

CLAREMONT EAP

IMPACT

Manager Supplement

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- Free "Simple Will" Kits are available from Claremont EAP
- A free credit report is available once per year
- Claremont EAP provides legal referrals for family law, consumer issues, traffic violations, and personal injury
- Referrals are available for child care, adult/eldercare, adoption assistance, school/college selection, and pet care

Claremont EAP
800.834.3773

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Make the Most of Leadership Opportunities

Leadership opportunities at work can crop up unexpectedly. They're unpredictable and sometimes blend in with the surroundings so they can easily get overlooked.

"Leadership isn't a position, it's a way of being. It's about seeing what isn't there and making it happen," says Roxanne Emmerich, C.S.P., C.M.C., author of "Thank God It's Monday: How to Build a Motivating Workplace."

Ms. Emmerich offers the following suggestions on how to make the most of your leadership opportunities.

DO THE EXTRAORDINARY

To be a leader often means to have extraordinary thoughts and to do extraordinary things. The word "extraordinary" is a combination of two words that mean "more than the ordinary." Ordinary employees follow directions, do what they're told to do and put in a good day's work. They have the mind-set of, "This is the way we've always done it, so this is the way I'll keep doing it."

"Every one of us really wants to be extraordinary," says Ms. Emmerich. "The problem is we surround ourselves with excuses for mediocrity, and we begin to believe it's the way to be."

LOOK FOR PROBLEMS TO SOLVE

The employee who wants to create leadership opportunities actually looks for problems to solve -- whether the problems are task-related or about office morale. When you work with the mind-set of making improvements, you're thinking like a leader.

You may have ideas that will make your work more efficient. When you take those ideas and ask for permission to implement them, you're creating your own leadership opportunity -- and an opportunity to be noticed for your innovative ideas.

GIVE 100 PERCENT

As an employee, you can take advantage of an often overlooked leadership opportunity: giving 100 percent effort to your work. Act as if you

were stranded in the ocean and your one thought was to save yourself by getting to shore. Ordinary employees may give 70 percent or even 80 percent effort, but leaders consistently go the extra mile and give 100 percent on the job.

HAVE A VISION

Finding leadership opportunities requires a vision. Just like the architect who designs a superior building, you can design superior ways to do your ordinary work.

"Each person needs to know his or her vision of what superior looks like. Without a clear vision, results are limited," says Ms. Emmerich. "By having a vision, every employee at work has the opportunity to be a leader."

IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS

Every employee can be a leader by improving employee relationships.

When you avoid gossip, sarcasm and negative comments, and substitute encouragement, appreciation and cheery greetings, you're making the most of a leadership opportunity. You'll be a role model to others, and you'll be rewarded with the trust of your coworkers.

The truth is, no matter what your position, you can act like a leader.

"When you seek solutions to problems, encourage positive workplace relationships and do extraordinary work, you're making the most of leadership opportunities," Ms. Emmerich says. "You'll be noticed for your efforts, and you may even be considered for a leadership position. Best of all, though, you'll be happier and more fulfilled at work."

Responding to the Human Factor in the World of Work

Do Your Employees Work for You or With You?

- Do you give orders and expect them to be followed?
- Do you distance yourself from your employees personally and professionally?
- Do you feel the need to push your employees to meet goals?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, then your employees work for you.

- Do you explain to employees the logic behind your decisions?
- Do you act as part of a team?
- Do you involve your employees in goal-setting?
- Do you involve your employees in decision-making?

If you answered "yes" to these questions, then your employees work with you.



Chances are, employees who work for you will just meet your expectations of them. However, those who feel they work with you as a team will work harder to meet or exceed your performance expectations.

By distancing yourself from your employees, for instance never dining with them during lunch breaks, you are encouraging a counterproductive us-against-them attitude. Knowing your employees will give you a clearer picture of their strengths and weaknesses. This information will be invaluable when delegating projects or tasks.

Morale is an important issue where productivity is at risk. Barking orders without communicating the why and how can confound employees and compound mistakes.

Assuming that employees are neither interested in nor able to give constructive input is a mistake. Encouraging problemsolving within a team will often yield more creative and successful solutions.

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Managers can call Claremont for consultation regarding employees who appear to be experiencing personal problems, whether or not work performance has become an issue. The purpose of this consultation is to help formulate an approach that effectively facilitates the person receiving appropriate help. The Claremont consultant will review the do's and don'ts for handling these often delicate situations and suggest things you can say and do which are most likely to be helpful.