



What Good Looks Like

by Howard Lees

A number of (sometimes frustrated) clients have said in the past, “OK Sherlock, what will it look like when we get good at this leadership malarkey.” Here are 12 predictions of what you could achieve:-

1. You will be coaching your direct reports; they will be delivering good things for you without you specifically asking them.
2. You will ask them to listen to speeches off the internet, read books and articles, you will be discussing these things when you meet 1 to 1, which will be at least every month.
3. You will meet the commitments that you make – i.e., say what you’re going to do and then do it. This will maintain trust and credibility.
4. You will not interfere with operational detail at all; instead you will take an overview of the operational strategy.
5. Everyone will have the freedom to choose the right meetings to attend where they add value.
6. You will have developed key relationships inside and external to the organisation. You will have written a relationship plan and have a strategy to achieve and maintain good relationships with all these people.
7. You will continue to get through your own reading & coaching plan.
8. You will be coaching your team to coach their people and you will have notes on their successes.
9. You will have an assistant who will deal with most of your email and volume of paperwork via short chats with you.
10. Your team will be delivering Improvement Plans as part of their normal daily work and you will be encouraging them to do more.
11. You will have data on the % annual reduction in bureaucracy, paperwork, time spent in meetings, volumes of reports.
12. Your people will have developed short, meaningful, graphical ways of effectively reporting business information.

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

The 7th Annual BMT Leadership Conference

12th May 2011 – Park Royal Hotel
Stretton, Warrington, WA4 4NS

This year’s keynote speakers are:-

Alasdair Cathcart, President of Bechtel Power Corporation.
Vic Emery OBE, Convener of the Scottish Police Services Authority and Chair of the Edinburgh Tram Project.
Also speaking will be Dr Nicole Gravina, Dr Denis O’Hora, Bruce Faulkner, Rachel Edwards, Allison Reynolds, and Howard Lees.

Pre-Conference Workshops

Dr Denis O’Hora, Rachel Edwards, Joanne Lees, Bob Cummins, Howard Lees, Bruce Faulkner, Allison Reynolds and Nicole Gravina will host pre-conference workshops on the 11th May 2011.

Topics covered

Advanced behavioural science subjects
Feedback. Dealing with difficult people. Fear responses. Coaching techniques.

US BMT Conferences

May 24th - Behavioural Safety Conference
in Kalamazoo, Michigan

May 26th - Behavioural Leadership Conference
in Chicago, Illinois

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Presenteeism - The New Sickness

by Allison Reynolds

High levels of absence in the workplace are driven by too little positive reinforcement and too much punishment and extinction. In other words, it is not sufficiently reinforcing to be at work. Traditional solutions do not address the problem but instead attempt to manage the symptom using threats and punishment, which is ironic given that the problem is caused by a negative work environment to start with.

To the unenlightened, draconian sickness absence policies and procedures may appear to be working. A recent survey by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) found that levels of sickness absence were one of the lowest ever recorded. However, whilst sickness absence is on the decrease, a new symptom has emerged. Presenteeism. People turning up to work but not functioning at full capacity. And it's on the up.

So why the change in behaviour? It must be a change in the environment. The CIPD explains the findings being down to a backdrop of a very uncertain labour market, where people are under pressure to perform under all circumstances, including when they're not 100 percent well. Especially if the employer pays close attention to sickness absence levels. Just recently, I noticed an unusually high number of people showing up for courses who were sick. Employees talked about guidelines being sent out telling them how to avoid being off sick, against the threat of looming job losses in 2011 and absence levels playing a part in the selection process. The antecedents remain the same, but they are now paired with much more significant consequences, hence the change in behaviour.

Instead of trying to suppress this latest symptom, we need to go back upstream to understand what is driving it, be it sickness absence, presenteeism, or any other issue. We need to stop distracting our managers with overly onerous policies and procedures and help them figure out how to make the work more reinforcing for their teams. If it's more reinforcing to deliver on the job then that is what employees will do. Performance problems and the other issues go away.



Does your Company Really Need a System to Know Who the Good Guys are?

by Howard Lees

I was delivering a workshop the other day and asked the attendees:-

“If you were to set yourself up in business tomorrow, do you know the six people from your current company you would take with you.” There was a pretty gleeful and unanimous response “yes.” I then asked, “Do you know the top six people you would leave behind?” again, a gleeful “yes.”

I said “Ok are you prepared to write the names of those people on that piece of paper in front of you.” Predictably the response was “no.”

I have asked similar groups the same in the past, it is clear that the people in the organisation have a good view of who the really valuable people are, I have also asked for names and privately been told them, of course most people give you the same list of names.

Do you really need all the expense of convoluted annual appraisals, forced rankings, assessment centres, beauty parades, and dubious and subjective scoring systems in the name of consistency? It seems everyone knows who the good guys are without all that, of course they do.

Do you know the six people you will take with you when you start up your own company?

