



EXTENSION

Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

## Showing Employees ("Associates") That Good Performance Doesn't Matter<sup>1</sup>

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### Introduction

In this article we will explore the time-honored management practice of showing associates that their good performance just does not matter. You will be asked to respond to a series of 45 statements illustrating how managers often inadvertently show associates that good performance does not matter.

### Showing That Good Performance Does Not Matter

Most (if not all) managers and supervisors want to demonstrate to their associates that their good performance matters — both to them and to the organization. Yet, research and experience has demonstrated that many "bosses" show, via their actions, that good associate performance in their organization does not matter that much. In fact, research with students who have or have had jobs identified at least 45 ways that managers and supervisors demonstrate to their employees that GOOD performance does not really matter that much.

Effective managers ought to be aware of these negative practices that communicate the wrong message to their associates. Therefore, each of the following managerial practices communicates that good performance does not really matter that much in this organization. Figure 1 lists 45 human resource management practices. Please rank each of the practices on a 1 to 5 scale (1=never occurs and 5=often occurs) for the extent to which they exist in your organization.

We would suggest that all associates, managers and supervisors rank these questions. It should be very interesting to compare responses across different human resource layers within your organization. These results could then be discussed at a future staff meeting.

After evaluating the extent to which these negative managerial practices exist in your workplace and/or within your organization, identify the most frequently utilized practices. Obviously, effective management teams do not want to perpetuate activities that demonstrate to their work teams that positive performance is not important. Nevertheless, the research is conclusive: many (potentially all)

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2. Allen F. Wysocki, assistant professor, and Karl W. Kepner, distinguished professor, Department of Food and Resource Economics, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL. Dr. Wysocki's Extension web page is located at <http://webct.nerdc.ufl.edu:8900/public/WyosckiExtension/index.html>

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managers and supervisors are inadvertently "guilty" of one or more of these negative associate performance practices. Therefore, what is your commitment to improving the organization's management practices by eliminating those practices that are most frequently being used?

### **Conclusion**

We hope you have found this article useful. We invite readers to provide feedback (via email) on which practices were the most prevalent in their organizations. In addition, Drs. Wysocki and Kepner are happy to lead a workshop on how managers and supervisors can demonstrate to their people that good performance does matter.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome and you may e-mail directly at [wysocki@fred.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:wysocki@fred.ifas.ufl.edu) or respond via extension web page at <http://webct.nerdc.ufl.edu:8900/public/WysockiExtension/index.html>.

### **References**

Class discussions led by Dr. Karl Kepner in AEB 4424, Human Resource Management in Agribusiness.

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<u>Managerial Practice</u>	<u>Occurrence</u>			Often
	Never	Sometimes		
1. Ignore good performance	1	2	3	4
2. Ignore poor performance	1	2	3	4
3. The expected attitude (this is what I pay for)	1	2	3	4
4. Lack of enthusiasm for a job very well done	1	2	3	4
5. Give good workers extra work	1	2	3	4
6. Mix praise and criticism	1	2	3	4
7. Ignore associate ideas	1	2	3	4
8. Practice management by exception	1	2	3	4
9. Management is often unavailable	1	2	3	4
10. Management is often unapproachable	1	2	3	4
11. False praise, insincere praise	1	2	3	4
12. Lack of request for follow-up	1	2	3	4
13. Associate input not sought, lack of involvement	1	2	3	4
14. Insufficient pay raises	1	2	3	4
15. Unfair pay raises	1	2	3	4
16. Inappropriate disciplinary programs	1	2	3	4
17. Rely upon top mgt to recognize good perform.	1	2	3	4
18. Equal pay raises	1	2	3	4
19. Quantity vs. Quality focus	1	2	3	4
20. Attitude of "it's never good enough"	1	2	3	4
21. Favoritism	1	2	3	4
22. Expectations are not clearly communicated	1	2	3	4
23. Low praise to corrective action ratio	1	2	3	4
24. Non-performance base promotions	1	2	3	4
25. Having associates do things mgt wouldn't do	1	2	3	4
26. Inconsistency	1	2	3	4
27. More responsibility, same pay	1	2	3	4
28. One-way communication	1	2	3	4
29. Complaining about company profits	1	2	3	4
30. More than one boss, conflicting instructions	1	2	3	4
31. Mgr "dumps" on after being "dumped" on	1	2	3	4
32. No greetings when seeing associates	1	2	3	4
33. Not recognizing improvements	1	2	3	4
34. Not providing challenging work	1	2	3	4
35. Good job rather than specific task praise	1	2	3	4
36. Not helping problem associates to improve	1	2	3	4
37. Focus on how to do rather than results	1	2	3	4
38. Putting down co-workers to others	1	2	3	4
39. Not using written memos	1	2	3	4
40. Inappropriate body language	1	2	3	4
41. Taking credit for associate accomplishments	1	2	3	4
42. Always interrupting	1	2	3	4
43. Saying one thing and doing another	1	2	3	4
44. Doesn't know what is going on in the workplace	1	2	3	4
45. Incompetent	1	2	3	4

Figure 1. 45 Managerial Practices That Show Associates That Good Performance Does Not Matter.