■ **Which one of these practices negatively impacts morale the most: failing to praise and reward employees, micromanaging, or poor communication?**

**Any of these** workforce management practices may contribute to morale problems, but poor communication consistently ranks #1 as the leading complaint affecting productivity in modern businesses around the world. Why is this? The answer is that managers are either unsure of what to do about it or they don't have systems in place to ensure better communication, or both. To improve communication, make sure employees and management are educated about the importance of communication; teach employees how to communicate effectively. Coach employees about how to give feedback, communicate in a timely way, share information properly, and create ways that employees can cross-dialog with each other regularly. Make communication part of the work unit or workplace culture with systems that keep communication moving. Internal memos, organization news, and special communications about management decisions are "nice to haves," but they will not fill the intimate communication void that often exists in the workplace. Investigate having a consultation with the EAO about communication education or even ideas on strategic goals to advance your initiatives in this area.

■ **I have a few employees who can't seem to break away from their smartphones. This is getting ridiculous, and it is negatively affecting productivity. Telling people they cannot use a smartphone won't work, and I need to do something. Is this Smartphone Addiction?**

**Although Smartphone Addiction is** not a medically recognized disorder, there are instances of employees experiencing serious, adverse affects in their job performance from being unable to stay away from the distractions of smartphone use. Some possible ideas regarding the use or nonuse of smartphones during the workday might serve as a topic at department meetings using ideas such as: technology devices not being used in such a manner that they bother others or become an annoyance; technology device usage slowing down business or work flow; or technology device usage causing loss of an employee's focus on other matters important to the employer. This may offer the opportunity for further dialog among employees.

■ **I know that leadership has little to do with what I**

**Successful leadership is** first grounded in competence, so there must be a foundation in your ability to do something well. But where are