

# Development Activities for Essentials of Leadership

## Application Opportunities

- Identify other people who demonstrate effective interaction skills and ask about their techniques. Listen for new approaches, as well as for consistent, reliable approaches.
- Seek feedback from your peers and team on your effectiveness in day-to-day interactions. Ask what you might do to improve your skills.
- In preparing for an interaction, try to see the benefits for the other person in proposals and recommendations.
- Pay attention to nonverbal communication during group discussions or one-on-one interactions. Is the other person uncomfortable or nervous? Try to pinpoint what, if anything, you might be doing to cause this reaction.
- Be aware of others' moods during interactions and look for signs that they might be getting frustrated. Offer to help clarify the problem, discuss alternatives, or provide additional support.
- Monitor your body language and tone of voice when interacting with others. Work at improving eye contact, gestures, and enthusiasm. Make sure your body language and tone of voice agree with your message and actions.
- Make a point to give timely, appropriate feedback on people's performance, remembering to reinforce their efforts and progress.
- Keep a simple record of your feedback to others. Write the names of the people you work with and put two boxes by each name—one for positive feedback and one for developmental feedback. Every time you provide positive or developmental feedback, check the appropriate box. Look for inconsistencies and adjust your behavior accordingly.
- Share credit for accomplishments so others involved in a project or activity feel valued and appreciated.
- Try to react objectively to others' ideas. Make every effort to fully explore their suggestions, even when you don't agree.
- Be ready to support the decisions of deserving others. Let them know you are willing to take risks for them. Be sure to tell them they have your unwavering support.
- Whenever you make a promise, make sure to record what you and the other party expect. Follow up on your promises and make sure you are meeting others' expectations.
- Look for success, not failure. Let people know you're aware of their accomplishments.

- Have coworkers give you a list of work-related problems they have experienced in the past two or four weeks. Instead of trying to solve each problem separately, look for trends. Either independently or as a team, brainstorm ways to address these trends.
- Take ownership of problems and their solutions. Don't wait to be asked. If you see something that needs to be done, do it!

## Readings

### Books

Bell, C.R. (2002). *Managers as mentors: Building partnerships for learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

This book reflects new management paradigms where leaders act as partners in learning and help to facilitate improvement. Bell advocates a collaborative approach to employee development with emphasis on the manager–employee relationship.

Byham, W.C. (with Cox, J.). (1998). *Zapp! The lightning of empowerment* (Rev. ed.). New York: Ballantine Books.

Structured as a fable, this easy-to-read book shows how to empower employees and create energy within an organization. It also details how to encourage creativity and responsibility so that employees feel that they own their jobs.

Crane, T.G., & Patrick, L.N. (2007). *The heart of coaching: Using transformational coaching to create a high-performance coaching culture* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). San Diego: FTA Press.

The author describes the transformational coaching process based on three principles: building a foundation of trust, learning together, and forwarding-the-action. This book also includes insight into coaching styles and coaching tips.

Fournies, F.F. (2000). *Coaching for improved work performance* (Rev. ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.

This timely, updated edition of Fournies' classic management coaching "bible" has been completely revised and details proven techniques for getting workers to perform at their highest level while eliminating the kinds of self-defeating behaviors that have become prevalent in recent years. This book presents specific face-to-face interventions that will enable leaders to enhance others' performance in every kind of workplace situation. Fournies also details interventions uniquely suited to resolving problems ranging from low productivity to absenteeism to conflicts between individuals. The book spells out precisely what to say and do to motivate each person in the work group to give his or her best effort—even if that person was previously thought to be a "problem employee."

Gandy, D.B. (2001). *Thirty days to a happy employee: How a simple program of acknowledgement can build trust and loyalty at work*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

The author's month-long program focuses on improved communications and deliberate praise to build trust and loyalty in employees.

Holliday, M. (2001). *Coaching, mentoring, and managing: A coaching guidebook* (Rev. ed.). Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press.

This book offers hundreds of practical, easy-to-learn techniques that every manager can use to coach employees to become more productive, positive, inspired, and effective. Replete with real-world advice and exercises, this manual shows how to get the most from employees in today's era of downsizing, layoffs, buyouts, and mergers. The author explains how managers can learn to be more than a "boss" and develop the skills and strategies to become a coach to their employees. This invaluable resource shows managers how to tap into their employees' hidden strengths and talents, inspire peak performers to even greater levels of productivity, confront inappropriate behavior, and transform problem employees into productive workers.

Kinlaw, D.C. (1999). *Coaching for commitment: Interpersonal strategies for obtaining superior performance from individuals and teams*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Coaching is essential to teaching new skills, bridging gaps in performance, and inspiring enhanced performance. In today's workplace, everyone can be a coach—the opportunities for leadership no longer rest solely with managers and supervisors. This step-by-step resource shows professionals how to counsel, mentor, and tutor their coworkers or direct reports.

Stone, F.M. (2007). *Coaching, counseling & mentoring: How to choose & use the right technique to boost employee performance* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition). New York: AMACOM.

This book advocates using all three techniques (coaching, counseling, mentoring) to improve employee performance; however, it is important to know when and how to use these techniques.

Tracy, D., & Morin, W.J. (2001). *Truth, trust, and the bottomline: Seven steps to trust-based management*. Chicago: Dearborn Trade.

The authors base these best-practice management tools on open, honest communication, and they offer clear examples and plans for implementing them.

## Articles

Bedell, G. (2001, April). Gentle persuasion. *Executive Excellence*, 18(4), 6.

In this short article the author advises executives to practice “gentle persuasion,” which involves creating positive feelings by fulfilling the other person’s needs. The result is support and commitment from those who are being persuaded.

Mentoring & coaching help employees grow. (2001, September). *HR Focus*, 78(9), 1, 11, 13–15.

This article discusses the value of mentoring and coaching programs for enhancing employee performance, highlights the difference between coaching and mentoring, and lists the characteristics of a good coaching program. It also contains an inset titled “How to coach the uncoachable.”

Mobley, S.A. (1999, July). Judge not: How coaches create healthy organizations. *Journal for Quality & Participation*, 22(4), 57–60.

This article describes a coaching atmosphere that enables managers to provide guidance without putting employees on the defensive.

Reichheld, F.F. (2001, July/August). Lead for loyalty. *Harvard Business Review*, 79(7), 76–85.

The author outlines six principles essential to building trust in the workplace. Beginning at the top of the management ladder, these principles, when put into practice, pervade the company’s relationships with its employees, customers, partners, and shareholders—establishing a pattern of trust that produces loyalty from all parties.

Ventrella, S.W. (2001, May). Intentional integrity. *Executive Excellence*, 18(5), 9–11.

The author delineates six gauges against which to measure the integrity of one’s actions. According to the article, adhering to these measures of integrity promotes consistency, fairness, and honesty and builds trust.

Waldroop, J., & Baker, T. (2000, September/October). Managing away bad habits. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(5), 89–98.

Business psychologists and coaches have studied and found tested, effective ways to help people recognize and correct their bad habits.

Wardell, C. (1999, May). Building front-line morale: A checklist. *Harvard Management Update*, 4(5), 6–7.

Brief and to the point, this article lists five strategies that managers can use to gain commitment from the frontline people.