

Where's the Trust?

By Maureen Tazzioli

There is nothing more disturbing than to walk into an establishment only to hear the words, *"Let me do my job already!"* However, that is exactly what happened as I entered a department store during my recent travels. Curious about what was going on, I proceeded to look at some of the items on the shelf close to where the conversation was occurring. The disagreement continued.

As I looked around the store I noticed potential customers quickly leaving without purchasing anything—a clear indication of the unsettling environment. With a desire to learn more I picked up an item and proceeded to the checkout.

As I walked over to the store attendant who was now left alone, I could feel a sense of tension. With a warm greeting I handed my item over at which point she looked up at me as she did all she could to attempt a smile and then said, *"I hate my job!"* To that I replied, *"That's too bad. Maybe tomorrow will be better."* *"I don't think so", she said, "I have been working here for over three years and they still don't trust me to do a good job, so now I have no choice but to leave."* Her comments had me thinking.

How many times do businesses or organizations run the risk of losing some of their best employees because they do not trust them to do a good job? Then again, how many employees articulate their frustrations directly to their customers and fellow co-workers when they are upset?

This situation was baffling to me because when you really think about it why would a business or organization go through the entire interview and hiring process to find the most qualified individual and then turn around and make the same person feel as though they can not be trusted to fulfill the daily duties of the position they were initially hired to do, especially after years of working there?

With the above situation in mind, here are a few things to consider when wishing to strengthen workplace relationships:

- **Mutual Respect** – We all need to be and should be treated with respect. When a situation of a sensitive nature arises we should take the time to articulate ourselves in a respectful fashion refraining from using inappropriate words and actions that could potentially damage the reputation of both the individual and the organization. Staying focused on healthy conversations while promoting positive outcomes, can help everyone work together especially during times of indifference.
- **Trust** – In order to build healthy working relationships trust must be evident in every situation. For example, employees must be able to trust their manager that the information being shared is 100% accurate. A manager must be able to trust their employees to know exactly what needs to be done in order to resolve daily situations in a timely and professional fashion. In a trusting environment individual accountability and responsibility in the workplace is likely to occur.
- **Remove Counterproductive Policies** – If you want to strengthen workplace relationships get rid of outdated, counterproductive rules, regulations and policies that ultimately slow down production while keeping office morale at a relatively low level. For example, if a person is new to a position it may make perfect sense to seek management approval beforehand on certain decisions; however, if a highly skilled and trained employee who has worked at the same position and in the same organization for years, are forced to wait for management or

supervisory approval to minor decisions, chances are they will not feel the need to be accountable or responsible in comparison to those given the opportunity to think on their own. Therefore, it is important that we begin to assess the effectiveness of current rules, regulations and policies to ensure they still apply.

- **Peaceful Communications** – When information sharing takes place between employees and their immediate supervisor/manager, without fear of repercussions, peaceful communications happen. In addition, when recognition and acknowledgments of innovative ideas and/or strategies stay with the original creator, office moral will begin to flourish.
- **Belief in Self, Belief in Others, Belief in the Main Purpose** – For real growth to occur you must believe in yourself and the professional skills and abilities of your co-workers. When you begin to see yourself and others as having great value, your willingness to resolve difficulties in a professional fashion will also increase helping everyone to stay focused on the main purpose.

Be a willing participant in creating a healthy workplace environment. Apply a little respect and trust to daily communications while ensuring all rules, regulations and policies reflect current situations so positive outcomes can happen.

(Maureen Tazzioli, President of ReZultsMatter, is committed to building organizational excellence. Regarded as an expert in overcoming obstacles, Maureen's keeping it real workshops and keynote presentations are helping to unify workplace environments so individuals and organizations can move forward together. Maureen can be reached at 306.545.2920 or 1.855.280.2920 or by visiting her website at www.rezultsmatter.com. This article is reprinted with the author's permission).

