



## Mid-South Engineering Company

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### Inspiring Top Performance

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Why do some managers and supervisors inspire top performance from their subordinates while others can barely extract a grudging day's work from the employees working under them?

No one statement can answer this question, but there is a general principle to which all effective leaders agree: They recognize that their main job is to get things done through people. Their efforts are directed towards this goal. Whether you are now in charge of a large staff or someday hope to be, the following points are some of the items I have learned in a management role and hopefully will be helpful in building an efficient and responsible staff.

**Set a High Standard for your organization.** If you are irregular in your own work habits, late for appointments, unclear in expressing yourself and careless in giving direction, the people under you probably will be too. If you live up to a high standard for your organization they will follow your good example.

**Be Considerate:** Be calm and courteous toward the employees working under you. Do all you can to build up their pride in their work and self respect.

**Be Constant:** Day to day and week to week be consistent in management style and philosophy. People follow only the leader whose course is steady and whose actions are predictable.

**Know Your Subordinates and What is Important to Each:** Human motives and attitudes are important clues for the manager, and they can be determined only by careful understanding of every individual working under you. Giving recognition to the contribution of others and to their role in your firm or department is a good starting point in getting them to give you their best efforts.

**Listen Thoughtfully and Objectively:** Try to understand how others actually feel on a subject and whether or not you feel the same way. Never dominate a conversation or meeting by doing all the talking yourself if you want to find out where people stand.

**Show Your Staff that you have Faith in their Abilities and that you Expect them to do their Best:** People tend to perform according to what is expected of them. If they know you have confidence in them to expect a first rate job, that's what you will usually get.

**Keep them Informed:** Advise your staff of projects and events happening in your firm and in the industry you work in. As members of a team they are entitled to know what's going on.

**Delegate Responsibility for Details to Others:** You are not doing your real job as a boss if you do not delegate a large portion of the details to the people working under you. By doing a lot of the details yourself you prevent others from learning to make their own decisions. If you are the boss "work on your company, not in your company".

**Give Your Subordinates Objectives and a Sense of Direction:** Provide guidance and input that allows them to know where they're going, what they're doing and why they're doing it in order to plan their time and work effectively.

**Give Your Employees a Chance to take part in Decisions:** When your employees feel they have had a say in a decision or their input was used in the decision making process, they are much more likely to go along with it in a cooperative manner.

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"The Barn" built in the 1930's to house Welsh ponies, serves as Mid-South's offices.

## Inspiring Top Performance (Cont'd)

**Criticize in Private and Praise in Public:** Criticizing a staff member with others present undermines their morale, self confidence and their desire to do their best for the firm. Praise in public has just the opposite effect, but make sure that the individual who receives the praise is deserving of it.

**Let Your People Know Where They Stand:** Of the items mentioned, holding regularly scheduled employee reviews is probably the most important. These discussions should be conducted at least annually. Do your homework prior to the review and be prepared to discuss employee strengths, areas requiring improvements and to establish tangible employee goals.



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