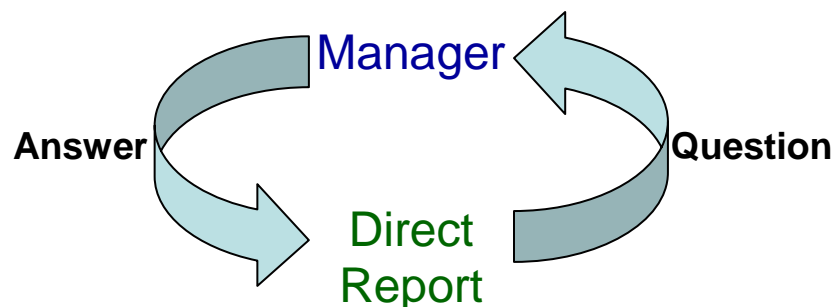


The Management Dependency Cycle

Over the years, management philosophies have changed but the fundamental problems of sound implementation and employee growth in accountability have often not achieved the anticipated results.

The managers in charge at all levels have an overriding responsibility for their area to achieve the results defined by budgets, objectives or other outcomes. The chief obstacle to fostering accountability, improving commitment and achieving increased knowledge and capability with direct reports can be the result of the Management Dependency Cycle.

This is a self-reinforcing cycle of behavior that allows everyone involved to be complimented by the results that actually undermine performance improvement. The diagram below is a simple illustration:

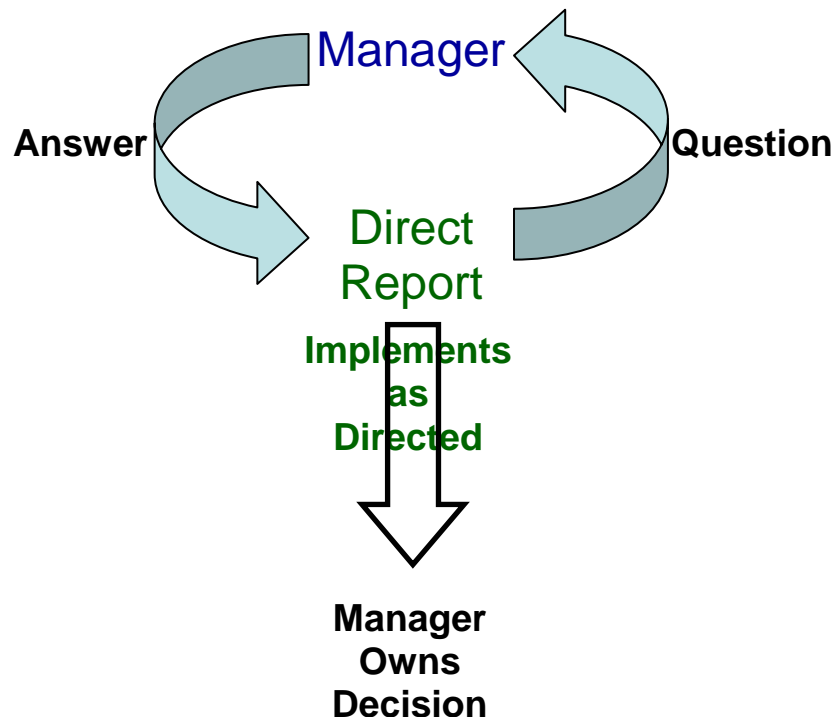


The manager's direct report asks a question. The Manager provides the answer. This is a simple scenario that occurs dozens of times per day. The Manager is reinforced in the process because they feel their position is needed, they have assisted an employee and they have furthered the achievement of their objectives.

The Direct Report is reinforced because the Manager has provided the answer, they are now able to implement without repercussion or further thought processes on their own. This allows the Direct Report to avoid ultimate accountability which rests with the Manager. The Direct Report also has no requirement develop further understanding of the decision process

The outcome appears obvious because the manager is directing. However, everyone who has been in this position clearly knows, the results do not always reflect the Manager's intentions. The results may meet the specific requirements of the words used by the Manager's answer, while failing to achieve the intended objective.

The results look like the diagram below:



Anyone who has managed very long has been a victim of this scenario. “That may have been what I said but they should have understood what I meant.” “They misunderstood my direction. That was not supposed to happen.” The direction given is now owned by the Manager and the Direct Report’s accountability is limited.

Achieving Better Results

Avoiding the consequences of the Management Dependency Cycle means that managers must change the way they communicate and increase their expectations of their communication. This requires a significant commitment to invest in the small additional time required to create a positive outcome in communication. The new expectations include error prevention, improved performance, reduced turnover, improved morale and development of personnel who are more qualified for promotion.

The initial view of the process may be, “I don’t have time to go through a discourse; we need to get things done around here.” However, if the process is followed consistently, there is no significant time difference required. In fact, if Managers implement effectively, they will have more time to devote to the critical needs of their organization.

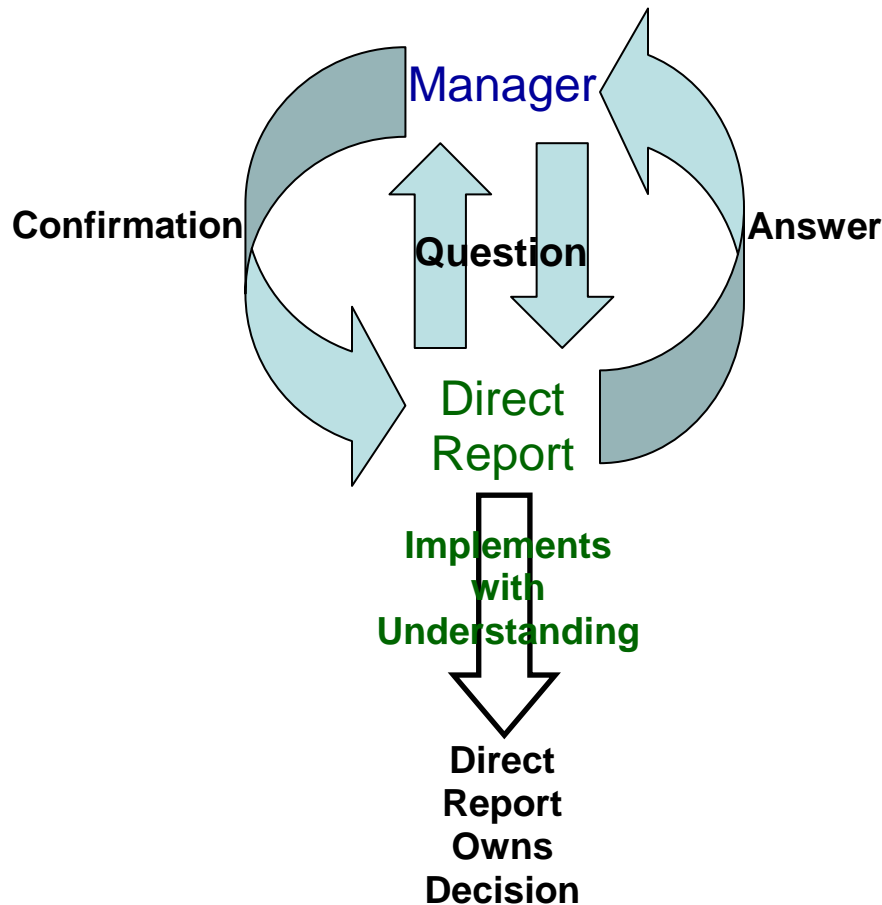
We will begin by breaking the question-answer scenario utilized so often and reinforcing the Management Dependency Cycle. The simple key is for the manager to question until the answer is provided by the Direct Report who initiated the questioning. While it may be counter-intuitive, the reality of communication is - **the person asking questions is in charge of the conversation - not the person answering or making statements.**

The effective process works like the diagram below:



The manager in this communication process answers a question from a Direct Report with a question. The purpose is to understand more thoroughly the Direct Reports thought process and motivation for asking the question. This will continue until the **Direct Report develops the correct solution to the initial question posed**. The **Manager must then confirm the answer** and ask if the Direct Report needs any further assistance in order to implement the solution they have derived.

While the initial reaction to answering a question with a question may seem unsupportive of the Direct Report, the reality is the opposite. The focus of the conversation has now shifted to a discovery process in which the Manager is the instructor and the Direct Report is learning how to make good decisions within their realm of responsibility. The resulting accountability also provides substantially improved job satisfaction and employee commitment. The complete process looks like the diagram below:



If you are truly interested in performance improvement, reduced errors, improved accountability, reduced turnover, increased morale, then you should at least try breaking the Management Dependency Cycle.

As with any change that is behavior based, it will take practice and perseverance. Once you have mastered the art of **answering a question with a question** in a sincere and supportive manner. You will find the results achieved far outweigh the personal cost incurred in learning to use the process effectively.

Halogenex personnel are trained to assist you to improve your personal as well as your organizations performance in many ways. Our unique approach preserves the culture that has made you successful while implementing new skills and processes that significantly increase performance and **we guarantee our results.**

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