

Figures for Best Practices for Operational Excellence

Source of management debt	Corresponds to...	Explanation
Putting two in the box	Lack of clarity	Assigning two people to the same position causes a lack of clarity about who is responsible for what and about whose orders and priorities are to be followed
Overcompensating an employee who received another job offer	Lack of fairness	Undercompensating an employee until he is offered another job and then overcompensating him is doubly unfair: to the employee himself before he is offered the job and to the rest of his team afterwards.
No performance management / employee feedback process	Lack of consistency	Once clear objectives have been issued, performance management is mostly about consistency in applying consequences.

Objective is...	Cause	Explanation
Ambiguous	The manager is incompetent.	The manager does not know how to set clear objectives or why it is important to do so.
Ambiguous	The manager wants to retain political power.	The blurrier the objectives, the more subjective the manager can be in their rewarding and thus gain power from their ability to apply such subjectivity.
Ambiguous	The manager is afraid they won't be able to follow-up with rewards or punishments.	The blurrier the objectives, the easier it is for the manager to confabulate a reason why consequences should not follow results or lack thereof.
Ambiguous	The manager is afraid their team will not be able to produce satisfying results anyway.	The blurrier the objectives, the easier it is for the manager to justify to his boss why his team underperformed, but neither he nor individual members should be held accountable.
Collective	The manager dreads having difficult conversation with individual subordinates.	The manager assigns responsibilities to groups only so that individual responsibility is unclear and cannot be rewarded or punished. This does not mean that good managers do not use group objectives, but doing so is not sufficient; it is also necessary to use individual ones.
Unrewardable	The manager does not respect their capacities or their subordinates' and ends up assigning too conservative objectives.	Objectives should not be set so that they are comfortable but so that good things happen if they are achieved.

Time	4 years ago	3 years ago	2 years ago	Last year
Workplace deaths	1	1	1	0

Time	4 years ago	3 years ago	2 years ago	Last year
Workplace deaths	25	30	15	5

The root causes of difficult employees

Problem	Consequence
They never got to achieve any objective	They did not experience that achieving objectives leads to positive individual outcomes
After achieving objectives, they didn't get to experience the rewards	They now believe that achieving objectives is not necessarily followed by positive individual outcomes.
After failing to achieve objectives, they still get to enjoy benefits as if they did achieve them	They now believe that productive behavior is unnecessary.

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