



# Indigo Path Collective

## Playbook

**Manager Effectiveness**

# THE PLAYS

Management is a  
Learned Skill, Not  
an Innate Ability



**PLAY 1:** MAKE HUMAN RELATIONS A KEY MANAGEMENT PRIORITY

**PLAY 2:** DESIGN MANAGER EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAMS THAT FOCUS ON STRATEGIC BUSINESS OUTCOMES

**PLAY 3:** IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE SYSTEM OF MANAGEMENT

**PLAY 4:** TEACH MANAGERS TO MAKE EXCEPTIONAL BUSINESS DECISIONS

**PLAY 5:** HELP MANAGERS TO BECOME EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS

**PLAY 6:** GIVE MANAGERS TOOLS AND RESOURCES THAT ENABLE THEIR SUCCESS

**PLAY 7:** EMPLOY A STRONG EXECUTIVE SPONSOR TO LEAD THE MANAGER EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAM

**PLAY 8:** DEVELOP A MANAGERS' COMMUNITY

**PLAY 9:** HOST AN ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR MANAGERS

**PLAY 10:** MEASURE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MANAGERS

# PLAY 1:

Make Human Relations a Key Management Priority



## What is Human Relations?

Simply put, Human Relations refers to the study of group behavior in the workplace. Although it is mostly unknown today, Human Relations is a formal field of practice which originated as a result of the 1930's landmark research that discovered the Hawthorne Effect. The study found that when you give people positive attention in the workplace, talk to them, and help them to see the big picture of what the company is trying to accomplish, they produce better results.

## Why is it important to manager effectiveness?

It is profoundly important because managers need to understand that sometimes their simplest acts can have massive effects on their employees. In small ways and in big, whether it's a yearly offsite or a Monday morning huddle, what managers say and do contributes to either an increase in enthusiasm and commitment, or a deflation of morale and loyalty.

## How do managers learn excellent Human Relations skills?

Mostly, managers will learn how to be effective through on-the-job training, classroom learning and advice from mentors and professional peers. To ensure they are effective in their role, focus managerial skill development in four main areas:

- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Decision making
- ❖ Communication
- ❖ Social structures

# PLAY 2:

## Design Manager Effectiveness Programs that Focus on Strategic Business Outcomes



### What is a strategic business outcome?

Simply put, strategic business outcomes are those results your company has set out to achieve in a given period. These outcomes are usually defined as part of your company's strategy. Your managers hold the keys to achieving these outcomes, since they are responsible for coordinating and managing groups of people whose work will collectively contribute to the outcomes your company seeks. So, to achieve success, all of your managers need to have a clear understanding of your business strategy and clearly understand what their role is in achieving it.

### Why are business outcomes important to manager effectiveness programs?

Business outcomes are important because they tell managers what they are supposed to work on, and as such, what your program should enable managers to do. If your manager effectiveness program is not rooted in the outcomes your company seeks to achieve, then you miss the opportunity to help managers know what to do and how to coordinate their teams, all of which will result in a loss of productivity.

### How do you focus managers on business outcomes?

- ❖ Present your company's business strategy and ask them for feedback and input
- ❖ Demonstrate how to translate company goals into team priorities and individual contributions
- ❖ Ensure they understand their team's role in the achievement of the strategy
- ❖ Give them information, tools and resources to align their employees' work with the company's goals
- ❖ Help them understand how their individual managerial decisions affect outcomes

# PLAY 3:

## Implement an Effective System of Management



### What is an effective system of management?

A system of management is the collection of processes, policies and procedures you ask managers to use to manage the work of others. To be effective, however, the system needs to be simple to use and cyclical.

### Why is an effective system important?

Without clear processes, policies and procedures, managers have no idea what they are expected to do. In turn, they make up their own, which leaves the company without an efficient way to run its operations. The system is not just important, it is critical if you want your managers to be able to deliver on your company's expectations year after year.

### How do you design an effective system of management?

Start with the end in mind and design your system of management in a way that helps managers achieve your business outcomes. To do that, your managers need to have a system that drives high performance because that's what managers do; they work with others to ensure that their teams deliver on what is important to the company.

There are four primary parts to an effective system of management:

- ❖ Developing effective managers
- ❖ Hiring employees
- ❖ Managing the performance of employees
- ❖ Terminating employees

# PLAY 4:

## Teach Managers to Make Exceptional Business Decisions



### What are exceptional business decisions?

Exceptional business decisions are those that help the company to achieve its stated goals. Exceptional decisions do not distract from your company's ability to deliver on its promise to its customers, shareholders, and importantly, to its employees.

### Why are exceptional business decisions important?

The reason it is critical to make exceptional business decisions—rather than just good ones—is because there are a lot of good decisions being made by your competitors. To differentiate your company and win in the market, the decisions that your managers make each and every day must fuel the achievement of your business strategy so that you win every deal and win in the market.

### How do you get to exceptional decision making?

There are a number of ways to teach decision making, but if you use the “Rule of Three,” then your managers will be well on their way to making exceptional decisions. The “Rule of Three” is easy to apply: If you have three solid business reasons that are totally aligned with your business strategy and supported by your company values, then your decision is a good one. But, the simple application of this rule doesn't mean that you can eliminate the need for decision making training. You will still need to help managers understand the big picture and make the types of decisions that result in success.

# PLAY 5:

## Help Managers to Become Effective Communicators



### **What are effective communication skills?**

Communication skills can make or break a relationship, especially in the workplace. So, when it comes to managing others, the number one most important skill a manager needs is the ability to be an effective communicator. At the core, effective communication skills are those verbal and non-verbal signals that a manager sends to his or her employees, as well as his or her ability to listen to what they have to say.

### **Why are effective communication skills important?**

Effective communication skills are critical for managers to have for one great big reason: When managers communicate effectively, productivity goes up. When managers have poor communication skills, the company ends up with distracting internal politics, expensive recruitment costs and poor employee satisfaction, not to mention that the company will likely never fully achieve the business outcomes it seeks.

### **How do you teach managers to be effective communicators?**

First and foremost, before you even start to teaching communication skills, you must have your system of management in place. Then, based on that system, you design a training course that helps managers to:

- ❖ Understand their personal communication style and the communication styles of their employees
- ❖ Communicate clearly, honestly and with a great deal of transparency
- ❖ Use the communications tools and resources provided by your company
- ❖ Design their own managerial communication plan

# PLAY 6:

## Give Managers Tools and Resources that Enable Their Success



### What are tools and resources?

Tools and resources are those items you provide managers to help them do their job. Such items may include quick reference guides, software programs, Q&A documents, training materials, access to experts, etc.

### Why are tools and resources important for managers?

It turns out that about 70% of what managers learn is through on the job training; 20% is through experiences they have outside of work; and only 10% is actually in classroom-style training. So, it is only obvious then that the majority of your manager effectiveness efforts should be squarely focused on getting them the information, tools and resources they need on a day-to-day basis to succeed. Your tools and resources teach them as they perform the task they are being asked to do.

### How do you get managers tools and resources?

Getting managers tools and resources is a lot easier when you have a manager communications program in place. With this program, you can get all of the tools and resources developed to help them succeed into their hands quickly and easily. Tools and resources come in many mediums, such as:

- ❖ Print
- ❖ Email
- ❖ Online
- ❖ Conference calls
- ❖ Video
- ❖ Classroom



# PLAY 7:

## Employ a Strong Executive Sponsor to Lead the Manager Effectiveness Program



### What is an executive sponsor?

An executive sponsor is the a senior leader who will not only be your internal spokesperson for effective management, but will also help you to remove any obstacles that get in your way when designing or implementing your program. The executive sponsor is often also usually responsible for funding the program.

### Why is an executive sponsor important?

Your executive sponsor is person who makes the program possible. As such, he or she will be responsible for making high-level program decisions; represent the program to your managers; and importantly, get buy-in and support from the executive leadership team. To be a success, this person has to be a credible leader and one that will commit to partnering with you so that the program is a huge success.

### How do you select an executive sponsor?

To select your program sponsor, identify an executive who is:

- ❖ A competent leader
- ❖ Respective by the executive team
- ❖ Admired by managers
- ❖ A strategic thinker
- ❖ Able to provide funding
- ❖ Willing to serve as the spokesperson for the program

# PLAY 8:

## Develop a Managers' Community



### What is a managers' community?

A community is made up of people who interact, get help from and support each other to the benefit of the group. So then, a managers' community is one where managers develop mutually beneficial relationships that help each other to succeed in their roles.

### Why is a manager's community important?

A manager's community is important because being a manager can be an exceptionally lonely experience. But, when managers are united in this way, they can talk to each other to get advice, share resources and general support each other's success.

### How do you launch a manager's community?

The absolutely critical component of your managers' community is the opportunity for managers to develop trusting relationships with each other. As such, when you design your managers' community, it should include a manager-specific:

- ❖ Intranet site
- ❖ Training curriculum
- ❖ Annual conference
- ❖ Awards program

Once you have the community structure in place, and then communicate the heck out of it early and often.

# PLAY 9:

## Host an Annual Conference for Managers



### What is an annual conference?

An annual conference is a once-a-year event designed to connect all of your managers as one community of people. This event should happen at least one month in advance of your business strategy being released to all employees. During this event, present the company's strategy, talk about strategic alignment and company values, train managers on new processes or procedures, and honor managers with special awards.

### Why is an annual conference important to enable manager success?

The annual conference is important for a number of reasons. It shows that the company is:

- ❖ Serious about the achievement of its business strategy
- ❖ Dedicated to its values and their business application
- ❖ Understands the importance of the manager's role
- ❖ Appreciative of the work that managers perform

### How do you design a manager's conference?

At its core, your manager's conference is designed to enable your company to achieve its business outcomes. It should include:

- ❖ Annual strategy—what you will achieve
- ❖ Values—how you will achieve
- ❖ Strategic alignment—translation of the company's strategy and vision into a specific and actionable list of responsibilities each manager's team will be held accountable for delivering
- ❖ Training
- ❖ Awards

# PLAY 10:

## Measure Manager Effectiveness



### What is measurement?

Measurement is your way of determining whether your manager effectiveness program achieved the results you set out to achieve. You should consider both short- and long-term program measures, such as workplace productivity, financial performance, employee satisfaction, expense reductions, etc.

### Why is measurement important?

Measuring the success of any program is extremely important for a number of reasons:

- ❖ It allows you to adjust the program to optimize the return on the company's investment.
- ❖ You can show the impact of your program on the bottom line.
- ❖ You can show the impact of your program on the top line.

### How can you measure the success of a manager effectiveness program?

- ❖ Include manager effectiveness in the performance reviews of your managers
- ❖ Manager, employee and customer satisfaction surveys
- ❖ Focus groups
- ❖ Retention costs
- ❖ Productivity indicators
- ❖ Company financials

# Indigo Path Collective

Healthy  
Workplaces  
Produce Superior  
Results

## Put our experience to work for you.

Indigo Path Collective is a corporate and community human relations consulting firm. We focus on helping our clients build healthy and productive workplaces that deliver tangible business results through leadership, decision making, corporate social structures, and effective communication. We counsel executives and managers to be massively effective and help organizations build high-performing teams, renew corporate cultures and design programs that increase employee fulfillment and steward change.

## We can help you to:

- ❖ Design your wellness program
- ❖ Develop a wellness campaign
- ❖ Manage your wellness special events
- ❖ Train managers to be effective wellness stewards

## Contact us to get started today.

Indigo Path Collective

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