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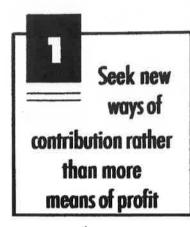
Utilising Human Resource Skills

OVERVIEW

This chapter is for those managers who wish to know all about the skills of their employees and utilise them to enhance organisational goals.

Although, procedures to harness human skills exist in

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many organisations on an informal networking basis, a formal plan for tapping the unused skil<u>ls of employees is drawn and implemented</u> in very few organisations.

WHAT IS A SKILL

Ability to perform a task in a competent and efficient manner is skill For the purpose of this chapter, the meaning of skill is not constrained by those required necessarily to perform a job entrusted to at employee. This chapter aims at discovering and utilising those skill of employees which they may not be using in execution of their present job but could be used by the organisation for some othe job.

OBJECTIVES OF TAPPING SKILLS

- To make plans for the future.
- To utilise these skills and save money which a manager may have to spend on hiring new staff proficient in the required tasks.
- To discover and work on areas of strengths and weaknesses is the organisation.
- To prevent under-utilisation of human resource skills.
- To motivate lower level employees, who take pride in using particular skill for the benefit of the organisation.
- To make the recruitment process more effective as gaps in skill can be identified.

LIMITATIONS OF TAPPING SKILLS

- Senior level managers need to work extensively and on a regular basis to update their programmes so as to maintain the accuracy and usefulness.
- It's a time consuming process requiring commitment of staff and managers, both.
- It may lead to using those skills of staff which they don't want to use.

STEPS TO USE UNUTILISED SKILLS OF YOUR EMPLOYEES

1. Obtain management support

Any plan or programme requiring considerable time and resources needed to collect the skills of employees should be supported by the commitment of senior management for such plans to be successful. It is also important to estimate the cost of collecting and analysing the data. Appoint someone to run the project, someone who can get things done, with right experience and commands respect.

2. Draw the plan identifying the skills to be covered

The employees to be covered by the programme, the type of skills to be identified and the areas of experience of employees are a few key terms to be included in the plan for carrying out the analysis. For example, a programme to analyse shopfloor employees, their formal qualifications and the areas of their experience.

3. Nominate person(s) to whom the responsibility car be assigned

Nominate person(s) to whom the responsibility can be assigned the responsibility of collection of data and to update the same on a regular basis. Take assistance from Personnel and IT department for obtaining qualifications details and recording and saving the data. Guidelines regarding the same should be drawn up and distributed and the staff responsible for collection of details of employees should be thoroughly trained.

4. Formulate a method for collecting data and saving it properly

Use of questionnaires is a very common mode for collecting the skills' data. Questionnaries can be distributed amongst employees who return them after filling in the answers. These are useful as information is received in written form which is more reliable and permanent in nature. It is also an inexpensive way and does not require any special training of those handling the whole process. However, designing a questionnaire needs real special efforts and they can be filled in badly.

Another method that can be used for collecting data is interview method. Though, it is more time consuming it can be useful in drawing out more information.

A combination of questionnaire and interview method can also be used but it depends on the availability of resources and approach of respondents.

Once the data has been collected take adequate and appropriate steps to conserve the same. Maintain, if required, confidentiality of sources from which the data is obtained and ensure that its disclosure is permitted only to nominated ones. Maintain manual registers or computer files updating them as and when required.

Remember, computer files also need to be protected from virus attacks.

5. Communicate the programme to all employees

Those who are likely to be affected by the plan/programme should be made aware of the idea behind the system. Tell them about the advantages they will gain and remove whatever fears they may develop. Following benefits can be conveyed to make employees have a positive and cooperative attitude towards the plan:

- Greater job satisfaction as a result of greater utilisation of skills.
- Upgradation to do better jobs.
- More varied work removing monotony and giving more exposure and consequently, more experience.
- An opportunity to prove one's worth in a probably more challenging field.
- A chance of internal promotion.

6. Set a target date for the programme to be completed

Fix a period at the end of which the process of collection of data is to be completed and the programme can be made functional. Communicate it to your data-collection staff and make sure they meet the deadlines.

7. Implement the programme

Once the programme has been competely drawn, it needs to be implemented. For this inform the employees of the person who will be collecting the data, the method by which the data will be collected and the person who will answer whatever questions employees will have regarding the programme.

Data once collected should be recorded without any distortions or dilutions and ensure it is used for filling in a new post or while creating a team.

8. Determine the success of the programme

Obtain opinions of the employees as to the usefulness of the programme. Analyse the complaints and grievances and if actionable, consider them to make necessary changes. Also discuss the utility of the programme with your seniors.

9. Update the programme regularly

At regular intervals, the data collected should be updated, for example an accountant, who joined after his B.Com and may have become a Chartered accountant over a period of three years. Details of individuals no more working with the organisation are of no use and should be removed/deleted. Similarly, details of new employees need to be added.

TAPPING HUMAN RESOURCE SKILLS

Permits

- Regular updation of skills database
- Communicating to employees the usefulness of the database
- Securing the information held on the database.
- Keeping employees aware of the purpose of the programme designed to discover these untapped skills.

Forbids

- Ignoring skills thinking that these are not required by the organisation in the immediate future
- Not obtaining feedback from the users of the programme
- Using the programme to oblige someone or promoting a person to further personal interests
- **Favouritism**
- Manipulations or exaggerations in information collected.



Organisations are social innovations involved in setting common goals and objectives.

The o ves are set cations on It is the aim to achieve thes



acquisition of resources in the form of raw materials and manpower for their conversion into products and services. This chapter is designed for those managers who are associated with setting of objectives.

WHAT IS AN OBJECTIVE

An objective is the desired end result of an activity for a specific time span. It is a goal towards which the efforts and resources are focused. An objective should be practical, clear, measurable and specific. For achievement of objectives, coordination amongst various sub-systems of the organisation is required.

As already explained above, purpose is the basis of an organisation's existence. Jamshedji Tata's Steel mill was established to strengthen India's industrial structure; similarly, spreading literacy is the main purpose of educational institutions. Organisational objectives are, thus, derived from corporate purpose – a commitment to action, to attain specific levels of performance, to utilise resources and to direct organisational effort.

Although, the terms, 'goals' and 'objectives' are generally used synonymously, a 'goal' may be viewed as a sub-set of 'objectives'. If 'objectives' is a map, 'goals' are landmarks and milestones as we proceed on a pre-determined route. An objective is, thus, the reason for an organisation's sustenance.

OBJECTIVES OF HAVING OBJECTIVES

- It gives direction to corporate efforts.
- It gives foundation to the process of planning, directing, organising, staffing and controlling.

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"Corporate objectives are respnsible for the existence, continuance and functioning of only my office organisation".

- It provides framework for formulation of strategies, policies, principles, rules and regulations.
- It guides organisational activity.
- It initiates group cohesiveness and team spirit.
- It also forms basis for resource acquisition, allocation and utilisation.
- And last but not the least, it is responsible for existence, continuance and functioning of an organisation.

LIMITATIONS TO OBJECTIVE SETTING

There are no limitations to objective setting if:

- You have the right direction.
- You know what you have to achieve.
- You can tune the above two assets of yours with long-term plans and highlight the above two assets of yours objectives.
- You are clear about your ideas and not confused or demoralised.

STEPS TO SET OBJECTIVES

1. Spell-out organisation's mission

It is very important that the objective should relate to the purpose or mission of the entity. On the basis of the mission the broad scope, latitute, critical constraints and boundaries within which objectives are to be achieved, are set. The mission of the organisation, i.e., the purpose of the existence of the organisation

provides vision – the expression of an ultimate aim to which the organisation aspires. It is very important that the mission and vision should be clearly communicated to all the personnel – management and employees, both.

2. The objectives should be consistent with the mission

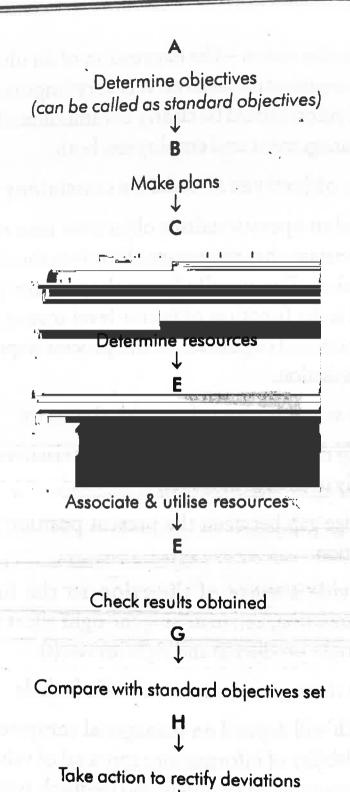
Mission operationalises objectives into realities, hence, it is important that corporate objectives should identify with the mission. This usually forms the purpose of the strategic plan and is the function of senior level management, although in empowered organisations this process is spread throughout the organisation.

The strategic plan is formulated so as to:

- Help management prepare for alternative sets of conditions likely to emerge in future.
- Bridge gap between the present position and desired future position.
- Provide a sense of direction to the functioning of the organisation, i.e., matching the right effort and right time with the right product(s) and right service(s).
- Knit the organisation into a unified whole.

Much will depend on managerial competence in forecasting; availability of information; appraisal of values; knowledge and communication channels; and feedback systems.

Objective setting should not be a top-down exercise. Instead, objectives can be split into higher-level and lower-level objectives so that knowledge and competence at each level can be utilised to achieve them. For this, objectives should be set out in a plan and communicated to all staff.



The 'Achievement by Objectives' Cycle

3. Structuring of objectives into hierarchy

As explained in Point 2 before, objectives can be operationalised into different levels relevant for staff, supervisory staff, personnel, R&D, purchase, management, etc. For this, you can rank the objectives according to priority, inputs, time frame, skills and knowledge.

4. Communicate the objectives to respective people/ departments

Objectives need to be communicated to job performers. Its only when objectives are properly communicated that planning can be done; goals, strategies, plans and policies for action can be determined; performance can be regulated, monitored, controlled; alternative courses can be chosen; and decisions can be made.

5. Objectives should be proposed and not dictated

Setting of objectives is a task accomplished through discussions, negotiation, compromise, seeking ideas, proposing and agreements. It is quite possible that objectives chosen are intangible, uncertain and risky. Both the objective-setter and objective-performer should have an answer to each of Kipling's six honest serving-men: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How?

6. Set appropriate measures to judge the progress against objectives

Certain measures should be set to measure the utility of efforts and resources applied for the achievement of ultimate objectives; to judge that the efforts are not going away from the desired or planned end results. Organisational effectiveness can be defined as to the extent to which an organisation achieves its objectives.

Thus, we conclude that these measures are usually related to:

- Efficiency in terms of honouring and meeting deadlines an time limitations.
- Effectiveness in terms of relevance and accuracy of service delivery.
- Efficiency in terms of cost.
- Effectivity in terms of cost.
- 7. Conduct review of performance

Past performance should be reviewed, learning opportunition should be identified and new or revised objectives should be set for the next period.

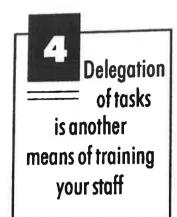
EFFICIENT OBJECTIVE SETTING

Permits

- Setting priorities by ranking plans and policies to operationalise objectives into realities
- Setting practical, measurable, time-bound objectives
- Making yourself aware of and familiar with organisational framework so as to set relevant objectives
- Reviewing objectives and organisational policies at regular intervals to make necessary amendments.

Forbids

- Setting up unrealistic intangible objectives
- Setting up objectives in consistent with legal (social laws
- Lack of nexus will organisational interand action
- Setting objectives beyon the parameters organisation's rules and regulations, i.e., again the provisions of in Memorandum and Articles of association



Practising delegation improves your ability to manage as delegation is an interpersonal process. The act of delegation enhances your ability to work with others. Delegating authority and responsibility to others requires adeptness in communication, a willingness to listen, an ability to motivate, convey trust and inspire loyalty. This chapter aims to explain this art of delegation.

WHAT IS DELEGATION

In simple and straight forward language delegation is distribution of authority from a manager to a subordinate. In practical sense delegation is more than just assigning work to someone else. It always means making your subordinate accountable for results. It usually means giving that person the latitude to make decisions about the ways to reach those results. That is not to say that to delegate is to abdicate. You always monitor and control the tasks you delegate. This is necessary because you cannot shed the ultimate responsibility on their completion. Delegation is always a tool, never an ending itself. Your success in delegation will never be measured by how you go about delegating, to whom you delegate or how often you delegate Rather, you will be judged according to the results you achieve through delegation.

OBJECTIVES OF DELEGATION

- To improve the ability to manage and prioritise work.
- As delegation is an interpersonal process it enhances your ability to work with others.
- It clears away time for other important managerial tasks like planning, directing and organising.

4

The Art of Delegation

OVERVIEW

All managers face a paradox: they need to produce results beyond individual capabilities. The solution to this paradox is not to do more, but to delegate more.

- People to whom the work is delegated feel highly motivated as they get to do more challenging work.
- It helps with succession planning by exposing people to other levels of work.

LIMITATIONS TO DELGATION

- Some organisations are too small to provide much scope for delegation.
- There is always some element of risk involved. The person to whom the work has been delegated may not possess the requisite skills to perform it as effectively as required.
- It is a time consuming process requiring inputs in the form of effort and personal investment of managers.
- Lack of availability of people with sufficient resources, time or competence.
- Delegating authority and responsibility requires adeptness in communication, a willingness to listen, an ability to motivate, convey trust and inspire loyalty. Lack of these aptitudes may lead to ineffective delegation.
- Centralised organisations, where authority is not widely distributed.

STEPS TO EFFECTIVE DELEGATION

1. Isolate tasks suitable for delegation

Evaluate each task on its merit. It may be a routine task which is easy to pass on to a subordinate or a task which may not require managerial skills and can be handled by a subordinate adequately.

Then there are tasks that require special skills which you subordinate possesses and can apply to the tasks or there may be a task which a manager may like doing himself. Confidential matters, generally, are not delegated.

2. Set rules and boundaries

Make clear to the subordinate that to whom he is required to report after the task is accomplished. Vagueness should be avoided. How much authority he has to make and take decision should be clarified. It is important to be consistent so that the staff understands what to expect and a climate of trust starts to build.

3. Analyse the benefits of delegation

Think how delegation will help you, the person to whom it has been delegated, the department, the organisation and the customers. Only when you are yourself clear about the benefit of delegation, that you can explain its worthiness to the individuation taking on the delegated acitivity.

Also make an assessment of problems that may arise, like:

- what can be the consequences if things do not work out,
- the worst outcome that can be for the team, the organisation the customers,
- any negative impacts it may have on the individual,
- the support and guidance needed to be given.

4. Select the delegatee

The person chosen should have the knowledge, skills, motivation and time needed to get the work delegated done to complet satisfaction. The individual selected should have the intelligent natural aptitude and above all, willingness to learn as to how do the job with help and guidance. This is how people develoand the development of staff should be a manager's conscious aim whenever he delegates.

5. Communicate the task delegated properly

When delegate, ensure the subordinate understands:

- why the work needs to be done;
- what is he expected to do;
- the date by which he is expected to do it;
- the autority he has to make decisions;
- the progress or completion reports he should submit;
- how you propose to guide and monitor him;
- the resources and help he will have to get the work done.

6. Monitor performance

Monitor a subordinate's performance carefully. Set target dates and keep a reminder of these in your diary so that you can ensure they are achieved. Without being oppressive, ensure that progress reports are made when required and that deviations from the original plan are managed in good time. Don't allow subordinates to become careless about meeting deadlines.

7. Review and evaluate

Once the task has been completed, review it to assess how well it went. The positive outcomes should be evaluated in terms of skills and activity which have accrued. Failures should be handled constructively with an effort to establish the steps to be taken to do things better the next time.



Let your employees take part in their own evaluations with self-appraisal forms. Have them evaluate you as well

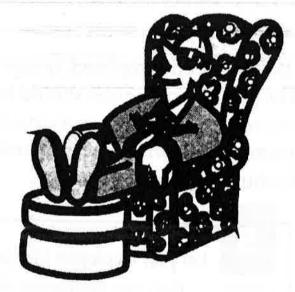
SUCCESSFUL DELEGATION

Permits

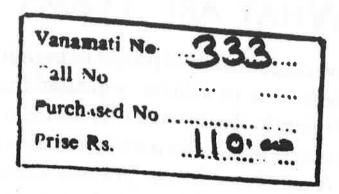
- A comprehensive understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the staff and the situation in which they work
- Stepping in if there is any danger of things going off the rails
- Being specific about outcomes
- Clearly indicating to your subordinate the extent of his authority to act without further reference to yourself.

Forbids

- Undue interference with the way work is being done
- Rash decisions, ove expenditure and ignoring defined an reasonable constraint and rules
- Oppressive attitude
- Delegating to the sam people all the time
- Taking all the credit
- Delegation of specific staff-related matters.



Besides all other things it leaves you more relaxed.



6

Building Teams

OVERVIEW

Teams are self contained entities forming a part of larger organisations. Development of interventions for team building has become one of the important task of management. This chapter aims to unearth the aspects of planning, setting up and maintaining an effective team.

WHAT ARE TEAMS

Teams are effective collaboration of people to permit combination of efforts and ideas so as to achieve organisational goals more effectively and efficiently. Teams are different from groups in the sense that groups emerge on their own while teams are planned, but and maintained. A team has a distinct purpose and may consist a people drawn from different functions or disciplines while a group generally consists of people having same interest and sharing common ideas.

Teams generally consist of people with varied needs - emotional and social - which team as a whole can help to meet. Team building based on the principle of synergy - greater than the sum of it individual parts.

OBJECTIVES OF TEAM BUILDING

- To coordinate efforts to tackle complex tasks.
- To harness the personal expertise and knowledge of individual members.
- To enable people cope with everyday work challenges.
- To provide social and emotional support giving quality tother performance.
- To create open and healthy communication channels at eliminate unhealthy rivalry and competition.
- To provide new ideas and solve problems through the process of brainstorming and group thinking.
- To develop strengths and skills of individual members.
- To develop and raise levels of individual and collective empowerment.

LIMITATIONS OF BUILDING A TEAM

- It does not allow enough room for everyone to participate, feel involved and stay committed.
- It often leads to duplication of skills, increasing the potential for clashes.

STEPS TO DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM

1. Decide whether you really need a team

It has been seen that group working can achieve targets more effectively than an individual. But there are situations when a person has all the knowledge and expertise to do the job on his own or when there is no real common purpose to be worked upon by a team for achievement. Hence, first decide whether a team is really needed.

2. Create team vision

Give your team a vision, i.e., the kinds of orientations expected of them to achieve aims of the organisation. Give your team a vision to make choices at times of uncertainity. The vision provides the values and ideas which underlie the work of a team.

3. Determine team objectives

Ensure that a team has a meaningful task to perform and be clear about the outcome of the team efforts. Identify the technical and professional skills required and form a team of individuals possessing those skills. Check the team's objectives regularly so

that everyone has a clear focus on what they are working toward both individually and as a team.

4. Plan a strategy for team building

Invest time in getting the operating framework right so that team can be developed. The first thing required to build a goo team is to create a climate of trust where failures become experiences to learn from. Then, it is important that there is far flow of information making a contribution towards integration of team work with organisational objectives. The next important aspect is training of employees in communication, interpersonant and negotiation skills. Also required along with all these is time for coordinating activities, monitoring progress of teams and regular meetings for discussions. Feedback should also form part of the team building strategy so that everybody known how well they are doing and identification of weak aspects a be made to take action for improvements.

5. Keep the team members informed

There should be adequate and proper communication channe to keep the team informed of the changes, if any, organisational strategies and policies so that they can achie their objectives effectively and in accordance with the organisation's needs. As mentioned in Point 4 above feedbashould also be given to enable a team to function effective and keep a check on deviations/departures from what actual needs to be accomplished. It is, thus, essential to monitote team and establishing a system of review within a team.

6. Identify strengths of individual team members

A team is nothing but an aggregate of skills and expertise of members. Carry out an audit of the same to evaluate the best a team can yield. Include in the team somebody with the building experience to help with initial phases.

7. Include yourself as a team member

Don't just boss around, include yourself as a member of the team. Remember, 'Charity begins at home'. Only when you yourself work in team you can focus on actual requirements for team building. Act as a role model, be a team leader.

8. Lead the team

Clearly define team's tasks. Ensure that a team has no shortage of resources. Create favourable conditions for performance. Create a team with members possessing the requisite skills and knowledge. Give coaching and help to the team members whenever required. Give team members opportunities to express their emotions and frustrations.

9. Dissolve the team once the task is accomplished

Acknowledge when the team has finished its task. Review to see if the required objectives have been achieved and provide an active feedback to the team members on their quality of performance so that they can learn, improve and benefit next time round. Dissolve the team, once the task for which it was created, has been accomplished, reason being that every team is created to perform a specific task and another task may require different combination of skills and knowledge of individuals, for it is seldom true that the same people have the requisite abilities to perform all kinds of functions.



If you use the services of an outside agency, treat the agency personnel as part of your team, not like the enemy. After all, you do have a common goal

STEPS FOR SUCCESSFUL TEAM BUILDING

Permits

- Spending time to manage and facilitate the development of a team and its activities
- Determination of the common aims, objectives and criteria of success for the task, project or process
- Clarification of team's targets and individual responsibilities
- Encouraging and managing team meetings so that everyone has the opportunity to voice his opinions and feels involved in the decision-making and planning processes
 - Providing feedback
 - Dissolving teams when objectives have been accomplished
 - Reviewing team objective, strategies and processes.

Forbids

- A tight team manage ment and control
- Creating a team of members without the requisite skills and knowledge
- Letting individuals take credit for the team's achievements
- Neglecting team climate increasing conflict and difficult relationships
- Lack of intra and interteam communication leading to uncoordinated and unaggregated efforts.



Work side-by-side
with your team
and learn
what their
day-to-day
experience is like

9

Your Boss and You – A Relationship of Value

OVERVIEW

Managing your relationship with your Boss can prevent misunderstandings and managerial

relationship not only helps
broaden your work experiences but also aids
to the development of your
management skills. Hence, this relationship needs
to be planned and developed.

The organisation will value you only if you are of value to your Boss.

Many managers take time and energy to develop good relationships with subordinates but ignore the importance of managing relationships with their superiors. This chapter focuses on this relationship which is an essential aspect of effective management.

Managing with Your Boss

A good relationship with a boss revolves around mutual dependence. This situation of mutual dependence requires that you:

- Acquire a thorough knowledge of your boss and of yourself, paying particular attention to strengths, weaknesses, work styles and needs.
- Use this knowledge to manage a compatible working relationship, one which suits both the parties' work styles and is in line with mutual expectations.
- Managing your boss is a relationship constructed on mutual respect, trust and support; maintaining the freedom to do the best for the organisation, the team and yourself.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS RELATIONSHIP

- To create a productive and communicative working relationship.
- Personal development.
- To help you overcome problems and conflicts when they arise.
- To ensure each of you know what is possible and feasible, en route to achieving the results that matter to you both.

LIMITATIONS TO THIS RELATIONSHIP

- Office politics or personal style often dominates the way you and your boss work together.
- Lack of open communication.
- Nurturing opposing feelings.
- Existence of certain factors that cause friction in your relationship.

STEPS TO MANAGING YOUR BOSS

1. Gain an understanding of the goals and working style of your boss

Understand and familiarise yourself with your boss' goals and pressures, strengths and weaknesses and working style. Without this basic information the manager can blunder into conflicts which could be avoided.

2. Maintain adequate and proper communication channels

Effective communication prevents confusion and

misunderstandings. Communication should be adequate detailed, regular and timely.

3. Develop a working pattern that suits both

This will result in efforts becoming more effective and productive. While it is not easy to alter one's working pattern, it can be useful to be aware of this and create a pattern with the useful modifications that suits both.

4. Identify and remove blockages, if any

Examine your relationship with your boss and identify the blockages, e.g., improper communication, conflict of opinions, etc. Identify the causes of these problems and work on them to make improvements.

5. Understand your boss

As priorities are constantly changing, managers need to seek out information about their bosses in an on going way, questioning them and watching for clues in their behaviour. Being sensitive to a boss' style of working and making the necessary adaptations can go a long way to smoothing the relationship. Understand his objectives and personal goals and values dear to him.

6. Understand your own self

You also need to know your own strengths, weaknesses, needs and working style. While you cannot transform your own personality or that of your boss, you can become aware of the factors that cause friction.

7. Communicate your expectations

The manager needs to let the boss know what his own expectations are. This becomes particularly important if the boss sets unrealistic targets.

work oath

- g. Prove that you are dependable and reliable
 - It is vital to a boss to be able to feel he can depend on and trust his subordinates. For this reason it is important for managers to meet deadlines very strictly and avoid making promises they cannot keep.
- 9. Learn to trust and value yourself

Do not underestimate yourself for if you don't have faith in your capabilities, your boss certainly won't.

10. Keep yourself informed about your boss as well as the organisation

Most information can be picked up by observing your boss' behaviour like how he schedules his day, conducts a meeting, develops plans, deals with complaints, works under pressures, acts when angry, etc. and being alert to letters, memos and conversations or - Simply ask.

11. Celebrate your success

Your success is their's too, so why not celebrate your success with your boss.

12. Review issues and your plan of action

Discuss issues important to you with your boss. Remember your success is your boss' success and your failure theirs. Before a problem really gets out of hand, discuss it. Have some solutions ready to talk through.

13. Tackle conflicts before they blow out of proportion
When two people work together there can be disagreements
and arguments. Do not run away from such situations; handle
them.

14. Review your relationship with your boss

Focus on how things stand between you and your boss, how you can improve them and what should be your approach in the future. Be assertive without being aggressive, this way you would maintain your self-respect and individuality.

Managing Your Boss

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