

Episode #13: Tips On How To Improve The Commitment To Team Decisions

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers will find tips and tools to deliver results through others.

Hello. In today's episode you will hear tips on how to improve the level of commitment to team decisions. I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode you heard four tips to manage disagreements with your boss:

1. Control your emotions at all times,
2. Ask questions, listen more and speak less,
3. Manage disagreements in a positive and proactive way, building and adding value on top of the boss' suggestions, rather than trying to prove them wrong, and
4. Last but not least, pick your battles. Go for the 10% rule, where you only challenge one out of ten decisions from your boss. It may not be a successful practice to become the manager who constantly challenges your boss.

Today I will share four suggestions on how you can increase your coworkers' commitment to the agreements made in meetings.

One of the assignments I had during my corporate career was to lead a product category in Latin America. I was accountable for the revenue and profit of this business.

A key project I co-led with two peers was to centralize the manufacturing facilities of our largest selling product line in one plant, which would translate into lower costs and faster speed-to-market of new formulations.

A key prerequisite for this was to gain the commitment of the company representatives in each market to standardize the product ingredients, the packaging designs and the SKUs across the different Latin America countries.

The challenge was that the starting point across the different markets could not have been more scattered: Both the product ingredients and packaging designs were different and, although I can't remember the number of SKUs we had, it was clearly an amount way too large to manufacture centrally and produce the desired cost savings.

To my taste, there were way too many meetings with folks from the different countries, seeking to reach a consensus behind a streamlined set of products, package designs and SKUs common to all markets in Latin America.

This, in part, was a reflection that few countries wanted to compromise on their original set of SKUs. Every market wanted to keep their current list without any major changes.

My two colleagues and I tried hard to highlight the benefits the countries would receive from standardization. This allowed us to make good initial progress.

However, at one point, we seemed to get halted by the lack of flexibility from a couple of the smaller markets. For example, one country had an SKU that represented a tiny portion of their revenue and was unique to that market. They however still wanted to keep it, without compromising with an equivalent SKU that would be part of the common menu of product options.

With the help of Senior Management, we were able to eventually roll out a single set of products for all Latin America markets.

The four lessons I want to highlight from this project are:

1. The process gave every country representative the chance to repeatedly voice their needs, suggestions and concerns. Although this project took longer than expected, it allowed for the full participation of the concerned parties. They all felt listened to. This was a good first step.
2. In hindsight, I may have contributed to overly extending the process. I was aiming for broad consensus and probably spent too many cycles trying to satisfy all the parties.
3. I learned that in some instances it helps to ask Senior Management to intervene. Although my colleagues and I felt empowered to make the decisions, I sensed that some of the individual markets would not buy-in to the final verdict if their demands weren't fully satisfied. With the help of Senior Management, we were able to close the loop with those markets that were still not fully committing to the final list.
4. I also learned that I had not been decisive enough when confronted with a decision that affected a small market niche. By taking too long to satisfy what, in the big scheme of things, was a small issue, I was causing delays in the broader project. This lesson helped me throughout the rest of my corporate career and has transcended to my coaching practice. Learn to recognize the big issues vs. the smaller ones, and deal with each appropriately.

In summary, to achieve commitment from coworkers, it helps to provide ample opportunity to listen to their perspectives, needs and concerns. After doing so, if you are the senior person in the process, make the final decision, even if no consensus was achieved. If needed, seek Senior Management's help to address any loose ends and gain the full buy-in from all parties. And finally, remember to address the bigger issues first and not get bogged down in the smaller ones.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode.

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This is coach Percy Cannon, working to **help you make the rest of your life...the best of your life®**.

In our next episode we will have as our guest Bob Burg, co-author of The Go-Giver book series. Here's a preview of our interview with him:

Bob Burg: Well, I think it really all comes back to, if you want to advance yourself, look at how you can advance others. And to the degree that you advance others, and again, not in a self-sacrificial way, that's not what I'm talking about at all, but to the degree that you can add value, bring value to other people, and do this constantly and consistently, that's the degree that you are going to advance yourself.

Thank you for listening to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers 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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