

Ten Golden Rules of High Performance

1. Hire by committee – make sure recruits talk to their future colleagues – I agree with this rule because in my opinion having management and future colleagues to interview potential candidate and count each interviewer's opinion, avoids unfair hiring process.

2. Cater to every need – make it easy, not hard, for people to perform – Some larger offices within the government agencies provide for example, nurse, day care, fitness, and restaurants in the same building along with transits for those who commute by CTA. There are many more other privileges that employees are provided with, which make people to perform more effectively as they value what is offered to them.

3. Pack them in – put people to work close to one another – As I stated before, I somewhat disagree that people working individually should be positioned to work close to one another as this can be disruptive or distracting for some employees, especially considering that people have different work habits where some employees' habits are annoying or distracting. This also might encourage the employees to chat with each other instead of focusing on the work. However, I believe that individuals assign to work on a project as a team, should work close to each other as they can then communicate and share their ideas much faster than otherwise.

4. Make coordination easy – use technology to keep people talking together - I also have mixed feelings about using technology to keep people talking together, as this can also be distracting. However, on the other hand, it's also beneficial as it facilitates communication. It enables employees to quickly get the information that they need. For example, if an employee needs information from another employee whose office is in another floor then the use of technology will enable both employees to communicate with each other without either of them leaving their cubicles or offices. Basically, as long as the technology such as Internet access,

email, and Instant Messaging is not abuse by some employees, than I believe this type of technology should be allowed.

5. Eat your own dog food – make use of the company products – Government employees can only use agency's products, especially software applications. Each government agency has its own unique system, therefore it is impossible to use private computer or any other type of software. However, employees do use agency's computers to access Internet for private needs but some websites are blocked, such as for example, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.

6. Encourage creativity – allow freedom to come up with new ideas – I strongly agree that employees should be allowed to come up with new ideas. Employee is the person doing the job every day and knows what works and what does not. Therefore, government not only allows but encourages employees to submit their suggestions to the special department for review. If the suggestion is approved and implemented, the employee is rewarded. The cash amount received varies as it depends on the idea, but it can amount anywhere between \$100 to \$500 per suggestion.

7. Strive for consensus – remember that “many are better than few” - I have mixed feelings about driving for consensus. Although consensus may sometimes lead to the best decision or solution, there are also times when striving to obtain consensus just prolongs the resolution of a problem, especially when the people involved refuse to agree or compromise and insist on standing firm on their opinions. In these cases, it may be necessary for the leader to step up and make a decision or impose a solution even if it's an unpopular one.

8. Don't be evil – live tolerance and respect – I strongly believe that tolerance and respect should be practice at home, work, school, and society. The most productive environment is that where employees are valued and treated with respect and dignity and where there is no unethical

behaviour.

9. Data-driven decisions – do the analysis and stay on track – At the office I work, everything must be analyzed and completed in accordance to the policy as each claimant's case is unique and confidential. We are actually using two different systems which are allowing us to track within minutes, every document that was faxed in or electronically uploaded.

10. Communicate effectively – hold many stay-in-touch meetings – I strongly believe that stay-in-touch meetings keep management and their employees closer. We have meetings every month. During those meetings, management informs us of up-to-date processes, effectiveness, and concerns. Employees are also allowed to raise questions and/or their concerns. There are also one-on-one meetings with superiors available at any time-no appointment necessary.

In my opinion and according to my performance reviews, I am working at an HPO. I work in the Office of Disability Adjudication and Review (ODAR) where Administrative Law Judges review and conduct hearings on previously denied disability claims. There are ten judges within the office and 9/10 have two legal assistance while I am the only assistant the judge I work with. I also prepare twice as many cases as required as I strongly believe hard work pays off and will eventually promote me to a higher position.

Can you think of a situation where employees might be very satisfied, and very unproductive?

I have been working for the Federal Government for about 4 ½ years now, and I must say that work in the government sector tends to be less stressful and has less pressure than working for the private sector. In particular, work at the government sector tends to be at a slower pace. The

projects are long-term, the employees are not severely judged on their output and productivity. On the contrary, work in the private sector is more fast-paced. Projects are short-term and with some limitations on time and budget, employees tend to be more pressured to finish their tasks on time.

In addition, the working environment in the government sector is more conservative and stagnant where creativity without approval is suppressed and suggestions/ideas are optional. Working for the government sector provides employees with clear procedures and guidelines for doing their job. The government sector also provides employees with job security and excellent benefits.

On the other hand, the working environment in the private sector tends to be more open to new ideas, is more flexible with the rules, and has fewer guidelines. However, there is no job security, and benefits are not as great compared to the government sector.

With that said most government employees are very satisfied but unfortunately are not as productive as they should or would be if they worked in the private sector. Given these differences between working in the government sector and the private sector, the government employees are bound to have a difficult time adjusting to the work in private sectors and adjusting their work habits. Some may also feel apprehensive since they will no longer have the same job security that they used to have while working in the government sector. In addition, I have never heard that someone was fired because of poor performance.