Results Rule!®
Build a Culture that Makes Your Team a Hero

Implementation Ideas:
A Supplement to the *Results Rule!* Book and Education Video

INTRODUCTION

Results Rule! it is the standard for measuring success if you are competing on the tennis court or in the district court; in the classroom or in the board room. And it applies to everyone at every level in every organization.

But ... you know that. In fact, that is why you are here.

These "Implementation Tips" are designed to help you turn your good intentions about building a culture that delivers results into action.

The information contained here was designed to supplement the award-winning book, *Results Rule! Build a Culture that Blows the Competition Away* and the video-based education program, "Results Rule!® Build a Culture that Makes Your Team a Hero."

Think of it as a compass rather than a map. Building a great culture for your team, department, or organization is a unique journey where you must find your own way. The information contained here will point you in the right direction and give you ideas, but it won't give you the "seven magic steps" for success.

A word of warning – establishing and sustaining a culture that serves as a competitive advantage takes work. It is your responsibility to do the hard work that will be required, but you don't have to go it completely alone.

Should you have more questions or encounter a challenge where there are no easy answers, send your question to us at Info@resultsrule.com. We will respond with an idea or resource to consider. We also offer consulting, education, and coaching services to help you achieve the results you want.

Check out the information contained on our web sites at www.resultsrule.com and www.penningtongroup.com for assistance and contact information.

All the best,

Randy G. Pennington

Results Rule!

IS YOUR CULTURE ON THE RIGHT TRACK?

"So my biggest concern is that somehow … we lose the espirit de corps, the culture, the spirit. If we ever do lose that, we will have lost our most valuable competitive asset."
-Herb Kelleher
Chairman, Southwest Airlines

Does your performance and the performance of your organization shout out Results Rule?

Here's a quick quiz to give you an idea how your team is doing at building a great culture. It's not scientific, but it will give you a snapshot of where you are. As you might expect, the validity of the assessment is in direct proportion to your willingness to tell yourself the truth.

Rate yourself from 1 to 5 using the following scale:
   1 = What are you high?
   2 = Occasionally, but it's probably by accident
   3 = We make a consistent effort and do OK about half the time
   4 = It's the exception rather than the rule when this doesn't happen
   5 = Look in the dictionary and you will see our picture as an example

?

	1	2	3	4	5
A common set of beliefs, assumptions, and values drive a commitment to results, relationships, and accountability. There is a consistency of purpose.					
Leaders at every level consistently model specific behaviors, attitudes, and skills that produce long-term voluntary commitment across the enterprise.					
People take their performance personally. A sense of ownership and personal responsibility exists at every level.					
Mutual respect, cooperation, and a high degree of trust exist between individuals, teams, and departments.					
Goals at every level of the organization are aligned and focused to deliver excellence that helps us stand out in the marketplace.					
Customers love us so much they voluntarily sell for us.					
The opportunity to work here attracts quality talent and retains top performers who appreciate the opportunity to succeed.					
Everyone views change as a positive tool to continuously improve our performance and adapt to new demands and opportunities.					
Integrity is the code by which we live and die.					
A high degree of candor and open communication exists. People at every level are comfortable saying what needs to be said and listening to the opinions of others.					

Scoring:

- If you scored a 50: You either work with one of the best teams on the planet, or you may want to be more honest in your assessment. If you do work with an extraordinary organization, congratulations. We'd like to hear from you.
- If you scored between 40 and 50: You are definitely on the road to being a hero. Keep at it, and realize that the last few steps will be the most difficult.
- If you scored between 30 and 40: You are a wanna-be moving in the right direction. Taking it to the next level has the potential to set you apart in your marketplace.
- If you scored below 30: Thank you for telling the truth. If your score didn't bother you, you are probably on the road to has-been status. If it frustrates you, you are in the wanna-be class. The good news is you have taken an important step in becoming a marketplace hero and delivering consistent results.

NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHERE YOU ARE ...

"Truth is all around you. What matters is where you put your focus."
-Roger von Oech, Ph.D.

One of the first questions that comes up when leaders want to initiate change is, "Where should I begin?"

The first step in changing or improving your culture is a conversation between you and your team. Use your own words and adapt them for your audience, but here is the message:

> "I want to work with a team that wants to be the best. I want our customers to love us so much that they sing our praises to everyone. I want you to feel that you are a valued and respected contributor to our success. I want us to be able to tell each other the truth about how we can improve our performance and improve our working relationships. I want this to be a team that is proud to work together and has each other's back.
>
> I believe that most of you want these things as well. I know that we must do this together, and I am asking for your help. We will begin by defining what it means to be the best in every area of our performance; identify the best areas on which to focus first, and then continue working until our team develops a culture that consistently delivers amazing results for our customers and ourselves."

Now it is your turn. Use the space below to write the message you will give your team.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

HERE'S WHAT TO DO NEXT

Identify the areas where you and your team need to improve. The Results Rule! Enterprise diagram below will give you some places to look. Remember to focus on all three components of a successful team: Leadership, Operational, and People.

The Results Rule!® Enterprise

Leadership Component
- Strategic Goals
- Operational Goals and Plans
- Resource acquisition and allocation
- Mission, Vision & Values
- Measurement and Analysis of Organizational Performance
- Performance Management

Operational Component
- Product & Service Delivery
- Information Systems
- Customer Engagement
- Support Processes

People Component
- Work Systems
- Selection
- Employee Education & Training
- Employee Satisfaction

Business Results
- Financial Performance
- Customer Performance
- Operational Excellence
- Human Resource Results
- Supplier & Partner Results
- Organizational Effectiveness

Now list the areas for potential improvement you identified:

Areas where we need to improve:	
Leadership Component	
Operational Component	
People Component	

Chose no more than three areas where you want to place your immediate focus. Make this choice carefully and consider the following:

- The impact that improving this area of performance will have on helping the team deliver great results.
- The impact that improving this area of performance will have on improving relationships on the team.
- The ease with which this issue can be addressed and the control you have over making significant change.

Here's a rule of thumb: Look for areas to improve where you have the most control over the factors that contribute to success. For instance, if you have little or no ability to influence how budget dollars are allocated, choose that as a long-term issue on which to work and then focus on something you can improve immediately in your team – such as work processes, communication, or customer satisfaction.

MAKING YOUR CHANGE WORK

Once you know the areas of improvement on which you want to focus, it is time to lead the change with your team. The following activities must be accomplished to increase the opportunities for your change to succeed.

- **Build a sense of urgency:** Build the urgency for change by helping individuals see the gap between what you want to accomplish and the current reality. Be very specific as you talk about these. You can also use crisis or opportunity as motivators to take on the change. Crisis uses fear (the bad things that could happen if we don't improve) as the motivation for change. Opportunity uses the desire for success as the motivation.

- **Create opportunities for ownership & participation:** People support what they help create. Quickly engage individuals in contributing to the effort to expand the forces pushing for the change.

- **Develop measurable goals:** Developing measurable goals focuses the energy and tells everyone that the change is important. Remember – results occur when you inspect what you expect.

- **Create, modify, and align the structure & processes.** Structure (how you are organized to complete the work) and process (the steps in which the work is completed) create habits in organizations. They include things such as reporting processes, work processes, and communication channels. Change initiatives fall short when leaders fail to align the organization's structures and process with the new goals and direction.

- **Anchor the change:** An organization's culture is the display of its habits and traditions over time. Make the change a habit. Change the behavior to change the culture.
    - **Empower action:** Empowerment means giving people control over their own success by providing a clear understanding of the goal, necessary knowledge and skills, and the trust and freedom to fail in pursuit of that goal.
    - **Generate quick wins:** Success creates enthusiasm and bolsters confidence. Find ways to allow people to succeed quickly to keep morale and support high. Remember to celebrate the success.
    - **Consolidate gains & expand:** Build on your quick wins by looking for other areas for improvement. Help individuals adopt the mindset that "if we can do this, we can achieve other successes as well."

HOW ABOUT ME?

"The qualities I observe in successful athletes are common among people who enjoy success in business. Both love the battle, the journey, the challenge. Both of them consider the final outcome a by-product."
-John Wooden

Your team will not improve until you improve. You can't expect others to strive for the best until you strive for the best. It just doesn't work that way. So where do you need to improve?

Remember the short quiz you took at the beginning of this document? Here it is again – except this time it is personalized for you. So where are you falling short as a leader who builds a great culture and inspires results?

 Rate yourself from 1 to 5 using the following scale:
- 1 = What are you high?
- 2 = Occasionally, but it's probably by accident
- 3 = I make a consistent effort and do OK about half the time
- 4 = It's the exception rather than the rule when this doesn't happen
- 5 = Look in the dictionary and you will see my picture as an example

	1	2	3	4	5
A common set of beliefs, assumptions, and values drive my commitment to results, relationships, and accountability. I have a consistency of purpose.					
I consistently model specific behaviors, attitudes, and skills that produce long-term voluntary commitment within my team.					
I take my performance personally. I have a strong sense of ownership and personal responsibility.					
Mutual respect, cooperation, and a high degree of trust exist between me and my team members.					
I set clear goals for myself. Those goals are aligned and focused to deliver excellence in my work and relationships.					
My team loves working together and with me so much they voluntarily tell others about it.					
I create opportunities that attract quality talent and retain top performers who appreciate the opportunity to succeed.					
I view and communicate change as a positive tool to continuously improve my performance and adapt to new demands and opportunities.					
Integrity is the code by which I live and die.					
A high degree of candor and open communication exists. I am comfortable saying what needs to be said and listening to the opinions of others.					

Scoring:

- If you scored a 50: You are either an excellent leader, or you may want to be more honest in your assessment. If you are that excellent leader, our experience is that you are still on the lookout for areas to improve. Please let me know if I can offer any suggestions. I would like to hear from you.
- If you scored between 40 and 50: You are definitely on the road to being a hero. Keep at it, and realize that the last few steps will be the most difficult.
- If you scored between 30 and 40: You are a wanna-be moving in the right direction. Taking it to the next level has the potential to set you apart as a leader.
- If you scored below 30: Thank you for telling the truth. If your score didn't bother you, you are probably on the road to has-been status. If it frustrates you, you are in the wanna-be class. The good news is you have taken an important step in becoming a marketplace hero and delivering consistent results.

> **NOTE: Email Info@resultsrule.com to receive a 50-question self-assessment that will provide additional ideas on where you should focus to improve your performance.**

Areas for my personal improvement:

Chose no more than three areas where you want to place your immediate focus. Make this choice carefully and consider the following:

- The impact that improving this area of performance will have on helping you deliver great results.
- The impact that improving this area of performance will have on improving relationships on the team.
- The ease with which this issue can be addressed and the control you have over making significant change.

Areas where I need to improve:	
Leadership Component	
Operational Component	
People Component	

DO YOU HAVE OTHER TIPS?

Still looking for more ideas? Here are 13 specific ideas to spur your thinking and focus your energy. Some of these can be implemented quickly. Others will take consistent effort. All will contribute to building a culture that shouts Results Rule!

IDEA	EXPLANATION
1. **Define the culture you want. Start with values, and connect to something larger.**	Most organizations have value statements that include words such as respect, open communication, excellence, or service to customers. Use these values to open the conversation by asking your team to assess how well it is doing at modeling the values the organization has stated are at its core.
2. **Set expectations from day one.**	Hold a conversation about your team's culture and its core beliefs during the first interview. Bring those expectations up again on the first day of employment. Make sure your expectations for contributing to the team's success are incorporated into your orientation process.
3. **Hire for fit.**	Make fit with your team and the culture you are working to establish as – or more – important than qualifications. Don't settle for the first person who meets the minimum expectations. Hold out for the best person who will help your team succeed. Make the last part of the selection process time spent with other team members and the applicant. If they wouldn't want to hang out with them over lunch, why would they want to work with them every day?
4. **Abandon unproductive ritual and tradition in favor of substance.**	Ritual plays an important role in sustaining a culture. Think, for example, of the traditions and rituals that occur in your family or community that help define what is really important. In fact, an organization's culture is often defined by its traditions. You want to keep those that support the culture you want to build and abandon those that do not. For instance, the tradition everyone pitching in to help co-workers is an important one to maintain. The ritual of performance reviews that don't really contribute to helping individuals improve should be abandoned. List – or ask your team to help you list – the traditions that have sprung up over the years that prevent you from performing your best. Then replace those with actions that address the substance of delivering results. As an example, you might stop the tradition of using weekly staff meetings to report on progress and start using it as an opportunity to work on challenges.

5.	**Develop relationships that grow into partnerships – show them you care.**	You don't have to become best friends with the people on your team. You do, however, need to get along with them and work together. Relationships form out of time spent getting to know each other, understanding how the other person thinks, and establishing trust in the other's character and competence. You will know that the relationship has grown into a partnership when you show others that you are looking out for their best interests. Your team members will start treating you as a partner when you start treating them as a partner. Stop throwing them under the bus to make yourself look better at their expense. Stick up for your team rather than blaming them. Accept responsibility for the team's performance when problems arise and be quick to share the glory when there is a success.
6.	**Think talent development not performance management.**	This is a specific extension of the previous idea. Performance management in most organizations has become a process for completing forms so that salaries can be determined or worse, someone can check "performance reviews completed" off their To Do list. Your team is only as good as the talents you develop and the commitment you inspire. Take a personal interest in every team member to assist them in developing their talents. That means you will need to look at the performance review as an opportunity to provide meaningful feedback rather than a punishment for accepting a job in management.
7.	**Talk about the culture often … and then talk about it again.**	Employees at all levels tell me that their organization's values and culture statements are basically words that hang on the wall with no application to how they do their jobs. When asked, they then explain that leaders rarely, if ever, talk about them. The best organizations talk about their values and desired culture on a regular basis. One client company discusses one of its twelve core values every month in staff meetings along with its results and projects. Another makes a discussion about its culture the sole focus of one staff meeting out of every month. Your team members take their cues about what is important from the attention you invest. Talking about the culture once or even once per year won't cut it.
8.	**Don't confuse communication with experience.**	This idea won't take long to explain. If the only thing you do differently is talk about the culture often, the only result you will achieve is that your team members will think you are stupid or worse a liar. Action that leads to a different experience trumps words every time.

9. **Drive out fear.**	Fear paralyzes your team and its performance. Team members refuse to share bad news, are hesitant to take responsibility, and play the blame game when they are afraid. The following five actions will help you reduce fear in your team: • Change assumptions – this one is all on you. If you lead through fear, you will get fear as the response. You must change your assumption that fear is the best/only way for a leader to earn respect. • Improve interpersonal relationships – we are less likely to fear those with whom we have positive relationships. • Reduce ambiguity – clear expectations remove the guesswork and assumption that contribute to fear. • Reward messengers – make bringing bad news or problems a behavior that is rewarded rather than punished. • Engage others in meaningful decision making – people support what they help create. Participation in meaningful decisions teaches why certain actions can or cannot be taken. Information is a great way to eliminate fear.
10. **Make it fun.**	Fun at work isn't about dressing up in costume or having parties. Those can be useful, but they will do more harm than good if they are perceived as "programmed fun." Fun at work ultimately occurs when people ... • Are passionate about their work • Take their work seriously, but not themselves • Have the freedom to be who they are • Feel their efforts make a difference • See their leaders have fun
11. **Drive out mistrust.**	Mistrust causes people to look out for themselves at the expense of others and even the team's success. Here are ten ways you can improve trust within your team: 1. Follow-through on commitments and promises 2. Be open in your communication 3. Make information plentiful 4. Make good decisions rather than easy decisions 5. Be good at your job 6. Be honest in all your dealings with others 7. Put the team above yourself 8. Strive for fairness in your decisions 9. Provide support – be an advocate for others 10. Communicate with others as professionals

12. **Know when to go slow in changing the culture and when to blow things up and start again.**	What most people call "culture change" is really "culture evolution." There are traditions you will want to preserve and others you will want to change. There may be times when it is necessary to start over. Consider blowing up the culture when … • Results have stagnated and the organization has become stuck in its own history of mediocrity. • Your industry or economic model has undergone seismic, revolutionary change. • Founding values have given way to bureaucratic management and lethargic execution.
13. **Embrace the messiness of growing your culture.**	Remember – culture is about people, and people don't change easily or over night. There will be days when you think that everyone has completely bought in to where you are going. Then out of nowhere, someone will do or say something that makes you wonder if your team has been inhabited by aliens from another planet. Mistakes are part of the process of growing your culture. How you respond to those mistakes will send a clear message about your commitment to the principles of partnership and teamwork you said you believe in. There are two types of mistakes: • Mistakes of the head • Mistakes of the heart Mistakes of the heart are intentional. That means the person knew they were acting in a manner that is contrary to what you and the team values. You cannot tolerate mistakes of the heart. Mistakes of the head are accidental. They occur when the individual's heart is in the right place, but she/he simply made a mistake. Mistakes of the head are learning opportunities for individuals and the team. Most important, they are a valuable opportunity for you to show your team that you are committed to them and the culture you are working to build. Whatever you do, don't confuse mistakes of the head and mistakes of the heart. Embrace the messiness that comes with change and growth.

IT IS UP TO YOU

"To act and to know are one and the same."
-Old Samurai Maxim

Our goals for creating this guide were to give you ideas you can implement immediately and provide guidance about how to lead the changes you want to make in your team's culture. Please email us at Info@resultsrule.com to let us know how well we accomplished that goal and any ideas you would like to see incorporated into future guides.

Now it is time for you to plan your next steps.

What are the 2 – 3 things you will do immediately to help your team develop a culture that delivers consistent and amazing results?

What are the 2 – 3 things you will do immediately to improve your own performance as a leader?

What resources or assistance do you need in taking these actions? Who will you utilize as an advisor or coach as you progress?

"Our cause must be entrusted to, and conducted by its own undoubted friends – whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work – who do care for the result."
-Abraham Lincoln

Note: Contact us at **Info@resultsrule.com** to discuss your individual and organizational coaching needs. You can sign up to receive regular ideas about building a culture that delivers results at www.penningtongroup.com.

ABOUT RANDY G. PENNINGTON

Randy Pennington helps leaders and organizations build cultures focused on results, relationships, and accountability. He is a twenty-year business performance veteran, author, and consultant who has worked with many of this country's best-known organizations including: Alabama Power Company, LaSalle Bank, SmithBucklin, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, Texas A&M University, Marathon Oil, Sprint, Huntsman Chemical, Progressive Insurance, AEGON Direct Marketing Services, and DFW Airport in addition to government agencies at the local, state, and national level. Additionally, he serves as an adjunct instructor in the Cox Business Leadership Center at Southern Methodist University.

Pennington is author of two books: *Results Rule!*, which received the 2007 Best Books Award from USA Book News, and *On My Honor, I Will*. He a frequent radio talk show guest/commentator with appearances in *The New York Times*, *Entrepreneur*, *Executive Excellence*, on CNN, Fox News, the BBC, the ABC radio network, and in numerous professional and trade association journals.

Randy's background is a unique blend of line, staff, and consulting experiences ranging from hourly employee to senior management. He holds a Bachelor and Masters Degree in Psychology and completed Postgraduate work in Organization Administration and Management. He is a past Chairman of the Board for the American Heart Association, Texas Affiliate, and the National Speakers Association Foundation as well as a founding member of the Texas Council on Disease and Stroke. Randy was inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame by the National Speakers Association and earned the Certified Speaking Professional (CSP) designation.

For additional information about Randy Pennington, visit us on the Internet at www.penningtongroup.com or www.resultsrule.com.