

The People that Drive Managers Crazy

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Most people in organization in the western world are in the middle levels of existence (D-Q, E-R, and, increasingly, F-S). Managers are used to dealing with such people. Occasionally, however, a manager must deal with people at either a lower or higher level, and then his customary methods fail, Graves says.

People at the C-P level (Egocentric) are found frequently in very impoverished areas. These people exhibit the least capability to perform in a complex industrial world. When a job is available, they do not apply. If they get a job, they do not show up for work or they soon quit. While they are on the job, their habits are so erratic that little work is actually accomplished. Exasperated managers find such people 'unemployable.' Society labels them 'hardcore unemployed.' To a Gravesian, people at the C-P level are employable, but they must be managed in a special way. The Graves theory holds that C-P people are driven primarily by the need to solve immediate survival problems. Applying the theory, a Gravesian manager would arrange the work situation so that the immediate survival needs of the worker are not threatened and would give him work that can be learned almost immediately. The manager would also change the hiring requirements so that they do not threaten a C-P person. For instance, the Gravesian manager would simplify and speed up the processing of applications so that people know in minutes if they are hired and, if not hired, are taken immediately to some place where they might find jobs. He would make sure that C-P people are not supervised by self-righteous, do-good managers. The hard-core unemployed person lives in a world of immediacy, says Graves. Often he must pay money down for almost everything he gets, and because of his immediate reactions to the crises he faces, he may be an absentee problem. To counteract these problems, a member of the organization might be assigned to administer an emergency fund to help the C-P person through difficult periods.

At the opposite extreme, managers must also deal with another group of people whom they find extremely troublesome, the G-T and H-U people. Ironically, these are among the most competent people. They possess knowledge needed to improve productivity in the organization, but often they are kept from improving productivity by ancient policies, inane practices, out-moded procedures and inappropriate managerial styles. The G-T and H-U people want autonomy, the freedom to do their jobs the best way they know. When management requires such a person to procure permission to institute change when he sees change is needed, it stifles what he can contribute. The sacred channels of communication seriously hamper the productivity of G-T people, who want to be able to decide when they know what to do. When he doesn't know, the G-T is motivated to seek guidance from those who do know. But a G-T employee's motivation becomes negative when he must waste time going through channels which require him to explain what does not need to be explained to people who do not need to have it explained to them. The G-T worker reacts negatively when required to ask an administrator's approval for materials he needs in order to be productive. He reacts positively when he can tell his supervisor what he needs to do a job and when the supervisor considers that it is his job to do as his subordinate says. The G-T employee believes that he, not a superior, should make the decisions whenever he is competent to make it, and most

G-T workers know that their supervisors are not competent to make the decision. People who operate at the Being levels are typically competent regardless of their surroundings. Therefore, their productivity is not a function of lower-level incentives. Threat and coercion do not work with them,

because they are not frightened people. Beyond a certain point, pecuniary motives do not affect them. Status and prestige symbols, such as fancy titles, flattery, office size, luxurious carpeting, etc., are not incentives to them. Many of them are not even driven by a need for social approval. What is important to them is that they be autonomous in the exercise of their competence, that they be allowed all possible freedom to do what needs to be done as best they can do it. In other words, they want their managers to let them improve productivity the way they know it can be improved. They do not want to waste their competency doing it management's way simply because things always have been done that way. G-T people are becoming more prevalent, says Graves. They must do their own managing of their own work and of their own affairs. Their procedures must be their own, not those that tradition or group decision-making have established. When G-T employees are autonomous and are properly coupled with jobs that utilize their competence, one can expect optimum productivity from them. An H-U employee does not resist coercion and restrictions in a flamboyant manner as does the G-T type, but he will avoid any relationship in which others try to dominate him. He must therefore be approached through what Graves calls "acceptance management" - management which takes him as he is and supports him in doing what he wants to do. It is useless, says Graves, to get an H-U employee to subordinate his desires to those of the organization. Instead, the organization must be fitted to him. If he cannot get the acceptance he wants, an H-U employee will quietly build a nonorganizationally oriented world for himself and retire into it. He will do a passable but not excellent job. If there is no change in management and he cannot go elsewhere, he will surreptitiously work at what is important to him while putting up a front to management.

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