

## Executing the Plan

BY GREG SCHINKEL

**Execution:** The difference between those who talk a good game and those who make it happen.

In a challenging business market, your organization can not afford to have paid spectators who focus most of their time on watching and commenting on the performance of others. Everyone has to be engaged in playing the game and getting results.

### Focus on Output

Most people look busy; after all their job depends on it. When you look more closely at the output, you discover that the individual really isn't adding value to your organization.

### How Managers Get Fooled

Spectators are great at attending meetings, identifying problems in other people's departments, answering emails and talking on the phone. Managers can get fooled by someone who talks a good game and really doesn't add value. The individual themselves often has very low self-awareness that they are not adding value, so the manager has to make the observation and apply the correction.

### The Manager Can Be the Problem

Of course managers themselves can be spectators, making excuses for poor performance, complaining about a lack of resources and pointing fingers at other departments. They tend to surround themselves with like minded people and pretty soon the department, plant or company is not getting results.



...There should be consistent positive consequences for those individuals who generate the results and get things done."

### Blame it on the Business Environment

A tough business environment provides a ton of excuses, many of them legitimate. The manager's job is to make decisions that move the organization forward. Employees are expected to keep moving forward. If they cannot demonstrate value, they will need to be coached, counselled or replaced.

### Hiring Execution-Oriented Employees

In a job interview, be very worried about a candidate who talks too much about their philosophy and less about accomplishments. Rather than have them tell you they are a team player - have them tell you about how they worked in a team to generate results. Have them be specific about the results they have generated for their organization; how they persevered with few resources and still achieved results.

### Avoid Promoting the Wrong Person

When making promotion decisions, look less at potential and look instead at what the person has accomplished. There is a saying

that men get promoted based on potential whereas women get promoted based on results. People who don't get results need to be confronted, coached, counselled and ultimately weeded out of the organization.

### Reward Performance

There should be consistent positive consequences for those individuals who generate the results and get things done. Recognition is inexpensive and means a great deal to employees. Good performers can resent the fact that they shoulder more of the work-

load if a manager does not confront poor performance in co-workers.

### Getting Results is not an Excuse for Unacceptable Behaviour

Some employees who are difficult to get along with will use their performance as a defence against being fired. Coaching from the manager should reinforce the results being generated and pointing out that a change in behaviour is required in order to be successful. It could be smoothing out how the person treats others, or have them keep negative comments to themselves. A good performer with a caustic personality can drag down the output of the people they work with.

Changing the culture of your organization to be execution-driven requires determination. The financial rewards will be significant and well worth the effort.

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