

COACHING TIP

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IMPROVING PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

Performance is critical in sports, the arts, investments, business, and every area of life. To win a NASCAR event the performance of the car, driver, and pit crew are all vital to success. In team sports such as baseball, basketball, football, hockey, and soccer performance of each player and the combined team performance are crucial. In individual sports such as bowling, golf, or tennis the performance of the individual determines the results or outcome. When you spend your hard earned money to attend a concert, the performance of the artist or act is critical in determining if you had a good time and feel it was a good investment of time and money.

The way you and your teammates perform in business also determines the results you and your organization get. There are four major things that impact your ability to get results on your team:

1. Clearly defined goals
2. Attitudes
3. Skills in respective areas of responsibility
4. Your coaching ability.

Assuming you have the right people in the right jobs and they have the necessary skills, the better you clarify goals, develop appropriate attitudes, and improve your coaching skills, the better your chance of improving performance and results.

Once you determine your goals, i.e. what you want to accomplish, you need to determine what performance is needed by you and your teammates to accomplish these goals. Identify what extraordinary performance would look like in specific, observable behavior terms. No one wants to be average. Therefore, when you think of performance, think of it in terms of what extraordinary performance would look like.

New goals and better results will not be achieved without improvement in individual and team performance. Extraordinary performance, outstanding utilization of skills, is mainly determined by how people think (attitude) and how they act (behavior). There is a direct correlation between the way people think and the way they act. And, there is a direct correlation between the way people act and the results they get.

You cannot necessarily “see” an attitude, but you can observe a person’s behavior and make a pretty accurate assessment of his or her attitude. Yogi Berra, the Hall of Fame baseball player, is reported to have said, “You can see a lot by observing”. You can learn a lot about a person’s attitude by observing his or her behavior. Is the person dependable or unreliable; prompt or tardy, careful or safe; neat or sloppy; etc.

A long-term change in performance or behavior will not occur without a change in attitude. People will not change their attitude because we want them to change it or because we tell them to change it. People change three ways: slowly, rarely, and never. To accelerate the changes needed to achieve improved performance and results, you need to help people see the benefits they can gain or the losses they will avoid by changing. This takes time and it takes a concentrated effort on your part to get to know each person individually so you can personalize your coaching.

The most important coaching skill needed is the ability to help players adjust their attitude in line with the performance needed to achieve the pre-determined goals.