

For Immediate Release

Start an Execution Revolution: Seven Ways You Can Help Your Employees “Get It Done” Every Day

These are challenging times that test the competence and endurance of even the best companies. The key to surviving and thriving in tough times is flawless execution.

“Creating a culture of execution begins with the knowledge that developing plans and strategic initiatives is just the starting point,” says Lepsinger, president of OnPoint Consulting. “It also requires adopting the mindset that a highly skilled and engaged work force—while important—will not ensure effective execution.”

A survey conducted by OnPoint Consulting (www.onpointconsultingllc.com) found that almost half of those surveyed believe there is a gap between their organization’s ability to develop a strategy and its ability to execute that strategy, and even more—64 percent to be exact—lack confidence that the gap can be closed. But Lepsinger insists that companies *can* close the execution gap by implementing some tried and true steps to creating a “get it done” culture:

- **Ensure plans are aligned and coordinated across the organization.** A common snafu at many organizations is that the head of one department will implement a new initiative without considering how it will affect the overall company or specific departments.
- **Establish clear expectations.** Goals help everyone focus on important activities and responsibilities, encourage people to find more efficient ways to do the work, and facilitate constructive performance feedback by ensuring that managers and direct reports have a shared picture of outcomes. It’s also difficult to get things done because people don’t understand their role or what exactly is expected of them.
- **Don’t micromanage your employees. But *do* monitor them.** Employees who take initiative and do an effective job without much direction from you are the gems that make your company special. But just because you feel like you can let them loose with a project or client doesn’t mean that you shouldn’t follow up with them periodically. In fact, when you empower employees in this way, monitoring becomes even more important. “When you use monitoring as an opportunity to recognize effective behavior, involve your employees in developing performance measures, and get their feedback on the timing of follow-up meetings you avoid sending the wrong message,” says Lepsinger.
- **Encourage employees to openly share bad news.** Getting information from employees can be easier said than done. If there is a problem, mistake, or delay, they may be hesitant to inform you because they fear your reaction or think it will make them look incompetent. When an employee presents you with bad news, express appreciation for the accurate

information, no matter how negative it may be. Respond quickly to the problem with specific actions to deal with it.

- **Balance careful analysis of a problem and decisive action to solve it.** Effective leaders move quickly to deal with a threat or problem. Nevertheless, they know they must make an accurate diagnosis of the problem and identify relevant remedies before taking action. Otherwise, they may end up implementing ineffective solutions or solving the wrong problem—both of which can make things worse instead of better.
- **Make decisions as close to the action as possible.** The key here is ensuring that decisions are being made where the best information is in order to increase speed and quality of responsiveness.

Turn your performance management system into a business tool. This system is one of the most important tools leaders have to ensure effective execution. It ensures goals are aligned across levels and work units, helps people know what they need to do and how they need to do it, and allows leaders to monitor progress toward goals.

“When you put these elements in place at your organization, you’ll see a general improvement in your overall ability to execute plans and initiatives,” says Lepsinger. “Your employees will start getting things done more consistently, and these wins will inspire them to redouble their efforts. One day you’ll look around and realize your mission statement actually rings true—and that’s one of the best feelings you’ll have as a leader.”

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