



Performance Cornerstones for the 21st Century

A Hammer Communication Tip

Get what you're paying for by instituting these three proven practices.

There are three performance cornerstones proven to sustain the leadership style, culture, and best practices that grow strong businesses. Enforced together throughout your company, they form a foundation for ensuring that your people are actively engaged in achieving success.

Cornerstone 1: Clearly articulate your most critical business goals at regular intervals.

Harvard Business Review's report on successful strategy implementation points to the importance of management's ability to identify and communicate the most critical priorities of their organization. Everyone on your team needs to know what fits your vision and what doesn't. The more they appreciate how what they do fulfills critical business goals, the more they understand what is expected of them and why. Most can even better align their contributions so that those goals are reached faster and more thoroughly.

Business goals should be specific, measurable, and simply worded. Compound ideas can result in a loss of important detail. Include a clear description of what "successful completion" looks like. When you define your expectations from the outset, completing every project becomes a shared vision.

Cornerstone 2: Reward and reinforce desired performance.

Poor managers cost US businesses \$300 billion a year in productivity losses. They give more work (instead of better work) to their best performers, who consequently become overloaded. Because of their discomfort with conflict, they gloss over reviews of underachievers and employees who may be a bad fit. Consequently, these people continue to detract from team effectiveness and the wrong behavior is unintentionally rewarded.

Evaluation, feedback, and reward systems should be designed to align your results with your intentions. That way, you get the best results from your best people and move more rapidly towards your business goals. Work with your team to create and publish guidelines for evaluating ideas, giving constructive feedback, and rewarding performance that forwards team objectives. Publicly acknowledge when someone has gone the extra mile. Your organization benefits from shared information and positive feedback and good employees are encouraged when they see their work making a difference.

Cornerstone 3: Focus on problem-solving over blame.

McKinsey's analysis of hundreds of global companies identified a strong correlation between improved reporting relationships and financial performance. Yet, many businesses have evolved using a blame or fear basis for motivating people. This model stifles initiative, accountability, and creativity –three forces companies need to flourish.

Creating Communication Culture for Employers of Choice

Performance Cornerstones for the 21st Century

Problems often present an opportunity for improving existing processes and team effectiveness. To take advantage of this opening, your team members must be able to be honest about their observations and experiences without fear of punishment. Using problem-solving language encourages people to work together to develop lasting solutions. Following is a chart illustrating some of the differences between typical blaming language and problem-solving language.

Blaming Language	Problem-Solving Language
Emphasis on history, a "laundry list of sins"	Emphasis on current situation and evolving processes
Focused only on roles of others	Includes your role in the current situation
Commands and compliance	Questions that challenge the other person to help solve the situation
High emotion	Monitored responses

In the 21st Century workplace, you need to consistently promote the appropriate sharing of information to move your company forward. By putting these three performance cornerstones in place, you optimize worker commitment, nurture quality employees, and attract and retain top talent. In short, you get what you are already paying for.



There's nothing soft about what we do.

The 21st Century has brought with it a New World of Work. The growing use of virtual workers, the expanding needs of our multi-generational workforce, and heated competition for top talent have put increased pressure on businesses of every size and industry.

Cathy Hammer & Associates works with business owners and managers to capitalize on their best people so they work together more effectively and achieve superior results.

Call 415-675-5811 for your no cost initial assessment. We pride ourselves on treating each client as an individual and provide tools and a schedule that suit your unique goals, needs, and environment

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