

THE NEXT FORUM

The ECP Forum is on summer break. Enjoy the long days. Keep checking this space in the future newsletters for information about future events.

You're Doing What?

Imagine going to a golf course on Monday and getting to use the carts for free because "it's a beautiful day." You show up to play again on Wednesday, another beautiful day, to find the group ahead of you has free carts but you're paying full price.

Most of us get upset because we had come to expect something even if not merited. As a customer, you could decide just to deal with it or take your business to another course.

Outstanding managers understand that co-workers and direct reports highly value consistency in actions and responses. Inconsistent behavior without perceived justification creates a lot of

problems on work teams. Let's look at a few:

Workplace Politics

If your team believes that your decisions are inconsistent without reason, many will assume that your reasons are personal — you promote and punish based on who is in your good favor. This is highly destructive as it causes teams to work against one another. They focus on you instead of the project goals.

Disruption of Work Flow

When a manager has a history of acting inconsistent, team members come to expect that their current plan of work will be disrupted when you change your mind about something. The expecta-



tion is so great, that it actually invites and encourages disruptions.

Paralyzed Employees

Finally, when your people don't know what to expect from you, they'd rather wait and not move forward in any direction until you personally make a decision. They refuse to guess at what you might do.

None of these are useful situations for a team. Work hard to be conscious of your inconsistencies and always provide background when you make a decision that is out of the ordinary.

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Decision Tracker

Want an easy way to find out if you are consistent in your actions and responses? Try this.

Type these three questions on a piece of paper, make copies, and ask a few teammates to complete and submit (anonymously, of course). Use the answers to do a

reality check. Here are the three questions:

1. On a scale of 1-10 (1=very inconsistent and 10=very consistent), how consistent are my actions and responses to situations?
2. When I have been inconsistent with an action or response to a situation?

3. When do I demonstrate consistency in my actions and responses?

Compare these results to your own self-analysis. If there's a lot of difference, spend more time being aware of your decisions and actions. Use the information to improve your managing skills.

Personal Finance Tip #13

Start investing now for all stages of life.

Through the years, your investment strategies will change. Whether you're planning major purchases, making educational plans for children, or investing in your retirement- the key is to start planning early. First you need to know how much to invest to achieve your goals. To get started, go to www.ubt.com/tools/library/calculators.htm



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Extended Learning

BLOG

Does having the job title automatically make you a better manager? Interesting thought in this Business Week Magazine blog post.

http://www.businessweek.com/careers/managementiq/archives/2008/05/a_new_power_pri.html

BOOK

This week's top selling book, **What Happened: Inside the Bush White House and Washington's Culture of Deception** by Scott McClellan, has everyone wondering if this book is about a bitter employee looking to cash in or a voice of truth to power? Regardless, it is a great example of a workplace in disarray because of inconsistent actions and responses.

ARTICLE

Americans work more hours and produce more carbon than any other people on the planet. More than a coincidence? Read more in this Fast Company article.

<http://www.fastcompany.com/magazine/125/all-in-a-days-work.html>

ECP Forum Fun Poll

This one is courtesy of USA Today.

How do you pay your monthly bills? Check out the poll of American adults.



For questions about the ECP Forum email:
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