

The SuperSTAR Leadership Model

How to Revolutionize Performance!

BY RICK CONLOW

People want to be great, and if they aren't, oftentimes, their leader is the obstacle. This may sound harsh, but it's only because I know people can achieve amazing results. The role of leaders is to show their employees all of the possibilities and to bring out the best in each person. The possibilities for astounding performances are endless. For example:

- Erik Weihenmayer, a blind man, climbed Mount Everest!
- Mackenzie Brown, a young girl, pitched a perfect game in boy's baseball, striking out 18 players!
- Cliff Miedl survived 30,000 volts and became an Olympic athlete!
- Cliff Young, a 61-year-old farmer, won the world's toughest ultra marathon!

At the presentations, meetings and seminars I conduct, the number one question I get (from both new and experienced managers) is: *How do I motivate my people?* If employees aren't motivated, their productivity is negatively affected, which is bad news for managers and companies. Employee morale today is questionable. The Conference Board reports that more employees are unhappy with their jobs than at any other reported time in the past. Over 70 percent of employees are looking for a different job. Employees report that they get little recognition and appreciation at work, and too many employees don't like their boss. These work environments don't inspire employees to deliver their best at work. In fact, these attitudes lead to more sick time, more workers' compensation claims, more on-the-job accidents, fewer sales, lower levels of productivity, and poorer quality and customer service levels.

After studying 100,000 managers across the globe, in more than ten industries, we identified nine key strategies that separate the SuperSTAR leaders from the others, which are reported in our book, *The SuperSTAR Leadership Model: Good Boss, Bad Boss - Which One Are You?* Our basic tenet is - if you want your people to be better, you have to be better as a leader. Considering the fact that management derailment studies report that 50 percent of managers today fail, these strategies are necessary and needed. See below:

- Clear Goals & Expectations – *Locke & Latham* – 16% improvement!
- Training – *ASTD Study* – Companies in top quarter of training expense (\$1,500 per year or more) average 24% higher profit margins!
- Communication – *Wyatt Study* – 30% increase in market value!
- Coaching – *Personnel Management Association* – 88% impact!
- Leadership Flexibility – *Blanchard, Hershey, Goleman* – 15-20% more results!
- Recognition – *Jackson ROI Study* – Triple return on equity for companies with more recognition than companies with less recognition!
- Promotions/Incentives – *Performance Improvement Institute* – 22% impact on results!
- Customer Loyalty – *Bain Research* – a 5% improvement in customer retention improves profits by 25% or more!
- Hiring – *Personnel Policy Service* – the wrong hire costs 3 times the annual salary amount!

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As a result, we designed a three dimensional SuperSTAR Leadership Model. See the illustration to the right.

Do they each work? Sure, but they work in tandem. It's not a menu to pick what you like. We found that managers fail because they only use bits and pieces of these strategies. Superb results require consistent and passionate execution. Let's explore each one individually.



Clear Goals & Expectations

All great performance starts with clear goals and plans. While this idea isn't new, the way it's currently practiced leads to three problems. First, much work is put into strategic plans, but rarely are they updated or reviewed. Second, very few of the goals that are made reach every manager and/or employee. Two-thirds of managers don't set goals or plans with employees, but employees need to know WIFM (What's in it for me?). According to research by Frederick Herzberg, challenging work and job recognition motivate employees the most. The third common problem is that when goals are identified, managers often lack the ongoing commitment and reinforcement needed to sustain the progress.

Training

In this day and age when services, technology and products are so similar from one competitor to the next, people are the primary differentiator. For employees to be at the top of their game, they need ongoing, engaging learning opportunities. The training must be interactive and relevant. If done consistently, training will increase productivity. We believe managers are the best trainers because they are closest to the employee. To master training methodology and delivery, most managers need to learn adult-learning principles, as well as professional training techniques. While not everyone will become an expert, most can learn the basics, which can put them in a position to reinforce skills, techniques, and attitudes through coaching. So, how often should you train? Well, top athletes train between games and in the off-season. Business shouldn't be any different; however, most employees are lucky to participate in one session each year. Ensure your team is different. Provide monthly tools, resources and training classes, so they "sharpen the saw" as Steven Covey says in his book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

We use the word three times to emphasize its importance. Overall, it indicates that it's crucial to be positive, helpful and motivating. It doesn't mean yelling, screaming and threatening. Employees want to do well. By communicating about goals, plans, outcomes and problems, we can work together as a team to do better. One company did an employee survey and found one department had poor communication scores. Further review revealed that what employees wanted to know was quite simple: vacation schedules in advance, meeting notices in advance, and a more timely receipt of customer-survey data. Dr. Daniel Goleman coined the term *Emotional Intelligence*, which is defined in terms of social and personal competence; needless to say, it's a powerful indicator of success in business. Social competence includes the ability to relate to people and to communicate effectively with people. Positive communication establishes trust, and if you give trust to your team, oftentimes, your employees will go the extra mile and treat customers better.

Coaching

The rewards of passionate and diligent coaching are increased productivity, higher sales and better service! Some managers don't think they have the time, but those that make the time reap the best results, and in fact, they leverage their time to its fullest potential. Effective coaching is when a manager conducts a one-on-one meeting with each employee. It should be a positive process of mutual dialogue, rather than a silo-driven monologue. Managers must build rapport, make the time, follow through, ask questions, give advice and genuinely be helpful. A good coach ensures that each team member receives regular feedback and understands specific areas of performance efficiencies and deficiencies. According to research, ongoing coaching dramatically influences results.

Leadership Flexibility

Each person is unique. You don't rubberstamp great performance; you treat each employee as an individual by finding his or her hot buttons. Top performers need challenging and creative options. The performers that are struggling the most need specific technique direction and adequate role models. Some employees are single, others are married with five kids; some love books, others are into sports – the point? Know your team. The better you know your team, the more insight you will gain into their inner motivations and desires. Flexible management involves two questions: What is the employee's skill level? What is the employee's will level? Your answer for each person will help you tailor your approach. Someone with little skill needs on-the-job training. Highly skilled employees that deliver poor results need coaching to build their commitment levels, so that they feel they have more ownership over their goals. It's about adjusting your approach to enhance their abilities.

Recognition

80 percent of performance problems are related to a lack of clear goals and expectations and a lack of recognition. Many managers avoid this easy fix. Every time we communicate with employees is an opportunity to recognize them. Do it informally and often; for example, "Pete, great job completing your report on time and under budget!" And do it formally, "Let's all give Dave a round of applause for exceeding his top priorities. Dave, please accept this gift card for your accomplishment." Recognition works when it is done consistently because it demonstrates to employees that they are valuable and important. It also drives their inner spirit to keep striving for new heights and performance goals. Employees don't need recognition for every little thing, but they do need to be appreciated for the right things.

Promotions/Incentives

"Always have something going on!" This is the mantra of a highly successful manager in the Midwest. His team performs three times better than his competition. He is always creating contests for his team. Why? He wants to change their routine, in order to keep things interesting and exciting. He also hopes to fan their competitive spirit. While not every manager can execute contests or have the budget for it, any manager with a little creativity can boost the work environment. One company made chart visuals to track this year's progress versus last year's; for every month they outperformed the previous year, they held a luncheon. Another manager personalized awards in Microsoft Word, and she distributed them to deserving team members on a regular basis. All in all, incentives are incredible resources, but you must first lead enthusiastically, execute consistently, and generate energy, in order to really maximize the potential benefits of incentives and promotions.

Continuous Improvement

The best managers and leaders are those who remain students of the game. Good can always become better, which can always become the best – and great leaders believe this. Great leaders don't stop learning, developing or pursuing the better way to do something. Improvement is not optional today, it's essential just to keep pace, let alone get ahead. A SWOT analysis is a very helpful tool that we recommend managers use in order to maximize their strengths, minimize their weaknesses, explore their opportunities and deconstruct their threats. Other ways to continually improve include problem solving, innovating, creating and brainstorming. All of these require a manager to take initiative and to think outside the box, both are vital if managers want to be great leaders.

Recruit & Hire Winners

Your success as a manager is inevitably (for better or worse) tied to those you hire and recruit. Not all managers have control over the hiring process, but if you do, you must take advantage of that position; and if you don't, you must make the best of it. Spend a lot of time on the hiring process because it will reap its own rewards, time and time again, if you hire right. Research candidates thoroughly, prepare for a professional interview, evaluate candidates objectively, and create a positive working environment.

When leaders execute these nine leadership strategies with consistency, passion, integrity, and a genuine approach to their team's success, they quickly realize and experience what it is that separates the SuperSTAR leaders from the run-of-the-mill managers. More importantly, they soon achieve dramatic performance gains in their personal performance, as well as their team's performance. Why not become a SuperSTAR Leader?

The SuperSTAR Leadership Model!

What are your strengths? What can you do even better? To answer these questions, see our free assessment on our homepage: <http://wcwpartners.com>. What can you learn from others? How can you be more consistent and passionate while executing these strategies? It's been said that to be all you can be, you must dream of being more. Fire up! Challenge your pride! Dare to reach higher to sustain revolutionary performance results! For more information on *The SuperSTAR Leadership Model* visit us at <http://wcwpartners.com/superstar-leadership-model/>



Who are we?

WCW Partners is a performance-improvement company with more than 20 years of experience helping companies, government agencies, and nonprofit organizations worldwide revitalize their results and achieve record-breaking performance levels. We are experts in sales performance, organizational development, leadership development, marketing and communications – and we don't mind telling you that we're different than most consulting firms you'll find in the marketplace. For one thing, it's our approach. When you hire us, you get us. But just as important, we're people who've had to wrestle with the same issues you have: how to strengthen sales, boost productivity, improve quality, increase employee satisfaction, build a team, and retain and attract new customers. To us – “We develop the capability in you” is more than a catchy phrase – it's our promise.



Rick Conlow is the CEO and Senior Consultant of WCW Partners. Rick's energy and ability to inspire others toward intentional change has allowed him to help companies reduce complaints by 57 percent, improve profits by 20 percent, and increase sales 30%, 56%, 75% and 218%. Rick's hands-on, practical experience as a General Manager, Vice President, Training Director, Program Director, and National Sales Trainer and Consultant, helped him to drive these results. Rick has authored eleven books, and he regularly facilitates presentations to large and small audiences on various engaging topics. His latest book is co-authored with his business partner Doug, *The SuperSTAR Leadership Model: Good Boss, Bad Boss – Which One Are You?*



Doug Watsabaugh is the COO and Senior Consultant of WCW Partners. He values being a “regular person,” with his feet on the ground and his head in the realities of the daily challenges that his clients encounter. His heart for and experience with clients in difficult situations set Doug apart from other sales performance and leadership development consultants. His knowledge of experiential learning and his skill at designing change processes and learning events have enabled him to significantly improve the lives of thousands of individuals and hundreds of organizations in various industries, some of which include: financial services, manufacturing, medical, consumer goods and technology.

For more information:

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