



## AssetHR - Master the Connection

*Education to master the connection between managers and employees.*

### QUOTE IT:

*"Great managers constantly seek to minimize uncertainty."*

Charles A. Coonradt, Author  
*"The Game of Work"*

### DID YOU KNOW that all employers are required to post...

... specific notifications to employees? Regardless of your company size, federal law and Minnesota law requires employers to display state-mandated posters in a physical location where employees can easily see them. These posters, providing safety, wage and age-discrimination information, include:

- Safety and Health Protection on the Job
- Minnesota Workers' Compensation; Employee Rights and Responsibilities
- Minnesota Employees State and Federal Wage and Overtime Laws
- Minnesota and Federal Laws Prohibiting Age Discrimination
- Minnesota Unemployment Insurance Benefits Information
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Family Medical Leave Act
- Polygraph Protection Act
- Government Contracts (Service or Public Contracts)
- Federally Financed Construction Projects

### THE MANAGER'S CHAIR: Consistent Employee Performance

In his book, *The Game of Work*, author Charles Coonradt uses a sports analogy to describe how to gain consistent employee performance. While the use of sports analogy is sometimes overused, it seems to ring true in the context of a manager's opportunity to bring out the best in their employees' performance. Chapter six, Field of Play, is especially on target.

Coonradt states that organizations continually cry out for improved communications but in a team sport, communications "on the field" is ongoing without much exception. For example, how many plays in a football game are *not* communicated? Few to none - communication happens continually. Organizations have undergone hundreds of attempts to make communications both clear and consistent. But communication success still eludes most companies.

Coonradt's perspective is that until a player's "field of play" is initially established and the boundaries for play defined, performance success will remain uncertain. In the world of sports, the "field of play" has long been defined. So long, that most of us take it for granted. Almost no one would stop short of understanding what a football field, baseball diamond, or tennis court looks like. These fields have been defined and the rules (boundaries) for playing have been consistent. Furthermore, we understand (in sports) that even though a great play is fabulous to view ... if the play is not made "on the field" it won't count.

A corresponding business example might look like this. A salesperson is doing a fantastic job of making appointments with new prospects. But are they making appointments with the right prospects? Prospects that have a need, desire, budget for your products or services? If the employer has not *defined accurately* and *communicated consistently* the salesperson's "field of play" the salesperson is playing a great game of appointment setting without scoring any points.

Thus, Coonradt's key point. The "field" where managers want their employees to "make plays" is largely undefined or too often a moving target. The communication needed to keep employees "on the field" and "in play" doesn't happen often enough or with enough clarity.

In short, Coonradt's approach is to define, and continually communicate, the following for each employee/player:

- What actions are out of bounds
  - Terminal out of bounds - hazardous conduct, terminable offenses
  - Operational out of bounds - application of company policies
  - Performance out of bounds - aligning talent and expected effort
- How will I, the manager, help
  - Recognize and reward - both effort and results
  - Correcting - redirecting effort, educating, resetting boundaries
- What is the expected "result to resources" ratio
  - How much time and activity should equal intended result?

**Uncertainty gradually restricts performance.**    C Coonradt

If you can't quite recall when the last time was that you offered thought to your employees "field of play," it's past time. You're due to get out of your office, away from your meetings, back on the floor and get chatting.