



## **Case Study**

### **Powerful Performance Appraisals**

#### **What are the benefits of a truthful well delivered performance appraisal?**

**Over ten years into my career in management, my boss gave me an appraisal that rocked my world. While painful at first, the benefits of the appraisal were many: stronger business results, greater team efficiency, higher associate satisfaction, more collaborative peer relationships and greater opportunities for advancement, reward and recognition for all, to name a few!**

In large part, his reasons for the lower rating were two-fold. I was viewed as a micro-manager by him and others and not as a team player by my peers. Hearing this was shocking, disappointing and alarming. I recall telling my boss that it was clear to me that I needed to leave the organization, if this is how I was viewed. He smiled and said he did not think so. I certainly had my doubts! I recall telling him I was afraid to change because “my current ways were what had brought me to the dance!”

So, why did my boss do this? He did it simply because it was the right thing to do, especially at a critical point in my career. Too often managers do not tell their people the truth for fear of hurting them or fear of losing them. I have learned this is selfish. It is always right to tell people what is in their best interest, for their good and for the good of the organization. My boss helped me to see that while my teams were producing very good results, my way of getting results was not going to take me far in the organization. Thankfully, he conveyed these important messages gracefully!

Over time, following the appraisal meeting, I began to see more clearly the root cause of these two issues. It lay in simple but profound truths - I was afraid of making mistakes and their potential negative consequences. I was also competitive and very uncomfortable with peer interactions. I was not comfortable around my peers. I avoided them except when it was necessary to interact. This kept them from getting to know me. I was more concerned with avoiding mistakes in my operation, avoiding being influenced by my peers to try a “different way” than I was in establishing good peer relations. I clearly did not see the many benefits of good peer relations.

Through mentoring and coaching I began to see these perspectives and attitudes more clearly and began the long and steady process of taking steps to change and grow. Over time, my changes and growth were confirmed by my boss, by peers, my associates and others that had known me for a long time. I remember telling my boss a few years later how much I appreciated what he had done and how he had done it. He had tears of joy in his eyes.

Some of the specific changes included delegating more, trusting others more, accepting less than perfection, making the effort to reach out to peers and others and joining a group of like-minded individuals engaged in a similar journey for accountability.

What were some of the specific benefits of the changes?

- The results of my business units continued to be strong. I learned to delegate well and was pleasantly surprised and encouraged to observe that others have very good skills, potential and ideas, often better than mine! It was nice to stop doing my people's jobs, something my boss had pointed out in our review meeting.
- I learned that mistakes did not increase and when they did occur, it was not the end of the world! I also learned that much of the time I had been spending making a report or something else perfect was wasted as it became clear that most of what we were producing was getting the job done well at it was!
- Associate satisfaction increased as their skills, confidence, and opportunities for advancement increased.
- Peers began to comment that to their surprise I was a nice guy after all! Interactions with them became easier, friendlier, and more often than not, win-win oriented, and not what I had feared.
- I continued to be promoted and grow in responsibilities my total compensation continued to grow. The changes accelerated my effectiveness in new roles delivering results faster helping avoid the pitfalls that can derail leaders in transition.
- The changes also helped me increase the speed of integration into a new leadership team with a new company cutting my learning curve, building early loyalty and longevity and ensuring critical business success factors were addressed early on.
- The changes equipped me to help others including high performers learn similar new behaviors and be assimilated in order to achieve the personal and professional rewards they are seeking.

So, change is possible and worth it! Try it and you will be please you did!

***Are you in the middle of a similar need for change? Does one of your leaders have a similar need? You can help yourself or your leader change successfully. You and your associate can experience the same benefits of changing! You will increase results, create more opportunities for professional advancement and experience a higher quality of life!***

***If you would like a free Executive Management Assessment with me to discuss how I can help you achieve the greatest success possible, please call me or email me and we'll get clear about the best immediate next steps for the success of you and your team.***

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