

SALES AND SERVICE Excellence

THE MAGAZINE OF TEAM LEADERSHIP

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**Keep
Promises
to Customers**

**Supersize
Your Sales**

Brand Loyalty

Price Concerns

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"Sales and Service Excellence is a phenomenal resource for sales professionals who want to grow and achieve more in their careers."

—TOM HOPKINS, AMERICA'S #1 SALES TRAINER



Great Expectations

Inspire consumers to choose your brand.



by Gregg
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with Susanne
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CONSIDER THE PEOPLE WITH WHOM YOU work closely. Who would you classify as your A and B players? What distinguishes these groups? What characteristics are shared by A players? What do B players have in common? What do you think about each group?

Now consider this: they know how you rate them. Whether you express your assessments verbally or not, they sense into which category you've placed them. You communicate your opinions clearly through verbal and non-verbal cues. You change the tone of your voice depending on whom you address. You avoid eye contact with some while granting others your full attention. The people around you know what you think of them, and they live up or down to your expectations of them.

You give more time and attention to those perceived as high performers and less to those you see as low performers. You smile more often with those you think well of, less with those you do not. You tend to call upon those you consider low performers less often, even granting concessions to high performers that you do not to give low performers. You praise low performers for mediocre results, reinforcing low standards. You provide less coaching and direction for weaker performers, demand less work and effort from them than you do from strong performers.

Your expectations for others predict their performance because your opinions are self-fulfilling prophecies. The cues you send are expressions of your thoughts and expectations, and they impact everyone around you. Your colleagues pick up these signals and adjust their behavior to conform with assumptions about them and their abilities. By expecting less-than-greatness from those with whom you work, you contribute to the less-than-great results.

When you think of others as unmotivated, incompetent, or unintelligent, they know it and resent it. When you think of others as unique and talented, you set the stage for high performance.

Halo and Horn Effect

Two patterns are common in the way people assess the ability of others.

The Halo Effect describes the tendency for one good characteristic to dictate your opinion. When a person demonstrates exceptional ability in one area, you see his gifts and talents in other arenas. For example, when looking at a very attractive person, you might assume that she is talented. Or you may allow a strong rating in one area to influence your overall rating. Favored people fail to get constructive commentary on their performance, while others go unrecognized. One part of your team is not asked to per-



form any higher, while the contributions of others are overlooked.

The Horn Effect has equal impact. When a person seems deficient in one vital area, you assume he is deficient in other ways. Most people do not get inspired by talking about their weaknesses, failures, mistakes, and flaws.

Now, imagine having great expectations of your staff—challenging them to perform at a higher level. People want to be successful, important, and engaged, and to know that their work matters. What if you saw everyone as a unique person with individual hopes and dreams? People have latent talents waiting to be discovered and applied. What if you spent your time and energy seeking out these exiled talents and helping to unleash their potential?

Coaching Perspective

See people not as high performers and low performers, but rather as individuals with wide-ranging personalities, talents, and abilities. Suspend your rating and see only greatness in them. This Coaching Perspective is the

foundation of the Great Expectations model. You don't condone poor performance; you see it as unused potential.

When you adopt the Coaching Perspective, you suspend judgment and cast aside your instinct to label and ask: what if you are wrong about a person? What if he is *not* who you think he is? What if he has a different set of motives, values, and traits? Taking a new perspective on people transforms your relationships. Can you approach another without preconceived ideas? Can you forget who you think he is or what you think is possible for him? Can you see people as empty canvases ready to be filled with wondrous colors? The great coach *deliberately* seeks others' highest potential, intentionally overlooking their shortcomings to help them become more of who they are.

Great Expectations Model

The Great Expectations model of high performance coaching consists of three guiding principles:

1. *Earn the right to coach.* You decide to help another person create personal change, and the other person decides to include you in his effort to change. You must know and live your values (authenticity), be aware of your strengths and gifts (self-esteem), and have a genuine interest in the success of the talent (noble intention).

2. *Form a perfect partnership* (one that alters performance). In this unique relationship, the talent is appreciated at his best, confronted with his own talents and aspirations, and held accountable to live up to high standards.

3. *Engage in dangerous conversations* (an intense form of dialogue). Most conversations involve exchanging information—instructions, advice, and opinions—with predictable outcomes. Dangerous conversations are uncertain and risky, their outcomes unknown. They take you outside your comfort zone and challenge you to consider new perspectives. This is a wide-ranging exchange between you and others—exploring aspirations, values, and the situation; taking you to new depths (*discovery*); generating new possibilities, opportunities, and perspectives (*creation*); and forging new action plans and accountabilities (*commitment*).

Employ these principles of the Great Expectations Model in your coaching—the effect will be transformative. **SSE**

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ACTION: Have great expectations of your people.