

# BOOKS

GUEST  
BOOK  
REVIEW



## LEADER EFFECTIVENESS TRAINING

BY THOMAS J. NEWMAN

## COACHING FOR IMPROVED WORK PERFORMANCE

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RACINE, WI

At last! Two new excellent background texts for training and development people to put into the hands of managers and supervisors who are convinced that their personnel problems are unsolvable, impossible or worst of all, are training problems to be handled by the training department.

First, *Coaching for Work Performance* by Ferdinand F. Fournies, is going to become the bible for frustrated training persons to use as background to bring managers to a high conversational level for problem discussions. Fournies, who has done two national studies on management and salesmen performance appraisal programs, uses this research as supportive evidence of his provocative conclusions. Three of these conclusions I have already used in seminars with eye-opening results:

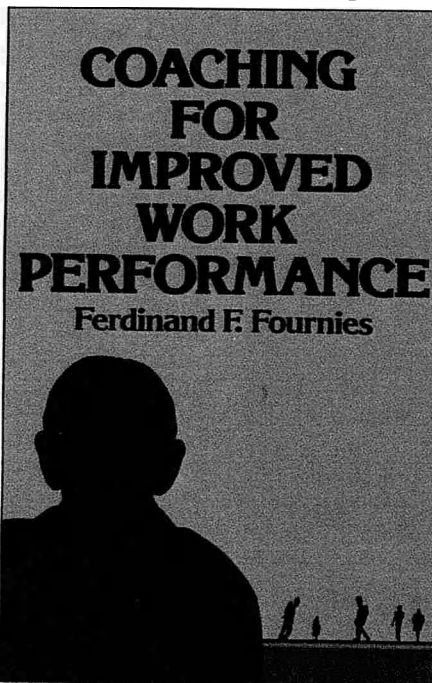
1. You don't get paid for what you do, you get paid for what your subordinates do.
2. You need your employees more than they need you.
3. Doing what comes naturally is self-destructive behavior to a manager.

The author backs up these early conclusions with understandable, down-to-earth examples. They will surely become standard phrases in future management seminars.

A valuable aid to trainers will be the chapter titled, "An Alternative to Psychotherapy". Fournies maintains, through thoughtful illustrations, that you cannot know what a person's attitudes are, and thus, how can you say about an employee, "He has a bad attitude?" His conclusion is that we really don't know what people's attitudes are. We can only guess and thus become trapped into believing our

guesses are correct.

His very understandable theory that every trainer (and manager) can put to use instantly is essentially a "Principle of adverse consequences". He begins with the behavior modification concept that



*Coaching For Improved Work Performance*, by Ferdinand F. Fournies, 214 pp., \$13.95, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 450 W. 33rd St., New York, NY 10001.

"Behavior that is followed by a positive consequence (to the individual behaving) will tend to repeat itself." This principle applies if the consequence is to the individual, is positive, and occurs soon after the action.

The author describes a manager who was convinced his people were doing things wrong purposely. On being questioned about his managing style, he discovered this was the only way they could get attention from him because the

only time he talked to them was when they made mistakes. The reverse of this principle is that "Behavior that is followed by a negative consequence or a painful event will decrease in frequency".

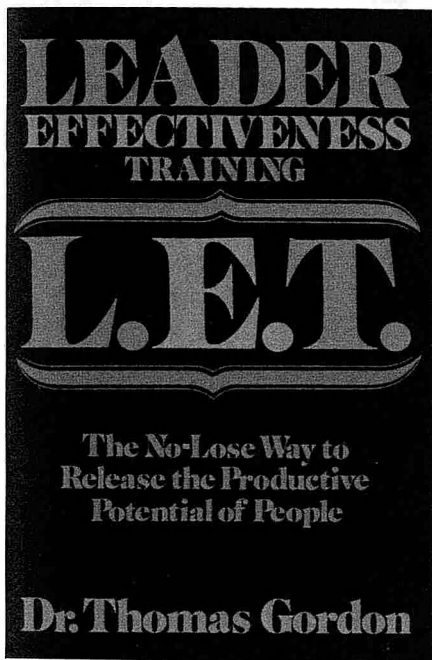
Some employees are reluctant to do an undesirable job well because their reward is that they get to do the crummy work all the time. Then because you probably give the highest priority work to the best workers, the screw-ups learn "the less I do around here, the less they ask me to do". Intriguing point, isn't it?

The book is helpful in developing Mager's *Analyzing Performance Problems* system into a usable five-step coaching process that any manager can use. Through use of one-on-one realistic conversations with subordinates, Fournies brings to life the schematic Mager overcomplicated in his book.

The final chapters in Fournies' book tie together those lingering doubts we all have after finally finding a readable, practical book on coaching problem subordinates. He addresses comfortably the issue of "what if the coaching discussion doesn't work", brings in some realistic cases, identifies the requirements that a manager needs to successfully improve employees' unsatisfactory performance, and even answers a number of the tough questions and issues that inevitably arise during coaching discussions.

The second new book is *Leader Effectiveness Training*, by Thomas Gordon. Dr. Gordon, whose earlier *Parent Effectiveness Training*, *Teacher Effectiveness Training*, and *P.E.T. in Action* are the basis of thousands of courses throughout the country, has finally completed the text which we've heard was on the way for five years.

Gordon successfully reintroduces his concept of "active listening." This skill is a type of Rogerian "nondirective counseling" put into more usable terms by the author. His 12 roadblock type of listener responses will make every reader of this book feel a bit guilty because you are sure to hear yourself saying one or more of these phrases. Some examples include, "You are wrong," "You must do this," "Let me give you the facts," "You're talking like an engineer," and "Things will get better."



*Leader Effectiveness Training*, \$10.95, 278 pp., published 1977 by Peter H. Wyden, 750 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017.

The author's description of how to make your management team effective should be read and understood by every trainer and OD person. It stands by itself as a base for a fine communications course for managers. Nearly one-half of the book is devoted to conflict resolution techniques. Ordinarily, this may seem a bit heavy, but I feel that if a manager can put these ideas to use, the reading will pay dividends.

Gordon's Credo for Personal Relationships should be posted on every manager's wall as a daily reminder. I am in complete agreement with the subtitle of this fine, readable book, "The No-Lose Way to Release the Productive Potential of People." It has already become my basic text for new managers. — *Tom Newman*

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