



Building Organizational Capability through Naturally Effective™ Performance Management Planning

By Gayla Hodges

As we all know, there are great performance plans, there are less than great performance plans, and there is everything in between. Most of us have probably seen examples of many types of performance management plans and many approaches to implementing them. Some of the approaches, of course, are better than others. Many of you are following the stream of our newsletter articles this year and working to create a Naturally Effective™ organization or team. In this article, I want to share some thoughts on how to write a performance management plan that capitalizes on the employee's natural effectiveness. My experience is that these are the plans that enable all employees to grow and increase in productivity because of the way the plan is written and implemented.



Some companies approach performance management in a semi-fascist style: they say to the employee, "This is your job description and these are your responsibilities. These are your goals and these are the actions you will need to take to reach those goals. You *will* perform what we have specified in your performance management plan. The document, further, will be used to beat you over the head when you are not measuring up in some way."

Some organizations want to run the business by the numbers. Each employee is responsible for achieving certain quantified goals. For the company to succeed, everyone must hit their numbers (or exceed them). The leaders of the company may not really care how you reach your goals, and might not even want to know. They care about achieving the numbers that are your goals. There is no real performance management plan.

In an organization that seeks to achieve all of its goals and seeks to develop employees and support them in ways that allow them to reach their peak potential, on the other hand, things work a bit differently. Let's look, then, at the things that are different in a Naturally Effective™ organization.

1. **The performance plan is more than just a paper exercise.** The employee and his/her supervisor work together to create a document that will *help the employee achieve his/her performance goals for the year by improving performance in critical ways*. The plan will be created in a way that plays to the employee's natural strengths, thus setting goals based on his/her natural talents. Far more than simply a statement of the employee's numerically measurable performance objectives, the performance plan outlines:
 - a. The employee's goals
 - b. How the employee can achieve these goals by playing to his/her strengths
 - c. How and where the employee can find assistance from others in the organization
 - d. What kind of employee development plan will help the employee achieve these goals
 - e. How will the employee and supervisor determine whether the goals have been achieved
 - f. How the employee will be evaluated against this plan

2. **The performance plan will then be used to coach the employee to the highest performance standards by using his/her Naturally Effective™ strengths.**



3. **Critically important in the employee's success, the supervisor or the organization will give him/her the support needed in order to reach his/her goals.** For example: A person who is a high extrovert might need support to meet one of his/her goals. If that goal requires a lot of time alone crunching numbers, the support provided might be to assign the number crunching task to someone else with that skill so both people can work together to leverage their strengths on behalf of the team.

4. **In order to write a performance management plan that capitalizes on the employee's Natural Effectiveness™ the supervisor/organization should use Natural Effectiveness™ to set goals across the team in the most efficient ways based upon the strengths of the individuals and *not* upon a job description.** Some years ago, performance planning utilized an *alignment process* by which everyone came together and put their performance plans on the table. People were then able to see how they could support each other in achieving their goals and being successful. This was a good approach, and it is unfortunate that we lost sight of it. Fortunately, many of the new automated performance management systems are including this feature.

Naturally Effective™ leaders don't waste time on paper exercises. They know that simply setting goals and expecting people to 'reach their numbers' doesn't create a growing, achieving culture. They build their organization around the strengths of those who make it a success, coaching, mentoring and leading them to ever higher capability and realization of their own strengths and how they are built by building the strengths of the organization.

About Gayla Hodges



Gayla Hodges is the President and Principal Consultant of Change Agents, Inc., a company that uses their powerful Natural Effectiveness™ Coaching and Teaming process to help corporate team leaders achieve personal, team and corporate goals. She has extensive experience in instituting corporate transformational change. She coaches executives and managers on leading corporate change, facilitating the development and implementation of organizational effectiveness strategies and leadership skills. Change Agents, Inc. is certified by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council as a woman-owned business. She is Vice-Chair of WBENC-Arizona. For more information, visit www.changeagentsinc.com or call 623-362-3876.