

Building Your Second Line

By Mohan Krishnamurthy

Email: leomohan@yahoo.com

It's essential for you to build your second and third line in your line of operations within your organization. It ensures a strong organization. There are other benefits too:

- When you go on vacation, you know you have your right man doing the job.
- When you are on an overseas trip or for training abroad, you know your project is in safe hands.
- When you are sick and you need a leave very badly, still you need somebody to do your job without compromising the quality.
- And finally when you leave your job, you know that the job is safely handed over to your successor.

Last one may not sound that positive to you. But imagine a situation where you are joining a company and your predecessor has left the state of affairs in a mess. You don't know the status of the project you are going to handle, no documentation, no passwords and no clear way ahead.

It's very essential also to maintain a great relationship with your ex-companies. In the Information Technology industry, which is still small, in spite of across the regional and international boundaries from where you may get an offer, references from ex-companies can make or break an interview.

Who knows a great relationship with your previous companies can also do a world of good to you when you have to return back to them for another stint or favors.

People who have aspirations to migrate to different countries require reference letters, character and conduct letters from all the employers one has worked with.

Building a second line or third line is as easy as keeping your team informed on what you are doing, sharing the knowledge you have gained on-job, clearly documenting the project implementation, progress of the project, meetings with the customers and next steps.

Involving your juniors in the mega projects you handle also gives them great assurance, they look at you as an inspiring leader and one who values team work. This greatly solves situations a, b and c.

Remember, unless somebody had taught you in your previous assignments, you are no superman to have learnt all by yourselves. Now, why don't you pass on such benefits to your team mates and colleagues?

TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More, you would have seen many posters talking about team work and this is one catchy one-liner. Let's put this into practice.

One odd-day you are not well, call-up your second line and he or she is in charge. You want to go for a training, drop a mail to your second line and there he or she goes.

While building second and third lines have all the benefits, it may create a feeling of insecurity in your minds. What if, company fires me after they have found a perfect replacement for me? What if, my junior learns all the tricks of the trade and leaves me in the middle. Remember, nobody is indispensable in an organization. Everybody is replaceable in the company. Though the organization is made up of individuals, organization is always greater than few individuals. People come and go, company stays here.

You can try to bring individual excellence. This is short lived. A process-excellence based approach takes you miles ahead. It makes you a professional.

And for all, when you are capable of teaching others about the finer points, you are already an expert. Experts always have a job in this world.

So why to worry? Start building your second and third lines and enjoy working. And feel free to take those breaks without worrying about your projects.

~Mohan Krishnamurthy