



The Value of Realistic Performance Standards

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Realistic performance standards provide both management and staff with a critically important measuring tool.

Without this tool, managers cannot effectively direct and support the efforts of their staff and the staff cannot effectively manage their time and resources.

Realistic performance standards should be established for both activity and results and should include criteria for quality.

The quality criteria is necessary to prevent the "numbers-for-numbers sake" phenomenon from developing. Once the standards are established they serve a variety of purposes.

1. They allow you to present a more accurate picture of the position during the hiring process and demonstrate to the candidate the requirements for remaining part of the team. This can be a selling point in attracting top performers.
2. They allow your staff to monitor themselves. With standards in place, your staff should always know where they stand; both quantitatively and qualitatively. The advantages of objective self-measurement are evident.
3. Properly utilized, they bring a level of objectivity to the management function and facilitate the decision making process. They allow everyone to evaluate both effort and effectiveness.

4. By properly utilizing realistic performance standards, you eliminate mutual mystification, increase your staff's effectiveness, identify areas for further skill development, better manage your time while decreasing the stress level normally associated with the management function.

Remember, true professionals welcome realistic performance standards. They understand that without these standards, there can be no measurement. Without measurement there can be no accountability. Without accountability, personal and organizational results will be compromised.