

Good morning, everybody. Dennis Engelbrecht with the Digging Deeper series. Thanks for tuning in.

We talked last week about the labor shortage and what's causing it, birth rates, baby boomers, immigration, some hangover from the pandemic certainly. And what we're trying to do is talk about all right, how do we get the people we need and get the work done with the shortage of people? So, today I want to talk about getting the work done, even though you may be short of people and that really boils down productivity. When you define productivity, it's very simply the output per person or per hour that you're getting from your organization. So, increasing your productivity means being a more effective organization. So, how do you do that? Well, one of the ways which we did talk a little about last week is hire only motivated, productive people, right?

If you have people that are unmotivated or unproductive, well, that's the wrong people and it is possible, but certainly much more challenging if you want to get productivity from people that are not now naturally motivated and productive. It certainly puts a larger burden on management, which we're going to talk about in a second. But to the extent you can, hire only motivated or productive people. And then the 'or' part of it is, well, maybe we need to devote time and energy to coaching, to productivity and success as well. And I'm going to say it is a two-part thing. You can't just find all motivated people and expect them to always stay motivated and productive. Even those who are motivated and productive, still need coaching and alignment to get them being their best for the organization.

So how do we do that? How do we devote time and energy to coaching, to productivity, and success? Well, I think the first thing to realize is that all people are flawed in a sense. We were talking at a strategic planning session this week and talking about how folks don't seem to, young folks in the workplace, don't seem to really understand urgency, don't understand prioritization, don't understand what's important. And there may be some truth to that, but then I'd say, well, whose fault is that? Your job as managers and leaders is to make sure that they understand the urgency, what's important, what's critical in your business. And that they're organized to tend to those things. And not everybody is naturally organized or has a great system of organization naturally. So, you can coach them through that. One of the best tools I've seen is to always spend maybe a half an hour to an hour, one on one with each of your direct reports and actually asking them what their priorities are, how they're organized for the week, what they're planning to do.

And what's important, what's not important, sort of a review of their to-do list and their priorities, if you will. Well, that's a great thing, but there's also a lot of outside resources to get organizational training. I know I've taken a number of Covey courses, which I found extremely helpful to help me understand urgency and priorities. Covey provides this 2 X 2 matrix where on one side, you've got the urgent and on the other side, you've got the important. And if you just place all of your activities in a day in those four quadrants and just see where they are that help you understand. And of course, quadrant two, they call the quadrant of planning. And that's for things that are both urgent and important. And that's where most folks should be spending the bulk of their time is doing the important things.

And then there's quadrant four, the quadrant of waste, which is the things that are neither urgent nor important. And you want to make sure you're staying out of that quadrant of waste as well. So that type of program certainly works for you. I remember one of them was called what matters most, and that what matters most program was very good for me because it taught me about being addicted to urgency. And I took an urgency addiction tool to see how addicted to urgency I was, but we're all addicted to urgency, to a certain extent. Urgency gives you a charge of adrenaline and sometimes it feels good to be the fireman, but if you're always in that urgency mode, you'll never get ahead of things and plan and reduce the amount of urgent things that are on your plate.

So, you got to turn to that planful side. And then within that there is that simple to-do list which I already mentioned. And you'd be surprised when I ask a room of people, how many people do a daily or weekly to do? Usually get a third of the room that number one, don't do it. But then within the two thirds that do it, there's a lot of them just get this list and they

fail to create priorities within that list. I highly recommend when you have your to-do list, use your four quadrants and list what's quadrant one, quadrant two, quadrant three, quadrant four. So, then you can prioritize the things that are most important and even most urgent and possibly get those things that are in that quadrant of waste, quadrant four, get them off of your list or ignore them for now. Do the important things and the little things will possibly go away.

So along with that, so get your folks some training, get your folks some help, and then don't neglect the coaching portion of that. Because even with training, not everybody gets it. So, spend that time one on one coaching, understand your folks' priorities, understand the amount of work they have on their plate. And try to help them with that as well. And I think you'll get more productivity and better results from your folks. So, productivity's the theme here. Got to get more from your people because they're not making anymore.

Thanks for tuning in. Dennis Engelbrecht, Digging Deeper.