



Sharing Best Practices Knowledge

TO MEET THE EXTRAORDINARY CHALLENGES YOU ARE FACING TODAY
YOU MUST DEMONSTRATE EXTRAORDINARY BUSINESS PRACTICES:

Why We Tolerate Low-Performing People

Why is it that leaders and managers tolerate low performers or disruptive behavior in people? There is usually one or more (combination) of several possible reasons for this unhealthy business practice.

Here is the top 10 list:

1. Believing that the person will improve or turn-around their performance/behavior and/or believing that one conversation has the ability to illuminate and change a problematic employee.
2. The fear of loss (with some specific technical skill, experience, competency or knowledge).
3. The mindset where “the devil you don’t know may be worse than the devil you do know.”
4. Discounting the bad behavior, issue or collateral damage that may be occurring. Believing that things are really not that bad or rationalizing the situation by believing everyone must be contributing to the problem. (While we like to think a conflict always has two sides this obfuscates the issue of a truly low performer causing problems to begin with. Toxic team members instigate conflict and will never bring out the best of even A-players).

5. A lack of hiring capability to replace the person with someone who is at least as capable – including the training inconvenience and/or possible time drain to get the person “up to speed” with the job or role.
6. The “yeah but” security blanket insurance that the person represents, providing peace of mind for some specific issue. “Yeah but, she is really good if we have a Joint Commission inspection – site visit.”
7. The fear of confrontation or reluctance with having the coaching conversation about poor performance.
8. The mindset that “good enough is.” Not recognizing what upside is possible with a person who is superior or believing that in their specific marketplace, this is as good as it gets.
9. Not being able to measure the degree of sub-optimized or negative (value-subtracted) contribution.
10. Believing the person is only bad, negative or disruptive with select individuals (or is only a jerk in specific circumstances).

In Corporate America, there is this distorted belief or assumption that we can somehow change or will people to become something that they are not. We then invest significant amounts of time, energy and financial resources in an effort to “develop” or even “Fix” people that are not a good fit for the role they are assigned.

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