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Why Your Best Employees Don't Deserve To Be Managers

By Anna Johnson

You'd think we'd know by now — just because someone is fantastic at *doing* something... doesn't mean they're equally as good at *managing* others to do that same thing.

After all, the skill set required to practice a specific profession — whether it's plumbing, hairdressing, engineering, selling, teaching, accounting or whatever — is entirely different from the skill set required to manage people.

Yet businesses persist in promoting "doers" into management roles. These promotions come with better-sounding titles, more money, more perquisites, more prestige and... more responsibility. And they involve doing less — perhaps none — of the "technical" work that the manager did previously, and more (or all) of the work of managing others.

In one sense it's logical — a manager who used to do the work himself or herself should understand what his staff need to do the work now. And yes, there are many managers who are just as good, if not better, at managing others as they are performing the actual work. In fact, many managers prefer to manage rather than do.

But, as indicated above, there's no reason to assume that a good doer will automatically make a good manager!

Now, this isn't to say that a pyramidal organizational structure — where the many are managed by the few — is necessarily a bad thing. As a delegation or management structure it works fine for many companies.

But when getting more pay and other rewards is contingent on becoming a manager, it's inevitable that people will try to get, and will get, promoted into management roles — regardless of whether they have the talent or passion to manage.

The result? Plenty of unhappy and ineffective managers. Plenty of frustrated people working for ineffective managers. And an organization that isn't performing at its optimum.

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Doesn't it make more sense for people to do the work they enjoy and are good at? To reward them for getting better and better at that work, rather than only paying them more if they step "up" to management... where they may generate less value for the organization?

Isn't a top salesman better off staying in the field selling... than floundering in the office, struggling to organize and motivate his staff?

Doesn't a hairdresser do more for her clients, herself and the salon by cutting and styling people's hair, than spending her time doing paperwork and trying to manage other hairdressers?

Fortunately, some organizations have seen the light. They do tie greater rewards to greater responsibilities and greater performances *within the same role*. In fact, some companies, like investment banks, are renown for paying traders and sales people much, much more than the people

who manage them, simply because, in the eyes of the bank, the traders and sales people generate more value.

Of course, as a "manager's advocate" I would never suggest that managers shouldn't be compensated well, especially given the challenges of managing people.

But to be as productive and profitable as possible, businesses should tie greater pay and rewards to greater responsibilities and performances, whatever the role. That way, they'll have people doing and being their best.

So if you're responsible for "promoting" people, I urge you to think twice before promoting your best people into management roles... and out of the jobs they love and do well at.

Instead, consider whether you can enlarge, or give them more challenges in, their current role? Or, if they've performed exceptionally well, can you give them a bonus or some other special reward to recognize their efforts?

Of course, if you work for someone else, you may be limited in terms of what you can do... but if that's the case, and you're committed to staying with your current employer... it may be time to start a revolution!

Anna Johnson is the author of the **How To Manage People System**, which includes her controversial new book, *How To Manage People (Even If You're A Control Freak!)* (ISBN 0-9775175-0-0). For invaluable advice on

, claim your copy of Anna's **FREE 12-page report, How**

What do Employees Really Want?

By Megan Tough

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A major problem for business owners and employers today is getting the best employees and then keeping them. Sounds easy, but any employer will tell you that these activities take up the most time and have the biggest impact on business results. So how do you go about retaining the good people once you've found them?

Understanding what your employees want from a workplace sounds like a logical place to start. After all, if you know what your employees are after, you simply need to provide it and all will be well. This is a great theory, but research shows that employers are not that successful at identifying what their employees actually want. In fact there is a significant disconnect between the things that employees say are important to them, and how highly employers rank those same things.

This survey first came out in 1946 in Foreman Facts, from the Labor Relations Institute of NY and was produced again by Lawrence Lindahl in Personnel magazine, in 1949. This study has since been replicated with similar results by Ken Kovach (1980); Valerie Wilson, Achievers International (1988); Bob Nelson, Blanchard Training & Development (1991); and Sheryl & Don Grimme, GHR Training Solutions (1997–2001).

When asked to rank a list of ten criteria, the employees and managers/owners ranked them very differently:

WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY THEY WANT (in order)

- 1.Full appreciation for work done
- 2.Feeling `part' of things
- 3.Sympathetic help on personal issues
- 4.Job security
- 5.Good wages
- 6.Interesting work
- 7.Promotion/growth opportunities
- 8.Personal loyalty to workers
- 9.Good working conditions
- 10.Tactful discipline

WHAT MANAGERS THINK EMPLOYEES WANT (in order)

- 1.Good wages
- 2.Job security
- 3.Promotion/growth opportunities
- 4.Good working conditions
- 5.Interesting work
- 6.Personal loyalty to workers
- 7.Tactful discipline
- 8.Full appreciation for work done

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9.Sympathetic help on personal issues

10.Feeling `part' of things

What does this mean if you are an employer or a manager in business today?

Frequent pats on the back will go a long way towards making your employees more satisfied at work. Happily, it's not always about the money.

Megan Tough, director of Action Plus, works with small business professionals who are ready to do more than `just get by'. Increase your income – decrease your stress! To learn more and to sign up for more FREE tips and articles like these, visit www.megantough.com

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