

MENTOR-NHC

Monthly Education, News, and Tips to Optimize Reliability of Nursing Home Care

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Twelve Tips to Improve Employees' Performance

Organizational leaders may ask, "Why don't employees do what they're supposed to do, and what can we do about it?" To discover effective solutions, these leaders can first ask themselves a series of questions and, based on the answers, make changes in their organizations. For example, did the leaders do something wrong? Did they fail to do something that would help employees? In addition, leaders can examine employees' attitudes and perspectives. Following are common issues with tips for overcoming these challenges.

Employees might:

Be Unaware of What They Are Supposed To Do

If this is true, use very specific job descriptions. Do not assume that employees *already* or *should* know what to do and how to do their assigned tasks.

Be Unaware of Why They Should Do Specific Tasks

If this is true, describe how each task affects other departments and the mission of the organization. Explain the benefits of success and consequences of failure.

Be Unaware of How to Do Specific Tasks

If this is true, assign an experienced employee with teaching skills to train new staff members. Provide a reference manual, allow practice time, and test employees' competency.

Think They Are Performing The Work Correctly

If this is true, provide feedback about what improvements are needed, and how to make them. Make sure your feedback is specifically on the employees' behaviors, not them personally.

Think Management's Way Will Not Work

If this is true, convince employees that your way will work. Offer a trial test to demonstrate.

Think Their Own Way Is Better

If this is true, distinguish between good and bad innovation. Before work begins, ask, "Can you think of reasons why you might do this project differently?"

Think Something Else Is More Important

If this is true, assign priorities to the work to be done.

Need Positive Consequences for Doing Their Jobs Well

Employees always need feedback and rewards for good job performance. If necessary, start providing small, immediate rewards, which have more effect on performance, compared to larger rewards delivered long after performance.

Need Negative Consequences for Poor Performance

If necessary, institute negative consequences to employees whose persistent poor performance is willful misconduct.

Be Rewarded for Not Doing Their Jobs Properly

If this is true, make necessary changes. For example, don't assign all the hard tasks to certain employees because they are better performers and don't often complain.

Be Facing Obstacles Beyond Their Control

If this is true, remove obstacles wherever you can. Obstacles include conflicting instructions, conditions that prevent employees from performing tasks appropriately, and lack of skills to complete tasks.

Have Personal Problems That Interfere

If this is true, ask employees for cooperation in eliminating work problems if the work becomes too cumbersome. This usually yields a positive response. Also, allow for pre-planned personal time.

Source: Ferdinand F. Why employees don't do what they're supposed to do and what to do about it. Fournies, Updated Edition, 1999.



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