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**Donald** is respected by clients in over 40 industries throughout the world as a “thought leader” and passionate visionary in the key areas of management, marketing, and service excellence.

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## An article by Donald Cooper, MBA...

### How many of your staff have "quit", but keep coming in anyway...and whose fault is it?

Failure to deal with non-performance is one of the biggest problems facing many businesses today. A recent survey of thousands of Canadian employees shows that 25% of those questioned admitted that the only reason they show up at work is for their paycheck. They have absolutely no interest in their job, the customers, the rest of the team, or the bottom line.

We've all heard the old expression that “one bad apple can spoil the bunch”. Well, what about 25% “bad apples”? What are they doing to your business?

You might think that 25% number is extraordinarily high but in his latest book Jack Welch, former CEO of General Electric, says that in his experience about 20% of employees in any company are dragging the business down and need to be dealt with it.

The first question here is how many of those people are just deadbeats and how many of them are working in businesses that are so badly run that they'd destroy anyone's soul? These are the businesses that are physically, emotionally or financially unhealthy places to be. Businesses where the good people leave and only the deadbeats are left. So, be honest...is your business a deadbeat ‘magnet’? Have you, for whatever reason, created an unhealthy business environment in which only people who don't care can survive?

Another possibility is that in a tight labour market you've hired people who have no possibility of success. You've settled for second or third best...and it's killing you. So, you give up and tell yourself that, “You just can't find good people any more!” But the truth is that, even in a tight labour market, the best people have to work for somebody...why not for you?

Is your business such a great place to work that the best people in your area or industry regularly come to you, resume in hand, looking for career opportunities? If not, why not? Where are they working now...and why?

Rather than wasting your energy complaining that you can't find good people any more, take 30 minutes, sit down with some of the best minds and hearts in your business to ask and honestly answer these two simple questions...

- 1. What kind of business do the best people in our industry want to work for?...and,**
- 2. What must we do to become that kind of business?**



Then, commit to becoming the best business to work for your target employees.

A third possibility is that your current hiring process is not effectively screening out deadbeats or poor performers. Not having the right people in every part of your organization carries a huge cost in lost business, inefficiency, frustration and missed opportunity!

Are you looking for the right people? Do you have a clear understanding of the type of people you need to deliver your customer promise, achieve your profit commitments and grow the business?

Do you know where to look for these people? Do you have an interview process that works? Do you ever hire after just one interview? Do you have some of your best people re-interview candidates?

Do you test candidates in any way? Do you have clear standards of performance, appearance and behavior that you have them to commit to before you hire them? Do you always check references, asking specific questions to get specific answers? .

Do you get new team members off to the right start? Do you have a “Welcome to Our Team” package including your company history, company values, staff rules, awards won, differences you’ve made in the community or the planet? Do you give them something to be proud of from day one? Do you continually train and develop your staff to either do what they do better or to take on new responsibilities in your business?

Have you created an environment that acknowledges and rewards individual and team performance? How about a simple “thank you” every day...or are you just too busy for that?

Even if you do all of this, you’ll still have some team members who just don’t perform. They’re dragging you down and you need to deal with them. Here are five steps that will be helpful...

1. Make sure that non-performers are clear about what’s expected of them.
2. Determine if they’re in the right job for them. Often, just by getting problem staff in a job that’s better suited to their skills or personality, they become stars.
3. Make sure that they have the skills, information, “tools”, resources and empowerment to do the job they’ve been given.
4. Make sure that some personal challenge in their lives is not causing them to be temporarily “off their game”. How can you support them and help them with this? If the personal challenge that they face has to do with something like gambling or drug addiction, they’re probably not rescuable. It may be time to “cut bait”.
5. Agree on and document a specific date by when they will be performing as required. Monitor their performance, then follow up on the agreed date. If they aren’t performing as required at that point, it’s probably time to invite them to make an alternate career decision.

So, who’s not performing in your business? Who’s driving away customers, or costing you money, or upsetting the team? Who can be rescued...and who needs to be dealt with? Make a list, create an action plan and get on with it. I can’t think of anything more important for you to do in your business this week!

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