

CREATING A GOAL-DIRECTED CULTURE

One of the most important motivational techniques a successful leader can use is goal setting that involves all team members. Without specific goals and carefully written plans to attain them, the success of your organization is left to chance. The future of your organization is far too important to be left to chance.

It begins with you. Unless you as the leader are goal-directed and create a goal-setting climate in all levels of your organization, most of your other leadership efforts will be in vain. You can't effectively set goals for another person, but you can create a climate that encourages and develops goal-seeking attitudes. You can also help team members relate their goals to overall organizational objectives. There are four basics of directing the goal setting of others:

First, team members must choose their own goals. To accomplish any goal, people must have a genuine commitment to it. When personal goals can be realized by accomplishing organizational goals, a higher motivational climate will exist.

Second, make it a challenge. Encourage team members to set goals and stretch themselves to do more than they have accomplished in the past. If a goal is to be motivating, some risk will be involved. Low goals don't inspire people to use their full potential and be all they can be. Goals that are set high cause people to stretch, reach, grow, and use more of their full potential. As a result, they achieve more.

Third, establish a personal development philosophy. When you expect your team members to grow and develop more of their talents and abilities, you can also expect and accept shortcomings. After all, if your team

members already had all the qualities you possess, they would probably already be in your position or in one comparable to it. Be willing to make allowances for occasional shortcomings, and avoid being too demanding. You will grow personally as you help your team members grow, and in effect, you will multiply yourself by building their leadership capacities. If, on the other hand, you have no tolerance for their shortcomings, you will in some form communicate this rejection to them, and they will gradually cease to set goals. The results will be the opposite of what you want to accomplish.

Fourth, give feedback on performance. Just as you're better able to motivate yourself when you have periodic feedback on your performance, team members also need to know how they're doing. Give them frequent, specific feedback. This will encourage them to set new and higher goals.

Goal setting is a prelude to action. Goal setting is dynamic. When you and your team members set and achieve goals on a regular basis, you increase your chances of success. At the same time, team members grow, develop and begin to use more of their talents and abilities.



Rex C. Houze,
Founder & President
Improving Performance
& Results, Inc.