Question of the Week – July 8, 2018:

Sedona Management

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Health care professionals are in the business of helping people get well. However, there is one diagnosis that can strike fear in patient and doctor alike – cancer. Correspondingly, in management terms, a cancerous condition is *incompetence*. If incompetence spreads across teams, the prognosis is not good for their health or sustainability. Incompetence can rise to affect whole divisions and eventually the company overall. So how do you treat this disease before it reaches "stage IV" in the company setting? By A. Corral

Leader Talking Points

Opportunity: Team-Building Activity

a.   Ask team members for examples of incompetence outside of work.
    1)   Someone thought of as a "loser"
    2)   Poor customer service at a restaurant
    3)   Delayed action by insurers on requests for corrections handed down by governmental agencies
    4)   How does it feel to be on the receiving end of incompetence as a customer, consumer or client?

Discussion Points

a.   Ask your team for examples of incompetence in the organizational structure (not specific persons) that can affect a team:
    1)   Peer – someone outside the team
    2)   Manager – a lead individual from a different department
    3)   Other?

b.   Ask your team what are potential causes of incompetence:
    1)   "Bad hire" – someone who was not the right match for the job requirements.
    2)   Training – lack of proper training including on-the-job and in-classroom development.
    3)   Disengagement – individual dislikes the job, so does just enough to get by.
    4)   Other?

Team Challenge Activity

a. As a team – what is an area of the organization where some might suspect incompetence exists, again without using names?
    1)   This may generate more than one area for discussion. If this is the case, identify the one which the team feels represents the greatest threat to their functioning.
    2)   Solicit ideas on how this situation can be improved, or potentially even solved?
    3)   Ask for a volunteer to take the lead on structuring a possible resolution, pulling on suggestions of other team members, and reporting in writing at the next meeting.