# If You Want More Productive Employees, Learn How To Get Out Of Their Way

Smart, successful managers hire well-qualified, skilled employees to get things done. If you've hired right, they should even be more highly qualified than you in the job you've hired them to do.

After all, your success depends on their success.

So instead of getting in their way, help them get the job done. Your role is to provide guidance, direction, and establish goals, not sit on their shoulders telling them what to do every step of the way.

You should also be their facilitator to get them the resources, time, and support they need. You should be the one who deals with company politics, bureaucracy, turf warfare, silos, and the many other barriers to progress that exist in a real-world organization.

In addition, if you are spending too much time monitoring your staff, you won't have time to do other valuable, strategic activities you should be focused on as a manager.

Here are several techniques you can use to get out of your employees' way and let them do their job:

## 1. Offer a Global View, Not Limited Information

The best foundation you can give your employees to do their job better is to give them all the information they need. After all, they also make decisions, and decisions based on the big picture are always better than the ones made blindly.

Don't hold back the insight and insider knowledge you may have about how your organization works and the politics and other factors involved. You still need to manage these things but when employees understand them, they may even be able to help overcome them.

Give them opportunities to learn more about related departments and services. Allow them to attend cross-departmental meetings with you.

Don't limit them by making them go through you when they need to deal with other departments or even your boss to get the job done.

## 2. Share Goals and Objectives, Not Instructions

Think of your employees delivering an outcome-based service where you simply define the goals, objectives, and what the final product is meant to accomplish. Then let your employees be responsible for finding the right path to achieve that objective.

Naturally, there will be some limits and parameters they have to work within, and those should be outlined upfront, of course.

For new employees, you may want them to touch base with you frequently about things they're doing so you can provide guidance on those limits and parameters. After all, those are things they need to learn.

Experienced employee should already understand this and will only touch base with you when they know they have to go beyond the well-established and understood limits. You simply have to trust your employees to do what is necessary.

## 3. Provide Support and Facilitation, Not Barriers

As a manager of other employees, it may seem like they're supposed to be working for *you ,*but they're actually working for the company to achieve the company's overall goals and objectives. Your role as a manager is to support and enable them.

Do everything you can to support your employees, whether it's resources, knowledge, information, funding, and of course advice.

Facilitate issues on their behalf including inter-departmental politics and cross-functional issues to break down the barriers when you can, or give your employees the tools and information they need to overcome those barriers. Work with your employees as part of the team.

## 4. Give Freedom to Act, Not Permission to Act

A new hire may need much more oversight and guidance once they start on the job, but they should get to a point where they no longer have to check in with you for every decision or action they take.

If you've done your job well and equipped them with the necessary knowledge, you should be able to let them get the job done without monitoring their every move. For this to work, you must expand their autonomy as much as possible.

If necessary, establish a simple update mechanism where they let you know what they're doing or sometimes what they're about to do. Then you have a chance to raise the red flag or issues if necessary. This should be on an exception basis. If they don't hear from you following the update, they should assume you're OK with what they're doing.

The level of detail on the updates should depend on the issues they're dealing with and their level of knowledge, experience, and sophistication as well as your comfort level.

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