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**■ HOW DO I KEEP MY EMPLOYEES MOTIVATED?
■ THE PRACTICE OF EMPATHY-BASED MANAGEMENT**

■ By: *George Langelett*

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1

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2

**HOW DO I KEEP MY EMPLOYEES MOTIVATED?
THE PRACTICE OF EMPATHY-BASED MANAGEMENT**

BY GEORGE LANGELETT

ALASKA SHRM
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FROM BROOKINGS, SD

BACKGROUND

- Taught management 12 years at SDSU
- Concern -- textbook theories of employee motivation (Expectancy, goal setting, reinforcement etc.)
- Focus on the cognitive side of the brain
- My goal --develop a theory- addresses both the cognitive & emotional portions of the brain

GOAL: A NEW WAY TO MOTIVATE

- Goal -- to develop a new approach -- connect with both the cognitive and emotional portions of the employee brain.
- Purpose -- to connect with both the brain and heart of each employee
- Goal-- create loyalty, foster professional growth, and internal motivation

KEY ASSUMPTION TO EBM

- Key issue -- connection, not correction is required for employee growth and long term motivation
- Theodore Roosevelt "No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care"
- Quote "I will forget what you told me, but I will never forget the way you made me feel."

QUOTE FROM LINKEDIN

- CEO – “What happens if we spend all this money on training our employees, and then they leave our company?”
- HR Manager – “What happens if we don’t train our employees, and they stay?”

DEFINING EMPATHY

- Empathy – “The intellectual identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another person”
- Carl Rogers – “Real communication occurs when we listen with understanding”
- Key to empathy – not identification with, but rather understanding the other person’s perspective, and the underlying reasons

EMPATHY VS. SYMPATHY

- Sympathy – sharing of feelings with another, especially in sorrow, to commiserate
- Goal of sympathy – to comfort
- Goal of empathy – to understand

EMPATHY – 3 KEY ISSUES

- To empathize – focus - not on what actually happened, rather, the other person’s perspective of “what happened”
- You do not need to agree with the person, rather, understand his/her perspective
- Do not deny the person’s feelings or perspective - “Oh don’t worry about it”

BRAIN NOTES

- When brain gets stressed, or has a problem, emotions take precedence over logic. Limbic region responds faster
- Amygdala - responds with fight-or-flight, signals hypothalamus to have adrenal glands secrete Glucocorticoids and Adrenaline.
- Occurs when a manager harshly reprimands an employee.
- Rewards programs may also stress brain
- The human brain spends the day focused on the source of the stress. –Teresa Amabile

RESULTS OF EMPATHY

- In the presence of an empathetic manager, the human brain knows it is safe.
- From the connection to a safe mentor, the hypothalamus signals the pituitary gland to release Oxytocin
- Oxytocin calms the limbic region
- In a safe environment, over time cerebrum builds connections to the Amygdala

EMPATHY BASED MANAGEMENT

- EBM - Definition: A manager's ability to empathize is a prerequisite for effectively: planning, organizing, leading, & controlling.
- "In the absence of an emotionally secure work environment, employees waste enormous amounts of energy dwelling on problems and concerns that they believe will never get solved or even addressed"

EMPATHY VS DARK SIDE TRAITS

Empathetic Behavior	Dark Side Reflection
■ Honesty	■ Dishonesty, Deception
■ Humility	■ Pride, arrogance
■ Acceptance	■ Perfectionism
■ Tolerance	■ Intolerance, prejudice
■ Gratitude	■ Greed, thoughtlessness
■ Faith	■ Cynicism, Skepticism
■ Hope	■ Despair
■ Forgiveness	■ Bitterness, Hatred

GOALS OF EBM

- Have employees who can think clearly and create solutions for any problem that may arise
- Develop competent employees who are devoted to their jobs, and motivated to work hard.

DURING A PERSONAL CRISIS

- Intersubjectivity
- Sharing of an emotional experience between two people
- Useful - when emotionally upset
- Goals:
 1. Ensure your employee feels understood
 2. Ensure your employee does not feel alone
 3. Give your employee hope

INTERSUBJECTIVITY

- Sharing of an emotional experience between two people
- -Linkage of two brains on an emotional level
- Why it works- once linked, the “calm” brain can influence and calm down the emotionally “upset” brain

INTERSUBJECTIVITY

- Three Requirements:
 1. Congruent Intentions
 2. Matched Affect
 3. Joint Attention

INTERSUBJECTIVITY

- 5 Steps of an intersubjective experience
- 1. Comprehend your employee's experience
 - Must have your undivided attention
 - Ask good questions for clarification
- 2. Respond with empathy understanding & acceptance

5 STEPS CONTINUED

- 3. Investigate the cause of the event
- 4. Respond with empathy understanding & acceptance
- 5. Co-create new meaning and find a resolution

INTERSUBJECTIVITY

- Six Important Notes:
- 1. While visiting, give your employee time to think
- 2. Instead of telling what you think, ask good questions
- 3. Misconduct is not excused- must face consequences
- 4. Don't break confidentiality
- 5. Help find closure, so can quit dwelling on issue
- 6. Be careful not to shame the person

TOOLS FOR EVERYDAY EBM

- Good news– how you display empathy will depend on your personality
- Key to being perceived as empathetic is not your words - rather your nonverbal behavior– warm and open, or pre-occupied and self-absorbed?

CONCLUSION

- As you start to develop a personal relationship with each employee, along with having high standards-- your employees will have no choice but change their attitudes and behavior for the better

QUESTIONS?

- This is management model I will continue to refine and make more useful. I welcome comments, questions, and critiques



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25
