



Hamilton County HRD's Follow-Up Flash: Leadership

Want to Be An Effective Leader? Help Your Employees Develop Their Skills!

*"Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself.
When you become a leader, success is all about growing others."*

~ Jack Welch

1st

Q
U
A
R
T
E
R

2
0
1
0

As Jack Welch notes, the most effective leaders focus on employee development.

A leader's effectiveness is measured not just by how the work gets done, but also by how employees feel about being a part of the workplace and the team. It's possible to get the work done, yet have an unhappy, disengaged group of employees. Effective leaders strive to lead a team that gets the work done well AND has employees that feel good about their contributions and their workplace.

Research indicates that developing skills, taking on new challenges, and continuously learning helps employees feel engaged and fulfilled. So what can you do to develop your employees?

1. Talk with your employees about their development goals. Ask them what skills they would like to develop so they can achieve even greater success on the job. Or ask what skills they might like to develop to help them be ready for the next step in their careers. If you have ideas about which skills employees could develop, share those ideas in a positive manner. You don't have to have all the answers during this discussion. Just starting the conversation is important!
2. Think creatively about ways to help employees develop their skills. They don't have to go to a class to learn. Maybe an employee who needs to develop stronger customer service skills could partner with an employee who is great at keeping customers happy. The employee who needs help could observe and get ideas from the more skilled co-worker. Or you could recommend articles and books for the employee who needs to develop skills and then spend a few minutes discussing them together.
3. Talk with other leaders about what they have done to help employees develop skill. Share best practices and ideas.

When the workload is heavy and everyone is busy just trying to get the work done, it's easy to forget about your employees' development needs. But developing employees' skills does not need to take a lot of time. And time spent on development makes a lasting impact — both on individual employees and on your team as a whole. So be the best leader you can be. Devote some time and energy to your employees' development needs.

If you want HRD's help with development ideas, please contact Laura Maus at laura.maus@hamilton-co.org.

