



## **CREATING A HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION AND COMPANY CULTURE**

### **Executive Overview for: Executing the High-Performance Recognition-Based Company Culture**

*"The philosophies behind the creation of the High Performance "Recognition-Based" Company Culture are easy to conceptualize but require a lot of discipline and commitment to implement. If a genie came down from above and promised you that if you do the things with your "Leadership Time" that are outlined in this segment, you would be guaranteed that your organization would be more engaged, more motivated, more selective in its makeup and considerably more accountable and productive, would you believe the genie? Well...there is no genie but we will personally guarantee these same results if done properly."*

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1. The two types of meetings:
  - Tactical/Operational "T" meetings
  - Non-tactical (sub-strategic) "S" meetings
2. Challenges of supervision regarding "S" meetings.
3. Challenges of supervision regarding making time to develop their associates.
4. Human Titheing; the establishment of "Leadership Time."
5. What is the best use of "Leadership Time?"  
The 10 most important things to do with your new found "Leadership Time."
6. Summary on the Development of a "Culture of Recognition."



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## **Recognition and Coaching in Action...the Double Edge Sword**

After the RROI Position and Performance Agreement is in place and the expectations of each Role are clearly understood and agreed to, we begin the process of executing our Role as leaders, managers and supervisors. These are obviously the day-to-day planning and activities we, as leaders, participate in during the process of performing the roles and responsibilities we have been assigned within the company.

**The two primary types of internal meetings that each individual associate should participate in to assure both the Productivity and Performance of the business and, in addition, to create and sustain the High Performance “Recognition Based” Company Culture are:**

### **1. Tactical /Operations “T” Meetings**

We establish “control points” in every business function within every business. We have meetings to review the dashboard of performance indicators. The music stops for an hour or so each day, week or month and the status of key indicators are reviewed and discussed.

- Generally, these meetings would be categorized as “operational” or “tactical” in nature. They would include meetings like daily production meetings, daily or weekly scheduling meetings, weekly project status reviews, customer service call volumes or customer issues, monthly safety incident reviews, weekly or monthly accounting (receivables, payables and cash status) engineering project progress status reviews or the sales activity to include monthly and YTD sales vs. budget, back log, pipeline, number of open proposals, hit rate, call plan or bid reviews or monthly financial reviews etc. These meetings are generally daily, weekly or monthly.
- You get the picture. These operational sessions are “tactical” type meetings and represent our entire team’s efforts to work **“in the business”** to keep all of the company’s many processes and functions operating at a high level of performance.
- These are normally scripted type review sessions (meetings) with fixed agendas that are “quantitative” in nature. Many times, you dive into details with assigned activities and action items. They become problem solving meetings when necessary.
- These are the meetings that keep all of the company processes and the company’s short term successes on track.



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- The supervisors, managers and leaders who attend these “T” meetings should be observing the associates presenting at these “T” sessions and assessing:
  - A. The quality and accuracy of how they present their information.
  - B. The quality of the content and level of results.
  - C. Their approach to accepting responsibility for corrective action when necessary and their overall focus, sense of urgency and attitude toward meeting the responsibilities of their individual roles.
  - D. The professional demeanor they exhibit.
- We will speak in a moment about how these regularly scheduled “Tactical (operational) Review Meetings” offer a great opportunity for next level up supervisors, managers and leaders to recognize, appreciate and positively coach associates in a way that fuels our “recognition” based company culture. At the same time these observations may lead to coaching opportunities.



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## 2. Non-Tactical (Sub-Strategic) "S" Meetings

These "S" meetings are much different and have a different objective. The "S" sessions are non-tactical team meeting that focuses **on the business** and its departments, divisions, project sites, major processes and business units.

- In addition to the "Operational Tactical" ("T") type meetings, these "S" type meetings are where people work "on" the business rather than "in" the business. These meetings are usually monthly.
- While it is appropriate to invite only the senior level leaders into the higher level monthly Strategic Leadership meetings where confidential company information is exchanged and the annual business plan and strategic plan is developed, monitored and updated, **these Sub-Strategic "S" type Team Meetings** are held by every department, division, major process, project team etc. and led by the manager of those respective business units.

**These Sub-Strategic Team Meetings are designed to work on the business.** These "S" meetings are critical to the creation of the High-Performance Company Culture.

- These "**Sub-Strategic Team Meetings**" are described as "**Leadership Loops**" and actually provide the platform for divisions, departments, process teams, project teams etc., to meet without the pressures of a "tactical agenda" to contribute thoughts and ideas on how their processes, departments, divisions, projects can be improved, how the communications or flow of information can be streamlined, how security or safety can be improved, how technology could be more supportive of their specific functions and how new or improved equipment could have a payback justification. The "S" are discussions regarding the facility or internal environment, parking lot or lunch room improvements, policies that are outdated, etc. They address the topics that lead to "hassle reduction." One company names these teams the "Hasred" team. These team meetings are also a great forum for general company information dissemination and general team building. The bottom line objective is to include everyone in the company in the process of improving the company environment. Ask for input, provide feedback and move information and good ideas up the chain to the Senior Leadership Team for consideration.



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- If you do not currently conduct these “S” type Sub-Strategic Team Meetings that focus **“on the business”** at every level, your first few meetings can lean toward “bitch” sessions. However, after the team leaders establish professionalism and openness, promoting the concept of not just describing a problem but offering a solution, things do begin to change and the meetings take on a different demeanor. As you progress over a few months the meetings are not only productive with worthwhile information coming out, but an incredible opportunity to observe, appreciate, recognize and later lead people within a collaborative Team environment where people begin to take ownership of their roles and responsibilities. This becomes a key part of creating the “recognition based culture.” These Sub-Strategic Team meetings are all about the associates in the team session, not about the leader. No room for bloviating, just listen, absorb, take into consideration and give feedback in a positive way.

This “S” team meeting format provides an incredible “out of the box” and “on their feet” platform to see how individuals think and operate so that they can be recognized, appreciated and later, if needed, coached and encouraged. These observations can also help management and leadership in identifying future supervisors, managers and leaders. Again, many of the great ideas for change and improvement come from the teams of people closest to the situation.

It is up to the Leader to create this open and productive “S” team environment that allows all of this to happen. Leaders. Managers and supervisors who develop and surround themselves with good people and then trust those people to meet agreed upon expectations move quickly in their creation of a High Performing Organization and Company Culture.

Done properly, this information and the solutions that go with them should move up the chain to senior leadership and be prioritized and placed into processes, policies and new initiatives for the organization. Those Sub-Strategic “S” Teams and individuals who contribute should be recognized for their contributions.



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## **Two major complaints regarding the two types of “T” and “S” meetings.**

### **First complaint from supervision and managers**

If all you do is have meetings, you will never have time to get anything accomplished.

**Answer:** If a meeting does not improve, speed up or in some other way advance productivity or employee engagement then it should not occur.

- A. **Operational type “T” meetings** should be “quantitative” in nature, well organized and scripted with most reports being measured against a standard, budget or plan. The desired results of each report should be understood and an expectation to provide a recommended corrective action or solution should be understood. These meetings should be efficient and effective with respect for everyone's time.
- B. **Sub-strategic type “S” team meetings** are “Qualitative” in nature and much less scripted to allow for open discussion. These “S” type team meetings, done properly will produce cost cutting and process improvements and most importantly will energize each individual who participates making them feel a part of the solution. This inclusiveness drives motivation and an entrepreneurial spirit that has a tenfold return. This is the forum that motivates associates, improves engagement and moves a company towards sustainable high performance.
  - a. “S” Team meetings are critical to gather information, offer feedback and integrate ideas into the mainstream communications flow and chain of command.



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## **Second complaint: From supervision and managers**

I am working 60 hours a week. How am I going to make additional time to coach, mentor, counsel, train and develop our people?

**Answer:** The concept is called: "**Human Tithing**" and you're not going to like it one bit.

You may recall in the Bible or remember from the sermons that you heard in church or temple that each family is supposed to "tithe" or give 10% of their earnings to the church or charitable organizations. That is religious tithing.

### **Human Tithing**

**Human Tithing**- means that when you moved from an associate or lead position to a supervisor or manager role you should have also shifted the amount of time you self-perform "in the business" to investing more and more time planning, leading and working "**on the business**".

"**Human Tithing**" means that as a supervisor, manager or leader, 10% of your 40- to 60-hour work week (4-6 hours) should be solely devoted to leading, appreciating and recognizing the people you have responsibility for developing. This is the "precious time" you invest in coaching, training and developing the people over whom you have responsibility.

### **Four to six hours a week...WOW**

It is amazing, but if someone locked you in a closet at work for one hour a day, you would still manage to get your work done. If you lock in on your daily calendar an hour a day to walk around and visit your associates, your return on time, seen in productivity and motivation, will be amazing. That is what you need to be doing as a supervisor, manager and leader. The more senior your role, your time should shift from working in the business to working more on the business. That is the primary difference seen in highly successful small and mid-size businesses vs. those that can't seem to reach their full potential.

As a leader/manager/supervisor, your first priority and schedule of time should be blocked out for setting expectations, communicating, recognizing, appreciating, coaching, training and developing the people of the organization and in some cases, implementing a "get well recovery" plan for underperformers.



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## **What do I do with my newly prioritized “Human Tithing” time of 4-6 hours a week?**

Each individual associate is different and embraces communications with their supervisors in different ways. As you use your 4-6 hours weekly to informally and formally visit with your associates, your topics of conversation may take multiple directions:

1. Personal about family, illnesses, deaths, sports, marriages, children, school activities, etc. Effective leadership must approach the “whole person” who spends two thirds of their time away from work and immersed in their personal lives. To ignore that important piece of each person’s life does not meet the standard of leadership style that we discussed in the leadership segment. Good leadership prioritizes “caring for and about your associates.”
2. Making references to previous discussions that resulted from either an “operations-tactical” meeting or more importantly from a “sub-strategic team meeting” is a great use of your tithing time. Taking the opportunity to follow-up with an associate’s idea, recognize them, show appreciation and coach them with specific examples referencing either a “T” or “S” meeting, is the best way to both recognize and coach. Almost everyone appreciates the “boss’s time” and observations positively delivered will be taken to heart by the people who perform and care and who will, ultimately, be considered “keepers.”
3. RROI- Position and Performance Agreement – Following up with a specific discussion on particular objectives or initiatives reinforces the importance of the document itself and of the objectives and initiatives within their individual role.

Picking a specific “Initiative” and seeing where things stand or what help might be needed, allows your associate to understand that objectives and initiatives are serious and that you are watching their progress and are willing to help in any way.
4. Personal Attributes and Behavioral Attitudes – Recognizing the attributes and attitudes that your associate has been exhibiting in a positive manner, reinforces your expectations. Coach an individual in rethinking a specific demonstration of a negative attitude. Desired attitudes should be complimented and reinforced. These discussions are all positive even if they include difficult topics. Having a great skill set is very important; having a good attitude, communication skills and a positive demeanor that allows an associate to maximize the impact of their skill set, is equally important.



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5. Associate Training & Development – Referencing the RROI – Position and Performance Agreement where personal and professional training and development, and career path discussions are documented. Show interest in being certain everything is on track. Recommend specific training sessions that are available through the YourBoard.US Personal and Professional Development Series.
6. Review Progress on a “Coaching Plan” that may be in progress. You may even have a “get well recovery” plan in motion that should be followed-up.
7. The topic and level of importance and seriousness of your associate discussions are dictated by how formal or informal the discussion will be. It also dictates how private the discussion is and whether the location is at their work station, in the hallway or in your office.
8. As a rule of thumb: You “Appreciate” hard work and going above and beyond. You also appreciate when someone accepts and complies with coaching recommendations.

You not only “Appreciate but also **Recognize “Results”** that are achieved in the way of objectives achieved or initiatives implemented. It is totally acceptable, and actually recommended, that recognition be offered even if objectives or initiatives are not completed but on schedule or benchmarks are met or initiatives are partially completed on time. Recognition can also be reinforced with a confirming telephone call or e-mail with a copy to the person’s supervisor or another senior person. It is very appropriate to send a letter or a formal written acknowledgement of commendation of some type to the home when a significant objective is reached or initiative is successfully completed.

9. It is also appropriate to suggest that you observed that an associate was struggling with something personal or in business and you wanted to know if you might be able to support them or get them the needed resources to help.



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10. A very important conversation with an associate centers around the reinforcement of the corporate strategic plans and strategies and how it directly pertains to the strategies and requirements of each person's role. The most demoralizing thing for an associate to understand and accept occurs when the associate has put a lot of time and effort into a strategy, whether it's operational, sales, marketing, finance and accounting or HR and then finds out through the grapevine that they have been going in the wrong direction or that the direction has been arbitrarily changed. Always communicate to an associate on changed or modified objectives, initiatives or expected results. It is critical to human motivation and momentum.
11. Once you have made the commitment of time and placed a schedule of Human Tithing in your day planner, all that is necessary is to mentally picture each associate that you are responsible for and develop a mental agenda that is informal, open ended, positive, engaging and casual.



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**Now you know what to do with the 4-6 hours a week created by your Human Tithing. Human tithing is the basis for setting aside the time to build your High Performing “Recognition Based” Culture. It is the time you work on the business not in the business.**

### **Developing a “Culture of Recognition” – Summary**

It is imperative that all supervisors, managers and leaders make mental notes, or even written notes, on your associate activities that should be appreciated and recognized – those that are exceeding expectations and the those that are falling short. After either a success or a shortcoming occurs, the sooner it is recognized or addressed and discussed in a positive coaching environment the quicker each individual will rise to the level of their potential in achieving the expectations of their individual roles.

It is imperative that you recognize, either publicly or privately, good performance. It should be done within 24 – 48 hours. It can be done privately or publicly in a group or with an e-mail with copies to the next two levels up. Any and every time an individual performs successfully in the role they have been assigned, we should reinforce it with honest and sincere recognition. This is a key consumer of time in your “Human Tithing” plan.

In a High-Performance Company Culture there should always be a recognizable difference between how you reward and recognize excellence and the way you treat and coach mediocrity. If there is not a clear difference in recognition and reward between the two...guess what you get.

There is an old adage that says: “If there is not much difference between doing it really well and doing it just average, what is the motivation to go the extra mile to do it well?” In a “recognition based culture” you as the leadership, management and supervision of the organization must recognize success so that success takes a firm hold in the organization and becomes the standard of performance.

On the other hand, if someone’s attitude is not where it needs to be, if the results are not there, or if you are seeing slippage in someone’s work ethic, attitude or passion, it is imperative that you act quickly, meet with that individual on a one-on-one basis, and discuss the expectations that you have already jointly established for that role in the RROI. There is always room for discussion and there is always forgiveness available under certain circumstances, but in general, if an individual performs differently than what he has agreed to in the RROI Position and Performance Agreement, that person must understand that change is necessary.

The key is that you approach poor performance with encouragement, support and a caring attitude. You will find that in some cases that an individual has the desire but not the skill. It is incumbent at that point for you, as a supervisor, to either help that person achieve that skill or move that person to another position where the skills match up. There are times that a lack of skill and/or the lack of another position where the current skills apply may result in a separation.



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If you have done an adequate job in setting up the roles in the RROI Position and Performance Agreement to begin with, by matching the skills sets and attitudes with the role and the expectations of the position, in a very large percentage of times that person will accept a “positive critique” and will do what is necessary to make the appropriate changes.

It is extremely important, at that point, to reinforce any evidence that suggested changes have been made so that, the individual sees that success in meeting expectations is acknowledged and recognized and a deviation from those expectations is discussed and will require a commitment for change.

What is hard to understand about some management and leadership is that very rarely do supervisors or managers take action when they observe what they know is not in line with the stated expectations. When you leave the ranks of tactical work and assume the role of supervision, management and ultimately senior leadership, more and more of your time must be devoted to the element of coaching and people development.

As a Senior Leader, if you do not pro-actively observe your managers, and supervisors, take the necessary time to clearly establish the expectations and continue to recognize the success and when necessary perform coaching when required, you are simply not doing your job. That same statement applies to managers and supervisors as it applies to their associates.

There must be a clear expectation of all management and supervision that a significant part of their job is not just getting the numbers by personally working in the business, but being certain that each individual is progressing towards exceeding the expectations of their role.

Again, I know how some people, especially in small companies, feel about meetings. Let me just go on record by referencing one idea that many of you may be able to identify with. Picture a football game where the football team is in the locker room before the game going over the game plans for the game. Would anybody ever say the plans were so good from the pregame meeting that they don't have to have a huddle after each play?

The huddle represents the adjustments we make as we understand what the competitor is doing. Huddles are where we decide who's having a good day and who isn't and what plays are working and what plays aren't. There would never be a thought that there shouldn't be a huddle after each play but in many companies there is the thought that meetings are a bad thing. Unorganized and unplanned meetings with no agenda and no focus are a waste of time. However, if you execute an efficient system of tactical operations and sub-strategic team meetings, your company's management and control of the business model and creation of a high-performance company culture are assured.



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