Supervising the “Not Me” Employee
What role does feedback play in your efforts to manage the performance/behavior of the employees you supervise?
When and how do you usually provide feedback to your employees?
When you provide feedback, what do you want to accomplish?
What do you usually do when your feedback produces the effect(s) you want?
What do you do when your feedback is resisted or rejected by an employee?
What are some reasons an employee might resist/reject your feedback?
When your feedback requires change/action, is it necessary to first get an agreement from the employee that the change/action is necessary?
What do you tell yourself about an employee who resists/rejects/dismisses your feedback?
THE “NOT ME” EMPLOYEE

- The “Not Me” employee is either unwilling or unable to consider that they might have possibly contributed something to a situation that didn’t go as planned or expected.
What are some possible reasons an employee is unwilling or unable to consider s/he may have contributed something to a situation?
What is the impact of an employee who does not recognize/acknowledge their own contribution to a situation:
• on you, the supervisor?
• on co-workers?
• on others?
SOME TYPES OF “NOT ME” EMPLOYEES

- Aggressive

I have no responsibility for this. I resent your insinuation that I do.
Clueless

I have no responsibility for this. I don’t know why you are talking with me about it.
Defensive

I have no responsibility for this. I want my Union Steward/I’m going to call my lawyer.
Intimidating

I have no responsibility for this. If you try to blame me for it, you’ll be sorry!
Paranoid

I have no responsibility for this. Why are you picking on me? Are you trying to get rid of me?
Provocative

I have no responsibility for this. If you were a better supervisor, this wouldn’t have happened.
TYPICAL RESPONSES TO THE “NOT ME” EMPLOYEE

- Performance/behavior is minimized – “it’s really not that bad.”
- Performance/behavior is rationalized – “S/he is just going through a rough time.”
Performance/behavior is avoided because it generates extreme discomfort or sometimes even fear – “I don’t know how to handle this, and I sure don’t want to make it any worse than it is.”
SOLUTIONS THAT WON’T WORK

- Repeatedly urging the “Not Me” employee to change
- Attempting to get the “Not Me” employee to accept/like your request to change
Demanding that the "Not Me" employee acknowledge you’re right about his/her need to change
Using the indirect approach of hinting in various ways to the “Not Me” employee that s/he needs to change
FOUR KEY QUESTIONS

1. If all the employees I oversee did this, would I be able to tolerate it?

2. Do I have an employee who, when s/he calls in to say s/he won’t be coming into work, I am glad?
3. Do I have a "significant other" who knows everything there is to know about the employee and yet, has never met him/her?
4. Do I feel like I am walking on egg shells around this employee?

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Given you have a “Not Me” employee who isn’t open to your feedback, isn’t likely to change, and you cannot tolerate it, what do you do?
What power/authority do you have to deal with this situation?
1. What are my legitimate work-related expectations for this employee’s performance/behavior?
2. How have I communicated my expectations to the employee?

3. How do I know my expectations have been understood as I intended them to be?
4. What feedback have I given the employee?

5. What has been the employee’s reaction to my feedback?
6. Have I specifically stated there would be consequences if the unacceptable performance/behavior didn’t improve?
7. Who have I consulted with re this situation? With whom can I/should I consult?
POSSIBLE CONSULTANTS

1. Your Manager/Director/Department Chair
2. Your HR Manager
3. Your Employee Assistance Office
4. Other?
If the employee’s performance or behavior issues cannot be tolerated, the only recourse available to you is personnel or disciplinary action.
REMEMBER:

You do not need the “Not Me” employee’s acknowledgement that their performance/behavior is problematic. It will never happen – this is the reason s/he is called a “Not Me” employee.
POSSIBLE PERSONNEL ACTIONS

- Letter spelling out/clarifying expectations for performance/behavior
Letter putting employee on notice that, if performance/behavior doesn’t improve, employment action may be initiated.
PERSONNEL ACTION

- Classified
  - concentrated performance evaluation (CPE)
  - reprimand(s)
  - suspension(s)
  - termination
Unclassified-Academic Staff

- letters of counseling
- stopping a rolling horizon
- reprimand(s)
- reduction in salary
- non-renewal for poor performance
- termination for cause
Unclassified - Tenured Faculty

- reprimand(s)
- suspension
- termination for cause
NOTE:

- Personnel action should always be preceded by consultation with your supervisor and HR manager, and possibly Employee Assistance and Legal Services.
Questions/Comments?

Thank you for your participation 😊