Bringing out the best in people, by Aubrey C. Daniels

1. The perils of traditional management
   1.1. Bringing out the best in people and achieving measurably superior results requires a clear and precise understanding of human behavior.
   1.2. Performance management provides a precise way of analyzing work and implementing a management system that will not only address the problems associated with inadequate performance, but will lead to practical ways to maximize performance in every aspect of the company’s business.
   1.3. Every organizational accomplishment is dependent on behavior.
   1.4. Effective antecedents are necessary to initiate performance, but are not sufficient to sustain performance.
   1.5. The only thing that makes an antecedent effective is its consistent pairing with a consequence.

2. The astonishing power of positive reinforcement
   2.1. Behavioral consequences are those things and events that follow a behavior and change the probability that the behavior will be repeated in the future.
   2.2. Management changes behavior by its action and inaction.
   2.3. People don’t resist change if the change provides immediate positive consequences for them.
   2.4. The role of leaders in every organization is not to find fault or place blame, but to analyze why people are behaving as they are, and modify the consequences to promote the behavior they need.
   2.5. Positive reinforcement maximizes performance, while negative reinforcement gets a level of performance that is just enough to get by.
   2.6. Deadlines give people permission to wait, goal attainment gives people permission to stop.
   2.7. Five clues that indicate negative reinforcement is present.
       2.7.1. J curve – sharp rise in performance just before a deadline
       2.7.2. Negative talk – produced by negative reinforcement
       2.7.3. Performance goes flat after reaching goal
       2.7.4. There is no plan for positive reinforcement
       2.7.5. Performance drops when performance requirement removed
   2.8. Negative reinforcement serves well when all we need is compliance or minimum performance. With negative reinforcement management loses control:
       2.8.1. Lose control of time – must always be present and vigilant
       2.8.2. Lose control of budget – no incentive to save money
       2.8.3. Lose control of performance – performance stops when goal reached
       2.8.4. Lose control of feelings and health – stressful work environment
   2.9. Positive reinforcement is any consequence that follows a behavior and increases its frequency in the future. Positive reinforcement occurs every time a behavior produces a favorable change in the environment for the performer.
   2.10. Two ways for positive reinforcement to occur – natural (button on water fountain) and created (must be added by a person). Two most common forms of created reinforcement are social (trophy value) and tangible (salvage value). All tangible reinforcers should be paired with social reinforcement.
2.11. Three ways of finding reinforcers – ask, try, observe.
2.12. Punishment doesn’t tell people what you want them to do; it only tells them what not to do. Problems in the workplace are often created not by what we do, but what we fail to do.
2.13. If people are not told they are appreciated, they will assume the opposite.
2.14. Common mistakes
   2.14.1. Perception error – assume the reinforcer that works for you will work for others
   2.14.2. Contingency error – if you get a reward with the desired behavior
   2.14.3. Delay error – the longer the reinforcement is done after the behavior, the less effective it will be
   2.14.4. Frequency error – low frequency of reinforcement is almost as bad as none. May take 50,000 reinforcers to teach competence in basic math.
2.15. Two attempts at positive reinforcers that aren’t
   2.15.1. “No but” – do not use the occasion for praise as an opportunity to prompt or instruct.
   2.15.2. Sandwich – do not pair positive reinforcement with punishment
3. The scientific approach to leadership
   3.1. Pinpoint the specific results you want first. Then identify behaviors necessary to produce those results.
   3.2. Pinpoints are tangible, observable results and behaviors, not beliefs, attitudes, or anything else external, subjective or abstract.
   3.3. Pinpointing requires precise descriptions of results and behaviors that are observable, measurable, reliable.
   3.4. Measurement alone won’t change behavior. Measurement is an antecedent.
   3.5. Feedback is information about performance that allows an individual to adjust his or her performance. Feedback is an antecedent.
   3.6. Don’t give feedback on variables that are not under the control of the individual or group.
   3.7. Post group performance publicly; provide individual feedback privately.
   3.8. Feedback and positive reinforcement form the most powerful combination of techniques you can use to bring out the best in people.
   3.9. Model for problem solving
      3.9.1. Pinpoint
      3.9.2. Measure
      3.9.3. Feedback
      3.9.4. Reinforce
      3.9.5. Evaluate
4. Turning good intentions into high performance
   4.1. Goals are antecedents for either reinforcement or punishment
   4.2. The purpose of setting goals should be to increase opportunities for positive reinforcement – the goal of every organization is to have all winners.
   4.3. The fastest way to change individual behavior is to set small goals, reinforce effort, and celebrate attainment.
   4.4. The best way to break an old habit is to replace it with a new one, and reinforce it a lot.
4.5. Contests that motivate
4.5.1. Use small tangible items as prizes and focus on bragging rights as the main reward
4.5.2. Make the contest short
4.5.3. Make the contest fun
4.5.4. Make sure everyone can win.
4.6. The requirements for positive reinforcement are that the consequence must be:
4.6.1. Valued by the person receiving it
4.6.2. Contingent on performance
4.6.3. Delivered immediately
4.6.4. Delivered frequently
4.7. If people don’t like you, practically nothing you do will be received well. It is risky business today for companies to promote supervisors and managers on the basis of technical and professional skills while minimizing or excusing weaknesses in social skills.

5. Revitalizing the workplace
5.1. The amount of reinforcement a person receives for a particular behavior is matched by the time spent engaged in that behavior.
5.2. Peter Senge, The Fifth Discipline: the most successful companies will be the ones that can most efficiently train their work force to assimilate and use vast amounts of ever-changing information.
5.3. How to make change easy and efficient
5.3.1. Plan positive reinforcement for the new behavior involved in the new system, process or procedure.
5.3.2. Eliminate all positive reinforcement for the behaviors associated with the old methods.
5.3.3. Positively reinforce the new behavior more than you think you should.
5.3.4. Expect some people to try the old way harder as a way to slow the change process – it indicates they are getting less reinforcement for the old ways.
5.3.5. Expect emotional behavior, then listen and ask for ideas to make the change work better.
5.4. Celebration defined: an occasion to relive an accomplishment
5.4.1. In a successful celebration, management asks employees to share what they’ve done.
5.4.2. Management’s role is to listen and encourage performers to relive their accomplishment, not tell them what they did.
5.4.3. The purpose of a tangible reward is to anchor a memory. It should always be given after the accomplishment has been relived.
5.4.4. Results are the occasion for celebration; efforts should be reinforced daily.