

Management Basics: Why You Must Always Inspect What You Expect



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Have you ever heard the phrase “Everybody watches what the Boss watches”? I have used this in many leadership trainings as part of our MTM Services Leadership Essentials © Training. As leaders, we watch many things, the bottom line, productivity, quality measures, outcomes and compliance.

Effective managers work hard to delegate responsibility to their team members. The process of delegation is much more than just handing out work to a team member though, and many problems in the workplace occur because managers fail to check delegated tasks.

To make sure people have understood

It is surprisingly easy to misunderstand what your boss has asked for, and managers often simply assume that their Team Members know what to do. Managers must always make sure that their people are comfortable with the task in hand, and it's not enough to just ask this once. Every time you delegate a task, review the completed work, and confirm that the team member has done what you needed them to do. Serious process problems often occur later due to a very small misunderstanding, so invest a little time at the early stages to avoid issues later on.

To confirm quality standards

It's important to make sure that team members deliver work to the highest quality, and it's the manager's responsibility to confirm that their people meet all standards. When a task is new or unfamiliar, team members often rush to finish it as quickly as possible, without completing critical parts of the process. Inspect what you expect, look for opportunities to coach team members, and help them improve their work.

To look for opportunities to celebrate success

Managers often spend too much time looking for things that are wrong, when they could look for opportunities to celebrate success. If you inspect the output of your instructions, you will have many more opportunities to find and reward great work. Many Team Members complain in annual staff surveys that their managers do not appreciate what they do. Spend time reviewing even the most basic of tasks in your team, so you can quickly show your thanks, and celebrate good work. There are few



better ways to build a good rapport with your team.

To look for ways to improve

It is not possible for managers to have complete subject matter expertise over everything, and it's quite likely that you can find better ways to do things. Many managers are unaware of these opportunities because they never look for ways to improve. Team Members often carry things out in inefficient ways because that is exactly what their manager told them to do. Show a clear interest in making every process as efficient as possible, and set an example for your team members to follow.

Good managers actively delegate tasks to their team members, but the most effective leaders go on to inspect what they expect their Team Members to do. Never assume that everything happens correctly, and make sure that you are setting the very highest standards possible.

Lead by Example

I recommend that Managers and supervisors are "Player Coaches". The Player Coach model simple means that as a leader you also have a caseload, do the same paperwork your team members complete. Based on the number of individuals you supervise, managers should also have direct Key Performance Indicators as Productivity, documentation timeliness and submission and corporate compliance. Work with your team and lead them to peak performance.

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