

President's Message

Dan Wright, Co-President

I recently was on the internet looking for some information on Leadership and Management to prepare an article for the Leadership Link newsletter. As I surfed, the net I came across a great web site called "Profiles International, www.profilesinternational.com . One of the short programs listed on their site was, "Coaching to Develop Employee Performance", (Copyright 2009 by Profiles International).

As you might expect I do not want to violate their Copyright but I do want to lead into some personal thoughts on developing your team and the importance of Coaching!

First, if you have a moment look at their program on their web site. I found it not so much a revolutionary change to leadership or management, but rather a confirmation of strategies and suggestions that we all know and understand, but sometimes someone puts it out there for others and it is refreshing to review and energize ourselves to strive to become just a little bit better at leading and managing.

I have always liked the concept of coaching versus leadership and in doing so, I prefer coaching employees who are willing to work, committed to their position, loyal to the organization, take responsibility for their actions. It's great to be able to help them be successful in their positions! Let us face it, we all prefer those employees! The problem is we do not always have employees with those characteristics to supervise! Nevertheless, all employees need the opportunity to grow and be successful. Some of my thoughts on Coaching are:

- ◆ As a coach, I believe that one of the most important things to remember is to be a person that recognizes and acknowledges employees for their success and accept responsibility for their failures. Of course, we are in the position to possibly prevent or reduce failures or mistakes; however, there are failures and mistakes with any job or task. True managers or leaders who believe in coaching recognize that the cause of those failures or mistakes may have been that the coach did not provide all the guidance and support the employee may have needed to be successful.
- ◆ As a coach, recognition of an employee's strengths and abilities is important and if possible, it is best to match their strength with work, but we may not always have an opportunity to match an employee's strengths with assigned work. In these cases, the coach must really provide good guidance and have the ability to measure their performance. We all know employees who are working in their weakness area and they are those who are often unhappy workers.
- ◆ Coaches need to develop positive relationships with employees. Coaches that are able to develop those relationships are those who hold employees accountable and judge them by their performance. Poor coaches, leaders or managers, misinterpret being their employee's friend as a positive relationship and overlook poor performance. Good coaches are those who are there to help all employees be successful, treat employees fairly, be honest; and, if necessary, have those critical conversations. Good coaches treat all employees with respect even those who may not be compatible.



- ◆ Good coaches need to be aware of their attributes, strengths, skills and abilities. They need to have a high level of moral and ethical conduct. These things are tangible skills that coaches can and should promote and display to their employees.
- ◆ Finally the reward for good coaching of employees is the development of good employees, succession for leaders and managers, and the development of a work force that has the ability to be successful!

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Leadership LINK
&
Nebraska State Government Chapters

November Luncheon Meeting

- WHEN: Thursday, November 21, 2013 at 11:15 AM
- WHERE: Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department
Training Center (Lower Level)
3140 N Street
- SPEAKER: Tim Clare, Esq., Chairman, UNL Board of Regents
Member - West Haymarket Joint Public Agency
- TOPIC: Leadership and Decision Making in the Public Arena
- NOTES: Cost is \$5 for Leadership Link and State Chapter members,
and \$10 for non-members (payable at the door). Menu - Assorted Sandwiches,
Chips, Fruit, Dessert & Beverages

RSVP by Noon on Tuesday, November 19 to Elaine Severe
at esevere@lincoln.ne.gov



Community Service Opportunities

Holiday Happenings

Leadership Link will provide Thanksgiving Treat Bags to residents of Homestead Rehabilitation Center. Members can help assemble the Treat Bags on Monday, November 25, 2013 at 5:00 PM at Homestead - 4735 South 54th Street.

RSVP by November 22, 2013 to Jann Douglas - 402-441-4660 or jdouglas@lincoln.ne.gov



Salvation Army Angel Giving Tree

Leadership Link will once again sponsor the Salvation Army Angel Giving Tree! The Angel Tree offers an opportunity to select a gift tag from the tree and purchase a gift. Tags will be available at our monthly program meeting on November 21, 2013 and will include the child's gender, age and preferences for gifts.

Please help us make the Holidays an exciting time for the children in our community!

For more information contact Jann Douglas, Community Services Chair 402-441-4660 or jdouglas@lincoln.ne.gov



So you think I should hire you...

Applicant Interview Tips

by Pat Kant, PHR, Personnel Coordinator

Over the years working in a human resources field I am approached by applicants, students or employees, about how to improve their presentation when interviewing for a job. Maybe it's the first job since graduating college, or the first interview after many years with the same employer. Naturally there is significant anxiety, for wanting to put their best foot forward and make an effective presentation. Obviously, the end result is - they want to get that job offer. I hear over and over from interviewers that they wish the applicants would have interviewed better.

What is "better" you say? The following "tips" are a few that come to mind, and are not intended to be all inclusive. A job interview is subjective and considers life experiences and education along with the motivation and character of the applicant. Face it, this is a competitive labor market, and you will not always receive a job offer. Lets see if these ideas hit a cord and help you reassess your talents and how it is projected to others. Some of these ideas aren't new or profound, but I believe some merit your consideration. I'm certain they will improve your chances.

I'm going to make an assumption you will arrive for the interview just *before* the agreed upon appointment time, dressed appropriately, with no cell phone, and a great smile of confidence!

Please, no chuckles about the cell phone. I have been in more than one interview when the applicant's cell phone rang and some actually answered it!

Let's start with preparation.

Identify your goals. What type of job are you seeking and why? *And if asked, don't refer to the salary as a reason.* Questions about goals are specific to what type of work you want to do, what is fulfilling, and where you want to be in the future. Write your goals down for yourself at home. Trust me, you will have a more organized response. After all, if you don't know where you are going, the interviewer won't have a crystal ball. You need to provide a road map.

Review the job description and the posting before the interview so you can speak to it in your responses. You will appear informed and prepared. Research about a company or organization on the Internet. For example, getting insight from their mission statement will show preparation. At home, practice answering hypothetical questions, it helps you organize your thoughts and show confidence. I have known applicants who prepare in front of a video camera so they can see how they come off to others. Does this sound like overkill to you? How bad do you want the job?

Smile and make direct eye contact (even if you are nervous). Show confidence. If this is hard, practice at home maybe with a friend or family member. Use a comfortable handshake. Responding to questions starring at your hands or the table, won't get you points. Do not fiddle with a pen or paper clip or other distractions.

Become aware of your strengths - i.e. a leader, self starter, dependable, organized, mechanically inclined, etc. Review past performance ratings and see what supervisors recognized as your strengths or talents. For many promoting yourself is uncomfortable. If you are not asked a specific question about your strengths, weave them into your answers to other questions.

Be prepared to know your weaknesses - *everyone has them.* What are you doing to overcome them? If you've had problems in the past, accept responsibility for a mistake and discuss what you are doing to not make the same mistake

again. *Do not make excuses or shift blame.* Do not say “None come to mind”. However, do acknowledge areas that are challenges for you and what you have done to minimize them or turn them into strengths.

Why do you want to leave your current job? Think about a response that uses your strengths for opportunities. Don't "manage down" your current supervisor or organization! Even if it is true, "managing down" your boss will be a non-starter for your new opportunity.

Why should they choose you? What have you learned on your current job? What have you been criticized for in the past?

Listen to the question and answer what is asked. If you don't know, say you don't know. Always be honest. Always be willing to learn.

Be specific. When applying for a promotion, don't make assumptions about what the interviewer knows about you. Treat them as though they are strangers. Explain your answers in detail even if the interviewer has watched you do the task. They are often listening for information to support a score. Don't make assumptions the supervisor knows you can do it. If you took a multiple choice exam and inadvertently skipped 5 questions, should they be scored correctly because the supervisor believes you know the answer?

You may be asked a question like “Describe your experience dealing with difficult customers.” Respond with a situation or task, an action and a result - Think about a **STAR**. In contrast to a general response like, “I've dealt with all kinds of difficult people and do it well.”

You may be asked if YOU have questions. Prepare ahead of time what you might ask. For example, What would a typical day be like if I had this job? Or, What is the process for training or orienting me if I get this job? Or, When will you make a decision? Or anything you want to know. *Don't ask about salary and don't say “no, I do not have any questions”.*

At the end of the interview, they may ask, is there anything they haven't covered that you would like to tell them. **ALWAYS** use the opportunity to sell your self one more time - restate your strengths and your interest. Close with confidence and eye contact.

Send a handwritten thank you note to the interviewer within one day of the interview and restate your interest in the job. This may sound unnecessary, but you will stand out.

The NMA Leadership Model



Derived from a similar model in Results Based Leadership by Ulrich, Zenger, & Smallwood.

NMA Code of Ethics

- I will recognize that all individuals inherently desire to practice their occupations to the best of their ability. I will assume that all individuals want to do their best.
- I will maintain a broad and balanced outlook and will recognize value in the ideas and opinions of others.
- I will be guided in all my activities by truth, accuracy, fair dealing and good taste.
- I will keep informed on the latest developments in techniques, equipment, and processes. I will recommend or initiate methods to increase productivity and efficiency.
- I will support efforts to strengthen the management professional through training and education.
- I will help my associates reach personal and professional fulfillment.
- I will earn and carefully guard my reputation for good moral character and good citizenship.
- I will promote the principles of our American Enterprise System to others, by highlighting its accomplishments and displaying confidence in its future.
- I will recognize that leadership is a call to service.



NMA Statement of Principles

NMA is dedicated to managerial excellence, personal and professional growth, and leadership development. The following principles identify NMA's core beliefs and provide the basis for the Association's Mission Statement

- * We believe in the highest standards of personal and organizational integrity and respect for the individual
- * We believe in lifelong learning, continuous improvement, and the development of a workforce capable of sustaining a competitive posture in the global economy.
- * We believe management is a creative, dynamic, and essential process enabling people to achieve personal and organizational objectives.
- * We believe that managerial responsibility is shared among all individuals at all levels of the organization and that leadership is critical to management success.
- * We believe that individuals and organizations have a community and civic responsibility.

**Website updates coming soon...
Be sure to check back often!**

www.lincoln.ne.gov

or

www.lancaster.ne.gov

(keyword: leadership)