

The McKenzie Mailer

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THREE RULES OF WORK

1. Out of clutter – find simplicity.
2. From discord – find harmony.
3. In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.

- Albert Einstein

We will be on vacation from July 21 through July 25.

McKenzie & Company
our Solution to Employee Issues

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When Support Runs Downhill Solutions Run Uphill

While attending the Society for Human Resources National Conference in Orlando a couple of weeks ago, I overheard a conversation between two HR managers complaining about the lack of support they were getting from their manufacturing employees. The company had recently introduced “lean manufacturing” and the production was not meeting the demand. One manager commented that the employees in the production department were deliberately slowing down. The second person stated that the employees continually whine about how their arms and legs hurt from the increased amount of work they had to perform. She went on to say, “Every time **we** come up with a solution, **they** come up with an excuse for why the new method won’t work.”

Many people in a supervisory capacity think it is their job to have all the answers and give their employees orders. The fact is their job is to get work done **through** others. There are many times when managers must make tough decisions. By including subordinates when considering alternative courses of action, other points of view are uncovered.

Employees have all heard the saying “Stuff Runs Downhill”. Changing this to “**Support** Runs Downhill” completely alters the complexion of the work environment. Think what could happen in the above case if management simply told the employees what the issues were and asked for ideas for solutions. The first thing that could happen is the word “they” (as in **they** come up with excuses) could change to “we”.

A few years ago, a manufacturing company facing a severe revenue shortfall asked its employees for cost cutting ideas. The 200 employees came up with over 400 suggestions – most of which had merit. The key to making this a success is in the follow up and communicating the implementation of cost saving ideas. It developed a new way of working together. In a very short period of time, the “Solutions Ran Uphill”. And in many cases, they came before management knew there was a problem.

Think about your own work situation. Do you perform better when you are placed under great pressure by a “do it my way” boss, or do you perform better when you are asked for your opinion and feel a part of the solution?

The answer is obvious.

Have a great month.