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Managing an Agile Workplace

Time for a mindset shift

Nathaly Pinchuk
RPR, CMP

Executive Director

Perspective

Agile organizations are learning to be fast, flexible, adaptable and responsive. This means that managers and supervisors must learn to make decisions quickly and at the right time to achieve the results that they and their organizations desire. How do they do that?

Qualities of the Agile Organization

To understand the new role, let's review the agile framework. Agile organizations have a number of underlying qualities. They include being faster while not sacrificing quality and usually feature smaller teams that can work in shorter release and decision-making cycles. These decision-making processes are often more bottom-up versus top-down. They foster an open communication style.

Another big difference in agile organizations is that while there are over-arching corporate goals, teams are encouraged to guide the corporate vision with their passion rather than having clearly defined rigid roles. There are also commitments to new ways of working that acknowledge and support individual needs and goals. This includes having metrics like a positive work–life balance and a commitment to innovation and new ways of working that can still achieve corporate success.

Managing in an Agile Organization

There are numerous challenges for managers in an agile organization beyond learning a whole new vocabulary that seems more like a foreign language. They include realigning the existing governance models, organizational structures and processes. That is not simple. Most organizations have built layers of policies, decision-making processes and internal structures that must be unravelled, even as the new agile systems are put into place.

Moving to an agile organization will also change the status and remuneration of some, if not all employees. There may be strong resistance to this change. The main challenge for management will be to keep the baby while throwing out the bath water. They will also have to ensure that the transition to an agile organization does not cost the organization too many growing pains or loss of business or effectiveness. Those organizations that have managed this well are best positioned to continue to thrive and prosper. Here are some tips to help you get there.

Tips for Agile Managers

Jon Younger and Norm Smallwood are co-authors of the book *Agile Talent*. They offer a number of suggestions to help managers become more agile.

Build a talent network

They suggest hiring the right employees as a good first step. You can train existing employees, but they will need to be led by people with the right technical skills and understanding of this new way of working.

Kickstart the agile working relationships

All new hires will need an onboarding experience that lets the work start fast and strong. They will also need clear goals, well-defined schedules, milestones and an agreement on performance expectations. This early investment in agile working relationships with internal colleagues will always succeed.

Manage the internal politics

There will be concerns that moving to an agile organization will put some employees' jobs at risk. Even senior management may worry that their role and influence will be diminished. You have to make it clear that agile talent is a supplement, not a replacement for internal staff, and that the benefits of access to new technology, speed, market discipline and flexibility will be worthwhile.

Think of employees as partners

The old employer/employee relationship won't work in an agile organization. Managers need to establish a win/win partnership relationship with their new agile talent, one where both parties feel a stake in one another's success.

Be a talent developer

New employees will need to be mentored and nurtured to success. This should include coaching new employees to work effectively within the organization and to be able to get up to speed quickly.

Ask for feedback

Managers have to be fully engaged with everyone affected by the changes to an agile organization. They have to be attentive and connected to their teams and invest in building individual relationships with every team member.

Nudge the system forward

The authors suggest "nudge" rather than "steer" or "lead" because middle managers don't have the license or authority to drive big system changes. However, they can nudge the system and drive helpful changes that will reduce friction.

Brian W. Pascal
RPR, CMP, RPT

President

President's Message

Your Personal Integrity Meter

It's time to walk the talk

Brian Tracy, the well-known motivational speaker and author, says that the glue that holds all relationships together, including the relationship between the leader and the led, is trust and trust is based on integrity. I believe he is right. Our workplaces are a series of relationships that are based on the premise that we will adhere to a set of moral principles or professional standards. At the core of those standards is integrity.

We all would like to think of ourselves as having a high degree of personal integrity. How well do we practice it at work? Here are a few questions to consider as you measure your own integrity level.

- Do you behave honestly and practice ethical behaviour in your interactions?

- Are you consistent and clear about your ethical standards?

- When questioned, do you provide facts, not diversions?

- Will you speak up even when it's risky?

- Are you actively challenging any system that encourages dishonesty or rewards unethical behaviour?

- Do you encourage people to express concerns about questionable practices?

It's not easy to be ethical at work, is it? It means taking some risks and being vulnerable at times. You can become a role model for the organization in this regard and as you lead the way, others will follow. You can walk the talk which means that you must be vigilant about your own actions and behaviours and ensure that your performance reflects the highest standards that you profess.

It also means that you have some degree of self-awareness and humility that allows you to acknowledge and celebrate the unique knowledge and talents of others. Treating others with respect and dignity as the Golden Rule suggests is another example of integrity at work. So too is practising honesty in all your dealings. Honesty encourages others to not just be honest themselves but to learn to trust each other, another essential element of workplace integrity. This incorporates confidentiality as well. Gossip destroys workplace relationships and is poison to anyone trying to improve integrity at work.

Employees can be led, motivated, coached and taught to practice integrity at work, but only if they first see it in action from their leaders and managers. They may also need some general reminders from time to time when they stray from the core principles. You can also build a need for integrity into your hiring policies. As Warren Buffet said, "Somebody once said that in looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence and energy. And if you don't have the first, the other two will kill you."

Brian Pascal is President of IPM [Institute of Professional Management].

"I, too, am making 7 figures. Unfortunately the first 3 of those figures are zeroes."

The Five Roles of a Master Herder

Leadership redefined

Gail Boone
MPA, CEC

*Next Stage Equine
Facilitated Coaching*

Carmen Theobald

*Leadership Coach,
True Presence
Horse Sense*

Ask the Expert

Q: What makes an exceptional leader?

A: The answer is someone who has access to all the five roles of a "Master Herder" and knows when to use them. This article is the first of two to introduce a different way to think about mastery in leadership.

The Five Roles of a Master Herder, a book by Linda Kohanov, is a leadership model that breaks down social influence into five distinct roles. The model evolved after years of academic research, ethnographic study and practical experience working with herd animals. Through the research, Kohanov drew heavily from the wisdom of the ancient nomadic pastoralist cultures. She coined the term "Master Herder" to describe their highly skilled ability to move large animals through massive territories without the aid of any restraining devices. This required mastery of the roles of **Leader, Dominant, Nurturer/Companion, Sentinel and Predator**. These roles are the ones we as leaders need to be able to balance so that we can effectively lead others.

Each role has its own set of strengths and challenges. In order to move away from the unproductive behaviours associated with the roles, we must be capable of operating within all five, including those that may not be our natural inclination. When each role is exercised in its mature form, one's leadership is compelling, collaborative and capable of producing intended results.

When we overemphasize a role, its challenges are bound to come out. It is crucial not to judge or shame ourselves or others when these unproductive behaviours show up. Furthermore, when we avoid or abdicate using a role, we are actually causing others to overemphasize the role we don't like using, therefore encouraging unwanted behaviours. The solution is to develop a healthy use of all five which will in turn help others to do the same.

In addition to understanding the roles, we need to be able to distinguish between the use of predatory and non-predatory power. The main difference relates to who benefits from its use and how it is being employed. Non-predatory power is aimed at generating the win-win as in mutual gains. Non-predatory power is aimed at benefitting the whole, whereas predatory power is aimed at benefitting an individual or small group at the expense of others.

Let's explore the roles of Leader and Dominant.

Leader

The Leader is the visionary, the one who can see out in front of the others. This role draws people toward a vision or goal. Those who are naturally inclined in this role will be attracted to novel situations, easily assess the possible benefits and exhibit a curiosity and confidence that others find contagious.

To step into a Leader role, we must get out in front so others can follow. This presents challenges when a leader gets so far out that others can't keep up — we lose touch with those we are trying to lead. When an individual overemphasizes this role, they may become unsympathetic or easily frustrated by interpersonal dramas and appear aloof and self-absorbed. Too much focus on this role can also result in taking on too much responsibility due to difficulty in delegating tasks.

When used in its mature form, the Leader exhibits exceptional creative and visionary qualities, calms and focuses others during tense or novel situations and motivates through inspiration.

When the Leader role is combined with predatory power, the Leader will often blast ahead with blatant disregard for the impact or wake that is left behind. The intention is to achieve that vision no matter what the cost.

Dominant

Despite its notoriety for being misused and abused, being able to step into this role is a necessary and invaluable skill to have. The Dominant drives from behind as opposed to the Leader who draws from the front. A healthy expression of the Dominant is the orientation to "direct and protect" for the benefit of the team.

When overemphasized, unproductive behaviours emerge such as: using intimidation as a management tool, sometimes attacking others for little or no reason to keep everyone a bit on edge, refusing to follow through on the requests of others, pushing a personal agenda and making unnecessary demands on others. When a person slips into these behaviours, they become the most feared, least trusted member of a team. This makes it difficult to lead in a crisis because immature dominance increases panic and decreases problem-solving abilities.

Predatory dominance might look like someone using the

5 Roles of a Master Herder

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above immature dominance tactics solely for personal gain, regularly using others' vulnerabilities against them.

Mature dominance looks like setting appropriate boundaries, stopping unproductive behaviours in groups, managing disagreements between team members, handling aggressive or passive aggressive power plays, motivating resistant individuals to take action and protecting valuable resources from those who would take advantage.

Next time, we'll share insights about the Nurturer/Companion, Sentinel and Predator roles. In the meantime, check out the Master Herder Assessment at *https://masterherder.com/ professional-assessment/*

Gail Boone is an Executive Coach and Owner of Next Stage Equine Facilitated Coaching and can be reached via email at gailboone@ns.sympatico.ca.

Carmen Theobald is a Socially Intelligent Leadership Coach and Advanced Eponaquest Instructor and Owner of True Presence Horse Sense. She can be reached at carmentheobald@gmail.com.

Minding Your Manners: Ontario Court Weighs in on Employer Termination Conduct

Employer's obligation of good faith and fair dealing with termination

Dan Palayew
LL.B.

*Partner,
Borden Ladner
Gervais LLP*

Odessa O'Dell
J.D.

*Associate,
Borden Ladner
Gervais LLP*

Feature

The Ontario Court of Appeal has recently provided employers with an important lesson in the legal consequences of breaching their obligation of good faith in the manner of an employee's dismissal. As was the case in *Ruston v Keddco MFG. (2011) Ltd.*, 2019 ONCA 125, conduct that falls short of good faith and fair dealing can trigger significant moral and punitive damages, in addition to high cost awards.

The Facts

The employee in *Ruston v Keddco* was 54 years of age and had been employed with the defendant, Keddco MFG (2011) Ltd., for 11 years. At the time his employment was terminated, he was the company president. Keddco took the position that it was terminating the employee for cause; however, it provided the employee no explanation.

The employee brought an action for wrongful dismissal, to which Keddco responded with a $1.7 million counterclaim for unjust enrichment, breach of fiduciary duty and fraud, as well as an additional $50,000 in punitive damages. It was only upon receiving the counterclaim did the employee learn the particulars of Keddco's allegations for cause.

Outcome at Trial

Keddco produced no evidence to prove any of the allegations it made against the employee let alone to prove that it had cause to terminate his employment. The trial judge therefore dismissed the counterclaim in its entirety and proceeded to award the employee a 19-month notice period, inclusive of bonus and benefits.

> Conduct that falls short of good faith and fair dealing can trigger significant moral and punitive damages

The trial judge also found that Keddco had breached its obligation of good faith and fair dealing both in its pre and post termination conduct. Accordingly, the trial judge awarded the employee punitive damages of $100,000 and moral damages of $25,000, in part, because Keddco:

- Attempted to intimidate the employee during the termination meeting by threatening to counterclaim against him if he pursued a wrongful dismissal claim;

- Refused to advise the employee of the reasons for which it was alleging cause during the termination meeting; and

- Filed a baseless $1.7 million counter-claim to strategically intimidate the employee. Keddco failed to lead any evidence pertaining to the allegations, called no witnesses and proceeded to drop its claim to $1 during the trial.

In a subsequent decision, the trial judge also proceeded to award the employee with substantial indemnity costs against Keddco in the amount of $546,684.

The Ontario Court of Appeal upheld the trial judge's decision, including the costs award.

Employers Take Note

Ruston v Keddco sends a clear signal that employers who engage in poor behaviour before and after the termination of employee risk costly reprimand by the courts should a legal action ensue.

Employers should be mindful of their obligation of good faith and fair dealing when terminating an employee. They must be mindful of the fact that a court may consider both pre and post termination conduct in the analysis for punitive and/or aggravated damages. This includes conduct that involves:

- Intimidation tactics, including the threat of legal expense or a counterclaim, used for the sole purpose of dissuading an employee to seek legal advice or pursue legal action;

- Baseless allegations of termination for cause; and

- Refusing to provide an employee with the reasons for alleging cause.

The courts have found that an employee is particularly vulnerable leading up to and following the termination of employment. As such, employers ought to be vigilant of their obligations of good faith and fair dealing during this time.

Dan Palayew is Partner/Regional Leader Labour & Employment Group with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP and can be reached at dpalayew@blg.com.

Odessa O'Dell is an Associate with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP and can be reached at oodell@blg.com.

A Sober Reminder: Duty to Accommodate Substance Use Disorders

Consider potential addiction before termination

Kyle MacIsaac
LL.B

*Partner
Mathews Dinsdale
Clark LLP*

Caroline Spindler
J.D.

*Associate,
Mathews Dinsdale
Clark LLP*

Feature

Employers face challenges accommodating employees on a regular basis. While the legalization of recreational cannabis has attracted significant focus in recent months, it is important to remember that employers continue to face a myriad of substance abuse issues in the workplace.

In *Canadian Pacific Railway v Teamsters Canada Rail Conference*, 2019 CanLII 8545 (CA LA), a locomotive engineer was dismissed after the train he was operating was involved in a collision. Fortunately, passengers or by-standers were not injured. After arriving on the scene, police smelled alcohol on the employee and requested a breath sample, which resulted in a BAC reading of greater than 0.08. The employee was charged criminally and pleaded guilty. An investigation revealed that the employee brought a bottle of whiskey onto the train and drank some of it while operating the train prior to the collision. The investigation also revealed that the employee had suffered tragedies in his life and used alcohol to cope. The employer dismissed the employee for violating the company alcohol and drug policy and for using and possessing an intoxicant while subject to duty.

The union grieved the employee's dismissal and argued that employer failed to consider mitigating factors revealed during the investigation, that discipline was excessive in the circumstances and that the employer failed to accommodate the employee who suffered from mental health issues including severe alcohol use disorder. In response, the employer took the position that dismissal was justified in the circumstances and that the employee's alcohol dependency came to light *after* the incident, and that the medical evidence disclosed to substantiate the employee's alcohol dependency was provided *after* the dismissal. The arbitrator found that (1) the union had established *prima facie* discrimination as the employee suffered from a disability (addiction); (2) he suffered an adverse impact (termination of employment); and (3) his addiction was a factor leading to the adverse impact. The employee was reinstated to his former position with a number of restrictions.

Substance use issues also played a role in another recent case involving prescription painkillers. In *Regional Municipality of Waterloo (Sunnyside Home) v Ontario Nurses' Association*, 2019 CanLII 433 (ON LA), the employee was an RN working as a Team Leader at a long-term care facility when her employment was terminated for theft of narcotics and misconduct related to protocols. For a 2-year period prior to the termination of her employment, the employee would steal narcotics from her employer, falsify reports and records and use the narcotics herself while at work. The employee denied any involvement in the incidents and did not disclose any substance abuse issues initially, but admitted misconduct and addiction issues later on in the investigation just prior to termination.

As required by law, the employer advised the College of Nurses and the employee was then prohibited from practising for a period of time. Following the completion of an in-patient treatment program and continued treatment regime, the College of Nurses permitted the employee to return to practice with a number of conditions including:

- compliance with treatment regime
- restriction on access to narcotics
- restriction on administering narcotics
- restriction on working only in a setting where practice could be directly observed
- requirement of a workplace monitor and workplace supervisor

The union grieved the termination of employment. There was no dispute between the parties regarding the employee's substance abuse issue or that the severity of the misconduct as having justified termination of employment. The only issue to be decided by the arbitrator was whether the employer discriminated against the employee and if so, whether the employer could accommodate the employee to the point of undue hardship.

The union argued that *prima facie* discrimination was established and that the employer failed to demonstrate that it could not accommodate the employee without suffering undue hardship. In response, the employer took the position that *prima facie* discrimination was not established because the employee's disability was only disclosed after the misconduct had occurred and that it was not a factor in the decision to dismiss the employee. The employer also argued that the employee could not fulfill *bona*

Boomerang Employees: The Good, the Bad & the Ugly

Paula Morand
CSP

Keynote Speaker, Leadership Expert

Ask the Expert

Q: Should you welcome back boomerang employees?

A: As recently as 20 years ago, most employers had policies prohibiting the rehiring of employees who left them. That has changed now in an era of a more transient labour force and high costs associated with recruitment and turnover.

Regardless of the trend, there are pros and cons to readmitting these boomerang employees and steps you can take to make wise decisions about whether to bring back a worker who already walked away from your organization.

The advantages center on culture and skill

Proponents of rehiring employees point out that unlike hiring an unknown worker, at least you know the skillset of the returning employee.

You also know these returning employees can hit the ground running because they know the system, where to find what they need and they have already built relationships with many of their colleagues and team members.

They also won't have any kind of culture shock. They are already well versed in the corporate culture and have self-knowledge about whether they can fit into it. They are at ease with the expected workload and work flow of the organization — another benefit.

In many ways, even though they left once, these employees can end up being more loyal. Some have gone out and explored the proverbial grass on the other side and determined that it wasn't always greener.

Research supports taking people back into the workplace

The latest research into boomerang employees suggest in most cases, taking them back makes good business sense.

T. Brad Harris, Professor of Labour and Employment Relations at University of Illinois, and his co-authors Stacie Furst-Holloway of the University of Cincinnati, Benson Rosen of the University of North Carolina and Abbie J. Shipp of Texas Christian University, discovered an important factor in how easy it is to come back again depends to a large extent on why the employee left in the first place.

Reporting their research in *Personnel Psychology*, they discovered that in most cases, the decision to pull up stakes and go wasn't because the employee was angry or dissatisfied. More often, it had to do with a personal matter like a spousal relocation, health issue, pregnancy or even an unexpected job offer that was just too good to refuse.

Harris was also involved in another study on the topic that looked into how differences across the boomerang employees' experience affected their re-employment performance. The researchers looked at a sample of boomerang employees in the National Basketball Association as a basis for their study.

Not all boomerang employees are created equal

This team, which included Richard Gardner of Brigham Young University and Joseph Liu of the Georgia Institute of Technology, discovered that whether or not a company should take an employee back wasn't just a simple yes or no answer.

A lot depended on the employee and their employment history within the original organization and at their current place of employment.

The workers who left on good terms and on their own volition were better suited to work their way back peacefully and productively into the original workplace. Those who left with acrimony did not fare as well.

Another key factor centered on how long the employee was away. If they were gone too long, they did not accurately remember the organizational culture.

How the boomerang employee can help his or her cause

Any employee who wants to return to your company or organization should be able to demonstrate how in their time away, they grew in their profession and in their personal and industry-related development.

They should also understand and be prepared to handle a mixed reaction from their coworkers. Sometimes they return like celebrities and there is a great feeling of welcome and warmth. In other cases

Boomerang Employees

Ask the Expert

however, especially if the team members feel like they are being overlooked for a promotion so the employee can return and get the job, they may find knives in their back from the moment they arrive.

Either way, they must be able to cope, fit in and keep the work flowing.

The boomerang employee is becoming a trend

Regardless of the pros and cons, the rehiring of employees is now definitely on the rise.

A study on corporate culture and the boomerang employee by David Almeda and Dan Schawbel, author of *Promote Yourself: The New Rules to Career Success*, found in a national US survey of 1,800 HR professionals, that 76 percent of companies are now more willing to accept former employees.

Additionally, 85 percent of the HR professionals said they had received job applications from former employees in the past five years.

Make sure that you look at the pros and cons of rehiring each employee who wishes to return. You can then make the right decision accordingly.

Paula Morand is a keynote speaker, author and leadership expert who helps high potential visionaries and organizations take their brand and their business to the next level. She can be reached via email at bookings@paulamorand.com.

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Dealing with Marijuana Use and Safety Concerns

Verify that you have expert evidence

Tom Ross
LL.B

Partner, McLennan Ross LLP

Dave Foster
J.D.

Associate, McLennan Ross LLP

Maurice Dransfeld
LL.B.

Partner, McLennan Ross LLP

Feature

As cannabis is now legal in Canada, many employers have been working to update their drug and alcohol policies, anticipate the kind of issues they will have in dealing with drug use (whether for medical or recreational purposes) and minimize safety risks and concerns. Here are a couple of developments relevant to these issues.

Relevant Arbitration Award

The Newfoundland arbitration decision in *Lower Churchill Transmission Construction Employers' Association v. IBEW, Local 1620* provides helpful arguments for employers faced with the possibility of having to accommodate into safety-sensitive workplaces employees who use cannabis for medical purposes. In that case, Arbitrator Roil dismissed a grievance challenging a refusal to hire on the basis that there would be undue hardship to the employer from the inadequacy of existing drug testing technology to determine impairment caused by cannabis use.

The grievor was authorized to use "medical cannabis", which he vapourized and inhaled. He was authorized to consume approximately 1.5 grams of cannabis with a high THC potency every evening. The grievor applied for two general labourer positions, which were both determined to be safety-sensitive. The grievor was not accepted for either position because of his admitted "medical" cannabis use. The employer took the position that the grievor's use of cannabis created a risk of impairment which was not acceptable for someone in a safety-sensitive role.

The grievor's physician gave evidence that the grievor would be capable of working in a safety-sensitive position 4 hours after ingestion. The employer challenged this evidence and led evidence supporting its concerns about residual impairment of the grievor. Contrary to the opinion of the grievor's physician, Health Canada and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Newfoundland and Labrador had previously issued professional advice that, due to the long half-life of THC, impairment could last up to 24 hours after use. Furthermore, the arbitrator concluded that the grievor's general practitioner was not an expert on the subject at hand.

The arbitrator concluded that if safety risk is to be managed, the employer needs to be able to measure the impact of the "medical cannabis" on the performance of the worker. The evidence supported a general lack of effective or practical means to accurately test impairment in the workplace caused by evening cannabis use. The arbitrator concluded that remedial or monitoring processes would not help offset this safety risk. As such, it was determined that accommodating the grievor would be an undue hardship for the employer. Without sufficient means for impairment testing, the employer was not required to compromise safety and assume the risk associated with cannabis impairment.

This is an important case for employers. Due to the complexity of the drug, it is generally accepted that current testing technology is unable to accurately measure impairment from cannabis use. It is also generally accepted by most physicians that THC impairs performance. However, not all "medical marijuana" contains high levels of THC. Some have less than 1% THC while being high in CBD (another chemical that is not impairing and tends to counter the effects of THC). In this case, the arbitrator accepted that in respect of this grievor, the lack of reliable testing for impairment was a safety concern that the employer should not have to bear. That is of course a conclusion based on the medical evidence presented in the specific case, but it is hard to question the overall logic of its reasoning.

If an employee is ingesting cannabinoids, employers should attempt to ascertain usage, dosage and potency, and obtain expert evaluation of the ability to work safely. At least two Alberta arbitrators have determined that use of authorized cannabinoids is not necessarily inconsistent with work in a safety-sensitive position. One critical factor is the relative concentration of THC versus CBD. The individual's circumstances have to be evaluated. Each case will depend on the particular expert evidence presented. However, this case now provides a sensible answer to

Marijuana Use and Safety

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the question: "What if there is a doubt?" As one would hope, safety should come first in weighing the competing factors.

Drug Testing in the Oil Sands

Drug testing is another way to address the risks created by marijuana use.

In Alberta, Suncor and its union, Unifor, have been litigating over the application of Suncor's random alcohol and drug testing program. Suncor had gathered substantial evidence showing a problem with alcohol and drug use at its workplaces — that has been considered by the courts to be a necessary precondition before an owner can implement random testing programs.

In an announcement released on November 29, 2018, Suncor confirmed Unifor's recent agreement to random drug and alcohol testing for all safety-sensitive positions. Suncor implemented this program in the first quarter of 2019 at all of its work sites in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, and its suppliers (e.g., contractors) will be expected to do the same. Other oil sands operators and employers in other industries may be encouraged to do the same.

The interaction between marijuana use and safety will continue to be an evolving issue in workplaces and the law.

Tom Ross (Partner), Dave Foster (Associate) and Maurice Dransfeld (Partner) practice Employment Law at McLennan Ross LLP. Tom Ross can be reached via email at tross@mross.com.

Time Management

Marcel Bellefeuille
RPR

Leadership Coach & Speaker, CoachMB

Ask the Expert

Q. As a former professional CFL Head Coach, what lessons can you provide us regarding time management?

A. Time Management has been a discussion point in business and the home for many years. The concept has mainly been centered on efficiency. Some of the traditional studies and focal points still have relevance today. The "Pareto Principle", declutter, specific journals and multi-tasking are all valid talking points and exercises. However, as a professional that works in an extremely competitive and demanding field, I wanted to dissect the whole paradigm of time management and how it applied on a day to day basis in the workplace.

Let's start with the definition of time management:

Time management is the act or process of planning and *exercising conscious control over the amount of time spent on specific activities*, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity...

The definition of time:

The indefinite *continued progress of existence* and events in the past, present and future regarded as a whole.

The underlined parts of these definitions were the driving force in my new paradigm. If productivity ultimately is the desired outcome when considering time, I had to consider the following questions:

- What activities am I spending my time on?
- Are these activities making me more productive?

These questions forced me to be intentional about what activities I was participating in and for how long. As a result, I began looking at time management as a question of productivity and not necessarily scheduling or efficiency. Some activities were effective at organization but had little impact on production. Others managed my schedule and allowed me to accomplish more but did not necessarily create a more productive environment.

Personal Growth = Productivity

After much consideration, I realized that personal growth was the actual driving force in productivity. Earning potential and new opportunities increase with skill development. Therefore our use of time both personally and professionally should reflect that.

4 Areas of Development That Increase Productivity

To become more productive and create new opportunities, we should schedule 3 hours weekly in the following quadrants:

1) **Professional Internal** — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a new skill that can be applied in your current workplace. Make it something that will make you more valuable to your organization.

2) **Professional External** — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill outside your workplace. Focus on a designation or mentoring program that can provide you greater earning potential or build professional relationships outside of your business.

3) **Personal Development** — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill that will create some area of personal growth. Focus on passive skills that interest you, but create possible productive skill sets. Language courses, learning how to play instruments or writing a book are excellent examples of this area.

4) **Personal Family** — schedule 3 hours weekly to work on a skill that will create increased family relationships and bonds. When we have good stable home lives, we are much more productive in the workplace.

If we are able to schedule 12 hours per week for 52 weeks, that makes 624 hours of growth yearly.

In order to make the most of our intentions, it is important to have some guardrails to keep us on track. There are also some key factors that should drive the decisions we make when deciding how to use our time. The following are some tools to utilize when scheduling the activities that will help you grow and become more productive.

A) Everything you do must have a start and completion date, regardless of whether it is a professional designation course or writing a book. Scheduling the start and finish date will keep you on track to finish.

B) Do what you want to do. Find growth opportunities that interest you. Take on projects in the office that create growth for you. It will create a domino effect. You will delegate more often. That will empower your people.

C) Schedule things that add growth to you or your loved ones. Be certain to identify that in your specific quadrant of growth. If it is a joint activity, find the growth opportunity for those who participate with you.

Time Management

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D) Try to schedule activities that have a 2/3 value. Each activity you schedule has the opportunity to have multiple growth opportunities. For example, taking a language course with a child can create growth both personally and professionally. One activity meets two separate quadrants.

E) What is measured is gained. Take the opportunity 12–18 months after completing a growth activity and evaluate how it has created earning potential and growth. It will provide you with the ability to make changes and validate what activities you are currently working on.

In Summary

Time management is a simple process of selecting and scheduling activities that improve productivity. The selection process should fit into one of 4 quadrants of development. These areas will create the balance in your personal and professional growth that will ultimately make you more productive.

When the process has begun, remember to test your selections with the 5 guardrails to ensure your personal success.

Remember, a better you, is a better …

We all improve with time!

Marcel Bellefeuille has spent over 20 years as a professional/collegiate football coach, speaker and leadership trainer. He is the co-author of "10 Discussions for Effective Leadership: 10 Ways to Exceed Your Expectations as a Leader." Marcel can be reached via email at marcel@coachmb.com.

Team Dysfunction: Where Do We Go from Here?

Intervention tools that work

Brian Gottheil
J.D.

Lawyer, Bernardi Human Resource Law LLP

Feature

Strained team relations can have an enormous negative impact on any organization. Dysfunctional teams often lead to absenteeism, conflict, WSIB and benefits claims, turnover, low morale and reduced productivity. However, team dysfunction is difficult to resolve because it involves complex human relationships and psychology. Here are some of the common contributors that we see in our work:

- **Confirmation bias:** our natural tendency to focus on evidence that supports our existing beliefs, while ignoring or discounting evidence to the contrary. For example, an employee who believes that their colleague is malicious or untrustworthy will interpret all of the colleague's behaviour — even positive behaviours — in that light. This bias tends to entrench people in conflict.

- **Normalization:** when negative behaviours become entrenched, they can start to feel "normal," making it difficult for team members to even realize they have a problem. For instance, we often hear employees in toxic environments vigorously defend their need to "vent", when in fact, ongoing negativity is making the problems worse.

- **Self-protection:** employees often try to protect themselves from a hostile environment in ways that hinder resolution. For example, an employee may try to avoid a hostile coworker, but the lack of communication only deepens their conflict. Similarly, an employee who fears an overbearing manager may protect themselves by blaming colleagues for mistakes. In both examples, the employee's reaction is understandable but unhelpful.

In the face of these difficult dynamics, there are no simple solutions. Management must develop a toolkit of possible interventions and deploy the right tools at the right times.

The first step is to diagnose the source of the problem. Consider combining a written survey with focus group sessions or individual interviews to delve deeper into areas of concern. Where time and resources permit, we prefer a cultural audit in which the facilitator meets individually with each member of the team. The facilitator asks open-ended questions and can then ask follow-up questions to gain a deeper understanding of the concerns. We recommend that employees be required to attend the review meeting but not be required to say anything to the facilitator. This way, employees won't be perceived as "ratting out" their coworkers — if questioned by their peers, they can simply say that they attended because they had to.

Once you have diagnosed the problem, you will need to tailor an individual solution. Often this will require a combination of different interventions, with regular follow-up to ensure that the interventions are working and to change course if they are not.

Any intervention must start by building psychological safety and trust. In our experience, generalized team-building activities are not sufficient. Team members must be shown that management is taking their specific concerns seriously. The cultural audit itself can be a good trust-building exercise if employees feel heard and understood in the meetings. Personality profiles (e.g., Myers-Briggs or True Colours) can help employees see their colleagues in a more positive light by demonstrating that the conflict may be motivated by personality differences rather than malice. Designing a fair and transparent conflict resolution process also helps. If employees trust the process, they will gain trust for management and each other.

Once a degree of trust has been established, numerous interventions are possible, depending on the problem. Here are some examples of possible intervention tools:

- redirecting the energy of employees who complain and gossip toward positive solutions, for example by placing them on the committee charged with addressing the problem

- bystander intervention training for the full team. It can be difficult for a bully to operate without peer support.

- mediation or a facilitated conversation (but only if it is a case of mutual conflict – harassment should not be resolved through mediation)

- positive workplace training with an emphasis on steps every employee can take to create a more positive workplace. We prefer this approach over standard anti-harassment training which too often focuses on what not to do and can create resentment.

Managing an Agile Workplace   *... concluded from page 2*

The agile workplace is becoming increasingly popular. According to McKinsey & Company, in a survey of more than 2500 people in organizations of all sizes and industries, more than 80 percent of respondents in agile units report that overall performance increased moderately or significantly since their transformations began. It's definitely produced results for many organizations.

Nathaly Pinchuk is Executive Director of IPM [Institute of Professional Management].

A Sober Reminder   *... concluded from page 7*

fide occupational requirements of her job. Specifically, the employer maintained that it could not comply with the conditions imposed by the College of Nursing given the presence of narcotics on site, the employee's need to work independently in her position, the employer's inability to guarantee observation and the lack of an appropriate workplace monitor and supervisor.

The arbitrator found that *prima facie* discrimination had been established because the employee's ability to comply with the workplace norm (not stealing and not falsifying records) had a discriminatory impact on her because her disability interfered with her ability to comply with those norms.

The arbitrator rejected the employer's argument that it could not accommodate the employee without suffering undue hardship. The arbitrator also found that the employer violated its procedural duty to accommodate the employee by failing to consider any accommodation and failing to inquire with the employee about a potential disability when they received reports of concerning behaviour. The arbitrator highlighted the fact that the employer's opinion that it would be impossible to accommodate the employee was based on the employer's current organization of the workplace and did not investigate how changes could be made to potentially accommodate the employee. The employee was reinstated with accommodation and awarded general damages and compensation for losses.

These cases serve as a strong reminder to employers that in situations where drugs (legal or illegal) or alcohol are involved, employers must consider the potential issue of addiction before taking any further action. Substance use issues are a disability under human rights legislation and employers should take the time to make inquiries as to whether addiction is at play in order determine the most appropriate action to be taken.

Kyle MacIsaac is a Partner with Mathews, Dinsdale Clark LLP and can be reached via email at kmacisaac@mathewsdinsdale.com.

Caroline Spindler is an Associate with Mathews, Dinsdale Clark LLP and can be reached at cspindler@mathewsdinsdale.com.

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- training employees on how to have difficult conversations
- providing one-on-one coaching for those who are contributing to a toxic team
- addressing any structural issues that may be contributing to the conflict such as a lack of role clarity
- changing the composition of teams
- ensuring that managers and supervisors consistently hold team members accountable. We recommend, more generally, that people management and conflict management skills should be made part of managers' performance reviews and bonus criteria; and
- creating a team charter where the team sets standards for their own behaviour.

Resolving dysfunctional team dynamics is a challenge, but the rewards are great. We hope that these tools and strategies will assist you in diagnosing issues, addressing conflict and moving forward.

Brian Gottheil is a Lawyer and Human Resource Advisor with Bernardi Human Resource Law LLP and can be reached via email at bgottheil@hrlawyers.ca.