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Training needs

A Leader's Difficult Question

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A Leader's difficult question

The Handling Difficult People course participants were managers of caravan parks in a seaside setting. Their employees were mostly itinerant workers who followed the sun in the hotter months and holiday periods and just took part time jobs at the parks as it suited their lifestyle. They did jobs like cleaning the shower areas, tidying the BBQs, emptying garbage, mowing lawns, cleaning the pool etc. The managers said it was hard to find people who would do that kind of work.

The facilitator asked “What is the most difficult issue you have to deal with?” The reply: “How to tell an employee they have bad body odour.” It seems that some of their itinerant workers lacked basic hygiene knowledge and the park operators were embarrassed in front of customers, and had also received some complaints about smelly staff (usually from other staff).



So, the group brainstormed the issue. This is what they came up with:

1. Tell them directly that they have a personal hygiene issue. While it might not work in other industries or other cultures, the group thought that this particular group will handle a direct statement more easily because that's what they experience from the police, and anyone in authority.
2. Give each new worker a hygiene pack (soap, shampoo and deodorant) when they start and explain the expected hygiene standards.
3. Put “personal hygiene” on the Agenda for a team meeting and discuss the issue in general without pointing fingers at anyone.
4. Ask a friend of the worker to tell them “The Boss thinks you smell so you better do something about it?”
5. Leave a note in their locker asking them to take a shower.
6. Insist that workers shower before they start their shift (and provide them with an on-site facility to do that).
7. Just don't hire them in future (not really an option in a difficult employment market).

Managers decided numbers 1 to 3 were the preferred options. However, what was most pleasing was that they really appreciated the opportunity to discuss with peers a really difficult leadership issue. This is the power of face to face training that you will never get in an on line program!

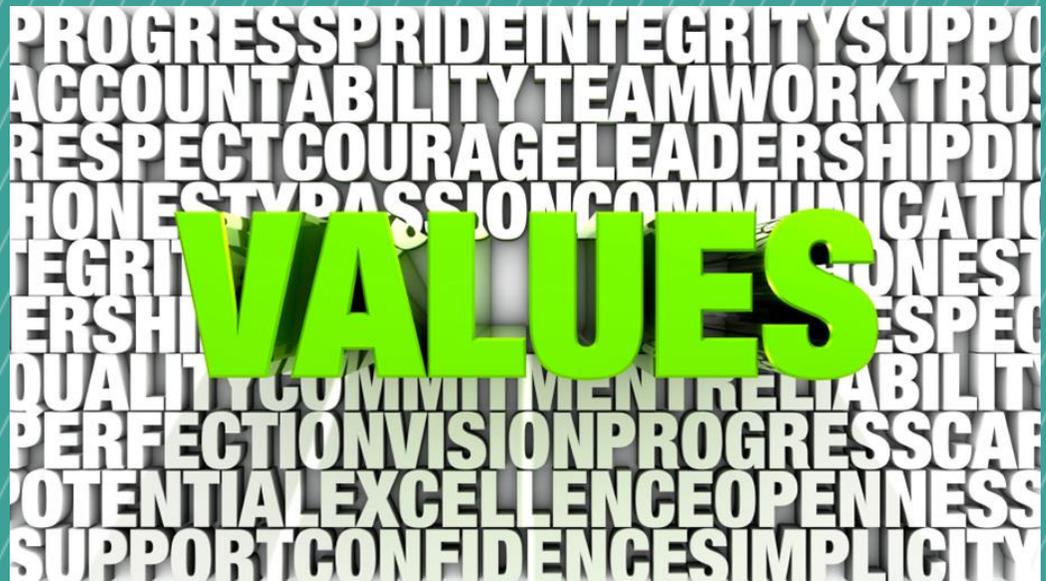
How we value Apple and Amazon?

Researcher Eric Almquist and his colleagues from Bain and Co have studied what customers truly value, apart from price!

Their survey research of 30,000 customers resulted in the description of 30 “elements of value”. Their conclusion was that successful companies such as Apple and Amazon rated much higher than companies which showed little customer value.

Based on their findings we developed a Values Questionnaire which you can use to measure whether any of your product or service initiatives are what customers truly want.

Use it to measure your next course or conference/seminar presentation.



How to Handle Difficult Workmates - Part 2

On our workshops we often hear how people avoid conflict and it inevitably escalates. Following on from our last newsletter, here are some more practical tips to diffuse conflict at work before they get worse:

If an angry person stands over you, stand up too. You have to show physical as well as personal power in as conflict situation.

Set ground rules for contentions team meetings e.g. "We may not agree with, but will respect, the views of all team members."

If the other person in the conflict brings two or three others to the discussion, and you feel it is a stand over tactic, tell them you won't continue until the others leave.

Know your rights. Often your opponent will not and will be gob smacked when faced with compelling arguments indicating how their comments or actions are illegal, or against company rules.

Avoid people you truly don't like.

If the other person is being verbally abusive, write down their comments while they speak e.g. He pointed to me and said "You are a X\$#cc^@!" It's called a Verbatim. In these days of increasing defamation, no one wants to be sued.

If a colleague is severely stressed, ask if they want to talk about it? Keep in mind the services of your Employee Assistance Program.

Walk away from bullies ... it takes their power away.

If you regularly explode, look in the mirror. Perhaps YOU are the problem!



Ask us about our Dealing with Difficult People training workshops which can be facilitated in your organisation. (Ph 02 9482 7704 or Q4@bigpond.com)

About

norman turkington and associates



norman turkington and associates is a management training consultancy specialising in helping clients with leadership, change management, team development, handling difficult people, and other soft skills training.

We also offer related services such as one on one corporate coaching, mediation and workplace investigations.

Contact us now for a free quote to facilitate a customised training intervention in your organisation.



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