

## Member's Quarterly

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### President's Message

## What Employees Really Want from Their Boss:

*What's Wrong Now?*



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**W**e all believe that we know how to be good managers. Isn't that the truth? What about the employees we oversee? What do they really think? A consulting group recently surveyed 500 employees for the Society of Human Resource Management on just that issue. What feedback did the employees provide?

The employees surveyed had five major areas that they thought their managers should focus on. These included having a clear vision and strategy, two-way communications, supporting their career development, leading but not micromanaging, and being a good coach. Are there any surprises here for you? Personally, I think that this is a good list that I would give to any new manager and have them work on delivering these goods to their teams if they want to be successful.

### Let's delve a bit deeper into these results.

Having a vision and a strategy to get there is crucial for any manager. No wonder it's # 1 on the employees' list. They want to be successful and productive at work. They also want to know that they are going somewhere and that you have a plan to help them get there.

Communication is the key. How often have we heard that? Yet how much time and energy do we put into communicating our vision and listening for feedback to make sure we are on the right track? Not enough, according to the group surveyed. In addition, they want you to listen more and talk less.

Supporting their career development is clearly self-interest. However, they want you as their manager to care about that too. Why does it matter so much? After compensation, employees talk about bad supervisors and lack of career mobility as the major reasons they change jobs. Employees want to grow and learn new things. Help them make that happen and they will not only be happier, they will stay.

No one likes to be micromanaged. It's the biggest complaint in the survey and the thing that drives all employees (good and bad) crazy. We don't do it on purpose and we instinctively know that it's not a good idea. Yet many of us at some point fall into that terrible trap. Not only does micromanaging irritate people, it gives them a signal that you don't trust them. That proves deadly in a work environment.

Finally, employees want to be coached. We know this instinctively as well. Employees respond positively when they are given feedback, both positively and negatively, on a regular basis. They become better performers when they practice. They are more motivated to do better work when they feel that their manager cares about them. So, get out there on the field and start coaching.

*Nathaly Pascal is President of IPM [Institute of Professional Management].*