

Potential of your Workers

Believing in people before they have proved themselves is the key to motivating people to reach their potential.

~John C. Maxwell

I think that one of the biggest mistakes managers make is failing to see the potential in every one of their staff members. It is so easy to form beliefs about your staff only on the basis of their past behavior rather than recognizing the unique potential that each one brings to the workforce each and every day. For example, if a staff member is constantly making mistakes on a certain type of report, many managers would define the employee in terms of those errors rather than seeing their unbridled potential.

Jim Moran, the founder of the Jim Moran Institute, was very successful in the automotive industry. In the years before his death, I had numerous opportunities to spend time with him and observe the way he treated other people. Without exception, he made his staff – and me too – feel great. This was not because he always had kind words for everyone, but rather because those around him really sensed that he saw their real potential. It was like having a sudden gust of wind to buoy you up. He was loved and cherished by so many people because he made them feel good simply by seeing their hidden potential.

So many managers try to coach their employees; however, the tendency is to change the employee's behavior on a certain task. For example, if I am coaching a staff member, and I am discussing the problems they had in their last report, I am getting bogged down in the details. However, if I can encourage them to see their own potential for greatness, I am coaching to the potential, and the details will get resolved as a result.

As a manager, you can get so much more out of your employees if you can just visualize each one's inherent potential. Just imagine a baseball manager trying to coach a hitter that has been in a slump and has not had a hit in 10 appearances at bat. The manager could coach the player to go out and practice more, or he could tell the player to be patient and wait until the slump eventually ends. However, a

great manager would convey the potential that he knows is within his player and help him to see this as well.

I frequently have to stop and take note of the greatness in all of the support staff around me. If I do not do this, I see them as obstacles, which is not good. I must see the potential of each person that I work with, as that allows me to have a very special relationship with them. As a coach, I need to see their greatness and show them how they can see this greatness as well. For some reason, it is so much easier for an outsider to see the potential in an employee than it is for the employee to see their own.

Now go out and do the best you can to see the potential in each and every one of your staff members.

You can do this!

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