

SELF-MANAGEMENT: THE BOSSES ARE AWOL

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Self-leadership is a mark of a new management science that has grown appreciably in recent times. Many organizations, both public and private, regardless of size and age, are looking increasingly to individuals who can perform effectively and at the same time, no longer require the “hand holding” of their predecessors.

Management has become less generous and visible than their historical direction. Rather than operate under critical observation and with controlling supervisors with nearby offices and stations, employees are increasingly carrying out their accountabilities with minimal oversight. No longer can individuals have a seasoned supervisor looking over his or her shoulder and avoiding one’s own creative snake pits.

Self-leadership and increasing personal initiative will be the by words as we enter the new millennium. For those who sit around waiting for detailed instructions, you will go by the wayside more so than ever before. Also, people at all levels will have to contend with more frequent changes in corporate direction and, certainly, with less notification than previously prevailed. Unceasing ambiguity and blur relative to courses of action will increase, not decrease.

We hear and see it all the time. Organizations seek employees who are fully capable of attacking the future with zeal and intelligence; those individuals who try only to remain traditional and predict the past are dinosaurs. Today, management seeks

employees who are innovative, bright, curious, and yes, willing to judiciously experiment while contributing creative potential.

Innovation has become increasingly important and new discoveries are acute measurements of an individual’s performance and with great frequency, their potential for expanded accountabilities.

While past management practices required the manager, by whatever title, to be the cheerleader, this will no longer be considered exclusively the right and privilege of the boss. As self-management grows, and it will, stimulation for new and novel approaches to a solution and problem resolution will no longer be the exclusive responsibility of the boss-in-charge.

The bottom line (a term used ad nauseam) doesn’t count on higher management to be the only individual “jump starting” effective action. Today, the companies we deal with in our executive and management search practice increasingly use the term “self-starters.” Certainly, the compressed organizational table has served as a stimuli for promoting self-management. This is a logical extension of the new ways in which many of us are further influencing our own careers.

It’s not a fable; it’s real. Most of us perform at our highest level when we assume personal control over our actions. Self-management...I believe it’s here to stay....not a ship in the night.

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