

Mini questionnaire Output report

Poor Performance Style Profile



Thursday, 10 June 2010

Poor Performance Style Profile

Introduction

To perform adequately or well means achieving or exceeding a pre-set target or standard. This might be a “hard” target like “Sell 100 units” or “Increase profit by 10%” or a “soft” target like “Build a high performing team” or “Lift customer satisfaction levels”. Although we may measure the efforts to reach these targets quite differently, poor performance occurs when an individual (or in some cases a group of individuals) fails to reach the goal we have established or does not meet the pre-set minimally acceptable standard. The first thing for us to realize then is that the word “poor” is a relative term when it comes to performance. It is dependent upon having “set the performance bar” clearly in the first place and then upon setting up processes to subsequently measure progress. Hence, what might be deemed to be poor performance in one company might not be regarded in the same way in another. This is often a function of the overall “culture” of a team or an organization and the managerial “style” adopted to manage performance.

When it comes to individual behavior as it relates to the performance of others, it is often the case that we treat other people in the way in which we would like to be treated ourselves. For some, this may be very clear and direct about expectations and then relatively uncompromising when people fall short of these standards (even in a minor way). For others, this may be a very non-interventionist approach in which performance is only tackled “head on” if it is a long way short of an acceptable standard or is likely to deteriorate dramatically without some action.

Clearly then, a potential poor performance handling style is a complex subject, with many possible approaches being possible from one situation to another. However, we can identify four broad style categories, to help simplify what people seem to do most in practice. These are the styles of being Permissive, Suggestive, Directive and Collaborative. Each of these styles can be adopted by individuals and even teams when apparently poor performance is encountered, and in so doing the subsequent intervention is likely to be very different. This profile briefly explains each of these styles and reveals which one you (as an individual at least) tend to utilize the most.

Poor Performance Style Answers

(Sorted in descending order of priority)

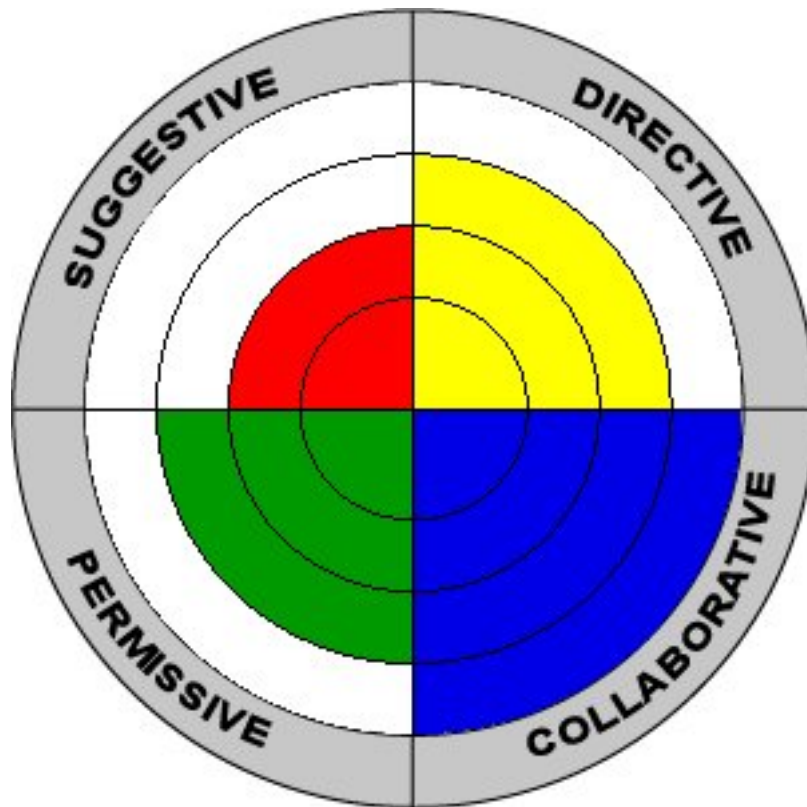
The following chart shows the choices you made in completing the Poor Performance Style questionnaire, in descending priority order, as well as the score that has been subsequently assigned by the system.

The color of the text indicates the category each question belongs to (the colors correspond to the four style types indicated in the key below).

1. I talk with people immediately when their behavior starts to 'slip' so as to discover the reasons for their deteriorating performance
2. I spell out the improvement steps required and in what timeframe when a performance problem has arisen
3. I mention particular performance standards to people but leave them to determine how these are to be achieved
4. I tend to leave performance problems to work themselves out without direct intervention most of the time
5. I am absolutely clear about the standards of performance that are required but then offer to help the person to reach them
6. I do not hesitate to issue formal performance improvement warnings when it is appropriate to do so
7. I talk to people informally or 'off the record' whenever I can if performance shortfalls occur
8. I don't worry much about minor performance issues which inevitably arise from time-to-time
9. I listen to issues raised by an individual before agreeing on a performance gap-closing strategy with them
10. I share performance standards and rules widely to ensure that people understand exactly what is expected of them
11. I let people tell me how they are going to 'lift their game' when performance has started to slip
12. I expect people to behave in an adult fashion and read and understand prevailing performance rules and standards
13. I manage performance firmly and consistently at every stage of the process
14. I am quick to point out even minor performance shortfalls and expect problems to be immediately addressed
15. I give people general guidance on how to get performance to the required standard
16. I believe that people are generally motivated to do their best and do not appreciate too much pressure or 'stick' to perform

-  Suggestive Style
-  Permissive Style
-  Directive Style
-  Collaborative Style

Poor Performance Style Grid



Dominant Style: Collaborative Style

Individuals with a 'Collaborative' performance handling style are likely to work closely with a poor performing individual in every way. This includes listening to why the performance problem has arisen, identifying possible "gap-closing" strategies and offering progress input, advice and coaching whenever it is valuable or needed. The downside of this approach is potentially that an individual may be happy to deal with a performance shortfall more independently. However a good manager should spot this early on in the collaboration and take a more "hands-off" role.

Different Poor Performance Handling Styles

People may utilize several Performance Handling Styles in different situations and to achieve a variety of different ways. The following descriptions therefore briefly explain the basic characteristics of each of the four Performance Handling Styles:

Suggestive Style

Individuals with a 'Suggestive' personal risk style will be likely to go further than "permissive" style managers by providing more advice to the poorly performing individual about what needs to be done to improve in the future. However, this advice will often be offered in a gently suggestive manner, leaving the person to whom it is directed to their own devices in terms of what to do with it. The downside of this approach is that the poor performing person may accept or reject the advice given, and in case feel that it is only one of what may be several opinions on the subject.

Permissive Style

Individuals with a 'Permissive' performance handling style are likely to give poorly performing individuals a second chance or the benefit of the doubt, more often than not. This means that they will allow the poor performing individual time and room to correct the situation themselves without much input or guidance as to how to do so. The downside of this approach is that the poorly performing person will do little or even nothing about the issue that has caused concern and the situation may even become worse over time.

Directive Style

Individuals with a 'Directive' performance handling style are likely to be very clear and perhaps unequivocal about where the performance shortfalls have occurred and what should be done to correct it. This is often done in a firm and even "take no prisoners" fashion with little room to argue being left. The downside of this approach is that the performing individual may be left under no illusions about the performance problem and its consequences but also feel that his or her circumstances are of no interest and that he or she will be left to "sink or swim".

Collaborative Style

Individuals with a 'Collaborative' performance handling style are likely to work closely with a poor performing individual in every way. This includes listening to why the performance problem has arisen, identifying possible "gap-closing" strategies and offering progress input, advice and coaching whenever it is valuable or needed. The downside of this approach is potentially that an individual may be happy to deal with a performance shortfall more independently. However a good manager should spot this early on in the collaboration and take a more "hands-off" role.

This mini questionnaire or profile is a simple version of the diagnostic survey and measurement tools that are available on the www.profiles-r-us.com web site. Full profiles have considerably greater depth and detailed information and an extensive output report, often running to more than 30 pages.