**Radio Interview Q & A**

**The Four Management Beliefs That Actually Do More Harm Than Good**

Ruth Schwartz is the author of *The Key to the Golden Handcuff’s – Stop Being a Slave to Your Business*. Published by Outskirts Press, and based on Schwartz’ business experience, the book gives entrepreneurs and business executives insight into shifts that can be made to create a transparent, open-book company. Today, Schwartz in an internationally certified business coach, motivational speaker, and the facilitator of business peer advisory boards. She owns High Performance Advocates, a management development and marketing company.

**Q: What are the four management beliefs that actually do more harm than good?**

**A:**

1. If only I was a better manager I'd get better results.
2. If only I were a better delegator I wouldn't be so overwhelmed.
3. If only I were a better motivator People would do what I want them to do.
4. Financial information needs to be kept secret.

**Q: If being a better manager doesn’t get results, what does?**

**A:** People do not want to be managed. That is an uphill battle you cannot win. People want input. They want feedback and sometimes they want help, but most of us are quite able to manage ourselves and our work. The reason we often look inept at managing ourselves and our output is because we are not led to see the expected result.

My experience is that the prevailing culture of micromanagement, disrespect, or under appreciation matched with a lack of vision or purpose is what leads to people failing to reach the preverbal bar of job management success.

If you want the bar higher, shift from managing people to leading people, and let them manage their results. When given a vision, a mission, a purpose, and most importantly feel a sense of value and respect, most people will rise to the bar.

**Q: Are you saying that managers won’t let employees solve problems?**

**A:** It‘s widely known, and my own experience with employees in workshop settings will tell you, that their boss: has all the answers, does it himself anyway, micromanages, mandates arbitrary goals, always knows better than they do, never thinks they do it right, will punish my mistakes, is protecting his turf*.*

Managers think that it is their job to have all of the answers. However, the more they solve all of the problems the more the people around them shut down and stop thinking about solutions, stop answering questions and stop solving problems themselves. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There are four primary activities that have to be in place for teams to become aligned and high performing. They must:

1. Be allowed to solve problems when and where they occur.
2. Be allowed to participate in making decisions that impact them and their work.
3. Have access to ALL of the information, including financial information that allows them to make good decisions and solve problems.
4. Have broad job descriptions that allow them to have a big picture ownership viewpoint.

**Q: Regarding belief number two…I thought delegation was a good thing, but apparently that’s not the case. Can you talk about that?**

**A:** You can never stop the need to delegate with delegation. Delegation is telling people what to do. While people may need some instruction, your job is to stop telling people what to do and support them by becoming a great communicator.

My experience is that managers, by having all the answers and holding all the decision making in their hands, hold employees hostage to constant oversight. This creates the inability to solve problems when they occur, and makes managers believe that their charges can't think for themselves.

If you want people to have higher authority and the ability to “think on their feet,” you need to stop solving all the problems and making all the decisions, and start asking great questions, and allowing others a higher level of authority.

**Q: So, you think employees are capable of solving problems, that they don’t need to be managed? Won’t that kind of thinking put managers out of work?**

**A:** The short answer is yes, we don't need managers to manage people. We need managers to manage production and that should become the job of the team. I know that employees are capable of self-management as I have experienced it and then spent time hearing about it as I wrote my book; however, it only works when everyone in an organization is a contributing partner in a high performance business.

**Q: What do you mean by “contributing partner in a high performance business”?**

**A:** What I’m talking about is that business owners and managers need to shift out of people management and into a leadership role. People want to be led. They want to understand the bigger purpose and grand ideas that inspire them to reach farther. That’s what my coaching is about.

I help managers build their purpose or mission, their vision and how to communicate that purpose and vision until everyone is rallied around it. If people can’t rally around it, they will start to see that the either aren't articulating their vision well or they have the wrong people on their team.

**Q: What about the third belief -- If I was better at motivating people, my employees would do a better job? I can’t see how that belief can do more harm than good!**

**A:** Guess what? You can't motivate anyone. Motivation is an inside job. Like the proverbial horse and water. So what can you do? Put the right person is in the right job. Find out what unique talents people bring to your organization and let them do it. Figure out what behavior styles each job takes so that you aren't putting round pegs in square holes. And lastly, understand what drives and motivates each person and provide that intrinsic value to them.

My experience is that managers hire people into jobs based only on prior work history. They promote people who are successful in one area without thinking about if they can be as successful in the new position. They don't look at the behavioral requirements of the job before they look for the right person to fill it.

If you want to motivate people, find out what they love and let them do it. Create a team that enjoys each other and the value they bring. Look for alignment not carrots and sticks.

**Q: You also believe that all employees should have access to the books, to actually see income and expenses. Don’t you think that’s a bit radical?**

**A:** It’s not radical at all. People all over the world are embracing open book or ownership thinking. Employees can’t act like partners when they are in the dark. There is a disconnect between business people who speak the language of business numbers and the people who work with them ,who don't understand the language, but are expected to support the vision. That is why workers speak badly of the fat cats they work for who they believe are only interested in their own bank accounts, and the business owners who are sweating to make payroll and can't believe that their workers think they are rich.

When leaders take on a teaching role and allow access to financial information and how to interpret that information, when people understand what the numbers are telling them, when people start speaking the same language, they move together as a team. Once a team gets good at that, they can drive measurable results better than any management team can do. That has been proven time and time again but open book companies everywhere.

**Q: What is the outcome for business owners who spend less time managing?**

**A:** Business owners are overwhelmed. They have contracted their businesses to adjust for a new economy. But this new economy is screaming for new creative business models. It is also calling all of us to be creative and authentic is ways we aren't used to being. Every business owner has the opportunity right now to create very unique businesses that shift how everyone works.

If we each find our authentic voice, purpose and vision ,and ask others to join us, not simply to be paid for time served, but for the results that each can bring to that vision, our opportunities are endless. In that effort, we must stop managing people who don't want to be managed. The result is freedom: freedom for business owners who are anxious about being alone at the top without support; freedom for workers who hate their mind-numbing hourly jobs, and bosses who manage them.

I am a proponent of a business culture that rewards not just the individual business owner for the success of the business but everyone on the team who drives that vision.

**Q: How much time and effort is required for a business to make the kind of shift you’ve been talking about?**

**A:** Like any behavioral change you have to be ready and willing to change your habits and create new rituals. Managers have to ask themselves:

* + Are they ready to stop answering all the questions, and start asking the great questions?
  + Are they ready to shift from demanding buy in and develop weigh in by becoming better communicators?
  + Are they ready to become a coach and allow the players to play the game?

If you are ready, then it takes the willingness to start new habits and practice them. How long it takes, is up to you. I believe that you can change your life, find freedom for yourself, improve your profits and light a spark under employees within one year. How would you like that year to be 2013?

**Q: We’re about out of time, is there anything else you would like our listeners to know?**

A**:** Please go to my Website, [www.highperformanceadvocates.com](http://www.highperformanceadvocates.com) and email me if you would like to continue today’s discussion.