



Change Through Offering Consequence

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It's 3:00 Friday afternoon. You're leisurely discussing weekend plans with co-workers when you get a call from me, your boss. "Got a minute? I'd like to see you in my office."

You know that Friday afternoon meetings with supervisors rarely end on a positive note. Your mind quickly reviews recent interactions and productivity.

"Have a seat; let's discuss your future. I value you as a person; however your motivation has slipped. You are capable of so much more and need to make immediate changes.

"You need to strengthen your oral communication. You'll also benefit from creating a more professional appearance. Overall, I need you to strengthen your executive presence."

I, your boss, then offer two different scenarios to you:

- 1) If you make these changes, I'll consider you for a promotion.
- 2) If you don't make these changes I'll be forced to demote you, salary and all.

Which option will inspire *you* to make the needed changes, a promotion or fear of a demotion?

A recent survey by CareerBuilder, which examined the responses of 2,600 hiring professionals and 4,000 employees found that 55% of employees aren't impressed by a fancy title, and that salary matters more than a title for 88% of employees, so you can disregard titles as a way to motivate your employees unless there's one they really covet.

I work with too many leaders who are constantly frustrated with employees who do not make requested changes, ever. I am surprised that 'consequences' are rarely offered as a motivator to change one's behavior.

The threat of consequences will capture an employee's attention much more rapidly and effectively than a mere promise of good things to come.

Here are my **Top 7 Tips** for 'consequences' to inspire even one employee's change which will in turn elevate everyone on your team.

- 1) **Loss of challenge.** You've been rising quickly in our organization yet need to make the following changes or will never reach that next level of challenging work with us.
- 2) **Loss of position.** If you don't live up to our expectations of your promotion, we'll return you to your previous position where you are more comfortable and capable.
- 3) **Loss of reputation.** Unless you improve your interactions with peers, we no longer need you on our executive team.

- 4) **Loss of relationship.** You've been my confidant; however, without the changes I've recommended, I'll move you to 'special projects' and have Michael take your place.
- 5) **Loss of status.** Your demeaning interactions do not represent the level of professionalism we need to lead our most productive division. Treat people with respect or we'll move you to a lower team leader position.
- 6) **Loss of telecommute.** You've proven that working at home is not productive for you. Unless your productivity increases next quarter, we'll find a cubical in our office.
- 7) **Loss of flexibility.** Your flexible hours do not provide the consistency we require to get the job done. Make the changes or you'll revert back to your five day work week.

In his or her heart your employee suspects the change that is needed, yet making that change on their own is a difficult at best. Your first course of action to stimulate change is exposing the change needed, offering guidance or resources.

When all else fails, these 'consequences' may be the only way to capture your valued employee's attention. Please keep them in your toolbox.

In the long run, out of your frustration, the employee may receive the actual consequence without being forewarned. Your employees deserve your honesty and candor.

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