



SmartSolutions Newsletter



Best Practices for Companies Moving to the Next Level

November 24, 2009

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*December 4, 2009
12:05-1:00 pm MDT*

To discuss [Top 10 Books for all executives to read for a more productive 2010.](#)

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7 Synergies of Business Success

1. Grow from the inside out.
2. Develop a brand promise and live it daily.
3. Put people first.
4. Hire leaders and managers.
5. Lead to create wealth.
6. Values validate valuation.
7. Monitor, monitor, monitor...what ever you measure will improve.

Soft subject deserves hard look

Mary Smith works as a front-line supervisor in a software development firm supervising six engineers. In August, her manager asked me to coach her on management skills and emotional intelligence. In my initial session with Mary, I noticed distraction and lack of focus. When I pointed this out, she became very enthusiastic about working with me and showed a positive attitude, on the outside at least.

In the second session, we reviewed several assessments which helped her set short-range goals for performance improvement. However, at the third session, she had not done any of her homework. The fourth session was the same. Then, I got an anonymous note in the mail from a person who said he was a peer of Mary's at work and it said, "You should know that Mary smokes pot most days before work and even leaves at lunch to smoke more. This is widespread knowledge in our company division."

Wow. While I had suspected outside influences for her distraction, I later found out that she would schedule her appointments with me early in the day, staying sober early. Then, she would go smoke at lunch or find a reason to go home for the day.

Mary is not an anomaly (while this story has been changed somewhat). According to the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, 10% of employees use illegal drugs at work. One out of three employees abuses alcohol or lives with someone who does (National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism). And domestic abuse occurs in 60% of marriages in the United States (National Crime Statistics Report). Layer on top the financial issues created for

Intangible...the quality of the company is directly proportional to the quality of the CEO.

Wondering how you stack up on these issues? [Take our Growth Assessment](#) to find out!

Check out the SmartGrowth the [Recommended Reading List](#).

[Order NOW!](#) Get Pam Watson Korbel's book *More Money, Less Work, More Fun* and face your business challenges.

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employees and their families due to the recession...

And you realize the number one productivity issue for American employers is not accountability, management, processes or the organizational chart. It is the personal issues that employees bring to work that distract them from doing their job and thereby reduce productivity and profitability. (Of special note, instances of personal issues interfering with work occur in professional environments as often as more blue-collar environments.)

For example, if Mary Smith comes in one-half hour late every day, expands her lunch hour 15 by minutes, and leaves 15 minutes early because she is more focused on getting and staying stoned than working, then her company is losing one hour of her productivity every day times \$50/hour. That's \$12,000 a year before we layer in how this impacts her work group or we figure out why she feels like she needs to be stoned all the time.

As you enter 2010, your executive team needs to embrace the fact that the single step you can take to improve your business profits is to get help for employees and their personal issues. It feels like a soft, squishy issue but you have no choice than to deal with it. Employers and leaders cannot afford to act like the parents of teenagers and turn your heads the other way on these issues.

First, as an employer you must hold employees accountable for their performance, document positive and negative incidents, and regularly (weekly) give them feedback. All employees should be treated the same on accountability regardless of their personal situations.

Here are some other ideas and resources:

1. **Discuss the personal issues dilemma at the executive team level** and raise awareness and bring resources to the issue. Tell your employees how and why you are focusing on this.
2. **Ensure that a well-trained human resources staff** focuses on bringing personal issues management into productivity discussions. The Chief People Officer has never been more important.
3. **Provide internal training** on the symptoms of personal issues, particularly drug and alcohol abuse, and how to handle them in the workplace.
4. **Contract with an Employee Assistance Program.** Go to the Employee Assistance Program Association at www.eapassn.org. Employee assistance counselors can deal with drug, alcohol, domestic abuse, stress, elder care,

single parenting, marriage, family issues and more.

5. Utilize your state employers' association for legal advice and training. In Colorado that would be Mountain States Employers Council, www.msec.org.

6. **Utilize the Society for Human Resources Management** (www.shrm.org), including its professionals and resources for legal advice, programs, training, etc.

In this situation, a business decision about dealing with employees' personal issues can positively impact more than just a business. Think about the value to your employees, their families and societies as a whole.

What's All This Talk About Emotional Intelligence? in Business?

Take the Emotional Intelligence Profile (tm) and participate in our 2-session webinar to learn how your emotional intelligence is driving sales, profits, customer retention and employee retention in your business. [Click here for more information and registration](#)

[Click here to visit the SmartGrowth blog](#) about how to celebrate the holidays in your company and more.

More money, less work, more fun!

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