

THE TRAINING DIRECTOR AS A COUNSELOR

some guidelines for a non-directive approach

As a training director, you have much to offer to a healthy, counselling climate. Your work with the development of people, your wide exposure to your company and to non-directive, listening and empathetic training techniques, provides you with the kind of background out of which good counselling comes.

However, you are busy. When you get the chance to counsel, you're hard-pressed to exercise non-directiveness — you just don't have the time.

In your search for ways to improve your effectiveness in the counselling situation, consider these guidelines:

Can you help the counsellee explore these questions?

1. DO I SOLVE PROBLEMS OR DO I JUST DISCOVER AND/OR CREATE THEM?

As employees, we get paid to solve problems — either getting dirty dishes clean or planning for what will happen ten years from now. If the problems were not there, we would not have a job!

2. DO MY SKILLS MATCH THE COMPANY'S NEEDS FOR SKILLS?

Each of us must have skills that the company needs now. Generally, we have to keep changing our skills to meet the company's needs or find another company where we are needed. This takes serious consideration and judgment. It's a good idea to see how others feel about where our skills best fit.

3. AM I SELLING SATISFACTION?

Sure, your job is important and you want it to be perfect. However, no matter how important or perfect, it still has to be done with, around or through others. And, it must satisfy someone on the other end. If you're not selling satisfaction, your chances of being in a position to solve a problem are slim.

4. AM I DOING A BETTER JOB THIS YEAR THAN I DID LAST YEAR?

If you're not, you're going "down

hill." Everything is changing too rapidly to mean anything else. It's a good idea to check how your boss feels about your performance.

5. HOW AM I MANAGING MYSELF—MY RESOURCES OF TIME, ENERGY, KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS?

All of us can point to our bosses' mistakes or his boss or to the president. That's easy!

More direct and a lot more productive is how we operate a very important "concern" — namely, ourselves. We are totally responsible for our own resources, time and energy. How are we doing? Where can we improve? When are we going to start?

In the short time that you have for counselling, an approach centered on these questions can be very helpful. Keep in mind that your goal is to help the employee explore these questions — not get the answers from you.

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