

## Five Characteristics of Top Performing Organizations

1. **Clearly defined and communicated goals and expectations** comprise the first and most essential ingredient. Keep in mind, that goals, to be meaningful, must be specific and measurable. Specific goals **will** deliver specific results, while unclear, vague, or non-specific goals and plans typically produce **no** results.
2. **Well-defined roles, responsibilities, processes, and procedures** come second. In order to assure acceptance of responsibility and consistency, people need to understand how their role fits into the organizational structure and the methods they must follow.
3. **Meaningful measurements and timely feedback** on performance are next. (Other words often used in place of measurements are monitoring, tracking, and score-keeping.) Just like in sports and recreation, knowing the score is motivational, whether it is good or bad. Without timely feedback on performance, people become enslaved to activity rather than focused on **results**.
4. **Accountability** is essential to assure the proper level of commitment and dedication toward achievement of organizational goals. Often, people resist goals because goals allow them to be held accountable. This can be very threatening to some individuals who have never before had to answer for results.

However, when the results oriented structure is implemented properly, with specific goals and timely feedback, people tend to hold themselves accountable. Nobody wants to be an underperformer. Your people want to meet your expectations and they want to meet their own, but they need to understand the expectations and they need to know the score.

5. And finally, **consequences**, both good and bad, must be defined and understood. In top performing organizations, “Doing the best I can,” is not good enough. Results must be achieved.

As these five essential characteristics evolve, people shift from an activity orientation to a focus on **results**. When they identify or anticipate a problem, they quickly seek support from those who can help with a solution, and a “**no surprises**” environment begins to emerge.

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