

---

# Surveys for Small Business Special Report

---



**Dana Pritchard**

October 1, 2009

**Table of Contents**

Open-ended Questions ..... 3  
AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH ..... 4

## Open-ended Questions

This report displays the narrative comments given by each respondent to the questions regarding your area of strength and area needing improvement. Each new comment begins with a dash (-).

**1. The way I INTERACT WITH THE TEAM (in areas such as coordination, cooperation, sharing, loyalty, helpfulness, and support) has been identified as one of my top strengths. In the box below, please describe TWO THINGS I CAN WORK ON that will help me find ways to use this strength even more effectively.**

- *I'd like for you to:
  1. Recognize people even more when they achieve a specific goal or do something outstanding. When you do provide positive feedback, you do an awesome job. Would just like to see you do it more often.
  2. Let us know about ALL the resources that you're aware of. You're generous about telling us about something when it's urgently needed, but there are other things (books, software, tools) that you may be aware of but haven't told us about.*
- *Just keep doing what you're doing. I can't see where you could improve.*
- *Just keep up the good work!*
- *Practice smiling when you talk--you always look so serious.*
- *Since I'm new here, I'd like more support and guidance on complicated projects. Once I get my feet wet, I'm sure I'll be fine.*

**2. I want to improve the way I BUILD THE TEAM (create vision, goals, roles, expectations; track and recognize progress; address issues; provide resources). In the box below, please describe TWO THINGS I CAN WORK ON that will help me more effectively empower our team for success.**

- *1. Be more specific with each team member about what outcomes you're expecting from us. Sometimes you're vague or don't say anything so we're not sure what you want.*  
*2. Pay closer attention when people are not getting along and address their issue sooner so things don't build up to a major conflict.*
- *I don't know what I have to do to get recognition from you - REALLY! I work as hard as I can and meet my deadlines--I need to hear that I'm doing a good job!*
- *I need positive feedback from you when I do something well. I want to feel appreciated for what I do.*

*I'm not quite sure how my job fits in with the overall goals for the company. I get isolated tasks to without much explanation of why--I'd like to get the bigger picture.*

- *I think you should give recognition for progress made each week--at our Monday meetings. And by name! That would be a real morale booster.*

*We also need to know what's our full role in the company. How important is our job to the company?*

- *We haven't worked on our team goals since last December, and we need guidance. Please schedule more meetings on goal-setting and milestones.*

*I don't feel recognized for my achievements. I think the whole team would like more recognition from you.*

- *When you speak, say it like you mean it. You know, do the "genuine" thing. Tell us what we're supposed to be doing, and why - right now we have no clue.*

---

## AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH

### AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH INPUT - Step 1 MAKE A COMMITMENT TO CHANGE

Once you've accepted the fact that you will benefit by improving a specific work habit, you can then begin working on making that change in your behavior.

Use your list of suggestions to create a plan of action that consistently focuses on these desired behaviors until they become an ingrained work habit.

To make a commitment to improve the way you do something, you need to appreciate what's involved.

Skills, work habits and behavior patterns in general are actions that you do without having to think about them. You just do them because doing things this way is now comfortable, whether or not they're always effective. This is because at some point in your life, your brain established a special network of brain cells to execute these behaviors. This made performing the pattern easy, comfortable and automatic.

An ingrained work habit is like walking, running or riding a bicycle. Once the brain cells are physically connected, the only things that can break up these connections are decades of disuse, old age, injury or death. This is why old habits are so hard to break.

It's possible to replace old patterns with new ones, but it's a lot like building a brand new interstate highway next to an old two-lane road. It takes a lot of construction. It's worth the effort, but it takes months of repetition-practical application on the job-before the new way becomes comfortable. But with enough repetition, the brain cells will physically interconnect and the newly ingrained work habit will become your new routine. And the pattern will be virtually permanent.

How much repetition? A lot. Think about how much practice it would take to change the way you shoot a basketball, swim the crawl or hit a golf ball. You'll need some guidance about how to do it right, and you need to repeat the action over and over again until you do it without thinking. How long? Several months of consistent repetition while you deal with failures and discouragement.

That's how much commitment you need to make to replace a problem work habit with a productive one.

Can you do it? Yes, you can. Millions of other people have. So can you.

Is it worth it? Of course it is. Your success may depend on it. Plus, you owe it to your coworkers.

Will you invest that much perseverance and patience? It's time for you to say....

---

AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH

AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH INPUT - Step 2

MAKE A PLAN

Focus on improving the one aspect of your performance that will make the biggest difference. Remember the guidelines for SMART goals:

SPECIFIC - Describe a specific behavior pattern you want to improve.

MEASURABLE - Describe the goal in quantifiable terms, so you have evidence that you were successful.

AMBITIOUS - Set a goal that will get your performance where you want it to be.

REALISTIC- Set a goal you believe you can achieve.

TIME-BASED - Set a realistic time frame for achieving the goal. Remember that it may take several months to replace an old behavior pattern with a new one.

Improvement goal (SMART):

---

ACTION #1 (what, when, where, with whom):

---

Resources:

ACTION #2 (what, when, where, with whom):

---

Resources:

ACTION #3 (what, when, where, with whom):

---

Resources:

---

AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH

AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH INPUT - Step 3  
LEARN FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE

To ingrain a new work habit, you need to apply it at work. Your experiences at work will result in learning only if you think about what happens. Use the outline below to help you think about your successes and shortfalls and record what you learned.

WHAT HAPPENED? Who did what? What was the sequence of events?

WHY DID IT HAPPEN THAT WAY? Cause and effect? Your motives? What helped or hindered?

WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES? Impact on people? Benefits? Costs? Problems? Resolutions?

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THIS? What would you do in a similar situation in the future?

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS? What will you do to improve? What support do you need to be more successful?

AFTER FOLLOW-THROUGH INPUT - Step 4  
STAY POSITIVE

To persist in spite of mistakes, shortfalls and failures, you need to regain your perspective and see beyond your frustration. These are some examples of self-encouragement:

**ACKNOWLEDGE REALITY.**

"Instead of being more effective, this time I was less effective."

"I didn't get the support I needed. It made me feel unappreciated."

**ADMIT THAT IT'S OK TO MAKE MISTAKES.**

"When I attempt hard things, I'll sometimes make mistakes."

"Mistakes are valuable. Without them there's no learning, no progress."

**GIVE YOURSELF A TIME-OUT.**

"I feel wiped out. I shouldn't try to deal with this right now."

"This whole situation will look differently to me after the weekend."

**BROADEN YOUR PERSPECTIVE-TAKE A LOOK AT THE PLUS SIDE, TOO.**

"Yes, I've had some problems. But look at what I've accomplished so far."

"First I'll list what's working against me. Then I'll list what I've got going for me."

**REFOCUS ON WHAT HAS GONE WELL SO FAR.**

"The truth is, I've been doing pretty well up to now."

"In spite of what just happened, I've actually gotten better at doing this."

**REMEMBER YOUR STRENGTHS-KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, EXPERIENCE, CREATIVITY, CHARACTER...**

"Nobody has more energy or works harder than I do."

"They need someone with good communication skills. That's my strong suit."

**FEEL YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE.**

"I've handled worse situations than this. A lot worse."

"Yes, it's bad. But the truth is, I can deal with it. I know that."

**REAFFIRM THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR GOAL.**

"When I improve in this area, it'll make a big difference."

"This skill is important. It will help me in lots of areas."

**REMEMBER PAST SUCCESSES.**

"This reminds me of what I did when I had a similar problem . . ."

"Situations like this can be turned around. I remember when..."

**REFOCUS ON ACTION AND POSSIBILITIES.**

"OK. I can sort out what's possible and what's not."

"It's important to get the ball rolling again. What's my next step?"