Exploring new perspectives for supporting a work environment that promotes positive behavior

Wynna Marie A. Medina, PhD
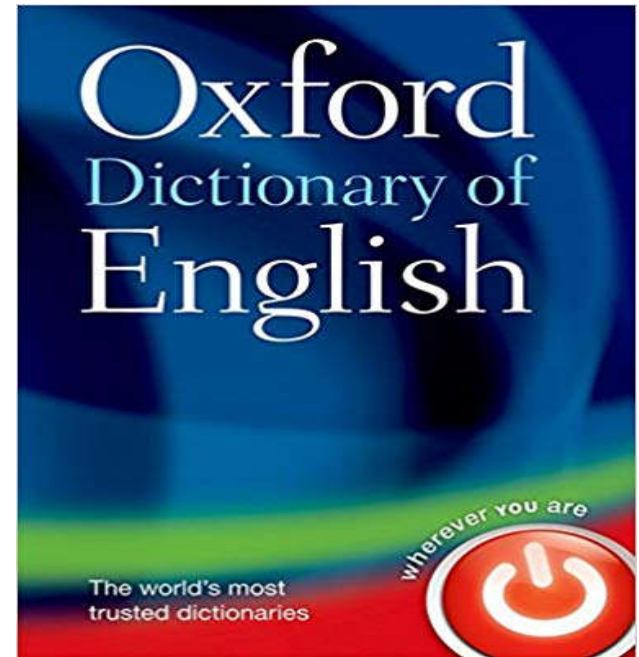**President, College of the Holy Spirit Manila**

Some fundamentals

6 Key Points

What's *discipline*?

The practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, using punishment to correct disobedience.

Synonyms:

control, regulation, direction, order, authority, rule, strictness, a firm hand

- **discipline (n.)**

Latin *disciplina* **"instruction given, teaching, learning, knowledge,"** from *discipulus*

- **disciple (n.)**

Latin *discipulus* **"pupil, student, follower,"** said to be from *discere* **"to learn”**

Therefore, discipline is

training that

encourages a prescribed pattern of behavior

through self-control and self-correction

Key Point #1

Discipline is <u>not</u> punishment.

Purpose: maintain order at work and ensure that people perform at their best.

Punishment -- a <u>means</u> to attain this purpose

Key Point #2

CONSEQUENCES OF PUNISHMENT

Stimulus

Undesirable behavior

Response

Negative consequence from immediate superior

Short-term consequence

Decrease in undesirable behavior

Long-term consequence

Anger   Apathy   Withdrawal

When discipline fails...

Discipline is a <u>problem solving process</u>

It is managing up,
not out.

It is communicating an expectation of change, not failure.

It is <u>not</u> treating the employee worse in the hope that he/she will get better.

Key Point #3

# Managing work performance and maintaining order is whose primary responsibility?

Key Point #4

Taking formal disciplinary action can be one of the most difficult jobs of a supervisor.

Some problems of traditional (punitive) approaches to discipline

- **Unpleasant for the administrator**

- **Overreaction**

- **Excusing good employees**

- **Avoidance**

- **Employees develop immunity**

- **Undesirable side effects**

- **Temporary effect**
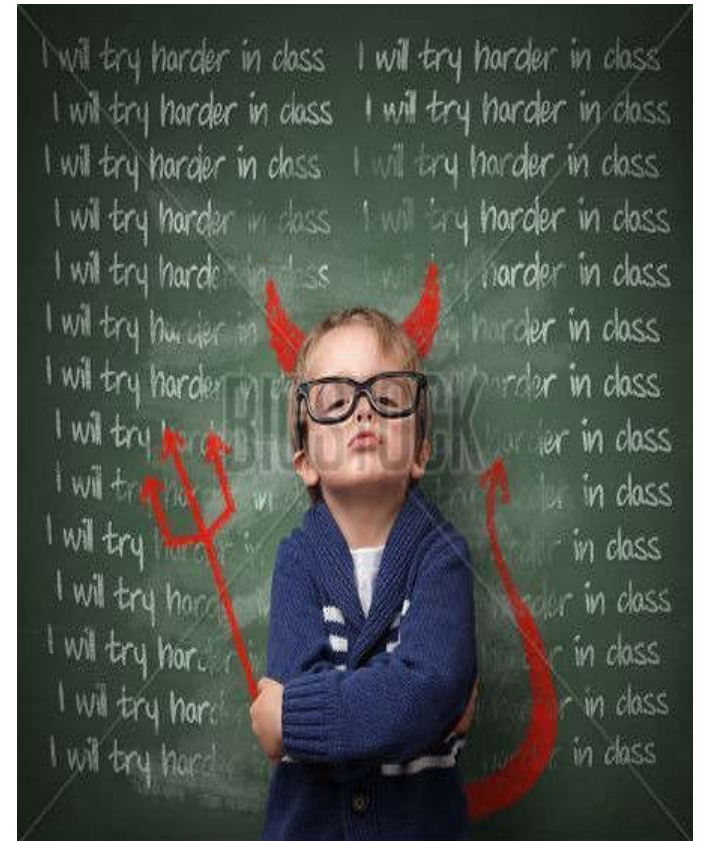
Formal disciplinary action may be needed for some employees.

- Purpose is <u>not</u> to punish.

- Purpose is to clearly communicate how important it is for change to happen.

Key Point #5.

For **most** behavior problems, taking more severe consequences such as suspension or dismissal is the <u>last resort</u>.

THE KEY POINTS IN ACTION

How can you apply these fundamental ideas to diciplining employees?

1. A <u>supervisory method</u> for building high performance and solving "people problems"

2. A <u>management system</u> for administering and managing discipline non-punitively
    - Involves all levels
    - Has a policy framework
    - Has a support system like documentation, manuals, training, etc

Positive approaches to discipline sets up people for success.

An effective disciplinary process

- Prevention- focused

- Problem-solving focused

- Coaching – based

- Maintains an employees' dignity and self-respect

Clarify standards and expectations

"Nip problems in the bud"

Do not over-react when people make mistakes

Catch people doing right

Clarify standards and expectations

1. Conduct effective employee orientations

2. Clarify performance standards at the very start

    Be very specific about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors

3. Repeat, repeat, repeat!

The basics of behavior management

- Behavior is learned, and unlearned
  - Behavior can be changed

- Behavior is related to immediate and social environmental factors

- We can create work environments that increase the likelihood that expected behaviors will be manifested

Clarify standards and expectations

"Nip problems in the bud"

Do not over-react when people make mistakes

Catch people doing right

"Nip problems in the bud."

- Take action early.
- Take <u>routine</u> supervisory actions for problems
  - Explain rule/policy/procedure
  - Provide training
  - Remove obstacles
  - Arrange consequences
  - Provide feedback
  - Do performance coaching

Providing Feedback – A Review

- Managing behavior starts with clear standards and expectations
- Feedback is about results and behavior, <u>not</u> attitudes, personality or character
- Stick with what you've observed, not what you feel
- Feedback delayed is feedback denied
- Feedback is two-way

When people make mistakes, the last thing they need is discipline.

It's time for encouragement and confidence building. The job at this point is to restore self-confidence...

If we are managing good people who are clearly eating themselves up over an error, our job is to help them through it.

Jack Welch
Chairman and CEO, GE
(1981-2011)

... they coached ...rather than preached.. they got better results
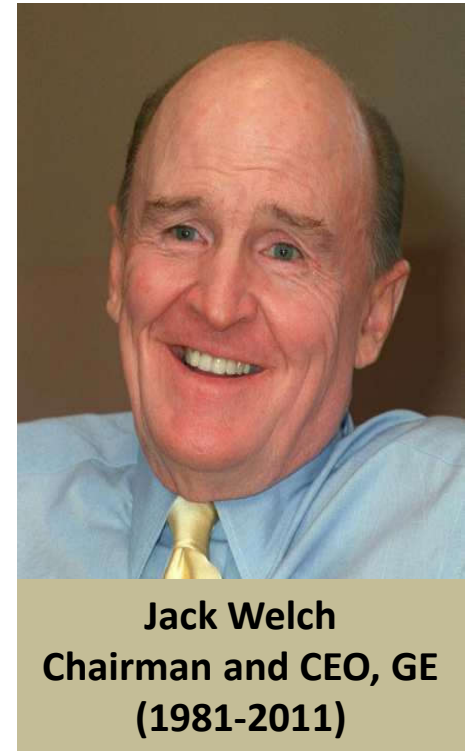
Clarify standards and expectations

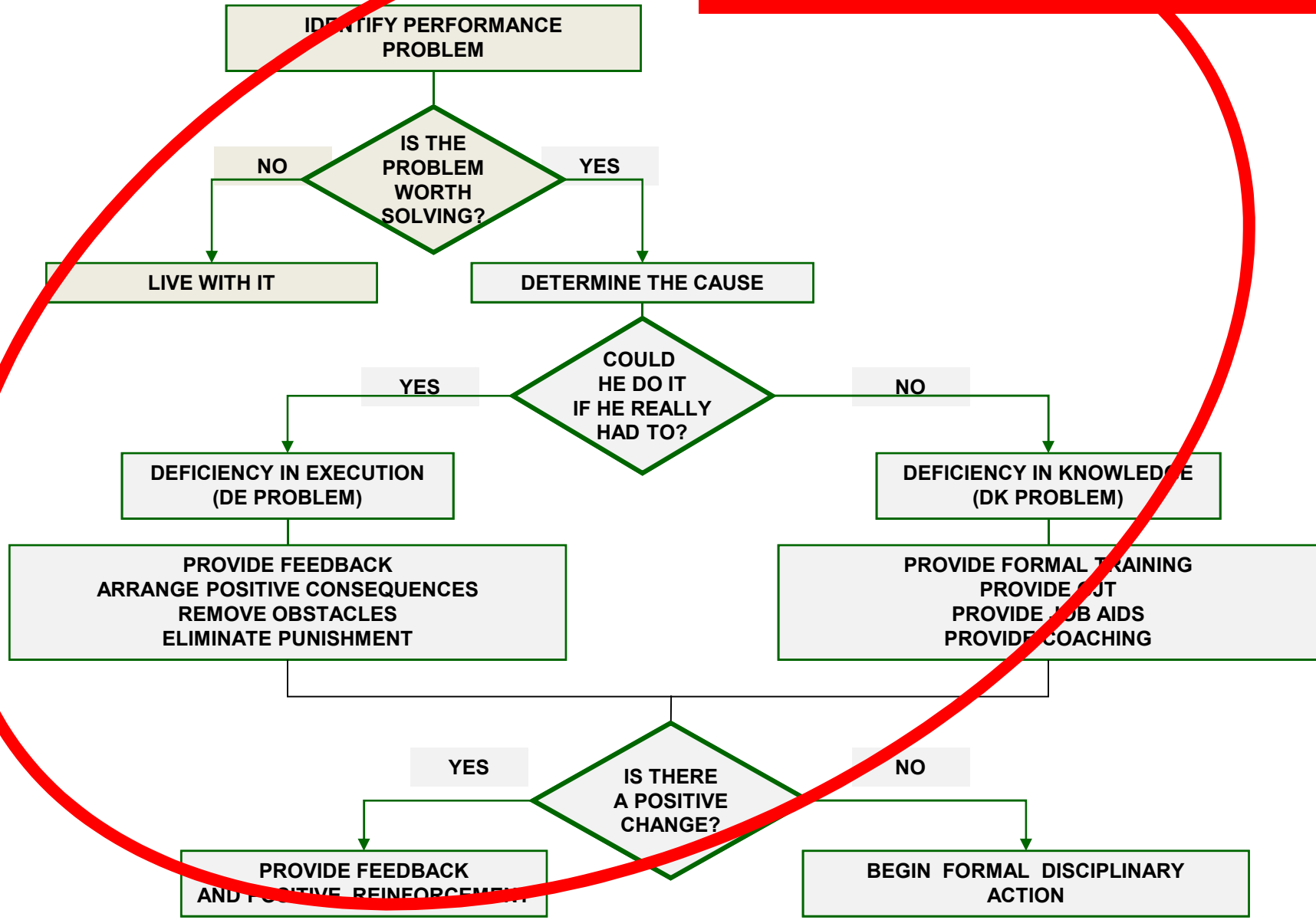**"Nip problems in the bud"**

Do not over-react when people make mistakes

Catch people doing right

Dealing with attendance

The "magic ratio" of 5:1

PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

IDENTIFY PERFORMANCE PROBLEM

IS THE PROBLEM WORTH SOLVING?

NO → **LIVE WITH IT**

YES → **DETERMINE THE CAUSE**

COULD HE DO IT IF HE REALLY HAD TO?

YES → **DEFICIENCY IN EXECUTION (DE PROBLEM)**

NO → **DEFICIENCY IN KNOWLEDGE (DK PROBLEM)**

**PROVIDE FEEDBACK
ARRANGE POSITIVE CONSEQUENCES
REMOVE OBSTACLES
ELIMINATE PUNISHMENT**

**PROVIDE FORMAL TRAINING
PROVIDE OJT
PROVIDE JOB AIDS
PROVIDE COACHING**

IS THERE A POSITIVE CHANGE?

YES → **PROVIDE FEEDBACK AND POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

NO → **BEGIN FORMAL DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Ultimately, behavior improvement is the responsibility of the employee.

How can you apply these fundamental ideas to diciplining employees?

1. A <u>supervisory method</u> for building high performance and solving "people problems"

2. A <u>management system</u> for administering and managing discipline non-punitively
   - Involves all levels
   - Has a policy framework
   - Has a support system like documentation, manuals, training, etc

If you wish to formally create a positive discipline system, then…

Immediate Next Steps should you formally create a positive discipline system

- Assemble a project team to review employee disciplinary policies and procedures

- Create a timetable to include date to finish draft for lawyer's review, then for submitting to BOT for review and final approval

Be sure the system …

- Is prevention based
- Builds up positive behaviors
- Is legally compliant
  - due process
  - documentation
- Is easy for supervisors to administer
- Provides for increasingly serious steps if the problem is not solved
- Maintains everyone's dignity and self-respect
- Is a collaborative effort

Some decisions to make

1. Discipline system features

- Types of offenses (categories)

- Seriousness of offenses

- Formal disciplinary actions and terminologies to use

- Procedures for each formal disciplinary step: who does what? documentation required?

- Will you use deactivation? For what actions and for how long?

- Appeal process?

Decisions to make

2. Who will write the manual of operations?

3. Who will take accountability for training and re-training of people?

4. Who will take accountability for monitoring and maintaining the system current?

Critical implementation activities:

- Training of <u>all</u> supervisors and managers on managing discipline
  - Overview of the disciplinary system
  - How to prevent disciplinary problems
  - Procedures and documentation requirements of the formal discipline system

- Re-orientation of <u>all</u> employees on the Code of Conduct

- Effective role-modeling by <u>all</u> supervisors and managers of desired behaviors

- Strong support of higher level managers and the HR Officer

- Monitoring of processes and results

Putting it all together

A Comparison

Element	Traditional Discipline Approach	Positive Discipline Approach
Goal	Compliance	Commitment
Focus	Employee	Problem
Responsibility	Supervisor	Employee
Time frame	Past	Future
Communication direction	AT the employee	With the employee
Mode	Parent ➡ Child	Adult ➡ Adult
Process	Punishment	Coaching
Climate	Authoritarian	Collaborative

Intelligence and technical expertise are threshold competencies for success.
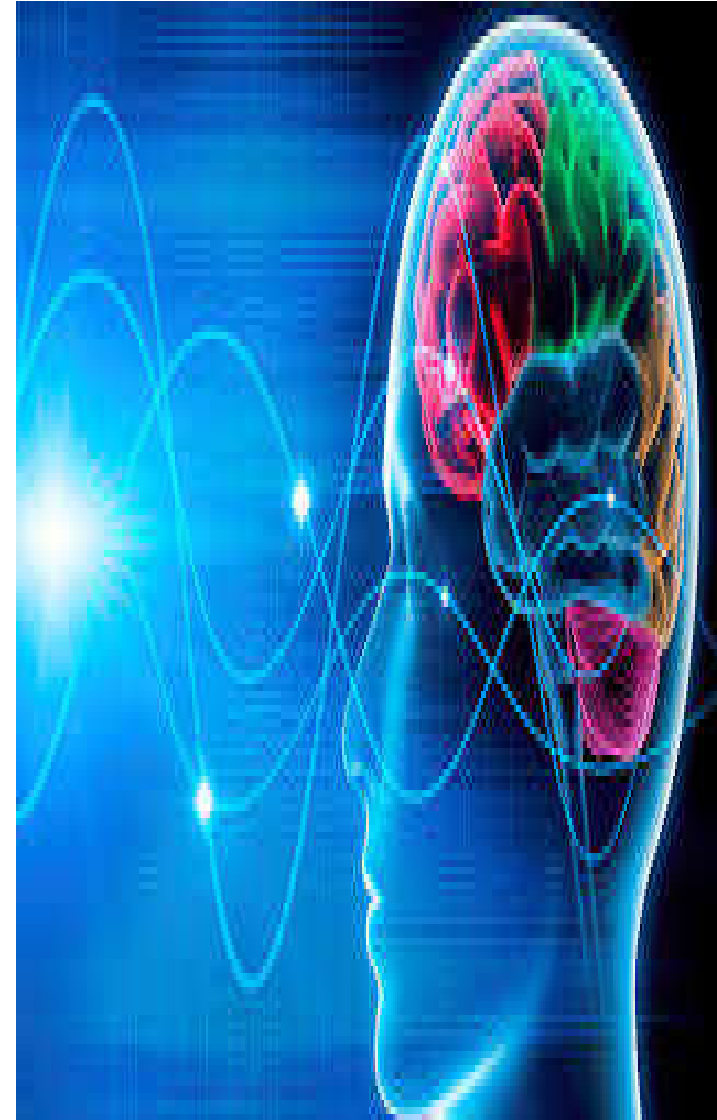
67% of competencies deemed essential for successful performance are emotional competencies

(Study of 181 competency models from 121 companies worldwide by Dr. D. Goleman)
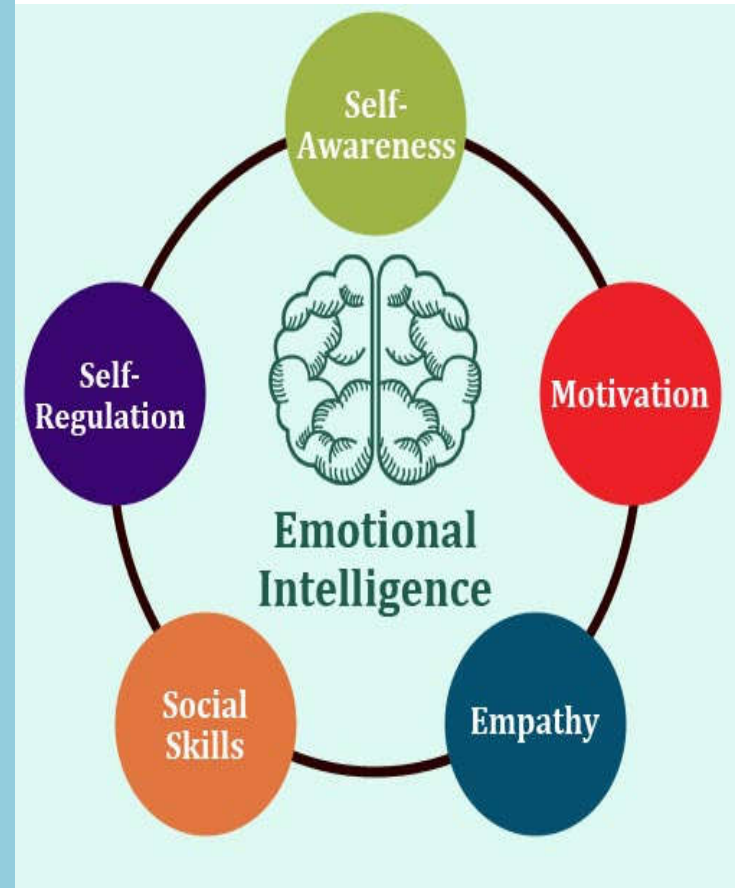
Higher EQ persons are more likely to make better decisions, engage and influence more effectively, and create the right mood in social settings.

By using positive strategies in managing discipline we assist our employees become more emotionally competent.

Shine through me and be so in me that all with whom I come in contact may feel Your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me , but only Jesus.

Blessed John Henry Newman