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A Telemarketing Supervisor's Reference Manual to Humanistic Skills

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CULMINATING PROJECT:

A TELEMARKETING SUPERVISOR'S REFERENCE
MANUAL TO HUMANISTIC SKILLS

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A CULMINATING PROJECT PRESENTED TO
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ABSTRACT

This thesis will focus on the study of telemarketing management and the need for a telemarketing management guide. A reference manual will be developed to help a supervisor understand the skills needed to be an effective supervisor. This manual will also be a reference to help the supervisor evaluate their skills and give them the information needed to increase their skills as well as develop new skills.

Telemarketing Supervisor training usually consists of how to give evaluations and explaining company goals. Supervisors are not usually given an overview of the proactive humanistic skills needed; communication, interpersonal leadership, etc. The humanistic, motivating skills are the skills most needed to be an effective supervisor.

If a telemarketing supervisor is expected to carry out the goals and objectives of the company, he or she needs the people skills to do so. Technical knowledge alone won't help the employee deal with people.

The purpose of this study is to show that

interpersonal leadership, communication, problem solving, motivating, listening and knowing how to learn are necessary for a telemarketing supervisor to be effective in today's work environment.

The reference manual will not be a teaching manual. This manual will be divided into sections that focus on each of the needed skills. Role-playing won't teach a person the humanistic skills but it helps the person learn the steps to develop those skills.

As the telemarketing supervisor's skill increases, the more effective they become.

Research provided considerable evidence that these skills are needed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND THEORIES OF MANAGEMENT

"Management is the process of coordinating human, informational, physical and financial resources to accomplish organizational roles. No matter what size organization, management must be able to identify and take control of its resources, set goals and allocate the resources to meet these goals" (Reese 124). This is the current definition used by many managers. This definition is based upon past management theories. Management's history can be traced back to the Egyptians, early Greeks and ancient Romans. There are also records relating management experiences in the writings of the Catholic Church, military organizations and the cameralists of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries (Koontz 25).

Interpretations of early Egyptian writings, dating back as far as 1300 B.C., indicate the recognition and the importance of organizations as well as administrations. Similar records also

exist for ancient China. Confucius' parables often include practical suggestions for proper public administration and admonitions to choose honest, unselfish, and capable public officers (26).

The records of early Greece give very little insight as to the management principles that they used. However, their structure of government indicates a strong managerial form. Socrates defined management as a skill separate from technical knowledge and experience (26).

Roman records of management are not complete. It is known that because of the complexity of the administrative jobs held by Romans, management styles and functions were highly developed. The Roman magistrates, for example, had different levels of importance and authority. This indicates different levels which are characteristics of an organization. It is thought that the reason the Roman Empire was so successful was its ability to organize. Through the delegation of power and the use of different levels of organization, the City of Rome was an empire that operated with an efficiency that had never been observed during that

time (26).

Perhaps the most effective formal organization in Western Civilization is the Roman Catholic Church. Its longevity is due to the effectiveness of its organization and management techniques. Some examples of these techniques are the hierarchy of authority, territorial organization, and specialized activities that follow practical lines, and the early use of staff. It is surprising that the Catholic Church and its management style didn't influence other organizations. J.D. Mooney, in study of church hierarchy, revealed that "nothing but the general neglect of the study of organization" can explain why the staff principle of the Catholic Church did not affect other organizations until recently (26).

The Military is another organization that has been crucial in the development of modern management. No other organization, except the Catholic Church, has been forced, because of its size, to develop organizational principals. Even the military failed to effectively use management theories prior to the last two centuries (26 - 27).

Military organizations have stayed fairly simple until recently. They have, over the years, developed their leadership abilities and techniques. Early armies were characterized by an understanding of the group's goal. History has shown that many leaders who communicated their plans and objectives to their followers, developed unity within the organization (26 - 27).

Later armies began using the staffing principle. Staffing was used in the French army in 1790, and certain functions had been around for centuries. The modern concept of staffing can be traced to the Persian army of the nineteenth century. They were organized under a chief of staff and given specialized advice as well as information that has become essential to the modern day armies (26 - 27).

The Cameralists were a group of German and Austrian public administrators during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. They believed that to increase the worth of the state, you had to maximize material wealth. They also believed that the use of management techniques would increase

personal wealth as well as the wealth of the state (27).

The Cameralists developed management principles and emphasized the specialization of functions, care in selecting and training of subordinates for administrative positions. They established the controller function in government, increased the speed of the legal system, and simplified administrative procedures (27).

In 1911, Frederick Taylor, considered by many to be the "Father of Scientific Management," published a book entitled "The Principles of Scientific Management" (31).

Taylor's principle concern was to increase efficiency in production. He wanted to lower costs and raise profits, along with making it possible to increase pay for workers because of higher production. Taylor saw productivity as the answer to both higher wages and higher profits. He believed that use of scientific methods could yield higher productivity without the expense of additional human energy and effort (30).

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Taylor believed that the fundamental principle

underlying the scientific approach to management could be summarized into five parts. He felt that, first, it was necessary to replace the "old rule of thumb" with science, or organized knowledge. Second, business organizations needed to create harmony in group actions, rather than disharmony. Third, they had to work toward cooperation between individuals, rather than promoting chaotic individualism. Fourth, as a work group, they needed to strive for maximum rather than restrictive output. And fifth, they needed to develop all workers to their fullest extent possible for their own and their company's highest prosperity (31 - 32).

These basic parts are not far from the fundamental beliefs of the modern manager. Throughout Taylor's written works, he was preoccupied with productivity at the shop level, but he also leaned toward a humanistic theme. He felt that workers should be given the tasks that they could do best. He had an idealistic notion that the interests of workers, managers, and owners could and should work in harmony. Taylor never

overlooked the fact, when discussing management, that the relationship between employers and employees, without question, is the most important part of management (33 - 34).

Henri Fayol, a French industrialist, developed another theory of management. The Operational-Management Theory fit very well into the current trends of management theory. Fayol found that activities of an industrial undertaking could be divided into six groups: (1) technical (production), (2) commercial (buying, selling and exchange), (3) financial (search for the optimum use of capital), (4) security (protection of property and persons) (5) accounting (including statistics), and (6) managerial (planning, organization, command, coordination, and control). He felt that of these six activities, managerial was the least known (Dale 97 - 98).

Fayol looked at the qualities he felt that managers needed in order to be effective. He believed that they needed to be mentally as well as physically fit. They needed to be healthy, vigorous and have the ability to understand and

learn. Managers also need high moral standards. They needed high energy, good judgment, firmness, responsibility, initiative, loyalty, tact, and dignity. He believed that managers needed additional education as well as a general knowledge of the business. Fayol also felt that they needed experience which was only gained through time on the job (Koontz 35).

Fayol noted that principles of management should be flexible, not absolute, and must be used regardless of changing and special conditions. He believed, according to Dale, that "Authority is not to be conceived apart from responsibility" (99). He felt that responsibility was feared as much as authority was sought. Currently this thinking has changed, it is now believed that authority and responsibility should be equal (99). Fayol claimed that there should be "unity of command." For any task, employees should receive orders from one supervisor. Doing anything differently would only cause problems.

Fayol observed that not only did employees need time to learn, they needed stability to insure

competence. This also applied to managers who needed time to learn. They must also be willing to encourage and motivate subordinates to achieve success for the business (100 - 102).

The main ingredient that all of these theories share is that managers must possess certain management skills to be effective. Regardless of their level, all managers must have three basic skills: conceptual skills, technical skills, and humanistic or "people" skills (Reese 127).

This paper will address the skills needed to be an effective telemarketing supervisor, while focusing on the increased need for the humanistic skills in management.

Conceptual skills give the ability to see the big picture. Supervisors must have the ability to understand the organization's activities, how everything fits together and relates to each other.

If supervisors possesses strong conceptual skills they can think analytically, creatively, and imaginatively. These types of supervisors are problem spotters and solvers who come up with fresh approaches to management. Conceptual managers see

the organization as a whole and are usually at higher levels of management (Reinecke 153).

Supervisors and managers must be able to work well with others this is why humanistic skills are so important. To communicate with others, and understand other's needs is perhaps the most important skill a good manager or supervisor can possess. Humanistic managers should strive to create a secure environment that allows people to feel free in expressing their opinions (153).

Communication, motivation, and leadership are also very important elements of people skills. Supervisors need all of these abilities to create a team (Reinecke 153).

As a person is promoted up in his/her organization, it is important to have knowledge in many areas. He or she must be a generalists, one who has a broad general knowledge. Most people find it difficult to switch from one job to another. Broadening one's viewpoint is a skill that can be developed if the person is willing to work hard and learn (153).

Supervisors can usually learn the skills

needed to be effective managers, but several traits are important to be a motivational manager. They must have the desire to manage. The desire to manage requires effort, time, energy and long hours of hard work (Koontz 403).

Strong supervisors must be able to communicate with empathy. They must be able to communicate through written reports, discussions, speeches and letters. Communicating with empathy is the ability to understand other people's feelings as well as deal with the emotional side of communication (403).

Good supervisors must have honesty and integrity. They must be moral and trustworthy. They must be honest with money and materials, as well as in dealing with others. Good supervisors keep their supervisors well informed and adhere to the truth, have strong character and behave with strong ethical manners. Executives cannot run a company effectively if they cannot depend and trust those who report to them (403 - 404).

Another personal trait is a person's background and experience. This is perhaps the

strongest indicator of person's future performance. This trait may not come into play for entry level managers, but it becomes extremely important in soliciting and training of middle and upper management (404).

Very often people are promoted to a higher position which requires skills that they may not possess. While you can't overlook a person's individual ability to learn, most need additional training - especially when it comes to humanistic skill.

Effective Humanistic Skills.

In today's working environment, people are expected to possess more than just standard academic skills. Today's jobs demand much more than the ability to read, write and make computations. Employers want workers with a broader set of skills, or at least the basics that will enable them to learn on the job. (Carnavate 23).

Stiffer competition, technology changes and innovation are forcing the demand to up-skill employees. Competitive challenges motivate

companies to use strategies which call for innovative and creative thinking, listening and strong interpersonal skills. Customer satisfaction and emphasis on quality require employees to listen, use teamwork, set goals and solve problems. (24).

Future skills, such as communication, problem solving, goal setting, listening and creativity have not been high priorities when training supervisors. History has shown that most theorists felt that low-level managers didn't need humanistic skills, they needed the technical knowledge. Most of the decisions, innovation and creative thinking was left up to middle management. Technology has made it necessary for supervisors to understand the business, know where the business is going, and how it will get there. They need the ability to make decisions based on sound information, to be able to solve problems, and to be creative when dealing with problems.

Training and Development

There are several areas that provide the necessary training needed by supervisors. These

include training methods, development methods, and multi-purpose methods (Reese 227).

Training is defined as "learning activities designed to improve current job performance. Its objectives can be stated in specific behavioral terms" (Peter 228). By contrast, development is "learning activities that increase the competence and ability of employees to progress with the organization as it changes and grows" (Reese 228). The development objectives cannot be stated in specific behavioral terms because the company cannot know what future job requirements will be. A third factor comes into play when talking training and development: education. Education is learning the activities that prepare an employee for greater responsibilities in an organization. While education may not have immediate or long term benefits, it addresses possible future needs (229).

Training methods include on-the-job training, apprentice training, vestibule training, and computer assisted instruction. On-the-job training is the most widely used approach to teach new skills. This method instructs the new worker,

often informally, on the job site under the direction of a supervisor or experienced worker. This method stresses actual production as soon as possible. The worker learns while contributing to the goals of the company (231).

Apprentice training is designed to develop a certified worker, with a designated program, a specific job. This program trains the worker in a certain period of time and requires the apprentice to reach certain levels within a set time (231).

Vestibule training is a very expensive form of training. The training occurs in a separate area equipped like the actual work place. Its advantage over on-the-job training is that it emphasizes developing the worker's skills (231).

Computer assisted instruction is a training method that allows workers to learn at their own pace. They develop their skills by working with special computer programs (23).

Development methods include on-the-job coaching, mentoring and job rotation. On-the-job coaching is a method that allows employees to receive regular instruction and feedback from their

immediate supervisor (Longenecker 335).

Mentoring is much more personal than coaching. A one-on-one relationship is developed between senior and junior employees. The mentor assists to help the employee build a network within the company (Reese 231).

Job rotation moves the employer from one position to another exposing them to various tasks. This helps them to gain a better understanding of the organization as a whole (Longenecker 335).

Seminars and workshops make up the multipurpose approach. These are most often off the job development programs. They range from half a day to a week or longer. These programs often use case studies and role playing. Case studies require trainees to evaluate situations that may have actually occurred in business organizations. Role playing involves the trainee portraying people who have resolved a set situation (Reese 231).

All aspects of training are very important techniques used to develop and maintain a strong professional team. A good and competent staff gets things done, avoids repeated attempts, and

basically gets it right the first time. A well planned job has a high potential for success (Mali 9870).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to show that humanistic skills are important not only to telemarketing supervisors, but to the company as a whole. Better humanistic skills will provide higher quality work and create a positive working atmosphere that will enhance the performance of the workers (Carnavale 24). A reference manual has been developed to help enhance the supervisor's humanistic skills as well as develop new ones.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

TELEMARKETING SUPERVISORS

Supervision is directing people to do a specific job. It is no longer the license of power as it was in the past. It is not overbearing, bullying or frantic. Nor should it be anemic or timid. Supervision should supervise firmly and fairly (Wilkinson 12).

Today's supervisor must be a coach, counselor, helper, trainer and leader. Criticism, nasty surprises and negative opinions need to be replaced by advice, counsel, and helpful problem analysis. If a supervisor expects responsible adult behavior from an employee, he or she must treat the employee in a responsible adult manner (Sandler 87).

Few jobs are as difficult, yet challenging, as the job of supervising other people. This type of job demands more skill, common sense, and foresight than most other types of work (Brower 3).

The supervisor should be able to think and act in terms of the total company goals. This includes defining and assigning priorities, planning and

organizing and programming and coordinating the operating tasks of a department so that the goals of both the department and the company as a whole are achieved (Sasser 113).

Good supervisors must excel in interpersonal skills. More often, the trend is for employees to be a heterogeneous group of people, many who are not especially dedicated to their jobs, departments or company. Dealing with a variety of attitudes and values in this multi-generation has become very difficult (114).

One supervisor who was interviewed stated "the company expects me to explain policies, regulations, rules and procedures to my workers, but they haven't been explained to me." Another said "I'm supposed to be encouraging, tolerant, sympathetic and helpful, as well as determine every problem and glitch before it happens. That would take a superman!" (Towler 56, 57).

The supervisory work force includes as many as four million supervisors. Approximately two million are blue collar supervisors in manufacturing, seven hundred thousand supervise in

offices and the rest are divided up into various industries throughout the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1987).

When a person is promoted from the ranks and becomes a supervisor, their technical skills are essential to maintaining the respect of their peers. However, most new supervisors learn that technical knowledge is not enough; a wide range of interpersonal and managerial skills are needed to be successful (Carnevale: Management Training Today and Tomorrow 26).

Too often people think that supervising is a simple, straightforward task that anyone can do if they have been supervised in the past. Supervisors must be taught how to do their jobs effectively. They must adapt to changes and new methods. The need for education is constant. It never ends. Not only do new supervisors need training, but so do the more experienced supervisors. They need to be taught new methods, better humanistic skills and how to deal effectively with changes in the work environment (Towler 56).

Quite often new supervisors will fall back on

personal experiences for guidance because they have had very little training. Once on the job, they are given very little systematic feedback regarding their performance. Therefore, the on-the-job learning process which is very often used, is not effective, in fact, it is actually non-existent (Hogan 76).

A supervisor's job is very demanding. With the ever changing business world many supervisors lack the preparation needed to handle the task at hand, yet they are expected to perform at a very high level. This puts the supervisor in a very difficult position. In the past supervisors worked in a very controlled and structured environment. But now they are in a very dynamic atmosphere that is confronted with frequent changes, more complex technology and greater competition (Crandall 26).

If supervisors are to perform effectively, they need the knowledge and skills to do so. They must also have the ability to learn and apply what they have learned to their work situation. The ability to learn requires more than just basic intelligence; a person has to have the desire to

learn and the opportunity to apply what they have learned. The supervisors and upper management must work together to insure that these factors will exist (29).

Some researchers believe that the number of employees per supervisor will increase in the future. Others believe they will decrease. Many base the difference of opinion on the changes in technology. Those who believe the ratio will increase believe that technology will allow a person to supervise more people with less of the normal hassles due to manual labor. Those who feel the ratio will decrease think technology will narrow the field of knowledge and a supervisor will have less people and less responsibility. No matter what happens, the supervisor will continue to face new challenges. They will have to provide a work environment that will increase motivation and maintain group effectiveness (Crandall 28).

To achieve effectiveness in the work place, supervisors will need an expanded base of technical, human relations, and system knowledge to perform better. This area of new skills needed was

identified almost twenty-seven years ago by Robert Katz. He called them technical, human and conceptual skills (Crandall 29).

SKILLS NEEDED TO BE EFFECTIVE

From Fortune 500 companies to the military, employees across the nation are aggressively building a core of new basic skills in their workers. Many of these skills, such as learning to learn and teamwork, would not have been considered either basic or even necessary a few years ago. The days are gone when a command of the three "R's" is enough to get and keep a job. Today there is a whole range of new skills that employers want their people to possess (Carnavale: The Skills Employers Want 22).

Today's jobs demand skills in reading, writing, and mathematics, but also much more. They want workers with strong foundations of the basic skills that will enable them to learn on the job. Problem solving, listening, negotiating and knowing how to learn are what employers are looking for. Without these skills, the work force including entry level, dislocated and experienced workers,

will have difficulty adapting to change (Solomon: Creativity Training 69).

E.I DuPont de Nemours and Co., Inc. started a study in 1985 to look at innovation and creativity. DuPont has many divisions and mature products. They began to focus on creativity training as part of a renewal process. What they discovered was that creative people and companies are more competitive and profitable. When people are allowed to exercise their creative talents, they are happier, have higher self-esteem and are more productive (Solomon: Creativity Training 69).

DuPont found that they have a very large number of "technical" people resources and that it could use its resources more effectively. Several committees, comprised of people from different areas of knowledge, and used these committees for brainstorming ideas to help solve problems. They found that it was very effective to share knowledge between various groups (70).

This type of interaction between people of various jobs allows them to share similar problems and solutions. Because most problems are not

unique it is often that someone has tackled a similar challenge or knows of a resource (70).

DuPont believes that in the future, a lot of industries will be using the concept of brainstorming to solve problems. According to Janet Rodgers, Research & Development, "It is unbelievable, the efficiency, the reduction in time to accomplish tasks and the amount of money you can save by pooling resources" (69) ... "In the past, the problem was assigned to a small group of people who tried to solve it. The solution depended on each person's field of knowledge" (70).

By opening up the problem to a more diverse group, all members discover state-of-the-art options that are open to them. This greater input generates more ideas than if they were trying to solve it alone (70).

A 1981 study showed Frito-Lay's sales to be leveling off. Instead of using budget cuts to solve the problem, the company asked Creative Thinking Consultant, Min Basacker for help; Frito-Lay saved more than \$500 million during the first six years with the help of the training that she

provided. Dave Morrison, Frito-Lay's group manager attests that there is a direct connection between employees learning and using creative problem solving and profits (Solomon: Creativity Training (69).

Particularly in the U.S., competition on every level is increasing," he says: "Every function in a company is going to have to be more creative to stay competitive. Another, more subtle, but equally important notion is that the work force is getting smarter, if management doesn't give employees more say in the business, it may be hard to retain good employees" (Solomon 68).

Morrison feels that any type of training, creativity included, is a way to get employees thinking. It also sends signals that the employees are a valuable part of the whole company. Morrison believes that while the work force is shrinking, American companies should push employees to the highest level of problem solving and creativity (69).

Alpander (1986), from a sample of 250 Fortune 500 companies, determined the skill content

coverage of supervisors training programs to be (in order) communication, planning, organizing, team building, motivating, training, production control, performance evaluations, and building their influence. Through research it was recognized that linkage and information gathering skills are needed to be successful. However, two-thirds of the program creators emphasized technical skills over conceptual or interactive skills in training. An extensive review of the training literature of supervisors indicated a need for training effective upward and lateral relationships in the organization. But no training programs with these elements could be found (Keys 210).

Bittel and Ramsey discovered that most supervisors were unsure of their ability to work with human relations problems associated with OSHA and employee benefits programs. They were least comfortable with statistics, computers and ideas for improving productivity. They felt they were not part of a management team (Bittel and Ramsey, 1982, 1984).

A joint two year project conducted in 1988 and

1989 by the American Society for Training and Development and the United States Department of Labor researched the area of skills that will be needed for the future. Besides the basic academic skills, employees needed a foundation for building more sophisticated and refined job related skills. These additional skills are: learning to learn, oral communication, listening, problem solving, creative thinking, self esteem, motivation, goal setting, personal and career development, interpersonal skills, teamwork, negotiation, organization effectiveness and leadership (Carnevale: Workplace Basics 21-22).

In 1984, after the break-up of the Bell system, New York Telephone conducted a study to determine the skills needed by all managers to help them become competitive and keep the company strong. They used a two page questionnaire that contained thirty skills they felt were important. The questionnaires were sent to all levels of management. Each skill was explained and the respondents were asked to rate the importance of each skill using a one to five scale (one being low

and five being high). Approximately 3,500 questionnaires were sent out randomly to all departments. 1,947 replies were received. The study found that interpersonal skills, communication, leadership, listening, decision making and coaching, were ranked consistently as the most important needed skills for effective management (McQuigg - Martinetz 69).

New York Telephone developed their new training program around their found results. They felt that the skills needed to be successful needed to be developed at entry level management. New York Telephone decided that all new and existing managers would be required to attend training classes and seminars on these skills (70).

THE NEED FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Education and training are critical not only to individual opportunity, but to the productivity and competitive advantage of companies and the nation as a whole. Learning in school and learning on the job are by far the most important factors

behind economic growth and productivity in this century (Wangel 14 - 15).

The content of training reflects an employee's culture; including the extent to which employees are to be involved in decision-making and the methods used to maintain a productive, informed and satisfied workplace. Most companies emphasize traditional management skills in training. Employer sponsored courses cover topics of basic communication and leadership to company policies and how to conduct performance evaluations (Education Beyond School, Report to the Department of Education, 1980).

New technology has changed the supervisory process. The supervisor has to assume a less aggressive role in managing the work process and a more supportive role in facilitating the work. Hierarchical levels have collapsed, middle and entry level management have combined. Management and non-management personnel are working together in all aspects of operation. This new participative management requires more time spent on dealing with conceptual and human resource issues than ever

before (Wangel 14 - 15).

In the past few years, two changes have come to light in the business environment. First, service-based companies are having severe problems recruiting, hiring and keeping employees. Poorly skilled employees give inferior service, which upsets the customer and, if it continues, leads to the dismissal of the employee. At this point the employer has to start all over again. Employee turnover is expensive and makes good training less affordable (Georges 41).

Good skills don't just happen. Companies known for their excellence such as Disney, Nordstrom, and Hewlett Packard, work at it by training their employees to act and react in certain ways. In addition to providing good service, companies like these realize that good training is less expensive than high turnover, lost customers or bankruptcy (41).

Second, other industries, such as manufacturing and high-tech companies are not experiencing the same recruiting problems due to downsizing. "Downsizing is the process of

restructuring a company to accommodate fewer employees" (42).

Their problem is that because of downsizing there are less managers and supervisors per employee. The result is that more employees are having to act as self-managers. More and more the individual employee needs humanistic skills to handle his or her job. This need to communicate more creates an even bigger problem for existing supervisors, because they also need to learn to improve humanistic skills, but they have to do so quickly (42).

Humanistic or "soft" skills training has risen in significance. Humanistic skills are called "soft" because it is difficult to see tangible changes in behavior. Humanistic skills training builds employees' interpersonal skills, including communication, listening, problem solving, negotiating, human relations, decision making and customer service. These are people skills and organizations are realizing that individuals, not technology make things happen (41).

Successfully influencing other people makes

things happen. Organizations prosper, human productivity increases and long term relationships both inside and out of the company are created. Unfortunately, just offering humanistic skills instruction is not necessarily good training. Senior managers and human resource practitioners who say they don't see any tangible return on investment from humanistic skills training are right. The results are usually vague and rarely become on-the-job-behaviors. Even worse is the fact that the way the skills are taught rarely produces true skills (Georges 41).

The link between skills and opportunity for individuals is powerful and still increasing. Skills influence lifestyles, the type of work a person does, and where it is done. Skills strongly affect what a person learns. About half of the increase in what a person learns throughout their career will be determined by learning in school and on the job. The other half is a mix of opportunity, chosen career, location and chance. A person with earning power can trade knowledge for location, employer or occupation, but a person

without education is very limited. Their choices will be minimal and their earnings low (Carnevale: Learning Enterprise 28).

Education is a particularly good investment in high-tech industries. It prepares the employee for the highly skilled jobs these industries generate. Education produces adaptable employees who can cope with rapid change. It also improves leverage for future learning on the job. Skills learned in school and on the job are complementary. A person with two years of higher education beyond high school has a 20% greater chance of getting training on the job. College graduates have a 50% chance of training on the job over high school graduates. If a person has education beyond four years of college, he or she has a 30% chance for getting on the job training over college graduates (Carnevale 28).

In 1983 a study on employee training in America conducted by Prentice Hall publishing and the American Society for Personnel Administration found that middle and upper managers received 85.5% more training than other employees. Another study

by Knowledge Industries, Inc., said that the average price tag for that training exceeded \$2.2 billion annually (Chris Lee 82).

Researchers Olmstead and Galloway set up to research what employees were getting their investment of cash, time and effort. They found that the training programs were set up to provide:

1. Increased knowledge, awareness and sensitivity to the human element in work situations.

2. Changes in attitudes.

3. Improved problem solving.

4. Interpersonal skills.

They also learned that most training programs had little effect on the on-the-job performance. They believed that the programs were only as good as the upper management support. Under supportive conditions, successful training was accomplished (Chris Lee 82).

In 1987 Fortune 500 companies allowed about 22% of their training budgets for supervisor training. Training topics ranged from how to give performance evaluations to "communicating

effectively", with communication and leadership skills as a major focus for the supervisors training (Carnevale: Management Training 27 - 28).

In terms of training, Jack Zinger, President of Zinger-Miller, Inc. believes we should do away with supervisor training the way we know it. During the 1990's employers will have to drastically change their training. The new emphasis will be on additional training, continual retraining and relearning skills for executive, middle management, supervisors and hourly employees. Interpersonal skills will be needed for all employees. These skills have proved vital to the long term success of quality improvement. Zinger says that if people can not communicate with each other, they cannot serve their customers very well (Wangel 14).

Gordan P. Rabey, a management consultant in Wellington, New Zealand, has a few problems with the supervisory training programs he sees. He feels too many programs are known for their total failure to produce meaningful results for the companies that use them. He thinks that most

managers are being sent to training without really knowing why (Jack Gordon 82).

Rabey suggests that managers ask themselves what skills or attitudes need the attention? What are their companies expectations? What are their performance expectations? What type of commitment are you willing to make to follow-up activities? If these steps are followed supervisory training will have a greater impact. Unfortunately, the majority of training courses use the same pattern and achieve very little (82).

METHODS OF TRAINING

Very few people are as successful in academic settings compared to the number of people who excel in the workplace. Almost anyone is able to learn a job, either by doing it, being coached by peers or bosses, or by attending formal courses. Learning on the job is nothing new. Most people learn on the job, and get ahead by using what they learn (Ramser 18).

Many companies invest considerable resources into training programs, but most employees do not use the training when they get back to the job.

The two main reasons for this are (1) lack of follow-up training, and (2) lack of support from upper management (19).

Supervisory training programs tend to be launched with great expectations. But in most companies the programs die a slow death. The lack of proven results is the killer. Training programs are often structured as a quick-fix, rather than slow development (Edwards 63).

Humanistic skills training is a hit-or-miss proposition, especially when subjects like management, leadership interpersonal communication, and problem solving are the focus. In most training, it is a success if 20% of the people use the techniques they were taught. The remaining 80% might try their new skills a few times, but they return to their old habits. Most people won't stay with any skill that makes them feel fake (Georges 43).

Trainers are less effective at teaching people skills because they are presenting information on a certain behavior instead of a physical skill. Knowing how something is done or describing the

steps used to complete a task is not a skill. It is not what a person does but how well he or she does it that determines the skill. This seems obvious. Skillful performance is rarely taught. Instead, trainees are taught to gain such performance through on-the-job practice. Unfortunately, this is the last place a person wants to look awkward or incompetent (43).

The present content of humanistic skills is too theoretical, psychological and conceptual. Even worse, the methods of training do not produce true skills, this is why the training usually is not used on the job. Most humanistic skills training is taught in a step format. Knowing about how something is done is not a skill. It is not what you do but how well you do it that determines the level of skill. You have skill only when you are able to perform skillfully (Georges: Why Soft Skills Do Not Take 43).

Real skills training involves knowing what trainees need to accomplish. At that point the trainee can present the appropriate skills and what to do with them. Effective training uses simple

words, and as few as possible (Georges: Soft Skills 44).

The trainer should show examples of the whole skill model; then show samples of the smaller skill element. Although videotaped behavior models are great, clear examples also work. The trainer must keep checking the trainee's level of understanding until they really know what to do (44).

In training it should be explained that the steps are not the skill. Make sure trainees understand that true skills rely on how well each step is performed and how well each step is used in skillful performance (44). Drill each element of the skill. The drill is not the same as role-playing each element is drilled until both learner and coach know it is mastered well enough to be successful in real life situations (44).

Finally, when back on the job, the trainer should not rely just on your boss for encouragement and coaching. Help one another and be supportive to those who trained with you (45).

What is the difference between role playing and drilling? Drills are short repetitive

exercises, practicing each step until it is mastered. Role playing takes all steps and puts them into practice at the same time (45).

Drilling is the best way to develop skillfulness. Mastering skills through a series of drills builds confidence. Confidence comes from the knowledge that one does something well and consistently with varied circumstances (45).

When talking about training and training methods, Walt Disney Co., without a doubt is recognized as having one of the best training programs in the world. They have created an in house University at each of their locations to do their training. Their philosophy is that you need to treat employees the same way you would treat a customer. They continually train and reenforce the needed skills for better performance. They assess the skill levels of employees and base additional training on their findings. This is done through consistent communication from every level of employee. They also evaluate their training and make changes when needed (Solomon: How Does Disney Do It 52, 57).

On-the-job coaching is almost always available, and in companies that do not provide formal training, coaching may be their sole source of training. Coaching is generally considered to be the most common delivery method, with the immediate supervisor as coach. The supervisor usually evaluates whether the skills targeted in training actually apply for their workplace. This type of self-evaluation can be either good or bad. The evaluation is based on the experience and education level of their supervisor. A problem with using this type of method is the uncertainty of whether the supervisor from the "old school" of management will be flexible enough to help the employee make the transition to becoming the flexible type managers needed in the future (Carnevale: Training Today 26).

If supervisors are to be effective in the new work environment with its constant technological changes, work force changes, labor law changes, etc., they need to be trained to carry out their supervisory responsibilities. Supervisors who are not trained and highly skilled in humanistic

skills, leadership skills, delegation, planning, motivation, problem solving, etc., are not capable of doing their jobs properly.

With effective training, supervisors could avoid major conflicts and grievances, which cost the company money and time. The cost of training supervisors is nothing compared to the cost of not training them.

Supervisors need special training and that means more than simple, on-the-job training or a watch-what-I-do approach. It means special courses offered by experts and developed for special needs. To do anything less is unfair to the supervisors, the people they manage, and to the welfare of the company.

Regardless of the type of training a supervisor has had, additional insight are always helpful. A supervisory reference manual with some basic information concerning humanistic skills needed to be an effective supervisor along with handbooks on company policies, rules and regulations would be worth the time and effort. The time it would take to read the reference manual

would be time well spent.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND EVALUATION

Sue Mace, the Training and Development Director for Maritz Customer Information Center was asked to evaluate the Telemarketing Field Supervisor's Reference Manual. Sue has a Masters of Science in Communication from Ball State University. She has over ten years of experience in the training and development field. She has been with the Maritz Customer Information Center since it's opening in 1991.

Sue is responsible for the training and development of all the new field supervisors, as well as the part time project supervisors.

Sue also is responsible for coordinating the motivational program used by the Customer Information Center.

Instrument

Sue Mace was contacted personally and the project was explained.

The Telemarketing Field Supervisor's Reference Manual (Appendix A) was given to her at this time. The importance of critical honesty was stressed. Any additional comments or suggestions for improvement were requested to help improve the manual.

Materials

The purpose of writing a Supervisor's Reference Manual was to provide needed information for the Telemarketing Field Supervisor. Most field supervisors receive little training before starting their first project. The skills that a good field supervisor needs are often referred to as humanistic skills. These skills are seldom taught yet are probably the most needed to be an effective supervisor.

Most supervisors are promoted because they have the technical skills to do the job. They are usually very knowledgeable in the technical skills needed for their job, but lack the supervisory skills needed to be an effective leader. This manual is not intended to be a teaching manual, nor

should it replace classroom training. This manual is strictly a reference manual to help the supervisor recognize the skills they need to be effective, better utilize their existing skills and help them learn new skills. This manual is designed for use by both new and experienced supervisors.

The Supervisor's Reference Manual contains information on several of the needed skills of an effective supervisor. This manual starts with an introduction and has six chapters. The introduction explains the needs for humanistic skills. Field supervisors have a great deal of responsibility and must have a good basic knowledge of humanistic skills to be effective. They should be willing to improve their skills as well as learn new ones. Every supervisor should make a self evaluation and work on the areas and skills that need improving.

The six chapters describe skills that are most needed for telemarketing supervisors. Chapter one deals with motivation. Most discussions of employee motivation begin with some theory of human

behavior. There is a great amount of research that supports the fact that most employees believe and do what is expected of them. Expectations have a significant impact on the behaviors of others. As a supervisor trying to motivate others, we have to examine our own beliefs about people, because these beliefs set the limits for our success.

There is an enormous amount of research on employee motivation. One of the more famous and controversial is the works of Herzberg. Herzberg's theory is discussed in this Chapter. His theory points out several different factors that have an impact on the affect of motivation.

There are several areas that a telemarketing supervisor can use to maintain motivation. Making the work more interesting, providing feedback, and allowing more impact can definitely increase motivation among telemarketers. Employees are more likely to work harder if they feel that they are contributing to the success of the project or center as a whole.

Chapter Two discusses listening. Listening is the cornerstone of communication. It is a needed

skill that can be taught and developed, but it is often neglected and taken for granted. As a child you have been taught to read, write and speak, but most likely you were never taught to listen. It is assumed that if you pass a hearing test you can understand what was said.

These assumptions have caused many problems in human relations. We can hear and not listen, and we can listen and not understand. A good supervisor has to develop and learn to use good listening skills.

Chapter Three deals with communication in great detail. Communication is very important. It has been said that communication is one of man's greatest problems. Many of the problems supervisors deal with can be tracked to misunderstanding, misinterpretation, overstatement or half-truths. Poor communication will always cause problems.

There are two elements present when people communicate: the information to be covered and the atmosphere or tone that accompanies what is said. The climate of communication is created by the way



we interact with one another, the way we behave. Interaction can be either positive or negative. Good supervisors need to know what causes a positive or negative climate. This will greatly assist them when dealing with their employees.

Chapter Four talks about the ability to learn. Learning from failure can be very costly. Oftentimes we don't take the chance of doing something new or different because we might fail. But by not doing things differently we often miss out on the opportunity to learn. To increase skills and knowledge one must be willing to make changes. A person needs to evaluate the experience and draw conclusions. To learn, one has to do, by continually evaluating a persons efforts, they can be improved for the next time.

Chapter Five discusses influence. Influence is the ability to affect a situation by indirect or intangible means. Two skills that affect the ability to influence are (1) asking for what is wanted and (2) developing the ability to say "no". Influence cannot be precisely measured, but it is very important to understand the effects of

influence. This is founded on personal abilities, because without it, others can push you aside.

The final Chapter, Chapter Six is divided into three parts: counseling, coaching and feedback. These three skills are important to a telemarketing supervisor. As Shakespeare said, "All the world's a stage, and people play many roles."

Counseling involves helping a person solve a personal or work related problem that doesn't seem to have a clear cut solution. Those steps that are involved are covered in detail.

Coaching is an extremely vital skill for a telemarketing supervisor. It is the responsibility of the field supervisor to improve their employee's performance and coaching is the key to helping them accomplish this task.

Feedback can be constructive or destructive. It is very important for feedback to be given in a constructive manner. A Supervisor shouldn't fall into the trap of giving a person feedback to make them look good, to appear better or more intelligent than the other person, or to hurt and embarrass another person.

(Monitoring and performance reviews fall into this category, but are not discussed in this Chapter. Each company works with these reviews differently. Supervisors must understand their company's procedures.)

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Mace liked the idea of combining several needed humanistic skills into one reference manual. She said that "Every new and experienced supervisor can use help on the "personal" aspects of supervising." She also felt that many experienced supervisors have had real experiences and perhaps have attended class, but re-enforcement on these subjects is always helpful.

She felt that after several years of training supervisors, supervisors can never get enough re-enforcement when it comes to dealing with people issues.

She also felt that the manual would be very beneficial for a new supervisor because he or she has very little of this information readily available to them. She felt that the skills covered in the manual were probably the most important parts of telemarketing supervision, but they often go ignored.

As an experienced Training Director, most of the information provided was not new to her.

However, she felt that it was important that each supervisor review such material again and again.

She felt that most of the areas were well covered and that the information was useful. The manual presented a good foundation for humanistic development. She also felt that perhaps it would help experienced supervisors find a new solution to old problems.

Mace liked the fact that the manual was presented in an orderly manner with basic terms.

The one thing she would have liked to have seen were some case studies. She would have liked to see the skills applied to the various situations, as well as all the possible outcomes discussed.

Sue felt that overall the manual would be helpful to both new and experienced supervisors. She felt that everyone could learn from the new approaches and strengthen their skills.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Limitations

One of the key limitations encountered on this project was the lack of current research on the need for humanistic skills and the over abundance of information on the different types of skills. All the research showed that there is a definite need for people skills and a humanistic approach, but there was very limited information to back up their research.

In evaluating this manual, Sue Mace was very knowledgeable in the areas of supervision theory, but more input would have been very useful. The number of evaluators should have been increased to include some of the different levels of experienced and inexperienced field supervisors. Male and female viewpoints would have given a broader insight to the necessity of humanistic skills from the male and female perspective.

The manual discussed several skills, but could have included more. The scope of the project could have gotten out of control, but including a few

more of the vital skills needed would have been an asset. Performance evaluation preparation would have been a good skill to include in the manual. Although, this is handled uniquely in every company, the basics should be the same.

Future Research

A good idea for future research would be to actually implement the manual and evaluate its effectiveness. This could possibly be done by giving the manual to small groups of new on-the-job supervisors, give the manual to a control group of supervisors, or set up a test using control group of new supervisors.

Once the manual was put into use, the strengths and weaknesses would become apparent. It would also allow the supervisors to evaluate the information in more detail. This information would strongly improve on the quality of the manual. More input from the different supervisors would provide information on skills that could be added or deleted. This would increase the strength and usage of the manual.

Another suggestion would be to have more

training personnel look at the manual from the training perspective. This would add credibility to the need for such a manual. The input from this type of evaluation would judge the validity and usability of the information in the manual versus what is actually being taught.

A different approach would be to narrow the manual to only focus on a couple of skills and expand on the information given. The manual could be personalized to target a certain problem area or areas. This focus could increase the information presented to include real life situations, as well as various ways of solving them.

Humanistic skills is a fascinating subject with numerous possibilities for study. Just getting the field supervisors to realize the importance of humanistic skills is a primary concern. Supervision is an interesting position to be in and learning as much as possible about a job can only improve morale, working conditions and the productivity of a department.

Appendix A

TELEMARKETING FIELD SUPERVISORS
REFERENCE MANUAL

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INTRODUCTION

Telemarketing field supervisors must have conceptual skills. They must be able to conceptualize the technical and human aspects of work. They also need interpersonal skills. Knowing individual needs and organization needs alone is not sufficient. They need to know how to put them together. They need to know how to approach people. Good supervisors must recognize that each person is unique, and must develop a personal relationship and approach to handling interactions with each person that enhances rather than detracts from their desire to cooperate. Supervisors must know how to tell people that they are not performing up to standard as well as how to tell people when they have met or exceeded standards. Interpersonal skills require knowledge of human behavior, maturity, and sensitivity.

Field supervisors must also be effective communicators. They have to be able to sell their ideas to upper management, their peers, and their employees. Field supervisors usually have more

responsibility than authority, so to accomplish goals over the long run, they need to be able to influence people to do things voluntarily rather than ordering compliance.

Strong supervisors must possess many skills and have to learn to play many roles to be effective. These skills range over a very large spectrum; communication, leadership, listening motivation and coaching/training.

The roles a field supervisor has to play range from friend, coach, counselor, to disciplinarian. These different roles can be difficult for a supervisor depending upon the skills they possess and the level of competency they have in a particular skill. Mishandled situations can be devastating for the employee as well as the supervisor. It is very important that a field supervisor have the skill knowledge to effectively manage their department.

A supervisor can no longer have the "do what I say, no discussions wanted" attitude that was ingrained in supervisors in the past, if he or she wants to be effective.

Management is defined as "the process of achieving results through others." This puts telemarketing supervisors in a unique and challenging situation because the results they need to obtain depend on other people. If a field supervisor is to be effective, he or she must understand people, job requirements and work environments. He or she must understand what motivates people and to what extent they are motivated.

As you embark on your career as a Supervisor you have to ask yourself, What type of supervisor do I want to be? You have to remember the definition of management, "obtaining results from others." Once you have made your choice, it is up to you to grow with that choice. To grow as a strong supervisor you have to improve and learn new skills. Many times the choice you make may or may not fit in with the current methods, you have to decide how strongly you feel about your choice. Hopefully, your choice is one that will make you a better, more effective supervisor; and will show that you respect and trust people to do their jobs

well.

To be an effective supervisor, you have to continually improve your skill levels and learn new skills. This is important to you as a supervisor so you can continue to be effective and to get the results that you want and need. Many supervisors do not feel that they need to improve themselves or their subordinates. This attitude will defeat you in the long run. Not only will you lose the trust and respect of the people who work for you, but you will lose the trust and respect of your peers and those in upper management.

Telemarketing supervisors have a lot of responsibility and need to have a better grasp of the skills needed to be an effective supervisor. This manual is setup to help field supervisors build on the skills they have and to learn new ones. Each of you has to be honest with yourself, and determine where you need help.

CHAPTER 1

MOTIVATION

"The Greatest motivation is achieved when the employee perceives his work and output as having meaning, worth, dignity, and status" (Robert Ford).

The age old question is "How can people be motivated to high levels of performance?" Each individual has his or her own motivations and no single, simple pattern fits everyone. The good news is that, within this constraint, research and experience have provided much insight concerning the motivation to work. What follows here is a summary of some of the more important ideas and research, and a synthesis of its practical application.

Most discussions of employee motivation begin with some theory of human behavior. Both research and everyday experience indicate that managers' beliefs and expectations have a significant effect on their ability to motivate others (Blanchard 25).

Most employees tend to believe and do what they are expected to. Why is that so? The answer is neither complicated nor mystical. If you

believe a thing to be true, you will act as if it is true. Others (people you want to motivate) see your behavior and tend to respond as you have anticipated. Most of us already know this from our own experience, but there is an enormous amount of research to support the fact that people's expectations have a significant impact on the behavior of others. The fact that expectations are so important gives rise to some vital truisms about motivation. Consider the following statements:

- You must really believe in a person in order for him or her to succeed (or for you to succeed in motivating them) (25-26).
- If you believe strongly that a person is a failure, the chances are high that he or she will fail.
- You should never lower your true standards to the person; you should raise the person to your standards.
- Before you give up on a person, you should remember that you may be a significant cause of that person's failures.
- Everything you do communicates your beliefs about

people.

- If you really believe strongly that you are a winner, then you and your employees will very likely be winners (Levinson 48).

As telemarketing supervisors trying to motivate others, we need to examine our important beliefs about people, because these beliefs set the limits of our success. There are volumes of research on employee motivation. One of the more famous and controversial theories of motivation came out of the work of Frederick Herzberg. Herzberg contends that "job satisfaction (and high levels of motivation) and dissatisfaction (and low levels of motivation) are not opposites. The opposite of job satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but no satisfaction. The opposite of dissatisfaction is not satisfaction, but not dissatisfaction" (Bowsher).

The significance of the distinction between satisfaction and dissatisfaction is that each tends to be caused by different sets of factors in the work situation. One set of factors (motivators) tend to affect satisfaction, motivation and

performance above satisfactory levels. A second set of factors (hygiene) tends to affect dissatisfaction, motivation and performance below and up to satisfactory levels.

SATISFIERS. The things that have the greatest effect on satisfaction, motivation, and performance above satisfactory levels are achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and growth, and advancement (Broadwell 47).

- **Achievement**

Achievement refers to doing something well. It means such things are completing a job successfully, solving problems, seeing the outcome of one's work, and seeing the outcome of situations that can be thought of as being good or bad.

- **Recognition**

Recognition refers to valid feedback on performance-praise or blame for the outcome of achievement situations. Recognition can be positive or negative, but to be motivating, it must be deserved

recognition.

- **The Work Itself**

The work itself refers to the nature of the work being done and whether it is interesting to the person doing it. Work that people see as interesting, varied, and challenging tends to be motivating; work seen as dull, routine, and uninteresting produces little motivation to perform at high levels.

- **Responsibility**

Responsibility refers to accountability for work or for increased accountability. Responsibility and increases in responsibility tend to have a motivating effect on most people.

- **Growth and Advancement**

Growth and advancement refers to upward movement in the organization and to opportunities to grow in ability.

The important point is that the satisfiers have their greatest effect on employee motivation and performance from satisfactory levels to high

levels. If the motivators are present, employees are likely to be highly motivated. If the satisfiers are not present, employees are not necessarily highly dissatisfied; they are just not satisfied. As a result, they are likely to perform only at satisfactory levels (47-49).

HYGIENE. The factors that have the greatest effect on dissatisfaction and motivation to perform below and up to satisfactory levels are salary, company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relations, and working condition (47-49).

- **Salary**

Salary refers to pay that employees receive for doing the job and to expectations about pay increases. It should be kept in mind that when pay and pay increases are seen as achievement and as recognition for achievement, they can result in satisfaction and motivation.

- **Company Policy and Administration**

Company policy and administration refers to the adequacy of the organization's

policies, including such things as authority delegation, personnel policy, and fringe benefits.

- **Supervision**

Supervision refers to the technical competency of the employee's boss.

- **Interpersonal Relations**

Interpersonal relations refer to how well employees get along with their boss and co-workers.

- **Working Conditions**

Working conditions refer to the actual physical conditions under which the job is done.

Both the motivation and hygiene factors influence performance, therefore, both are important to employee motivation. Based on Herzberg's theories and additional research, some important conclusions about the motivation to perform prevail. Employees will be motivated to perform to the degree that they:

- Are kept fully informed about what is

happening and are allowed to participate in decisions

- Are aware of their authority and its limits, and understand the "why" of their task
- Understand how their job relates to others in the department and how their department relates to other departments
- Truly understand the specific results expected of them
- Are told when and where their performance is exceptional
- Are told when and where their performance is poor
- Feel the work they are doing is worthwhile and is a contribution to the organization
- Feel their awards are just
- Feel their boss recognizes their work and makes it known to others
- Feel their boss has a personal interest in them as individuals
- Feel their boss believes in them and supports their progress

To maintain motivation several things can be

done: provide interesting work, give people a sense of direction, provide daily feedback, allow participation, and be concerned and supportive (Bowsher 21).

Some work is inherently more interesting and engaging than other work. For example, in one automobile factory, management sought to make the work more interesting by allowing teams of workers to shift jobs over the course of a workday. The results were higher productivity, better quality, and lower absenteeism. Job enrichment programs attempt to utilize the motivational aspects of work by providing additional challenge and stimulation to workers, thereby reducing tedium. Finding out who on your staff enjoys what, and then spreading the desirable assignments around, could increase motivation. Clearly, this should not be the sole criteria for work assignments, but it certainly could be one factor (21-22).

If people know where they are going, they are more likely to get there. And if everyone is pulling in the same direction, individual efforts will enhance each other rather than impede one

another. A mission statement or goal serves these ends, but it has an even more important function: people tend to be motivated to work with dedication when they take pride in what they're doing. They like to feel that they are contributing in some way to improving the quality of life, and that they are part of the solution rather than part of the problem (21-22).

One reason why sports are so engaging is that we get immediate feedback on our performance. When I hit a golf shot, I know right away whether I hit a good shot or a bad one. In bowling, the difference between a strike and a gutter ball is immediately apparent. That's a big part of the excitement and fun. The supervisors who wish to motivate better performance need to provide daily feedback, if possible.

Allowing participation, in many respects, is just common sense. Think about it. When are you generally more motivated: When you are given instructions and expected to carry them out or when you have been one of the decision-makers? There's evidence that, in the former situation, people tend

to obey with very little enthusiasm. They may even sabotage the task, knowingly or otherwise. In contrast, people who participate in decisions tend to feel responsible for their success and are motivated. This is not an argument for letting people at all levels participate in all decisions. It is, however, an argument for allowing people opportunities to influence their destiny and be important (22).

There are leaders for whom some people would willingly jump off a cliff. Leadership has a vast potential for motivation. Good leader/follower relationships with mutual respect, mutual concern, openness to ideas, health conflict, feedback, warmth, humor, and honesty inspire motivation. Whatever is involved, when the relationship in question is with one's boss, the motivation implication is large. In view of the linkage of good work relationships with high performance, field supervisors need to nurture their relationships with everyone in their charge. They need to spend as much time and effort in cultivating good work relations as they devote to

other work responsibilities (Coblentz 78-79).

Motivation to perform on the job involve diverse sources, however, there are some common practical determinants of motivation. In general, people are motivated to the degree that they feel that they have worthwhile work to do, that means they have the opportunity to influence the things that affect them, and that they get specific feedback on their performance, and feel support and caring.

Implementation of these conclusions is more a process of piecing together many small things than it is of unlocking and unleashing the motivational Pandora's box. In fact, much of it is common sense that most telemarketing supervisors already know.

CHAPTER 2

LISTENING

Listening is a cornerstone in the area of communication skills. It is a skill that can be taught and developed, but is often taken for granted. Miscommunication, due to ineffective listening, costs millions of dollars in wasted time and energy. There is often a huge discrepancy between what we mean to communicate, and the message that is received or understood by the receiver or vice versa. It is important to look at this skill and determine how we can improve our listening ability (UNISYS: Cause for Listening).

It may be a little embarrassing to admit that we have some deficiencies in listening, but we do have an excuse. How many of us were ever really taught to listen? You are taught to read, write, and speak, but at no time was there a class offered to teach you how to listen.

Except for counselors and people in the field of psychotherapy, the art of listening has been overlooked in all professions. Listening has been taken for granted. As children we had hearing

tests and if we passed it was assumed we knew how to listen. It also has been assumed that if you listen, you will also understand what was said. Both of these assumptions have caused several problems in human relationships. We can hear and not listen and we can listen and not understand. This happens all of the time.

Listening for understanding can be difficult. Along with not being taught to listen there are several barriers that also get in our way. Some of these barriers are:

- Other sounds and noises
- The other's appearance
- Personal preferences and biases
- Nonverbal mannerisms
- Speed of delivery (slow or fast)
- Accents
- Feelings about the matter being discussed
- Status of other person
- Your interest in the topic
- Wanting to interrupt

When you add these barriers as well as several others, along with our lack of training, it's a wonder we listen as well as we do (20-23).

There are a number of things we can do to improve our listening skills. One tool you can use is the listening check. It is any easy technique. This is simply a restatement of the other person's message in your own words. By making this listening check, you can be assured that you have the message correct, or if you misunderstood, to have the misunderstanding cleared up before you start work on a project.

Listening checks are important when the outcome of the communication is crucial. It is also extremely helpful in conflict situations where there may be strong differences of opinions. A lot of time, energy, and emotions can be spent on misunderstood points of view. A listening check makes you listen to the opposing view in order to understand it. Then when you answer, you will be addressing the real issue and not a different topic. You don't have to agree with the other person, but it shows them you are willing to listen

to their point of view.

Listening checks are also helpful when speaking on the phone. The inability to see the person you are talking to increases the difficulty in listening and understanding. You need to make it a point to summarize the major points of the conversation before hanging up to make sure you are on the same track as the other person (23).

Listening is an important communication skill that is often overlooked. As a telemarketing supervisor, you need to develop and use good listening skills. When listening checks are used appropriately and effectively, it can increase understanding and reduce the amount of time and energy needed to undo the consequences of poor listening. The listening check is easy to use and will become even easier with practice.

Communication and Productivity-Items of Interest

- We spend approximately 80 percent of our waking hours in some form of communication.
- The average worker spends approximately 50 percent of his/her day communicating. Salespersons, support staff personnel and top level management may be involved in communication for 75 percent or more of their work day.
- Success in business is 85 percent dependent on effective communication and interpersonal skills.
- Time spent in communication activities is estimated as 9 percent in writing, 16 percent in reading, 30 percent is speaking, and 45 percent in listening.
- Approximately 80 percent of the message is distorted as it travels from the top of an organization throughout the ranks.
- Seventy percent of mistakes made in a work place are attributed to ineffective communication.
- Approximately 75 percent or more of the message is communicated nonverbally and in the tone of voice (Freston 67-70).

CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNICATION

It has been said that, "Communication is man's greatest problem." It's certainly true that misunderstanding, misinterpretation, overstatement, half-truths, and innuendos can often be found at the base of many problems between humans. In fact, managers and supervisors consistently rank communication high on the list of serious management problems. In a national survey of husbands and wives, poor communication was identified as the major problem in the relationship. It's apparent that unclear communication is an extremely common practice that often gets us into trouble (67).

Whenever people get together to communicate with one another, two factors are always present. First there is some sort of content to be covered: instructions, news, gossip, ideas, reports, evaluations, etc. All of us are familiar with the content of communication because it is the most obvious factor, and we deal with it every day (67).

The second factor that is always present when

people get together to communicate is the atmosphere or feeling tone that accompanies what is said or communicated. This atmosphere is called the "Communication Climate" (68).

Communication Climate is in some respects similar to physical climate. The physical climate impacts us in many ways. When it is cold, we wear warm clothes. When it is raining, we wear protective covering. We often enjoy bright, sunny weather, and it is not uncommon for weather conditions to affect our mood.

Communication climate affects us also. It can be either positive or negative. When the communication climate is positive, it is easier to communicate, solve problems, reach decisions, express thoughts and feelings. It makes working and dealing with other people more pleasant and productive. Just by reflecting on our own personal experience, we know this to be true. We have often been in locations where we have felt comfortable and at ease -- a favorite restaurant, someone's home. We normally want to return to these places. We have also been in locations where the climate

has been negative. In these instances, we feel uncomfortable, uneasy, less open. We do not enjoy attempting to communicate or do business in a negative climate (69).

Communication climate is real; it does exist, and it affects the way we work with, and relate to other people. This climate is created by the way we interact with each other the way we behave. Since it is caused by our behavior, it can be managed. We can make choices about the climate we want to create.

When two people interact, both are responsible for the climate that is created. If we know the kinds of behaviors that create negative climates and the kinds that create positive climates, we can affect the climate that exists, even when the other person is not aware of what we are doing. For example, picture a salesperson in a department store who has put in some extra hours and is short with a customer. The customer, instead of getting nasty, simply says, "You seem to be having a rough day." The salesperson may respond with a list of complaints and then is normally more helpful and

friendlier to the customer. The customer decided to manage the communication climate and tried to change it from negative to positive. We do not have to be at the mercy of a negative climate. We might not always be successful in changing the climate, but we can at least try.

There are behaviors that tend to create a positive climate and behaviors that tend to create a negative one. The following behaviors tend to create a positive climate for field supervisors as they interact with others. A positive climate is created when a supervisor:

- Gives Full attention
- Offers a Friendly greeting
- Listens attentively
- Attempts to be helpful in concrete, specific ways
- Gets out from behind the desk
- Does not appear to be hurried
- Is sincere
- Is open and honest
- Gives good eye contact

Negative climates are by created supervisors

when they:

- Are insecure
- Keep looking at their watch
- Discount the problem and/or person
- Speak condescendingly
- Allow interruptions
- Continue to read or write
- Change the topic of discussion
- Refuse to respond

These are just a few of the behaviors that can create positive or negative climates. All of us **have done or do some** of the things from both lists. The point is this: The climate is established early in our interactions, and because of the press of business, the initial climate may be negative. When this happens, communication slows down and sometimes relationships between people become damaged. On a personal level, married people often seek counseling or divorce. In business, we tend to avoid the people who create negative climates. It is in our best interest, both personally and professionally, to know how to create and maintain a positive communication climate (68-70).

Positive communication climates are not "soft". The behavior listed in the positive column are neither "soft" nor "hard" behaviors. For example, we can terminate people in a positive or negative climate. The difference is that, in a positive climate, people just leave; in a negative climate, they leave and speak ill of the management and the company (69-70).

We can say "no" or "yes" in either climate. Saying "yes" in a negative climate may come across as insincere or sarcastic. We can say "no" in a positive climate, and the other person may not feel better, but they know they were heard, understood and respected as a person even though their request was denied. Don't confuse positive climate with soft, easy, "nice guy" behavior. You can be a firm field supervisor and still operate in a positive, productive way, and be much more productive than a supervisor who constantly creates a negative climate and justifies their behavior by holding that a good supervisor must be "tough". Telemarketing supervisors who create negative climates tend to have high turnover in their

departments and friendships.

By becoming more aware of the communication climate we create, we may learn that some of our behavior creates negative climates, though our clear intention was to be positive and helpful. This can be very valuable learning. Soliciting feedback from others on how our behavior is impacting them and others can also be helpful. As a telemarketing field supervisor, anything we want to accomplish can be done more effectively in a positive communication climate.

Once we understand how the climate can affect how we communicate, we then need to learn how to handle the verbal side of communication. Interpersonal communication is a multifaceted, complex process about which much has been written. Two aspects of communication are Direct and Indirect communications. Direct Communication is generally more risky, but is it also more powerful, effective, and personally rewarding. Indirect communication tends to be safer, but it is also less powerful, less effective and more easily misinterpreted. Most researchers tend to be biased

toward direct communication, but there are situations where indirect communication would be appropriate. In learning the differences between direct and indirect communication, conscious choices can be made about how you communicate (Geildstein 76).

We are all born with a tendency toward directness. Babies cry when they are hungry, smile when they are happy, and scream when they are angry. Younger children say exactly what they think regardless of the heartwarming or devastating result it produces. You rarely have to guess about how they feel, what their opinions are, or their reactions to a situation.

At a fairly early age, direct communication/behavior begins to give way to indirect. Indirect communication is learned behavior. Children learn from family and friends that communicating directly is not always safe or acceptable. They learn to be polite and tactful, and during that process, they become skillful at indirect communication (77).

INDIRECT COMMUNICATION

Indirect communication is so widely used and accepted that we don't even realize we are being indirect. Here are some common forms of indirect communication.

Pseudo-Questions

Questions are perhaps one of the more abused types of communications. As a communication form, questions are a legitimate way of asking for information from another person. When used for this purpose, questions are an appropriate form of direct communication. However, questions are often used indirectly not to seek information, but to disguise some other conscious purpose. For this reason they are referred to as a false question or pseudo-questions. Consider the following types of questions (Co-Operative, Set-Up/Gotcha, Projection, Deflection, Second-Guessing, and Talking about people) and their purposes. The real intent in each case is not information seeking, but disguising or toning down our own opinion or punishing another person (77).

A. Co-Operative Questions

The co-operative question indirectly states our own opinion and pushes the other person to agree with us. The speaker is not seeking real information. The "question's" veiled purpose is to state an opinion and seek agreement. Although these types of questions take many forms, the following are typical:

"Don't you think that...?"

"Wouldn't it be great if...?"

"Don't you agree that...?"

"Haven't you wanted to...?"

B. Set-up Questions/Gotcha Questions

At one time or another we have all been on the receiving end of a set-up or gotcha question. We can see them coming from a mile away, and their purpose (at least on the receiving end) is clear. (It doesn't take genius to realize that these aren't requests for information; they are questions that set other people up "for the kill.") Some of the more commonly used forms are:

"Is it fair to say..?"

"If you were doing this.."

"Would you agree that..?"

"Didn't you say that..?"

"Weren't you the one who..?"

C. Projection

As an indirect method of communication, projection occurs when we attribute our thoughts or feelings to other people. In essence, it amounts to speaking for someone else. Projection is a way to indirectly state our own opinion by attributing it to other people (77-78). Some of the more common forms are:

"People ate too much lunch, and now they are sleepy."

"The company doesn't like that attitude."

"We are all in agreement."

"The company doesn't like that."

D. Deflection

Deflection indirectly changes the subject without appearing to do so intentionally. The speaker picks out a word or phrase from the conversation and changes the subject to a more comfortable topic. Although deflection can be a useful survival technique at cocktail parties, it

is devastating to meetings and does little to build relationships (80).

A typical deflection conversation might proceed as follows:

Person A: "Tom is spending too much time running at lunch."

Person B: "Some people have really become obsessed with running."

Person C: "Say, did you see the guy who won the marathon this weekend?"

E. Second-Guessing

This potentially dangerous form of indirect communication allows speculation about the other person's motives or intentions. Second-guessing or motive-guessing frequently will draw a defensive response in the other person.

These statements often makes the speaker's true feelings of anger or disagreement based on other issues that haven't been dealt with. We are all familiar with this tactic:

"What you really mean is.."

"What you are trying to do is.."

Hypothetical Questions

These types of questions are most often ways of subtly disagreeing with someone without stating a position directly. In many cases these questions are just a way of saying, "I don't believe that would work in these circumstances." For example:

"What if...?"

"Would that work if you had...?"

Punitive Questions

Probably the most flagrant misuse of questions is when they are used to punish the other person. Clearly these types of questions are not requests for information; their intention is to punish or misuse a command. Examples of these types are:

"When are you going to ...?"

"Did you do that?"

Think for a moment about these methods of indirect communication. All are disguised, "watered down," or misleading methods of communicating personal opinions and intentions. These communication methods seem less risky to the

speaker, but they are also less influential, less powerful, and certainly less explicit. They are risky because they are ambiguous and more vulnerable to misinterpretation.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION

Direct communication attempts to convey to another person accurately and openly what we are thinking and feeling. We communicate directly making our own statements, speaking to people, and practicing listening checks (Listening Chapter 2). Whatever our intention, we will be more influential if we speak directly. In doing so, many misunderstandings will be eliminated. Five basic steps need to be followed to help you speak directly; speak to people, make "I" statements, avoid "we", "People", "you", "it", own your feelings, don't project, and practice listening checks (Kotter: Power in Management). Examples of direct communication follow.

A. Speak to People

Look at and speak directly to the person concerned. Speaking directly to the person has a significantly greater impact than speaking around

that persons or speaking in general. Acknowledge the individual rather than saying:

"Bill has a good idea," or "Joan's idea just won't work."

say

"Bill, I like your idea," or "Joan, I don't think your plan will work."

B. Make "I" Statements

Sometimes in our lives we learned to avoid using "I". We learned to use "we", "people", "you", (in general), or "it". It is much more powerful to use "I", because we are clearly speaking for ourselves. "We" is appropriate if you are indeed representing a consensus. If the statement of opinion is yours, use "I".

C. Own your Own Feelings

Speak for yourself and own your feelings, rather than projecting them onto others. For example, say "I am bored" rather than "people are bored." If you feel that way, but are speculating about other people, make sure you identify your statement as a guess. You could say, "I am bored,

and I think others are too."

D. Practice Listening Checks

Listening can facilitate direct communication. Make "listening checks" feedback to the other person a substantive summary of what you heard. Listening checks will help you to avoid second-guessing, keep you on the topic, and prevent deflection.

Direct communication offers greater clarity and less chance for misinterpretation than do indirect methods. More powerful and influential because of its vulnerability, direct communication is riskier because it highlights differences of opinion and creates opportunities for people having to deal with issues in a forthright manner. However, direct communication has also the potential to create and build relationships based on openness, mutual trust, and respect (33-34).

The majority of researchers are in favor of direct communication. In no way do they advocate avoidance of indirect methods altogether. They believe you should be aware of your options and make your choices with full knowledge of the

consequences. In some cases, direct communication is simply too risky; they do not advocate martyrdom. Nor do they believe direct communication is necessary if you do not intend to build a relationship with the other person. However, in most working and personal relationships, direct communication is more effective because it leaves less room for the misunderstandings that can create serious problems (33-34).

CHAPTER FOUR
LEARNING TO LEARN

Good supervision is based on specific skills; skills that have to be learned. Learning to supervise more effectively is a matter of improving on skills we already have and/or learning new skills. Many of us have heard or even said that, "Experience is the best teacher." This may or may not be necessarily true. Experience can be a good teacher when people have "learned to learn" from their experiences but most people do not really learn from their experiences (Del Grazio: Building Curriculum That Works 58-59).

In the real world, learning from failures can be very costly. Many times we do not take the risk of doing something different because we might fail. By not doing anything differently, we often do not learn as much as we could. To increase your skills levels, you have to be willing to take some risks.

Normally when we have a bad experience our tendency is to forget it. When we have a good experience we enjoy it but, normally do not learn much from it.

Learning from our experiences requires several things. First it requires that we consciously reflect on the experience and draw conclusions about what we did. Then we must decide how we can use what we learned. We then must take what was learned and use it again. To learn something you have to do something, you have to critique your efforts and decide how you can improve it the next time around. We then "practice" again and hopefully continue to get better (59-60).

CHAPTER FIVE

INFLUENCE

Managing effectively depends on the ability to influence other people. Everyone has the potential and the ability to effectively influence others. The more skillful you are in influencing others, the more effective you can be as a manager (Bell: *Influencing: Marketing the Ideas That Matter*).

One essential skill for effective influence is asking for what you want vulnerably. "Vulnerably" simply means disclosing the true importance of the request, putting the actual stakes on the table. For example, it is one thing to casually ask your boss for the day off; it is quite another to explain that your wife and baby are coming home from the hospital. The second is a more powerful request because there is more to lose. It would hurt more to be told no, that is the vulnerability; but it is far more likely to be granted. This is the power of vulnerability (19).

Ask for what you want. Don't leave it to guess work, it may never be guessed. If we hint around, the hint may never be caught. Our best

chance of getting what we want is to simply ask for it. Asking for it does not guarantee you will get it, but it increases your chances significantly over not asking. As your average of getting what you want increases, you can get things in your life to be more the way you would like it.

The second skill of influences is learning to say "no". If you can't say "no", you are at the mercy of other people's requests, no matter how disruptive or unreasonable it makes your life. Not saying no can create resentment and could easily hurt a relationship (21).

If you value the relationship, you would rather the person say "no" if they meant "no" and say "yes" when they mean "yes". Saying "no" need not be regarded as inconsiderate or punitive. If done gracefully, "no" can be received as validating and supportive. Being able to say "no" protects your time, energy, and resources to invest in what matters most to you. It is the foundation of personal power because without it, you allow other people's priorities to shove yours aside on a regular basis (21).

CHAPTER SIX

DEVELOPING

It is every supervisor's responsibility to see that those who work for him/her are fully capable of performing the required tasks. Achieving results through others means that people must have the skills and abilities required to reach the stated goals. This necessitates developing. Developing is a continual activity that can take many forms, and it is a vital part of managing (Carnevale 35).

Developing is a four-step process. It begins with analysis of the task to be performed. What does the task require and what are the performance standards for the task? Based on this data, the second step in developing is assessment of the individual's abilities and potential. Specific development needs arise from discrepancies between requirements and abilities. The important third step in developing is the assignment of tasks. Broadly conceived, task assignments include giving instructions, designing jobs, and delegating. The final step in the development process is what most

supervisors associate with the word "training". It includes such activities as instructing, modeling, evaluating, and correcting. In summary, the training sequence attempts to insure that people have the ability to do the job assigned to them.

Performance of the developing process requires particular skills. Analyzing tasks obviously requires analytical skills; assessing ability, and potential requires sensing skills; assigning tasks involves a range of contracting and negotiating skills. The developing skills required for the fourth step include teaching, giving feedback, reviewing performance, coaching, counseling and confronting. It is the fourth step that will be dealt with in this chapter (35-37).

Part I: Counseling

To paraphrase Shakespeare. "All the world's a stage, and people play many roles." This statement applies to managing successfully in business today. Telemarketing supervisors must function in many capacities, not any easy task; and most of us have to learn to achieve versatility.

Counseling others and helping them solve their problems represents a very important managerial responsibility. Even though being a professional counselor requires extensive training, most supervisors can provide help by learning the skills necessary to genuinely assist those who ask for it.

As a managerial technique, counseling involves helping another person solve a personal or job-related problem that does not have a clear-cut answer. It is most often initiated by the other person. By its nature, counseling is not something that supervisors often initiate. As a skill, counseling should be something a good supervisor can do when called on (Phillips 46).

Supervisors sometimes question whether counseling is a legitimate role for them to play and whether they are qualified to do so. In some cases, the problems are serious or complex enough to require professional expertise. However field supervisors are responsible for performance, and that responsibility often requires helping people to solve problems. Current research indicates that about 75% of performance problems at work are

actually rooted in issues outside of the immediate job. Whether this statistic represents all managerial situations is questionable, but it definitely indicates that counseling is a tool that supervisors can use to help improve employee performance (46).

Because most of us have had little or no training in the helping profession, when someone comes to us with a problem, we typically react in several ways. First we are flattered because that person respects us enough to share the problem with us. This reaction is often quickly followed by anxiety. Because we want to help, we begin to feel responsible for finding a solution to the person's problem, and as a result, we often give advice. Unfortunately, we often give either good advice for the wrong problem, or poor advice for the right problem. Either way the advice is likely to be ignored, and the net effect is that often we have not been very helpful.

Step I: Basic Counseling Principles

A. The Principle of Ownership

As a managerial counselor, the first and most important principle that you must adopt is that the problem belongs to the other person, not to you. This attitude may seem somewhat cold-hearted, but your responsibility is to be helpful, not to take the problem off the other person's hands. By assuming ownership for the other person's problem, you also feel responsible for find the solution. Assuming responsibility only for being helpful frees you to react creatively and objectively (47-48).

B. The Principle of Discovery

The role of the supervisor is to help the person explore the problem and discover a solution. It is not to provide the solution. The person who has the problem, not you, is the real expert. Most of the time, people who seek help from others have already given a great deal of thought to the matter; they know more about the problem than anyone else. The person seeking help is really the expert, and most likely has the information and ability, with help, to solve the problem (48).

C. The Principle of Commitment

This principle is closely related to the principle of discovery. Most people are truly committed only to solutions that they themselves discover and believe in. Think for a moment about all the advice others have given you. Most of it probably did not fit your situation, or you chose to ignore it for some other reason. People are generally more committed to implementing solutions that make sense to them, not what make sense to someone else. This usually means that the person has to develop their own solution for their problem. The manager's counseling responsibility is to help employees and others develop the solutions they can be committed to (48-50).

At this stage of the helping process, the person with the problem should be doing most of the talking. The counselor's job is one of listening and encouraging the person to talk fully. To avoid misunderstanding and jumping to conclusions, use listening checks by repeating back what you have heard. When you make a listening check and get no further information, you can assume that the person

has covered all of the details and explained the problem thoroughly.

B. Develop and Explore Alternatives

The second step in the counseling process is to help the person explore alternative solutions. Do not offer your own alternatives; that comes later. Most of the time, people with problems have either considered certain alternatives or have tried some solutions. Your most helpful response is assisting the person in examining the solutions already tried or considered.

C. Ask Questions

"What solutions have you tried?" "What were the consequences?" "What solutions have you thought about trying?" "What would be the outcome of doing that?" This kind of guidance aids people in exploring their own solutions to the problem. Quite often, at this point the person with the problem succeeds in developing a solution that best fits them. In this case, you can proceed to help the person develop a specific plan of action (Packham 26).

D. Offer Your Alternatives

Sometimes after exploring all apparent alternatives, the person still has not found an acceptable one. At this point, you may offer any options you have that have not previously been considered. It is important to understand that offering alternatives and giving advice are not the same. When one gives advice, it is normally directive: "Here is what you should do." When you present alternatives, they must be offered in such a way that the person feels free to consider them and turn them down if they are not acceptable. You should not say, "Now, here is what I think you should do." Try saying something like: "One of the options I thought about is so-and-so." "What do you think would happen if you did that?" This leaves the person free to make up his or her own mind (37).

E. Develop an Action Plan

At this point, the person should have found a solution that he or she sees as the answer. Now is the time to develop a specific action plan. You can help the person decide on exactly what must be

done, how it should be done, and a timetable for completion. To increase the probability of success, the person needs to leave with a clear plan in mind.

F. Follow-up

The last step in the helping process is to agree on a follow-up meeting. Setting a follow-up time provides the person added incentive to implement the action plan. Additionally, you demonstrate your support and concern for the person and their problem.

The counseling process can be thought of as a road map for helping another person solve a problem. Helping techniques are vehicles that enable you to implement the process effectively. There are several important techniques that make the counseling process more productive (40).

Step 3: HELPING TECHNIQUES

A. Open-Ended Questions

At several stages in the helping process, particularly in understanding the problem and exploring alternatives, one of the more useful

things you can do is to ask questions. Generally speaking, there are two kinds: open-ended and closed. Closed questions can be, and generally are, answered with a simple yes or no. Closed questions should be avoided if at all possible because they tend to limit the conversation. On the other hand, open-ended questions are more helpful because they free the person to talk about what ever is important to him or her. Some typical open-ended questions would be: "How do you feel about ...?" "What do you think would happen if...?" "What is you opinion if...?" "What are your ideas on...?" (Sherman 22).

B. Direct Statements

Other than questions, a second technique for encouraging people to talk is the direct statement. In this context, a direct statement simply encourages the person to talk more. Direct statements can be worded in several ways, some of the more useful are "Talk some more about that." "Tell me what you mean by that." "Help me understand that a little better."

The most innocent question can, at times,

create some defensiveness. Or, too many questions may cause resistance. One way to avoid asking too many open-ended questions is to turn them around and make direct statements of them.

C. Listening Checks

One of the most beneficial things you can do as a counselor is to listen closely and let the other person know that you are listening. Really listening to the other person accomplishes several things: you collect information to help you understand the problem; and you encourage the person to talk and explore the problem more fully. The person is more likely to provide information and explore solutions if he or she senses the respect that careful listening demonstrates. Listening checks are one way to understand what other people are saying and let them know that you are listening non-judgmentally. A listening check consists simply of summarizing back to the person, in your own words, your understanding of what he or she has said. Listening checks can take several forms, but some of the more common ways are, "What you seem to be saying is..?" "If I understood you

correctly, you said.." "What I hear you saying is..." "My understanding of what you said is..." "So.." Listening checks are a powerful interviewing technique because they clarify information and encourage people to talk (47-49).

Step IV: Summaries

A fourth counseling technique is the summary statement. In reality, the summary statement is several listening checks. They cover more ground than a listening check because they tie ideas together. A summary at the end of a counseling session might sound something like this: "Okay, to summarize our conversation, you are going to confront your boss; you are going to do it by this time; you are going to cover these specific items; and we are going to meet on the 15th to see how it went." In many counseling sessions, summaries are appropriate after each step in the counseling process and at the end as a parting statement (50).

Counseling is a major responsibility of most supervisors. The counselor's role is that of a helper, helping the person with the problem more clearly understand their problem, develop their own

solution and own action plan. The managerial counselor does not give advice or provide solutions. You can use these counseling techniques as a tool to help people solve problems that interfere with performance (Phillips 49).

Part II: Coaching

As a leader of a work group or project team, you play a significant role in your organization's future. One of your most important tasks is coaching others toward success and growth. Your assistance, guidance, direction, and enthusiasm could very well determine whether or not your team meets its objectives.

Managerial coaching is similar to sports coaching. Coaching is the process of talking with another person to help him or her improve performance. All telemarketing supervisors have a responsibility to help their employees improve performance, so coaching is most often supervisor initiated. When you notice something an employee does or does not do that keeps them from being as effective as they could be, it is your responsibility to talk to them. Coaching is a "should do" in terms of managerial responsibility. Coaching is not just for the poor performers; even good and excellent performers need help at times (Stowell 34).

Each of us have had a number of coaches

throughout our lives, and not all of them have worn uniforms or had whistles around their necks. We have been coached by our parents, our teachers, our bosses, and our co-workers. It could have been anyone who took the time and put forth the effort to help us improve our performance in a given area. Coaching's main objective is to improve performance, to help someone who is good be even better. As a managerial function, coaching is a teaching and training activity which aims to help people achieve their highest potential. To improve performance often requires a change in behavior (34-35).

Behavior change involves two important elements. First, people must know how to behave in the way we want. Then they must be willing to behave in that way. Most of the time people know what to do, but usually are unwilling to do it. Coaching consists of two factors; one is to help people understand what they are to do and secondly help them develop the willingness to do it.

You should approach any coaching session by thoroughly analyzing the situation ahead of time.

While the actual conduct of session may vary according to the circumstances, you need a general game plan.

First decide exactly what part of the current behavior needs to be changed. Then define how you want the behavior changed. Decide whether the problem is caused by lack of knowledge, lack of willingness to change, or both. Recognize that there may be some resistance, particularly since the person's overall performance is already satisfactory, and he or she may simply not see any need to tamper with a good thing. Your job as a coach is to convey to the employee that what is already good can get better. You also need to have a specific action plan in mind to implement the changes you desire (36).

In any single session, it is usually better to address only one behavior or at most a limited range of behavior. Dealing with too much change at one time can confuse people.

Conducting a Coaching Session

Coaching sessions need to follow fairly well prescribed pattern, consisting of five steps.

1. Set the Stage

Establish rapport. Make sure that the individual knows that you approve of his or her overall work and that you are sincerely interested in helping them perform even better. Then state your intentions, informing the person that you wish to discuss a point which might prove helpful (35-36).

2. Give Feedback on Current Performance

Describe the person's current behavior as you see it, evaluating the performance and not the individual. Give specific positive feedback that centers on what the person is already doing well. "You are a valuable member of our team. In most areas, you are really doing a good job."

Now you are ready to identify and describe the specific area that needs improvement. Do this clearly and concisely, without sugarcoating the change or downplaying its importance, but make clear that you are trying to help the person improve performance, not punish them. "I believe you could be even more effective by making a few changes in your ..."

Describe fully and explain specifically what behavior you believe would be more productive or would add to current behavior. State why this behavior would be beneficial and what the person will gain from the improvement. For example, "I think that you can increase customer satisfaction if you fully explain the client's reasons for the call. Show real concern and be the client. I think this would make a difference" (36).

4. Listen and Acknowledge

Give 100% attention. Remember the coaching session was your idea. Welcome differing opinions. Do not become defensive when your suggestion is challenged. Few people accept criticism or change without some resistance. Be positive toward the resistance. If employees just "roll over", it usually means that either they don't understand, or they are not taking the situation seriously. Encourage the person to evaluate both the current behavior and the suggested changes.

Demonstrate understanding by using listening checks that paraphrase what the person has just told you. Several listening checks used throughout

the conversation are more effective than one long summary when the individual has finished (36-37).

5. Reach Agreements

Arrange a follow-up session. Setting a follow-up time provides the person with added incentive to implement the changes. Additionally, you demonstrate your support and concern for the person.

Coaching is by no means a mechanical process. If you have a situation where the person understand the suggested changes, but is simply unwilling to do what you want you may want to pay special attention to explaining why the new behavior will be more productive and what the pay off is.

Where lack of knowledge is the issue, concentrate on explaining the specifics of the needed behavior. In all cases, solicit feedback from the person being coached; listen carefully and try to understand his or her side of things.

Because your success as a good supervisor depends to a large extent on the performance of

your employees, helping good employees get even better represents an important managerial function. Coaching, like most other management skills, require careful preparation and skillful execution (37-38). Coaching's effectiveness is always influenced by your relationship with the employee. Knowing in advance what behavior needs to be changed and conducting a coaching session in an organized fashion will help both the employees' performance and your own.

PART THREE: FEEDBACK

Giving and receiving constructive feedback is a skill that is important for the process of personal and professional growth to occur. One way to look at feedback is that it is information. Information that helps people decide whether or not their behavior has the effect that they intend it to have. Asking for and receiving constructive feedback is a way to increase your personal effectiveness. Giving constructive feedback is a way to help those people around you who want to increase their personal effectiveness.

Feedback can be constructive or destructive. Giving and receiving constructive feedback is simply a sharing of information in a particular way, so that it will have the highest likelihood of being truly helpful or constructive (Kotter 156).

Here are some things you can do to make the feedback you give constructive.

A. Constructive Feedback

Before giving anyone constructive feedback, be sure to check with yourself to see if your

intention is truly to be helpful to the person. It is sometimes easy to fall into the trap of giving another person feedback to make ourselves look good, to appear more intelligent than the person with whom we are interacting, or to hurt or embarrass the other person. If your intention is to help the other person, there is a much greater likelihood of it being constructive (156-157).

B. Helpful Feedback

In order for feedback to be helpful, it must be heard. Feedback is most likely to be heard if it is asked for. There will be times when feedback may need to be given when it is not asked for. One way to handle that is to let the person know you have some feedback for them and ask if they are open to hearing it.

C. The Feedback Should Deal with Behavior

The feedback should deal with a behavior the person can do something about if they choose to do so. To tell a person they are too short is not helpful since there is little any of us can do about our height. Therefore, feedback should deal

with something a person says or does since the person can change these things if they decide to do so as a result of hearing your feedback.

D. Feedback Should Deal With Specific Behavior

Feedback should deal with specific behaviors rather than general statements. For example, to tell someone they have a bad attitude is not very helpful. It does not identify what the person is doing that makes you think they have a bad attitude. A more specific statement would be, "When you complain about the script, I feel like you are looking for reasons to be difficult."

Then if the person wants you to think they care about their work, they will present ideas for improving the script.

E. Constructive Feedback: Describe Behavior

Constructive feedback should describe behavior, not evaluate it. For example, "When you don't like the rules I think you don't care about your job", as opposed to "When you're such a slob, I think you don't care about your work." The first statement describes a behavior: not finishing an

assignment on time. The second example evaluates the person by calling them a slob. Feedback that is evaluating rather than descriptive may cause the person to act defensively making it difficult for them to hear your feedback and be helped by it.

F. What Behavior is Expected

After describing a specific behavior, let the person know what the behavior makes you think or how you feel when they behave in that way: "When you don't work with the team I think you don't care about your work." Or "When you don't do your share, it upsets me."

G. Feedback Should be Well Timed

In order to be most helpful, feedback should be well timed. It should be given as soon as possible after the behavior occurs, or the most recent example of their behavior should be used. Something that happened today is more likely to be remembered than something that happened last week, last month, or last year. Another aspect of timing is the issue of privacy. People may be more receptive to hearing certain feedback in private

rather than in public. In addition to this, some feedback is simply not appropriate given in public.

H. Was The Feedback Understood?

Feedback should be checked to see if the receiver understood the message the way the sender intended it to be understood. The message may be distorted by either the sender or the receiver. A way to check to see if this has happened is to ask the person to paraphrase back to you what they heard because you're not sure you have made yourself clear. This gives you both a chance to clear any misunderstandings.

I. Ask Others For Feedback

The receiver of the feedback should be encouraged to check with other people to find out if only one person thinks or feels a certain way about their behavior, or if those thoughts and feelings are shared by other people. Feedback is more likely to be heard and understood if it is checked with others. Other people may also be able to provide some more examples of behavior for the person to think about.

Asking for and receiving constructive feedback is important for increasing your effectiveness, both personally and professionally. Many of the criteria that apply to giving constructive feedback also apply to asking for constructive feedback.

When you would like to get someone's thoughts and feelings about something you have said or done, the following will help insure that the information you receive will be helpful:

- Be specific about the behavior you want feedback on. Rather than saying, "Go ahead and tell me what is wrong with me." Ask for the person's thoughts and feelings about a specific thing you said or did. For example, "How did you feel when I told you I did not have time to train you for any new projects?"
- Try very hard not to act defensively, remember you asked for the person's feedback.
- Summarize your understanding of the feedback so that both you and the sender will be sure that the message was not distorted by either of you.
- Let the sender know your thoughts and feeling

about the feedback you have received. Was it helpful? How are you feeling about what you have heard? How are you feeling toward the sender of the feedback now? (157-160).

Feedback is simply additional information about a person's behavior. It is information that helps you and others determine if your behavior has the effect you intend it to have.

This manual was created to help strengthen the humanistic skills needed for telemarketing supervisors. In order to be fully effective you must strive to continually learn and develop new skills. The Telemarketing Supervisors Reference Manual alone will not provide you with the skills needed to maintain the humanistic strengths required to be successful, it has simply been designed to serve as an aide in your endeavors.

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