Wishful thinking about the job

by Michael_Kinsman

OK, maybe you didn't just discover a magic lantern with a genie in it, but we're still going to give you five wishes for your job in the new year.

You can ask for whatever you want and you're probably going to be granted all five of your wishes. What do you ask for?

That's probably a tougher question than it seems at first. I'm sure most of us would immediately ask for a substantial pay raise because none of us are actually paid what we are worth, right?

Or, maybe you deserve a promotion because everybody thinks they know how to run the company best?

Or, maybe you ask for an early retirement so you can just get away from the job entirely?

Possibly, you'll wake up to reality and ask for some things from your boss that will make your job more fulfilling and will inspire you to work harder.

Here's five things you ought to consider asking for:

- Honesty. Too often, management candor is an oxymoron. For some reason, supervisors seem stuck on the notion that they have to carefully control the information they provide workers. That might have been a sound idea several generations ago, but today our workplaces thrive on information and anyone that is inhibiting that flow of information is committing corporate treason.

The hallmark of a good company today is one that employs the brains and ingenuity of each of its employees. But if managers don't allow a free-flow of information, they handicap the ability of all employees to contribute.

- Fairness. This has been distorted in our workplaces to mean we need to treat everyone equally. That's not the goal. What we need to do is give everyone the same tools and opportunities to succeed. Those who excel at certain tasks or jobs deserve to move into more challenging work. To deny them under the auspices of fairness is to be unfair to them.

Fairness doesn't mean you find common denominator and cater to it. It means that you judge each individual with the same set of criteria and reward them based on their performance.

- Opportunity. Everyone wants to get ahead, but that's just plain impossible. You make every fifth employee a vice president if that makes you feel good, but what have you created in a company that has 20 percent vice presidents? You've created a mess.

Opportunity means giving people the tools and resources they need to succeed. When they do succeed, they should be given more complex projects or assignments and should be rewarded for good work.

- Dedication. Everyone wants to believe that their boss has the company's best interests at heart, which is why dedication is such a major issue. If a supervisor's heart isn't with the company's mission that certainly will filter down throughout the company's work force. Lack of dedication in the management ranks has a direct link to employee motivation.

- Compassion. Workers are not robots. They have good and bad days. But managers who don't realize this may be short-circuiting the ability of their company to reap the best productivity from workers. Supervisors need to step back and look at the long-term benefits an individual brings in order to accept short-term problems.

Your wishes may be different, but you should at least consider what you would wish for.

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