

## THE BOILING FROG EFFECT

Previously, an introduction to organizational standards and job performance standards was presented by this author. As a reminder: Organizational standards include philosophy, mission statement, purpose, long-term goals, and short-term objectives to meet the long-term goals. Job performance standards replace job descriptions because job performance standards add a clarifying comment to the job expectation by stating the quantity or quality of the job expectation. Each job performance standard states more clearly than a so-called job description the exact behavior expected for monetary reimbursement. Ambiguity is curtailed. Thorough employee understanding and performance of these standards (organization and job) usually require a systematic and slow integration into the expected job performance. A slower, organized, and calendar-planned approach (rather than an all-at-once) increases acceptance, understanding, and compliance with organizational and job performance standards.

Epictetus, a historical philosopher, encourages a leader to require the organization's employees to understand and comply with the performance of organizational and performance standards. Therefore, it is agreed upon that moving rationally and incrementally toward this ultimate goal is a pathway to leadership success. This incremental process helps keep an employee's job-related misunderstandings, anxiety, and confusion at bay. Employees need to know that the gradual movement toward more organizational knowledge and employee job perfection is administratively expected and will enhance the thorough understanding of the underpinnings of expected behaviors. Incremental steps/objectives toward a thorough understanding of all organizational and job standards will improve the ability to accomplish this mission. Therefore, use the Boiling Frog analogy when communicating a planned approach to incremental organizational understandings and expected job performance. Such planned teachings resulting in improved employee understanding of all work standards signify leadership success.

**Boiling Frog Effect:** If you put a frog in boiling water, the frog will immediately jump out. However, put a frog in tepid water and slowly/incrementally bring the water to a boil, and the frog will remain in the water until cooked.

OK—so your employees are not frogs—however, such a slow, constant, scheduled, and meaningful plan to the ultimate “done” stage of thorough understanding will encourage understanding and relevance.

Yes, it requires the leader to provide more organized and ongoing communication. The positive result is employees slowly warming to the concepts that will make sense to employees, and the information will be “well-cooked” in their memory.

This approach means planning calendar dates where all standards will incrementally be presented and discussed with employees. Questions will be answered, and observed performance to the presented or discussed standard(s) will be required. There is a time, place, and process for leading employees to job success. Be smarter-than-the-average-bear (a yogi-bear saying) and learn this incremental process. Employees are amused and amazed when they know they are participating in a Boiling Frog Effect!

The slower process requires leadership abilities of patience, kindness, support, and appreciation for employees who find it difficult to conform to quick and demanding change. Such leadership patience allows listening to employees' concerns without interruption and responding meaningfully to employee questions.

There is a season and a better choice for everything as to timing. An incremental time and place for everything allow for more adequate learning. These chosen moments in time will transcend a leader from a mere observer to leadership greatness.

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