LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

The One Minute Manager

by Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson

The whole system takes a minute at a time: clear goals, instant praise, and fair, fast correction.

BEST POINTS FROM THE BOOK

01 **One Minute Goals: agree on the goal, see what good performance looks like, and write it on one page in under 250 words.**

State each goal in behavioral terms anyone can observe, so it can be re-read in a minute and checked: does my behavior match my goal? By his 80/20 rule, most results come from a few goals - pick the vital ones.

02 **No surprises: tell people up front that you will let them know how they are doing.**

Feedback is the breakfast of champions, and performance review is an ongoing process, not a once-a-year event. Goals begin behavior; consequences - honest feedback - maintain it.

03 **Help people reach their full potential: catch them doing something right.**

With someone still learning, catch them doing it approximately right and praise the progress; step by step they learn to do it exactly right. Good performers eventually learn to catch themselves.

04 **A One Minute Praising is immediate and specific.**

Tell them right away exactly what they did right, how good you feel about it, and how it helps the organization and the people in it. Pause in silence so they can feel it, encourage more of the same, and shake hands.

05 **Never reprimand a learner.**

A reprimand is only fair for someone who already knows what good performance looks like and has done it before - and only for behavior you saw yourself, never hearsay. If they cannot do it yet, go back to One Minute Goal Setting.

06 **First half of a One Minute Reprimand: be tough on the behavior.**

Reprimand immediately - never save up grievances to unload later. Name exactly what they did wrong, tell them how you feel about it in no uncertain terms, then stop for a few seconds of uncomfortable silence so they can feel it too.

07 **Second half: be nice to the person - and when it is over, it is over.**

Shake hands, remind them how much you value them, and reaffirm that you think well of them, just not of their performance in this situation. Then drop it completely and never bring it up again.

08 **We are not just our behavior. We are the person managing our behavior.**

That is why the sequence works - tough on the behavior first, then supportive of the person. The manager's own desk sign reads: the best minute I spend is the one I invest in people.

09 **People who feel good about themselves produce good results.**

The belief under all three secrets. Feedback that protects a person's worth can actually be heard - and people are not pigeons: they think for themselves and do not want to be manipulated.

10 **Everyone is a potential winner. Some people are disguised as losers.**

The words on the plaque the manager gives the young man: do not let their appearances fool you. The whole system exists to manage people so the disguise comes off.

THE BOOK, IN SHORT

A young man goes looking for an effective manager. The managers he finds come in two kinds: tough ones who get results but whose people dislike them, and nice ones whose people like them but whose results disappoint. Then he meets a man people call the One Minute Manager, whose staff turn in the company's best results - yet who spends surprisingly little time managing them. His secret is not a personality. It is three techniques, each taking about a minute.

The first secret is One Minute Goal Setting. Manager and worker agree on a few goals together, state each in behavioral terms so both know exactly what good performance looks like, and write it on a single sheet of paper in no more than 250 words. By the manager's 80/20 rule, 80 percent of the results that matter come from 20 percent of the goals, so the list stays short - and each goal can be re-read in a minute to check whether behavior matches it.

The second secret is One Minute Praisings. He tells people up front that he is going to let them know how they are doing, then spends his time catching them doing something right. The praise comes immediately, names exactly what was done right, and says how it helps the organization. With beginners he praises work that is only approximately right, building winners step by step until they can do it exactly right - and eventually praise themselves.

The third secret is One Minute Reprimands, reserved for people who already know how to do the job. The first half is tough: reprimand immediately, name the exact behavior, and say how you feel about it in no uncertain terms, followed by a few seconds of silence. The second half is nice: shake hands, remind them how much you value them, and reaffirm that you think well of them - just not of that performance. Then it is finished: when the reprimand is over, it is over. Learners are never reprimanded; they go back to goal setting.

Underneath it all sits one belief: people who feel good about themselves produce good results. Goals begin behavior and consequences maintain it, so the manager attacks behavior and protects the person. At the end, the young man becomes a One Minute Manager himself, keeping the plaque the old manager gave him: Everyone is a potential winner. Some people are disguised as losers. Don't let their appearances fool you.

DO THIS WEEK

This week, run the full cycle with one person you lead. Write their most important goal together on a single page, in plain observable words, and tell them up front that you will let them know how they are doing. Then watch for the first thing they do right - even approximately right - and praise it within the minute, naming exactly what it was. If they already know the job and miss, correct it in a minute too: behavior first, person reaffirmed, then drop it for good.

By Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson, first published 1982 (William Morrow) - 112 pages, readable in about an hour, and one of the best-selling management books ever written. This summary follows the original text: the updated edition, The New One Minute Manager (2015), renames the third secret a One Minute Redirect.