

## Transcript for The Career Accelerator podcast, Episode #5: How To Deliver Results Through Your Direct Reports

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where you will find tips and tools to deliver results through others. Hello. The episode for today covers how you can deliver results through your direct reports. I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode you heard about how generating WOWs and FEEDING THE LION can help you capture upper management support, get your proposals accepted, achieve your objectives, and generate good personal branding, all of which will work in your favor when advancement opportunities arise.

In today's episode you will learn how to add value to your Direct Reports by understanding what each one of them needs from you.

Do you know how your Direct Reports rate you as a manager and what they expect from you? In one of my executive jobs, I led a team of eight managers, each with one or more individual contributors reporting to them. One of the company-wide processes was to run an internal organizational health survey every year. All employees worldwide were required to participate. Once the results were available, all corporate managers were expected to analyze the results and develop action plans to address any areas where the scores were low. The results also played an important part in our annual performance appraisal.

In one of these surveys, my managers and I received low ratings from our respective Direct Reports on questions related to "My Manager", which was one of the several categories in the report. I'm sure you can guess we were not happy with these scores...It didn't do much good for our egos...

We each decided to make it a priority to turn these scores around and not flunk again in the next survey. We brainstormed the potential root-causes for such low ratings. In the middle of the discussion, one of the managers suggested that we shouldn't try to guess what our direct reports wanted. Instead, he suggested that we ask them on an individual basis. He explained that this potential solution was an adaptation of a process called "Conditions of Satisfaction" which was used by the company with its large customers.

All of us immediately saw how reapplying this process of understanding what our large customers expected from the company could work with our Direct Reports. Sometimes there are simple solutions to big problems. However, in this case, the solution, which seemed simple on paper, wasn't necessarily easy to execute. Regaining the trust of our employees was not going to be a straight-forward activity.

To speed up the execution of the plan, instead of generating a new process, we agreed to leverage the monthly one-on-one meetings that had already been scheduled with our Direct Reports for the rest of the year. These 1-on-1 sessions were a standard practice in the company but were typically used by the managers to follow up with their direct reports on pending items. We decided to repurpose these 1-on-1 sessions, for which we developed the following 5-step approach:

1. First, ask each Direct Report what expectations they had from their respective manager to help them deliver their performance objectives and accelerate their career growth. Did they want more direct coaching? Or maybe they wanted help with a difficult person in another department? Or perhaps they wanted to develop a skill to speed up their readiness for their next career assignment?
2. Second, we agreed to settle for at least three specific areas on which the manager would commit to working with the Direct Report over the next year.
3. Third, set specific success criteria for the expected results from the manager.
4. Fourth, swap roles. Instead of the manager following up with the direct reports on their expected commitments, the manager would start each monthly one-on-one session reporting back to the direct report on the progress the manager had made on the 3 agreed-upon areas.
5. Finally, make any necessary adjustments during the year.

Within my role as manager of managers, I conducted a “practice round” with each one of them as my Direct Reports. We finetuned the plan based on this initial experience and rolled it out to our full team.

It worked! The combination of finding out “What’s in it for them”, them being, in this case, our respective Direct Reports, and to then deliver each month on our commitments to them translated into significant improvements on the “My Manager” scores the following year. In particular, the coaching role of the managers was appreciated by the employees and helped increase their morale and engagement levels.

This approach to deliver results through our Direct Reports became a best practice that I implemented in my future managerial assignments. I also regularly advocate this good practice to managers whom I coach.

Become a manager-coach. It’s one of the key choices you can make, whether you have recently moved from an Individual Contributor role to a corporate manager, or if you’ve been a manager for a few years. Seek to understand what your Direct Reports want from you, commit to helping them in those areas, and make this part of your day-to-day interaction with them.

Remember, it’s about “What’s in it for them.”

I hope you enjoyed today’s episode. In the next one, I will share more tips on how you can deliver results through your peers in other departments.

If you like what you heard today, let me ask you to please rate this podcast and share it with your coworkers and friends. Also, please use any of the links shared in the Episode Notes at the bottom of this podcast to download the transcript of today’s episode, order my book, ask questions, suggest topics of interest, request a free consultation call with me, or connect with me on LinkedIn.

This is coach Percy Cannon, working to help you **make the rest of your life...the best of your life®**. Thank you for listening to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where you will find tips and tools to deliver results through others. Stay tuned for our next episode!

## Percy's BIO:

Percy provides corporate managers and leadership teams with customized coaching programs that help them develop the skills and capabilities needed to significantly increase their business results through others and accelerate their career growth.

Percy is an "alumnus" from three multinational corporations, Procter & Gamble, IBM & Microsoft, with whom he spent close to three decades.

Since 2011 he has been helping corporate executives, managers and employees **make the rest of their life...the best of their life®**.

Percy has worked in the United States and across several countries in Latin America as an Executive Coach, Leadership Team Consultant and Keynote Speaker, serving companies such as Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, Tiffany & Avianca.

Percy is a Certified Professional Coach from Wainwright Global, Authorized Partner for "The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team" and "Everything DiSC" and certified as a "Go-Giver" speaker & coach.

He published his first book in 2012-13 in English (*The Business Apostolate: Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*) and in Spanish (*El Negocio Más Grande de su Vida*).

Percy is a Consulting Partner with Grupo Azimuth and the Chapter Director for the COO Forum in Southeast Florida.

He has lived in 9 different cities and 5 countries, and speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese fluently.

Percy is married, has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and is a passionate runner & reader.

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