



(U) The Bald Truth: P3 & Promotion Feedback

FROM: Charles H. Berlin III
SID Chief of Staff
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(U) Providing constructive criticism to our employees is a tough job for leaders at all levels. The fact is, one of the biggest problems is self-inflicted. I have heard an occasional leader whine about how it is hard to criticize someone when they did not know what they were supposed to do. Well, duh, whose fault is that? I am constantly amazed by the last-minute nature of our evaluations and the lack of effort early in the process.

(U) The main thing to do is start early and modify as needed. You know, the old living document idea. First of all, have that counseling conversation with your subordinates when the plan is created, not when the evaluation is due. Think about the kind of things the person would need to do to be thought of for promotion at this point and cook up some stretch goals to help that process. Most motivated employees want to know what they have to do to get to the next level, and this is the way to get that out in the open.

(U) While this is primarily a leader responsibility, the employee has a part, too. Drafting the P3 plan is a chance to influence the action. It is not impossible for you to propose some stretch goals for yourself - especially in professional development. Don't you know where you need work? Additionally, drafting your P3 plan is an exercise in strategic thought and visioning. You will need this skill as you rise up in the organization. Practice it now by envisioning the next year and understanding the organizations goals and picturing where you can make the best contribution. Leaving room for change is also a good idea.

(U) The second problem with these plans is that they were not kept up to date with regard to the changes we see every day. This is easily fixable, too. As the commercial says, "Just do it!" As we head into the promotion/compensation decision cycle next month, most of the attention will be focused on the 2003 P3 evaluation and not the P3 plan for 2004, but don't let it get behind.

(U) Meanwhile, I have heard some more whining about the onerous administrative burden of the P3 evaluations. Not too much sympathy here. As you know, we are trying hard to automate this to make it easier to write up, but there is no program to generate content. This is still the leader's responsibility. Yes, I know, many of you are asked to draft your evaluation, too. Again, think of this as a marvelous opportunity to influence the outcome (as long as you realize it is just a "suggestion" for the boss to consider). Mostly, the onerous nature of the whole thing is due to the last-minute nature of your process.

(U) Remember, it's the "One-Minute Manager" **not** the "Last-Minute Manager".

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