THE MISSING LINK: FRONTLINE MANAGERS TRAINING

Frontline managers have a tough job. They are expected to deliver a high-quality service to clients and customers, greater productivity, bigger cost savings, flexible teams, lower staff turnover, and much more. They’re at the very first level of management across a company’s business operations and functions. Typically, they make up 50% to 60% of a company’s management ranks and directly supervise as much as 80% of the workforce. (HBR 2010)

Despite the importance and the impact of frontline managers on the business, frontline manager’s reviews show room for improvement on vital leadership competencies such as strategic and innovative thinking, developing talent and inspirational leadership.

Frontline managers are first level leaders whose direct reports are employees with no management responsibilities. These managers are central to a company’s business strategy because they oversee its execution. These are usually line managers, office managers, supervisors who are directly responsible for production of goods and services, and supervision of clerical staff and shop floor employees. Most of the time they have limited flexibility in decision making and little room for creativity.

According to studies by McKinsey in 2010, 70% of Senior executives are only “somewhat” satisfied or “not at all satisfied” with the performance of their companies’ frontline managers. On that same study, 81% of the frontline managers say they are “not satisfied” with their own performance.

So what is happening? What is the cause of these alarming results?

One of the main reasons, and the one we will be focusing in this presentation, is training. Companies’ training programs are not designed to help frontline managers despite the potential impact their jobs can have. There is an obvious lack of leadership development.

Frontline managers are not offered enough training and development programs to meet the rising job demands.

60% of Frontline managers claim to have never received any training before stepping into a leadership role, according to the Center for creative leadership in 2014.

Part of the problem is because the number of frontline leaders compare to senior leaders make it more expensive, monetary more investment and substantially more risk.

According to research by Liaw, Chi & Chuang 2009; Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007, highly capable Frontline leaders drive better customer/client experiences, higher productivity and ultimately increased profitability.

“It’s ironic that most companies spend much of their money on people’s salaries, and yet they spend only a small fraction of their budget to develop people. In fact most companies spend more time and money on maintaining their buildings, technology and equipment, than they do on developing people”. (The New One Minute Manager).

The link between frontline manager effectiveness and turnover rate is just one example to justify investing in more developing these leaders.

Managers need to inspire people and promote innovation. They need to lead with collaboration; they need to be both results-oriented and people-oriented. They have to show their people how to be participants on their own decision making.

In today’s world we need to get more done sooner with fewer resources, so we have to train on how to keep things new and fresh, how to evolve, how to adapt to change. It’s easy to miss the obvious so we need to focus in common sense and simplicity. Show them how to bring out the best in people.

Based on research from Hay Group in 2010, providing training to Frontline managers will help you deliver up to:

-12% higher financial turnover

-36% lower staff turnover

-57% less absenteeism.

We want to challenge you to go back to your organizations and identify the situation and find the opportunity to improve success rate for managers. Improve team productivity. Allow the frontline managers to be prepared for their role. Let them learn and practice the basic skills they need to succeed.

Let them become more centered and supportive of their team.

Help them be the winners they are meant to be.