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# Be The Best

Volume 1

Issue 4

**KBS GROUP, INC.**

**PEOPLE...PERFORMANCE...PREDICTABLE RESULTS**

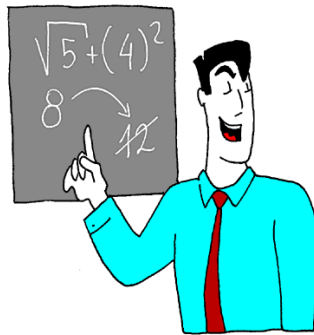
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## *The Top 10 Ways To Empower Your Employees*

The word empower is often over-used. Many employers talk about empowering their employees but often employees feel disempowered. Here's a list of the top 10 things you can do that will really empower your employees, according to employees, not employers!

- 1. Allow employees to actively participate in team and company goals.**  
Look for every opportunity to include employees at every level of the organization, in being active participants. Employees often report getting one-way directives instead.
- 2. Allow employees to suggest better ways of getting their jobs done.**  
Ask for employee suggestions for other ways of getting the task or project accomplished. Listen and be willing to really hear the employees' comments. Employees often report that they have no input and are told exactly how to perform their jobs, leaving no creativity.
- 3. Provide positive reinforcement.**  
Always listen and acknowledge your employees. Employees often report that their decisions and actions are second-guessed and that most, if not all, feedback given is negative.
- 4. Clearly delegate responsibility and give the employees authority along with the responsibility.**  
Do you give inconsistent messages? Do you ask the employee to handle a problem or project and then give them negative feedback or give them an assignment and then say, "never-mind?" Employees often report that they are given tasks and then told they did it wrong.
- 5. Be clear in your communication.**  
When you express goals or explain projects, be sure the employees really understand what you are asking for. Employees often report that the goals are unclear and that they are not sure what they are being asked to do.

*Continued on page two - Empower*



*So then you take...*

## *The Science Of Hiring*

By Will & Suzi Helmlinger

In a recent speech given on the "Science of Hiring," we asked our audience how many are responsible for hiring staff. Everyone raised their hand. We then asked, "How many of you enjoy the interviewing and hiring process?" Not one person raised their hand. Experience tells us that the vast majority of hiring managers simply hate the interviewing/hiring process.

Often this results from not understanding or following the process necessary to do the job effectively. Many hiring managers are thrilled to learn that this process does not have to be as painful as they think.

The mission of each hiring manager should be to "recruit, interview, and select the right person for the right job every time." While no one will ever be 100%, following our six steps will make a difference in your interviewing/recruitment efforts.

We'd like to share six of our secrets (steps) that have proved successful which are to be used in the selection of any employee at any level. Skip a step, and the likelihood of a hiring mistake increases.

**Step 1: Create a Valid Job Criteria.** Many people know this as a job description. We choose Valid Job Criteria because this information must be valid, job related, and must include all criteria necessary for the successful completion of the job. It must include job expectations, performance measurements, as well as the more traditional factors of experience and duties.

**Step 2: Complete a Work Environment Profile.** This is a computerized assessment, which outlines exact expectations, of "how" the job is to be done. Experience tells us that hiring managers can tell us "what" the person will do, but cannot clearly and completely express "how" the job is to be done. Without this key component, success will be limited at best! Often you hire for experience and fire because the person did not know "how" to do the job.

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*Empower - continued from page one*

6. **Show you have trust in your employees.**  
Allow them to make mistakes as a form of learning. Show that it is really OK to make mistakes. Let them know you really support their decisions. Employees often report that someone is always looking over their shoulder to make sure they do things right.
7. **Listen. Listen. Listen.**  
Do you do most of the talking? Employees often report that conversations are one way, comprised mostly of their ideas being criticized. They don't feel they are heard.
8. **Be interested in the employees' career development.**  
Meet with employees and discover their goals and their wants. Employees often report that their goals are not viewed as important in the organization.
9. **Let the employees help you achieve success.**  
Are you doing it all yourself? Employees often report that their managers do all the tasks and that they have no way to make contributions outside their job descriptions. Look for opportunities to delegate and enhance the employees' career development at the same time.
10. **Be a coach.**  
The best way to empower employees is not to manage them. Coach them to success. This is a process of developing their skills and providing them specific feedback to meet high standards. Employees often report feeling like children rather than being on the same team with their bosses. Be their coach and lead the team to success!

Submitted by Terri Levine, Professional and Personal Coach, who can be reached at [terri@comprehensivecoaching.com](mailto:terri@comprehensivecoaching.com), or visited on the web at <http://www.comprehensivecoaching.com> Copyright 1997, 98, 99, by Coach U, all rights reserved.

## Web Site Of The Month

Search for daily news using the Pandia metasearch engine, and get headlines, summaries and links to articles from some of the best news sites on the Internet, including BBC, CNN, MSNBC, Yahoo, The Washington Post, NewsHub and Moreover.

Check it out at [www.pandia.com/news](http://www.pandia.com/news).



## The Top 10 Steps To A Clean, Clear Desk

Is your desk a disaster area? Desk clutter creates stress, confusion, and cuts down on your productivity. It is estimated that people waste an average of 30 minutes per day searching for papers - that translates into 10 hours per month or a whole 3 weeks per year of unproductive time!

1. **Take everything off your desk and out of your drawers.** This is very satisfying as you have a quick win by being able to see your desk in two minutes!
2. **Give your desk a good clean.** Make sure you remove all the dirt that has been lurking in those darkened corners.
3. **Get a large, strong bag and start dumping!** Put all your papers in one big pile, and start to "divide and conquer." Remove large items such as catalogues and manuals. Are they out of date? Do you really need them? If the answer is YES, they should go in a filing cabinet. Over 80% of your paper pile can probably be thrown out. The only papers you should keep on your desk are the ones that you are actively working on, so make a file for each topic and keep all the papers together. Anything else should be thrown out or filed for future reference / audit purposes.
4. **Start putting the equipment back on your desk.** PC, Printer, telephone, fresh pad of paper and a holder with your pens, pencils, stapler, paperclips etc. Keep only what you use every day - the rest can be put in a drawer or filing cabinet within easy reach. Get rid of everything that doesn't work, is broken or that you never use. How many pens and pencils do you have on your desk? How many can you use at any one time? If you aren't sure whether or not something belongs on your desk, ask yourself the following questions:

- Do I like this item?
- Is this item useful?
- Does it belong on my desk?
- If the answer is NO, then remove it from your desk.

5. **How many calendars & address books do you have?** If possible, you should have just ONE place where you keep your contacts and appointments. It could be on your PC (Outlook, ACT, Goldmine, etc.), personal organizer or a paper-based system. Just use whatever works for you.

6. **Personal items.** How many photos, toys, and awards do you have on your desk? Keep them to a minimum as they can be distractions - one or two at most.

7. **The surface of your desk is NOT a storage area.** Keep it clear apart from the few things that you use daily.

*Continued on the next page*

Continued from previous page – **Top Ten**

**8. Always have a waste paper basket by your desk.** When printed matter arrives on your desk, ask yourself the following questions: Do I need / want this? Is it too late to act on this? Could someone else use this information? Would it change my life if I threw it away? 80% of papers that you file will never be looked at again. Why not throw things away instead of filing them?

**9. A simple filing system:**

- a. **ACTION** - ongoing work should be categorized into topics, with one file per topic to keep papers together.
- b. **TODAY** - things to work on today
- c. **TO FILE** - this can be kept under your desk and out of the way. Set aside time to file each week, and only file papers that you really need to keep. Bin the rest.
- d. **TO READ** - magazines, articles, etc., that you want to read. Set aside time each week to read. If the pile just keeps on getting bigger, set a time limit for keeping these items, and then bin them. If it is important information, you will find the time to read it. (Stop re-cluttering areas that you have already cleared, and you will soon limit the spaces where clutter gathers.)
- e. **BIN** - before throwing junk mail away, get yourself removed from the mailing list if you no longer need the information.



**10. By now, your desk should be looking pretty empty - good work!** That was the easy bit. At the end of every day, give yourself 10 - 15 minutes to tidy your desk. When you come to your clean desk each morning, you will no longer waste time looking for things or rearranging the mess.

***Congratulations on clearing your desk!  
Don't forget to give yourself a reward.***

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***Employees Just Want to Have Fun***

An extensive, company-sponsored recreation and social program can be a boost to morale - but it can also be a fiscal and managerial nightmare to the CEO who has to administer it. Jack Stack, CEO of Springfield Remanufacturing Center Corp., in Springfield, MO., was so intent on fostering healthy relations with his 450 employees that he began feeling more like a camp director with each passing athletic season. His solution? Set a budget, and then let your employees divvy it up themselves.

"It's really hard to please everybody," says Stack. "You don't know how to draw the line and be fair at the same time." So he established a recreation committee for each of his plants. Eight employees, elected annually, receive a budget of \$5,000 with which to fund company softball and volleyball teams, fishing tournaments, and a company picnic. "It gets rid of the little headaches for managers," Stack says, "and it gives employees a taste of what it's like to be a manager."

***Time Out For Thinking***

If you find you're too busy to do the strategic planning your company needs, you might want to listen to Neal Patterson, chairman and CEO of Kansas City, MO - based Cerner Corp. It was when Cerner was doubling revenues about every 45 weeks that Patterson said, "Whoa, I need to preserve some time to think." He now schedules a weekly two-hour session to "talk to himself." He prefers to do it early in the morning - "when my mind is uncluttered" - and away from the office, so he won't be interrupted. "This isn't fill. I work between appointments," Patterson says, "yet that's how too many executives treat it. That can get a company in trouble."

***The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.***

– William James



***Be The Best***

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**Step 3:** *Review the resume, cover letter, and application in detail prior to any personal interview.* Time pressures are immense today and often insufficient time is dedicated to the review of these important documents. Part of the person's story, their history, is laid out in front of you. It is very important that the interviewer look for patterns that are evident. By doing so, it helps identify the types of questions that need to be asked during the personal interview.

**Step 4:** *The Interview.* Here is where the "rubber meets the road." This is your opportunity to learn about the candidate. Ask the right types of questions, and you'll know if you have a potential match. Successful interviews consist of asking four types of open-ended questions; task, skill, career, and work habit questions. Do all four, and you will get a good picture of the person you've interviewed.

**Step 5:** *Employment Assessments or Tests.* Many companies are concerned about the inaccuracies of a test. Hiring managers also know that applicants today are very astute at putting on the "interview mask." Hiring managers often wonder if the person they have interviewed will be the person who does the job. We recommend that you use validated testing tools, such as the **Managing for Success** series and the **Sales Strategy Index** assessments before you hire anyone. These validated assessments help you discover the person behind the interview mask as well as the attitudes they bring with them. They also help measure whether their behaviors and attitudes fit the job.

**Step 6:** *Reference Checks.* Today, it is difficult to get more than just dates of employment and the last position held. In some states, companies are now required to release more complete information about a former employee. Reference checks can be made easier when you ask for the assistance of the applicant. Also, never forget to verify the degree the applicant has listed. It is amazing what you can discover with that phone call to the school.

Miss any one of these steps, and you eliminate a critical component of the hiring process. You don't have to make your decision a roll of the dice any more. Put the odds in your favor; follow our six steps.

*(P.S. These aren't all our secrets, but we'll be glad to share more when you contact us.)*

*People...Performance...Predictable Results*  
*KBS Group, Inc. 1-877-271-6383 OR Fax: 1-877-273-8998*

## **Be The Best**

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