

## Realizing your 2008 Goals

February is already here and depending upon which groundhog you consult, spring may not be far away. All the pundits including me have been extolling the virtues of goal setting and taking the time to write them down.

Have you included goals for personal development for yourself and your team if you manage others? This is important, because if we want to have more of anything in our work and in our lives then we need to expand our potential for creating, knowing and receiving in order for the goals to manifest.

This is why training and development are so important for goal setting to work. Training increases our knowledge and skills so we can perform at a higher and more productive level. It also gives us the confidence to face the new challenges that lie ahead. If we expect ourselves or our employees to achieve higher performance in the realization of new goals without providing the right training, we may be dreaming in colour. And simply handing someone a subject matter book or manual without any coaching does not constitute as training.

When considering training you need to look at two areas; systems and people. Both are essential for improving operations and achieving goals. Here is a quick yet effective way to determine your training needs along with an example for a business owner.

Look at your list of goals for the year. Make a list of the knowledge and skills you or your team would need to develop in order to reach your goals. Consider both potential systems and people problems. Also contemplate what you need to give up or stop doing that could be done by others. This opens the door to delegating greater responsibilities to team members and automatically enables them to develop new skills. If you are a manager and have not been proactive in delegating and training staff, one potential roadblock could be a resistance in your staff to change or to grow. It may entail specific training to address this problem. Choose one or two of the most essential items and then develop a plan to acquire that knowledge and those skills, or to provide them to your team members.

Suppose you are the owner of a medium sized manufacturer business and your key goal is to expand your distribution network in the US through franchised distributors. You realize that this requires more time on your part to learn about the market and to develop new skills in marketing. The problem is that you don't have the time to devote to this because much of the day-to-day operation is dependent on your input and direction. Upon further analysis you see that the main cause for this dependency is a lack of the ability of your managers and their

staff to be autonomous. Thus you determine that the training required to address the cause of the problem is leadership training and development to have managers develop skills such as delegation, coaching, managing performance, giving feedback, communicating etc.

From a systems perspective you realize that meetings to track and discuss department progress are inconsistent. So you decide that planning a calendar of meetings along with meeting management training for your managers is also essential, so they can hold their own meetings autonomously. We need to make sure that we solve the real cause of our problems and not just the symptoms. It could be easy to analyze the problem incorrectly and choose the wrong solution. Perhaps the immediate solution would be to hire a marketing manager or a consultant to come up with a plan, but if the owner does not have the time to support and work with that person then the investment would be wasted.

It is important for someone like a business owner to recognize the importance of consulting with someone who can have them identify the real cause of performance issues by looking at the whole picture, which means systems and people.

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Contact us if you feel we can assist you to determine your training needs or to solve performance problems that are hindering the achievement of your most important goals.

An investment in knowledge pays the best interest.  
Benjamin Franklin

If you think knowledge is expensive, what is the cost of ignorance?  
Benjamin Franklin

Article by Stephen Goldberg  
[sgoldberg@optimusperformance.ca](mailto:sgoldberg@optimusperformance.ca)