BMTFedNewsletter

BMTFEDERATION

News

**This year's BBS conference will be a workshop, interactive style conference and will be held on 18th November.
For more information e-mail info@bmtfed.com**

Behavioural Management Techniques (BMT) is a science-based approach focused on using behaviour analysis for the improvement of business and safety performance.

Words of Wisdom

Quotations from Bill Redmon's speech at our recent conference:-

"...this isn't about being a good or bad person, this is about the behaviour of people. If I ever hear the phrase, "I'm going to punish those people" I always say, "You're not punishing people, you're punishing behaviour." If you punish a person, that means you just kick them around no matter what they do and that's not a good idea. If they have a behaviour that doesn't have the right effect, punish it so they suppress that behaviour or it decreases."

"...you don't reward people, you reward behaviour. So talk about behaviour, and not people. Not people systems, behavioural systems. That's a big difference in terminology. That's a big difference in the implications for what you actually do as a leader when you manage people, because you're managing the behaviour of those people. You don't own them, but you rent or buy their behaviour, and you make the best use of it you can."

"...all of those things together have a sweet spot called Leadership where everything comes together. The consequence of those factors is leadership. I take it to market, hopefully in a profitable way, using processes to deliver consistently and reliably with high quality, and I manage the behaviour of the people who create this productivity in a way that's motivating and engaging, and retain those people for the future."

"...an executive once asked me, "when does this feedback process end?" I said "never, feedback doesn't end. You don't just get it and you're okay. It's not like penicillin. You have to keep getting it. It has to redefine your culture." Creating a feedback rich culture is the target."

It's the way you tell 'em...

By Howard Lees

I have been made aware of some events that have occurred which were reported completely differently by two different attendees. Here are the stories:-

Situation 1
Manager's story – "I sat down with my engineer and chatted to him about the course and his homework. It was good crack, it's nice to be able to chat about non-work related things with my people."

The engineer's story – "My boss came over to me the other day and gave me a bollocking for doing my coursework in the office."
Moral to the story – One manager's crack is another person's bollocking.

Situation 2
Director's story – "I've just completed our road-shows around the business, we presented for 2 hours letting everyone know the company business plan, what the future holds, it was really invigorating. There was no dissension whatsoever, I'm really fired up."

Worker's story – "We had to down tools last week to sit and listen to a load of company bullshit. It took two hours and we lost our bonus for the day, thanks a lot!"
Moral to the story – What's interesting to Directors might not be interesting to the workforce.

Situation 3
Team leader's story – "I got the team together in the office today in order to thank them for their great work over the last couple of months during these difficult times."

Team member's story – "We got our usual pep talk today, you're all doing really well but you cannot let up, there can be no slacking, blah, blah, blah, nag, nag, nag."
Moral to the story – If you are going to thank people then just do that and nothing else.

BMTFEDERATION

It's Not Them...It's You

By John Austin, Ph.D.

The old joke goes like this: A couple had been married for 25 years, and the husband says, *"Look, I told you I loved you when we got married; if anything changes I'll get back to you!"*

That kind of feedback is just not good enough for today's world, in relationships or in business. Instead, we need strong feedback sources that we can rely on in order to improve what we're doing. We just can't learn unless we regularly see how our behavior affects others. This seems like a "no-brainer" – most organizations have spent literally thousands of hours arranging feedback systems to gather data from their customers.

My bank has a feedback system whereby the corporate office gathers satisfaction data after customers visit a branch. The system is rigid and automated. In their effort to make one size fit all and make it efficient to collect the data, the survey asks many questions of the customer that are irrelevant to your specific case – I took one of their surveys and after 5 minutes I was very frustrated. There was no personal touch, there was no relationship, and there was not much incentive for me to give thoughtful responses to the questions.

I visited my branch the manager recently and she asked me to give her branch a good rating on the feedback system. I asked her why she felt she needed to ask me to give her good ratings; and she told me that she is forced to account on the phone to her boss for every rating below a perfect-5. The change in her behavior over this new feedback system has been dramatic; she appears nervous and needy in her interactions with me – not good traits for a banker to exhibit.

Getting accurate and timely information you can trust is essential. The truly enlightened companies constantly seek better ways to talk to employees to obtain and use the information that is freely available to all who have strong enough relationships to get it. Lots of companies use external survey firms, these have a bad habit of producing levels of complexity that stifle the original intent of the surveys. Many also produce lengthy reports that make it very difficult to identify the key results you require.

Estimates suggest that managers actually receive between 10% and 20% of the feedback that employees could give, if they were willing to do so. Some of the techniques we like to use to get employee feedback include Survey Monkey and RF response cards to ask questions to live audiences and get their anonymous opinions on the spot. Once you develop your key relationships you can just ask individuals for feedback and get honest and good pinpointed responses. It takes lots of time and experimentation to get it right, but once you do, your improvement skyrockets. Once you get the pure stuff, you'll never go back to the old stale ways you used to collect feedback on your ideas.

Are you Unintentionally Discouraging Your Employees from Speaking Up?

By Allison Reynolds

Performing businesses thrive on two-way communication. The best ideas for improvement frequently come from the 'shop floor' or 'open office' where the workers know the issues and opportunities. The biggest problems can often be avoided if these issues are raised when they are first discovered. Harnessing these opinions and improvement ideas is very difficult for many managers.

Most people accept that employees will not speak up if they perceive a threat of punishment for doing so. However, a recent article in The Harvard Business Review highlights the much more common issue of employees keeping their ideas and opinions to themselves due to a sense of futility, rather than fear of personal consequences. If they perceive that nothing will happen anyway, why would they bother? It's just not worth the effort. Speaking up is all too often unintentionally put on extinction by managers who are too busy or simply don't recognise the importance of encouraging opinion from the workers.

"If you send signals that you're already overwhelmed or conversely completely satisfied with the status quo, then it shouldn't be a surprise if your employees doubt you want to hear about their ideas".

The key to increasing the behaviour of employees sharing their opinions and ideas with you is to make sure that you reinforce all attempts. Booking time in your diary to solicit their feedback will increase the likelihood that you will do it. When you do get the feedback, make sure you reinforce the employee. Whilst you may not be able to implement every idea, saying thank you is often not enough. Consider other ways in which you might reinforce contribution, perhaps by letting them know that you received their idea and are considering it or talking about it at the next meeting. Do nothing and pretty soon, you'll be on your way to getting nothing.....or perhaps that's where you're starting from today.

http://blogs.hbr.org/research/2010/05/do-your-employees-think-speaki.html

A starving peasant stands on a hillside for a very long time before a roast duck flies in... Confucius

BMTFEDERATION