



One Approach to Performance Leadership: Twelve “Better Practices” That Can Help Ratchet Up Performance

I. Creating the Performance Framework: *What would it mean to do a good job?*

Practice 1: Articulate the organization's purpose.

Proclaim — clearly and frequently — what the organization is trying to accomplish.

Practice 2: Identify one of the organization's most consequential performance deficits.

Focus on a key failure that is keeping the organization from achieving its purpose(s).

Practice 3: Establish a specific performance target.

Specify what new level of success the organization needs to achieve next.

Practice 4: Clarify your cause-and-effect linkage between target and purpose.

Define (for yourself, at least) your implicit theory that explains how meeting the target will help to accomplish the purpose.

II. Driving Performance Improvement: *How can we mobilize our people?*

Practice 5: Monitor progress frequently, personally, and publicly.

Publish the data so that every team knows that you know (and that everyone else knows) how well every team is doing.

Practice 6: Build operational capacity.

Provide your teams with what they need to achieve their target.

Practice 7: Take advantage of small wins to reward success.

Find lots of reasons to dramatize that you recognize and appreciate what teams have accomplished.

Practice 8: Create “esteem opportunities.”

Ensure that people can earn a sense of accomplishment and thus gain both self esteem and the esteem of their peers.

III. Enhancing Future Performance: *How must we change to do even better?*

Practice 9: Check for cheating, distortions, and achievement of purpose.

Verify that people are achieving their targets in a way that helps accomplish the purpose (not in a way that fails to help or actually undermines this effort).

Practice 10: Analyze a large number and wide variety of indicators.

Examine many forms of data — both quantitative and qualitative — to learn how your organization can improve.

Practice 11: Adjust purpose, target, theory, monitoring, capacity, esteem opportunities, rewards, and/or analysis.

Act on this learning, making the modifications necessary to ratchet up performance again.

Practice 12: Create an accounting of your organization's performance.

Build a reputation for competence and accomplishment, and obtain, perhaps, additional flexibility or resources.