



11. Promote accessibility of management

Challenge

The distance between the shop floor and executive management is often large, or employees can experience this distance as being large. Maintaining and feeding an open dialogue can then be a challenge. And this is required to ensure that the top management is aware what is going on in the workplace, and to make sure that the employees understand and commit themselves to the drivers of the top management. The open dialogue contributes to a safe working environment in which employees feel free to approach management. To achieve this, good internal communication between management, (middle) managers and other employees is essential.

Solution

Several solutions can be considered:

1. Organize townhall meetings or Q&A sessions on compliance and similar topics, possibly preceded by a questionnaire or survey on specific topics, in order to focus the dialogue on relevant topics relevant for the employees. A good feedback/communication of the results to the employees is indispensable. An open attitude, creating a safe environment (where one can speak freely without consequences) is a prerequisite.
2. Other forms of dialogue could be a lunch with members of management, or a visit of management to the workforce.
3. In addition to the organized dialogue, it can also help to make management accessible, for example by removing physical obstacles: the management working behind closed doors with a secretary in front of it does not create openness. Space in the management agenda can also be reserved for others than solely the direct reports.
4. So-called "collaboration days" can also be organized. Directors or managers then spend a day with a department, e.g. at the reception or in the call center. That way they get an idea of what's really going on at the workflow. In large organizations, this can also be picked up by middle management. It is not only important that the influence of and attention for this action is great at the collaboration moment itself. Experience has shown that employees still remember this moment after a long time, and also that the employees among themselves will still mention this moment in their conversations for a long time to come. The circle of influence is therefore much larger than just the colleagues who are directly involved in this action.
5. Another option is to work on the workflow for a day as a board member/senior manager on a regular basis. Take a seat in a department, open the laptop, create an open mindset and listen. That greatly increases the approachability, and the conversation will be much easier to establish.



Middle management is often in a kind of split between the management and the workforce and is not always (sufficiently) equipped for this. They are expected to act as a spider in the web, from the top of the organization to the workplace and vice versa. Investing in coaching and training is therefore very valuable for this group to permanently improve internal communication. In addition, it is of great importance how they convey the vision and mission of the organization; then we not only talk about the 'tone at the top' but also about the 'tune in the middle'.

Actors

- Management (top and middle)
- Communication
- Compliance
- Other employees

Techniques

Open-door politics, management by walking around, asking open questions, good information and communication about whether the results obtained and insights in the decision-making are taken into account by the board and if not, why not. Regular consultations via (employee satisfaction) surveys, surveys and interviews. Peer review of the management by a selection of employees to get an impression of the approachability according to the employees.

Role Compliance Professional

Sparring partner for the top management and inspirator in the field of compliance topics and advisor with regard to reducing the distance, between management, middle management and other employees.