

OPINION

## Performance improvement plan for a problem manager

**I'm the chief executive officer (CEO) of a small family enterprise. We have a department manager, a non-family member who refuses to observe even the basic protocols for ensuring the health and safety of our food products. Last month, he failed to hire a pest control service provider in a timely manner. I had to go over his head to hire one. It resulted in the discovery and elimination of more than a thousand cockroaches and rodents inside the factory. This is unacceptable. Is there a cure for this without eroding our preferred way of running things, which is paternalistic management? — Pestered.**

### IN THE WORKPLACE REY ELBO

**ELBONOMICS:**  
Management is getting lazy people to do what you want done without coercing them.

A CEO's executive secretary resigned to get married and settle overseas. Her boss gave her a big hug and told her: "You've been like a daughter to me — abrasive, impolite and unappreciative. Good luck in your future endeavors!"

At times, this may happen to any corporate official who treats people like they're family. While being paternalistic to employees who are not family has its own advantages, you must also be aware of the disadvantages.

You must maintain a safe, professional distance in managing your direct reports. Regardless of the conditions, any CEO may fail or succeed depending on their ability to proactively manage any situation that could mitigate losses and convert any crisis into opportunity.

With or without being paternalistic, you must establish parameters so you can tell when managers or workers have reached their limits. One way to address this is to implement a performance management system that spells out the job's requirements, standards, timelines and targets.

#### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

When anyone, regardless of rank or job, is not performing to management expectations, you can always charge them with insubordination, negligence, or whatever offenses are applicable in your company's code of conduct. Ignoring such cases may cause you further trouble that may erode morale if the worker is a manager.

It also sets a bad precedent that could lead other managers to turn in below-par performances. You can start by engaging with the problem manager to reset the work relationship. You can do this through a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) that

effectively puts the manager back to probation status, though you may not want to be too blunt about it. It's not easy, but unless you address things firmly, you'll get nowhere.

The internet offers an ocean of information on PIP templates. Choose one that suits your style. Whatever you choose, I recommend observing the following elements:

**One, identify key performance expectations.** If your organization has an established performance management system, you can adjust it by defining what you want through a SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound) approach. You must mutually spell these out with the help of the problem manager, who must be held accountable for the goals set.

**Two, monitor performance and provide continuing feedback.** For the time being, you may hover over the problem manager to closely monitor performance. Give progress reviews every three days.

Put your ear to the ground and tap the grapevine for indications that progress is being made.

**Three, identify training needs.** Knowledge, attitude, ability and skills (KASH) development programs may be needed under the PIP. But before spending big money, think hard before investing in the future of the problem manager. This could mean hiring an external executive mentor to fast-track the training process.

**Four, summarize performance over an agreed period.** It could be daily, weekly, or monthly. Waiting for two to three months may be too late. It could be through an online or in-person reporting. Whatever you do, demand actual facts and figures that can be independently verified with other departments.

**Last, recognize the problem manager as soon as progress is made.** It can come in many forms like taking the manager to lunch, or by providing the team a modest *merienda* (afternoon snack). While doing this, highlight the latest accomplishments of the manager and department.

Have a chat with REY ELBO via Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter or send your workplace questions to [elbonomics@gmail.com](mailto:elbonomics@gmail.com) or via <https://reyelbo.consulting>.



## Nearly 40% of PHL workers 'overeducated,' study finds

NEARLY 40% of employed people in the Philippines hold academic credentials beyond what their jobs require, and earn only 5% more for the extra schooling, the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) said.

Citing a study, "Surveying the Extent and Wage Consequences of Education-Job Mismatches in the Philippine Labor Market" published in the *Philippine Journal of Development* in January, PIDS said 39% of working people are "overeducated," while a quarter are "undereducated."

This results in lower job satisfaction, along with "large wage penalties that signal inefficiencies in the labor market."

"Investments in time, money, and other resources do not translate to

improved employment outcomes or higher wages," researcher Monica M. Melchor said.

"Such negative effects are significant in a developing economy context, where education quality is highly variable and low incomes are prevalent."

Using data drawn from 2006 and 2012, the report found that the extra years of schooling have a lower return of 5%, compared to the 7%-19% range seen for each required year of education.

In response, Ms. Melchor said that labor market policies should support job skills matching or improve access to information about work, such as job fairs.

"Policies to facilitate job-skills matching can alleviate challenges in

the Philippine labor market, such as the continued gender disparities in labor outcomes," she said.

The government could also consider more targeted subsidies aimed at lower income groups.

"Arguments that publicly subsidized higher or tertiary education will translate into improved wage prospects for highly educated individuals or higher productivity may not bear out in reality, raising concerns over the efficiency of public investment in tertiary schooling," Ms. Melchor said.

"Subsidies for those from the lower income and vulnerable groups, combined with strong social safety nets, can better balance tradeoffs between efficient public investments and sufficient social support." — **Jenina P. Ibañez**

## Over 300,000 US federal workers eligible for unions

WASHINGTON — The White House has released a highly anticipated report from its labor task force that highlights low union participation in the US government, and includes nearly 70 recommendations on how the government can help workers join labor unions and bargain collectively.

More than 300,000 employees in the federal government, the country's largest employer, are eligible to join a union but have not, the report said. The government will offer unions seeking to build membership greater access to federal employees, the reports said, and push agencies such as the National Labor Relations Board and the Federal Labor Relations Authority to coordinate on worker organizing.

The 43-page report also asks the Labor department to ensure that workers who face retaliation when engaged in organizing receive full protection. And it aims to prevent the misclassification of workers as independent contractors — part of

a long-running battle for the Labor department with companies that rely on so-called "gig economy" workers.

President Joe Biden established the task force in April with the goal of reversing a decades-long decline in union membership. He appointed Vice-President Kamala Harris as the chair of the task force and Labor Secretary Marty Walsh as vice-chair of the group, which also includes over 20 heads of agencies and Cabinet officials.

Union support was important to Biden's victory in several Rust Belt states in the Midwest and Northeast in 2020, and those voters' choices in 2022 will play a key role in the midterm congressional and gubernatorial elections.

Only 10.3% of the US workforce was represented by a union in 2021, down from more than 30% in the 1950s, the White House said. The numbers are even

lower for private-sector employees, where union membership has fallen to 6.1% in 2021 from 16.8% in 1983.

"This report is going to do some good things for workers in America," Labor Secretary Walsh told Reuters in an interview. Harris and Walsh, who held more than two dozen meetings with stakeholders around the country, met with Biden last week to discuss the report, a source with knowledge of the matter said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

During the meeting, Walsh said, Biden and Harris were focused on "what's the follow-up going to be, so it's not just the paper documents." They discussed "coming up with a system" that helps report progress, he said.

The task force will submit a second report in six months, which will describe progress in implementation, he said. — **Reuters**

#### FULL STORY

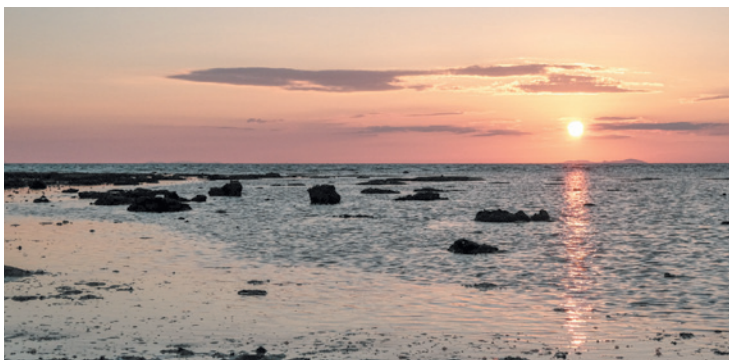


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#### FULL STORY



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ROBERTO JR. SALDANA/UNSPASH

## Eastern Visayas red tide-free after five years

THE Eastern Visayas have been declared free from red tide toxins after nearly five years, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) reported.

The BFAR said that the results of laboratory tests on Feb. 7 detected no red tide organisms in the region.

The last time the region was red tide-free was in 2017.

The last areas cleared of red tide are: San Pedro Bay, Samar; Carigara Bay, Leyte; Cancabato Bay, Tacloban City; Guiuan, Eastern Samar; Matarinao Bay, Eastern Samar; and the waters off Biliran Island.

Red tide notices have been regularly issued for Matarinao Bay, Carigara Bay, and Cancabato Bay.

"After almost five years of regular issuance of red tide advisories, we're now finally red tide-free. Hopefully, we will have a longer period like this with the interplay of weather. We need this for us to have a good harvest of shellfish products," BFAR Eastern Visayas Regional Director Juan D. Albaladejo said in a statement.

"Even if shellfish ban is lifted in these areas, our active surveillance will continue since we are still experiencing rains. This may cause runoff of soil sediments rich in organic load that fertilized the cyst of red tide in these bays," he added. — **Luisa Maria Jacinta C. Joacson**



A TRIBUTE TO THE FILIPINO YOUTH. DoubleDragon Corporation and DDMP REIT Inc. recently unveiled the Iconic Giant Modern Art Sculptures BAYANI & PAG-ASA at DoubleDragon Meridian Park along EDSA at the Bay Area. The giant sculpture towering 64 feet or about six storeys high, posted along the entrance of DoubleDragon Meridian Park, stands a refreshing new installation of public art depicting a figure of a young person named "BAYANI". Not far down the road is another installation of public art waving at passersby along EDSA named "PAG-ASA". Dedicated to the Filipino youth, the sculptures symbolize the future of the country as the young median age of the Philippine population is one of the key driving forces that fuel economic growth. It also symbolizes the aspiration of making the Philippines into one of the largest economies in the world within the next few decades. Bayani and Pag-Asa are expected to further complement and enhance DoubleDragon Meridian Park's position as the the most desirable office and commercial address in the Bay Area, Pasay City, Metro Manila, Philippines.