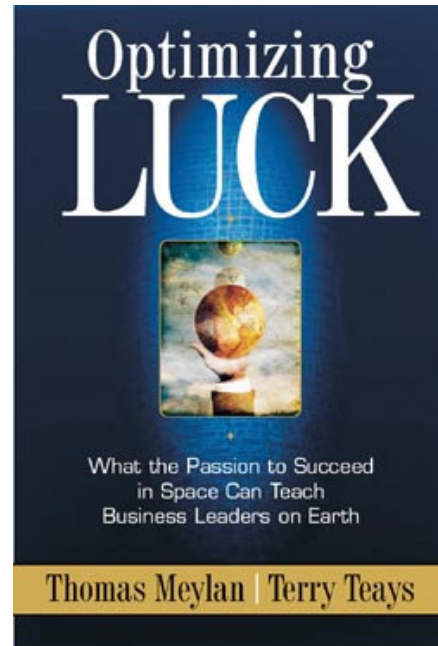


CHAPTER 10

Rewards and Success

“Shape (your) policies so each worker will feel...a vital part of the company with a personal responsibility for its success and a chance to share in that success.”
William Cooper Proctor, Procter & Gamble executive

Many enterprises seem to “train” their staff to do the opposite of what they claim are the organization’s goals. If you have hired the right people and let them do their jobs, you can still undo the good things that this generates by having a system for recognizing and rewarding employees that undermines this.



There are a lot of people in the world, some of whom have become managers, who retain a lot of emotional baggage about rewards. “Why should I reward people for ‘just doing their jobs’?” is a common complaint.

We wouldn’t suggest *rewarding* people “just for doing their jobs.” That’s what you *pay* them for. Instead, what are you doing for people who perform beyond their jobs descriptions? What are you doing for people who save you time, frustration, or other headaches that come with managing a business team of some kind? Are you simply stealing their credit?

It's very difficult to make constructive uses of rewards (or reprimands) if you don't apply them towards your luck-optimizing and fault-tolerant practices. It is very difficult to build rewards and other consequences into your luck-optimizing practices if your personal experience in these matters has been weak, or even debilitating. The psychology of why so many managers can't get a handle of the use of rewards and consequences requires deeper analysis than we can provide here. But we will suggest that if you have problems with these ideas, you are reducing your own options to succeed. If you have negative feelings or reactions towards the positive use of rewards, get it behind you and work hard with your team to develop the system of rewards and consequences that will motivate, support, and expand the types of behaviors you need to keep your business at the top of your market.

Rewards Not Necessarily Expensive

Everyone talks about how important it is to give people a proverbial pat on the back when they have done a good job. This is easy, costs nothing, and works wonders. Yet it happens all too infrequently in most work environments. Why? Usually the boss is so busy and distracted that s/he doesn't remember or take the time. But we are talking about something that could take less than a minute!

Recognition Not a Zero Sum Game

Many managers seem to be so intent on making themselves look good that they claim exclusive credit for all of the successes in their shop. (Conversely, all too often, all of the blame is laid on the staff when something goes wrong.) IUE was a collaborative, team environment. The Project Scientist, Yoji Kondo, always went out of his way to let people know about the contributions of the staff and to compliment their expertise. The effect on the staff morale, *and performance*, was very powerful.

Many of the reports and publications of the Observatory displayed authorship of all of those who worked on a particular project. This made the team feel good about the work they had done, but more importantly, it reinforced a desired behavior. You got recognition through team effort. You got assigned to key teams because you had contributed strongly to past team projects.

One of the main things that behavior studies tell us about effective training is that the positive reinforcement for a job well done must be immediate and clearly connected to the desired behavior. What of a manager who is “too busy” to give a simple “Good job” to a staff member who performs well on a specific task? This is a manager that is “too busy” to focus on an especially crucial part of their

job. This lack of recognition from the manager will diminish the luck-optimizing contributions of the team.

Simple procedures such as posting who found the most bugs during software testing of a new product, a reserved parking space for the “employee of the month,” or similar things may seem trivial, but properly applied they work very well. The praise works best if it is “public” for many reasons:

- The value of being praised is enhanced for the recipient.
- The other employees see that praise is the result of outstanding performance.
- The staff learns that this is the culture of your team.
- Upper management gets a better view of the quality of your team, and
- There is ordinarily a notable improvement in morale in everyone.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is perhaps the most under-appreciated and least understood aspect of the system of rewards and consequences. Yet it is commonly observed that job satisfaction relates to everything from performance to retention. If it is

possible to create job satisfaction in a given business, whose responsibility is it to provide such a constructive environment? It's the management's responsibility.

IUE experience clearly indicates that physical conditions are *not* the key to job satisfaction. As an increasingly aging project we tended to get shunted off into older spaces with increasingly obsolete equipment. Refurbishments were rare, and we have told you about all of them during the Project's 20 years.

Instead, we had a community of people who could be trusted to do their best every day they came to work. We had open communications, which helped us create our solutions quickly. Everyone had a willingness to help when asked. We were all in it together, and we all worked it out together as well.