

Two Business Hats and a Velvet Glove ~ a Management Style

While the slightly obtuse title to this article may perhaps appear somewhat unrelated to business or business management at all, I would suggest it is entirely appropriate for many business operations.

When a person owns a business and has employees, over time original management is gradually restricted in their ability to do every task that ever comes along and has to learn to delegate their operational authority to another so they can themselves focus on commercial strategy, overall management and the wider picture. (and perhaps get some golf in)

One of the issues here is that regardless of whether the employees change over much, are being increased or are reasonably long-term, there is a gradual but quite tangible, increasing level of remoteness between the two 'positions': Employee and Employer.

In essence we have the situation that an owner will go from the 'flat cap' to the 'bowler hat'. From the functional operations to the office operations.

If any of your staff have been with the business for some while, they will quite likely go from being reasonably familiar while you were more operationally focused, to developing an increasing degree of perhaps 'discomfort' if they now stand in your office for too long.

The obvious fact here is that where you were once viewed as a head co-worker, now perhaps you are viewed entirely differently.

Also, if they come to your office it is quite likely there will be a desk standing between you both. A psychological barrier actually.

I believe the comfort levels between the 'divisions' (perfect word) to be quite important when it comes to productive throughput, in that if you are viewed as 'one of them' and 'on their side' their cooperation and efforts will likely be more diligently applied than if they have the opposite opinion for your management position.

I will also volunteer from experience that regardless of regular bouts of floggings or torture, employees will produce often more than 30% more effectively when working willingly.

I appreciate that many businesses have perhaps grown over time to such a degree that some owners may not actually know where the door to the operational area is any more, or wouldn't recognize their own staff if seen in the street. Worse again is when second tier employed management sits between the owner and the operations team as remoteness is increased.

While I have to accept that my methods may not be appropriate to every business, my goal is always efficient, more and efficient, and as such my way of meeting falling output, increasing absenteeism, more rules and more managers is to bring the entire business membership together in the interest of developing willing cooperation

throughout the business.

I openly discuss what is happening with output and why operational profit is there to ensure full employment. I do not pass blame. I make all aware that I hold down two distinct roles and need their help with both. I have to wear one hat to manage the enterprise and the other hat as investor.

Firstly, I was an employee in a company, which is what they and I worked in totally equally. I was a company employee as they were and had to earn my keep as they did, else my job would naturally be at risk also because the company could fail if I did my job badly. This of course could impact them too so me being on top of that job was crucial to us all.

Then there was my other obligation and that was my position as an investor. I had extended some large sums to set-up a company, hopefully in order to make a profit by doing so. To make a profit, which coincidentally would ensure we all held our jobs, was thus the goal, else 'the investor' might just as well put his money in the bank without risk.

It is nice to get all round nods in agreement about here.

The third part of my purpose is to ask of them, as trusted and well skilled operators, to be entirely comfortable letting me know directly of any idea for making the workplace safer, smarter, smoother, easier or more efficient, based on a cash reward for any implemented ideas at all.

Everyone is advised they are important to me and that a cooperative operation is a profitable operation, which I have no reluctance in sharing.

I provide realistic benchmarks of output versus costs and time and do ask for their feedback if they feel it is too tight or encourages safety or quality problems.

Prior this sort of general meeting I meet first with the general managers, check systems and ensure everything is happening as I would want and that no error or oversight of management is driving output lower.

And the velvet glove? Well, I fully respect anyone doing their best to earn their wages and always will, but I insist that respect works both ways.

For you to ponder:

The Illogical Logic of Failure

If you go about your life believing deep down that you are not worthy to be where you're aiming, or that you will probably not succeed, the great contradiction in life is that **you will succeed.**

You will indeed succeed in your deep belief that you will fail!

Think about it.

It is not what you want that will come to be, but what you truly believe you can achieve, that comes about.

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