

October 2007: The Understanding People Edition

“Sometimes I feel so small” and “Can I still be their friend?”

These are two of the most common comments we hear in management and supervisory level training. The first comment comes in many formats but they all boil down to this:

You've got talent

You've been promoted

... but you're not sure if your former colleagues respect your new position.

The second comment arises from the same situation.

You've been promoted, so how do you treat your former friends and colleagues, who are now your staff?

One of the best ways to start to understand this kind of situation is to think about the relationship and how it makes you feel.

Quite often, when we start in a supervisory or management role, we feel it is about telling people what to do. We know that it is not just about that and there are better ways to get the best from our colleagues. Yet we don't yet know how.

We also know that sometimes we will have to tell our team members what to do. How does that make you feel? *Does it make you feel bossy - a bit like “trying to be mum or dad in the work-place.”* That doesn't feel right?

Or does it sometimes feel like you are having to tell someone with as much experience - perhaps even more - what to do? *Do you feel a bit like a little kid, telling a grown-up what to do?*

The solution to this is to know that, at times, we all feel a bit like a parent - criticising and telling people what to do. And we also all feel like a child sometimes - in awe of some of the people around us.

At work, however, we can all learn to feel confident about ourselves and our authority. When we do that, we can focus on communicating as an adult communicates - in a clear and respectful way, and with positive intentions.

Learn more about assertiveness and how we all feel like a parent, a child and an adult in [Management Essentials](#) on 19 November. For in depth exploration, [Understanding People](#) is a certificated course on Transactional Analysis, on 28-29 November.

Our [Management Programme](#) and [Leadership Programme](#) are both underway - the next ones start on 8 February and 11 March respectively. [Supervisory Management](#) is on 31 January.

How do you perceive time?

Some of us are acutely aware of the time - at all times. We are always thinking about what's coming up and what's happened before. These people typically manage time very well. We'll call them “Time-keepers”.

Others have a completely different way of thinking about time. They don't. They live in the moment, all the time. It's hard for them to make their plans happen because, as soon as they get engrossed in something, all of their plans are forgotten.

Which are you most like?

When you meet someone who is never 100% focused when you are talking to them - chances are, they are a Time Keeper - constantly thinking about the last conversation, or “What's next?”.

When you meet someone who is so focused on what they're doing, the forget to move on, they are a Time loser.

Learn more about [Time Management](#) and time-keeping strategies at one of our most popular courses on 16 October or 24 January.

If I have one member of staff I'd love to fire, it's . . .

How many of us have said that to ourselves? The toughest part of being a manager is tackling under-performance and other general people problems.

But have you ever acted in good faith and had your motives misunderstood? Other people do too, so look beyond what they do and try to understand their behaviour may simply be the best choice available to them, given their emotional state and their beliefs about themselves and the world.

The fact that their behaviour is not what you want, what the customer expects or what your organisation needs from them is not the whole story. Trying to change their behaviour without understanding what is driving it is fruitless.

Here is a checklist of some reasons for difficult behaviour or poor performance:

1. Emotional problems are blocking rational responses to work-place situations
2. Inadequate training limits ability to do the job to the necessary standard
3. Limiting beliefs are frustrating efforts to train or coach the person
4. Poor social or communication skills limit their ability to express themselves in a resourceful way
5. Personal values mismatch with what you are asking of them in the workplace

Is any of these a reason to give up on someone? Take some time to understand them. See through their behaviour to what is going on behind it. Chances are you'll find that they are really doing the very best they can at the time.

Learn more about [Managing Under-performance and People Problems](#) on 9 October. Or attend [HR Essentials](#) on 11-12 October. For in depth exploration, [Understanding People](#) is on 28-29 November.

Also coming soon:

PowerPoint Introduction	10 October
Finance for Directors	11 October
Marketing	18 October
MS Word Introduction	18 October
Finance for PAs and Admin	31 October

Contribution: The Ultimate Business Win-Win

You may have read a lot about Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) recently. Many of us assume it is only for large organisations with huge resources: it isn't.

YOUR BUSINESS: YOUR COMMUNITY?

CSR represents an approach to how you involve yourself in the local community, which can bring **enormous business benefits**. You can do this by supporting local charities, employee volunteering or action days and other initiatives.

Businesses like yours who have got that involved have achieved a multitude of benefits. These include:

- developing skills within your business and increased morale and motivation
- building networks with potential clients and partners
- creating effective ways to develop your people and their team-working
- enhancing the public perception of your company
- the pride of bringing real benefits to your local community

Sevenoaks Volunteer Development Agency is running a programme to promote CSR throughout West Kent. They can provide advice on how to establish a policy or action plan, through to arranging **"action days"** where staff can get involved in teams to help local organisations. For example, creating a sensory garden for children, painting a playroom, redecoration for older people living alone. or helping to establish community computer facilities.



Learn more about what you could do,
email David Mckee at
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