Establishing Relationships:

The Key to Maintaining Quality Teams

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Summary

Research shows that all employees can do well on teams and in the workplace if they are managed and motivated according to their needs (Bradley, Pauley & Pauley, 2006). Dr. Taibi Kahler, an internationally acclaimed psychologist, has shown that the key to forming positive relationships with employees and fellow team members is to help them get their motivational needs met positively and use an Individualistic Management Style to manage them. (Kahler, 1991).   A working knowledge of the concepts of Process Communication enables managers to understand how to motivate each of their employees so that they can address the motivational needs of each type every day. When they do their employees and team members are happier in their job, healthier, more productive and more willing to implement quality programs.

Keywords

Behavior, communication, distress, Gallup, interaction style, management, management style, mismanagement, motivation, personality, personality type, process communication, psychological needs, quality, relationships, Taibi Kahler.

Text

Dr. Taibi Kahler, an internationally acclaimed clinical psychologist, has shown that the key to forming positive relationships with employees and fellow team members is to help them get their motivational needs met positively and use an Individualistic Style to manage them. (Kahler, 1991). Dr. Kahler's Process Communication Model® describes the characteristics of six distinct personality types, including the way they perceive the world, their preferred management or interaction style, their preferred mode of communicating and their motivational needs. The model also describes what each of the types will do when in distress and provides both proactive and reactive antidotes for dealing with them.

The six personality types are described as follows.

Reactors are compassionate, sensitive and warm and filter the world through their emotions. Their motivational need is for other people to show that they appreciate them, not for anything they have done, but just because they are nice people. They also need a cozy, nest-like, comfortable environment.

Workaholics think first and want people to think with them. They are responsible, logical and organized and work best in an environment that is structured, has clear rules and adheres to schedules. Managers can motivate them by recognizing their hard work, their good ideas and their accomplishments.

Persisters are conscientious, dedicated and observant. They form opinions very quickly and have a very well developed value system that they use to steer their course through life. They need to be respected for their beliefs and values and have a very hard time doing things they do not believe in or working for managers who do not respect

them or whom they do not respect. They also need to be recognized for their accomplishments and dedication.

Dreamers are reflective, imaginative, and calm. They need their own private time and their own space. They also need time to reflect before they act. Dreamers see connections between things that the other types do not see and for this reason others may see them as weird. Dreamers feel suffocated when surrounded by many people and cannot think in a noisy environment. Also, they do not prioritize well and cannot do more than one or two things at a time.

Rebels are creative, spontaneous and playful. They react immediately to their environment and to people with strong likes and dislikes. Humor is their currency and they will work hard for managers who encourage their creativity and display a sense of humor in the workplace. They will do anything for people they like, but will resist doing anything for people they do not like.

Promoters act first without thinking and are motivated by challenges, action, and excitement. They are persuasive, adaptable and charming and may be Mr./Ms Popularity in the workplace. They thrive in leadership positions and in the spotlight and like to make deals that make them look good to their peers. (Kahler, 1991)

Although everyone is one of these six personality types, everyone has parts of all six in them. Dr. Kahler describes this as a six-floor condominium in which some floors are more fully developed than others. Research shows that most adults can access two or three of their parts fairly easily. Most children can access only one or two of their parts. (Pauley, Bradley & Pauley, 2002). Because each of the types perceives the world differently and is motivated differently, employees who are like their managers tend to do

well on teams led by those managers. Conversely, those who are not like their managers may have difficulty. Many managers have Workaholic and Persister as their most well developed parts. Consequently these are the employees who perform well on teams run by Workaholics and Persisters. Rebels, Dreamers and Promoters sometimes have difficulty with Workaholic and Persister managers because of miscommunication between them and their managers. Frequently they end up quitting or being fired for insubordination and for a poor attitude. (Pauley & Pauley, 2006). It is no one's fault. Everyone is doing the best they can with what they have available to them at the time. The managers are doing the best they can and so are the employees. That raises the question, how can everyone do better?

Research shows that employees of all six types can do well on teams and in the workplace when they are managed and motivated according to their needs (Bradley, Pauley & Pauley, 2006). A working knowledge of the concepts of Process Communication enables managers to understand how to motivate each of their employees so that they can address the motivational needs of each type every day. To do so, managers can ask themselves the following questions. (Pauley, J. et al. 2002)

1. How can I provide personal recognition for the Reactor?
2. How can I give recognition for work and provide time structure for the Workaholic?
3. How can I ensure that the task is meaningful for the Persister?
4. How can I provide reflection time, space and structure for the Dreamer?
5. How can I ensure that the task is fun for the Rebel?
6. How can I incorporate action and excitement for the Promoter?

If managers will do this, employee motivation and job performance will improve and they will stop their negative behaviors. This will allow managers to spend more time focusing on goals and less time putting out fires. Savage, in 1991, said, "Learners who get their needs met in school, seldom cause trouble, because doing something that interferes with getting a need met is not in their self interest." (Savage, 1991) Although Savage was talking about students in the classroom, his comments are equally applicable in the workplace. Dr. Jonathan Knaupp, a professor at Arizona State University, said, "We can give employees what they deserve or what they need. If we give them what they need, they will deserve more." (Knaupp, 1990) This is the key to establishing relationships and to the success of every employee – helping them get their motivational needs met every day.

In an article in "The Scientist: The Magazine of the Life Sciences", Cepheid CEO John Bishop says that he keeps a list of the personality structures of his employees on his desk and he holds the list more dear than anything else in his office. He explains that by knowing how individuals in his staff approach the world , he can best communicate with them. He has learned that if he knows how his staff thinks, he can both understand the motivations for their recommendations as well as communicate his positions to them in the most likely way to get them to respond. He uses this knowledge to achieve his goals of high quality products, positive cash flow and an increase in revenue from $85 million to $100 million per year. (Wilan, 2007.) Larry Adams, the former president of Martin Marietta Corporation found the concepts of Process Communication very useful and told the authors that "the concepts complement the concepts of Total Quality beautifully".

In their book "First Break All The Rules", Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman, described the results of extensive interviewing done by The Gallup organization to determine the effectiveness of a workplace. They found that if employees answered the following twelve questions positively, they worked for an effective manager in an effective organization. The questions are:

1. Do I know what is expected of me at work?

2. Do I have the materials necessary to do a good job?

3. At work do have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?

4. In the last seven days have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?

5. Does my supervisor or someone at work see to care about me as a person?

6. Is there someone at work who encourages my development?

7. At work do my opinions seem to count?

8. Does the mission/purpose of my company make me feel my job is important?

9. Are my coworkers committed to doing quality work?

10. Do I have a best friend at work?

11. In the last six months has someone at work talked to me about my progress?

12. This last year have I had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

All of these questions can be related to the needs of the six personality types. For example, Question 7, "At work do my opinions seem to count?" clearly refers to the conviction need of the Persister. Question 4, "In the last seven days have I received recognition or praise for doing good work?" refers to the Recognition of Work need of the Workaholic and Persister. "Do I have a best friend at work?" refers to the

Recognition of Person need of the Reactor. "At work do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?" refers to the strengths of each of the six types. For example, for the Rebel it might mean be creative and have fun. For the Promoter it might mean lead, sell, or be involved in challenging or exciting projects. For the Reactor it might mean use their excellent interpersonal skills or show concern for other people. For the Dreamer it might mean be reflective, conceptualize ideas, and work alone. For the Workaholic it might mean analyze data or work with numbers. For the Persister it might mean work on a project that is important, will have impact or is challenging. Helping employees get their needs met positively greatly improves their job satisfaction, their desire to produce quality work and their willingness to adjust to new ideas. (Pauley, J. et al. 2002)

In his book, "The Mastery of Management", Dr. Kahler explains how each of the 6 types prefers to be managed and describes what each of the six types will do when their needs are not met positively. Workaholics and Persisters are most productive when their supervisors use a democratic management style in which they participate in setting team goals and the paths chosen to achieve them. Reactors consider their co-workers part of their extended family and are most productive in an environment in which everyone is nurtured as if they were members of one big happy family. Rebels are most productive when their manager uses a Laissez Faire management style in which they are encouraged to use their creativity in finding innovative solutions to problems with a minimum of direction and supervision. Dreamers respond well to an Autocratic Style in which they are told to do one thing at a time and are left alone to accomplish it. Promoters also respond well to an Autocratic style. Tell them the goal and the quick reward they will get

for achieving it, and then get out of their way. (Kahler, T. 2000) Managing everyone the same is not managing them equally. Neither is it treating them fairly. (Bradley, D. et al. 2006)

When team leaders and managers do not individualize the way they interact with their colleagues and employees and do not motivate each according to her or his needs, the employees may show signs of distress that are predictable and observable. Managers who know the warning signs to look for and recognize the significance of the bahavior when they see it, can quickly intervene to re-motivate the employee.

When Reactors are mismanaged they tend to make mistakes resulting in the team having to do extra work or do tasks over. When Rebels are mismanaged they tend to miss deadlines or withhold information, resulting in the team getting behind schedule and missing production deadlines. When Promoters are mismanaged they tend to create negative drama within the team, resulting in team members distrusting each other and reducing the willingness of team members to cooperate with each other. When Dreamers are mismanaged they tend to shut down and are unable to focus on the tasks at hand, resulting in other members of the team having to do more than their share of the work. This frequently upsets team harmony and results in some team members getting angry because not all team members are doing "their share". (Kahler, T. 2000)

When Workaholics are mismanaged they tend to take on more and more work themselves because they can do it better, faster and more efficiently that anyone else. This frequently results in their taking on so much that they cannot do it all well and ends in team members deciding not to put a lot of effort into the project because other team members are going to change things anyway. Frequently this results in team members

not doing their best work and reduces the quality of the final product. When Persisters

are mismanaged they insist that everything be done their way and if other team members

refuse to comply with their ideas, may cease to be team players and subconsciously may

work to destroy the morale of the team. (Kahler, 2000)

Conclusion

All of the negative behaviors can be eliminated or greatly reduced if the team

leader or manager will use an individualistic management style and manage each team

member with the style with which the team members are most comfortable. If, in

addition the team leader will individualize the way he or she motivates each employee so

that each person is being motivated according to her or his needs, team members will be

more willing to implement quality processes, the teams will function more efficiently and

products will be of much higher quality. (Pauley, J. et al. 2002)

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