ways to realize expectations?

- Give opportunities that reflect true interests, strengths
- Make sure of success before moving on
- **Frequent** verbal interaction
- **Consistent** messaging
- Enable participation
- **Sincere** commitment
- Mentor and provide one-on-one time
- Expecting the best is good, giving your best is better
- Set a target; Strategic Plan i.e., Goal #2, Objective #3
“High expectations are the key to everything.”

Sam Walton
Clear Expectations...

- Create cohesion and a culture of support
- Break down barriers
- Connect folks to a shared purpose

When done right you will hear...

“I didn’t know that was important to you.”
“That explains why you do what you do.”
“Now I know what makes you tick.”
Rule #1 - Clarity

An expectation is only valid when mutually agreed upon.
So, let’s be clear and begin to exceed expectations.

Questions?

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