

Insincerity is a reputation killer



Our client came to us saying that, while she knew clearly that her employees are the company's most important asset, she was concerned that too often the significance of that assertion was not seen on a day-to-day basis in the workplace.

She understood that lip service to and the occasional enthusiastic recognition of good performance are not enough as they can make employees sense and reflect corporate insincerity. She didn't want any sign of this lack of sincerity to be detected by customers.

As pragmatic hotel consultants, our focus is the success of our client's business and that has to be understood by every one involved, from top down. On many occasions over the years, we have designed and refined a process of involvement that works all the time.

Employee involvement

This system has every employee knowledgeably involved at every level. It starts with ensuring that everyone is always clear about their role - what he or she must do - and the standards required. This clarity enables the individual to communicate with others, intelligently and with appropriate authority, about work issues.

Such informed communication gives the trained individual an agreed degree of control and encourages decision-making at that level, close to where the work is done. This way of working is respectful, efficient and, normally, helps the considerate manager hold back from interfering in the work of subordinates.

Above all, it means that the leaders don't do the work that their more junior colleagues are employed to do. Instead, leaders who know and understand the work involved are able to 'show' their colleagues what to do, to the required standard.

Establishing the system initially demands considerable effort from everyone at all levels but, once in operation, it has been shown to make life at work smoother and more thoughtful - and it strengthens teams.

Because it involves everyone employed in the company, from bottom to top, it is called 'How We Work Together' or, as everyone likes abbreviations, HWWT.

The system

To make it work, it requires:

- meticulous time-consuming selection of personnel
- colleagues aware and content that, with HWWT, there is no 'master and servant'
- a practical relentless understanding of what leaders must do
- initial and continuing task and HWWT training, geared to the individual
- careful employee development, guided by the employee's leader
- regular communication with everyone, in teams, about everything that affects their work

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