

Unlocking The Human Potential Of Your Organization

Pat Brown seemed like the ideal candidate to fill the vacancy for the Director of Customer Service at Applied Materials Corporation. Pat's references, educational credentials and work experience were the strongest of all of Applied's candidates. No wonder that Applied's management team felt very comfortable extending an offer to Pat for the position.

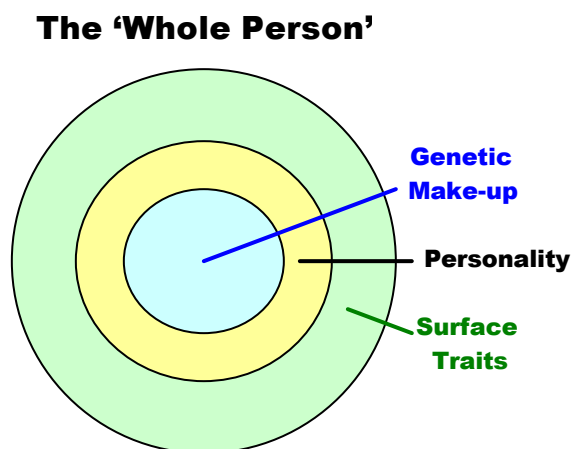
It took Pat less than a month to come up to speed, developing and implementing a solid plan and budget to achieve the current year's goals and objectives. Within four months the department was ahead of target and under budget. End of story, right? Not exactly.

Chris Nelson, Applied's VP of Operations, was the first to notice how the Customer Service Department was becoming divided... some people seemed to work well with Pat while others struggled. By the end of Pat's sixth month with the company, morale was down and several long-time Applied employees had resigned, citing an inability to get along with Pat as one of their reasons for leaving. It had become apparent that Pat's behavioral style was clashing with a number of employees and peers.

It Happens In Your Company, Too

How often is this story played out every day, across all kinds of businesses and organizations large and small? Does the Pat Brown story happen in your organization? A talented, motivated employee fails, not because of his or her skills, knowledge or ability, but because of poor fit and the inability to make all of his or her job relationships positive ones. The costs of having a 'poor fit' include lowered morale and productivity, lost customers, employee turnover, and the costs to hire and train new employees - all because of *ineffective behavioral styles* causing interpersonal breakdowns.

To get underneath this issue, let's look at a very simplified, three-fold model of the 'whole person.' At the core of every person is his or her genetic makeup, which does not change as he or she matures through life. The next layer is an individual's personality, which changes only in the case of a life-changing event, such as a catastrophic illness, loss of a loved one, etc. On the outer layer is a person's surface traits, like appearance or mood, which can change rather easily. Included in an individual's set of surface traits is their behavioral style, defined as *how we tend to respond to the people and world around us*.



Adaptability is Key

Behavior is something that is highly adaptable. For example, consider the typical behavior of a child who wants his or her toy. Early behavior may be to point to the toy, demanding it with sounds or cry until the toy is supplied. As the child matures, the demanding behavior gives way to respectful requests using a proper tone of voice. The child adapts his or her behavior to have a more positive result, being guided by his or her parents along the way. And so the child grows into adulthood, adapting and flexing his or her behavior, learning what is effective and ineffective in particular situations. By eighteen, most people have developed their own unique behavioral style that will govern their responses to the different situations they will face.

Have you noticed that in any group of people, there are some people with whom you tend to get along almost effortlessly, while other relationships are a struggle, despite your best efforts? The answer is found in your *preferred behavioral style*, and how that style interacts with the different behavioral styles of others.

The Golden Rule Doesn't Work!

The Golden Rule ('do unto others as you would have them do unto you') does not work. Why? Because nobody is just like you. What works for you may be quite ineffective for the other person. Rather, replace the Golden Rule with the Platinum Rule: *Do unto others as they would have you do unto them.* In our example of Pat Brown, employees who liked Pat's direct, factual and straightforward style felt good about working for Applied, while others felt that Pat was cold, insensitive and even disinterested in their concerns. Had Pat adopted a style that worked well with those that needed a more sensitive approach, the Customer Service team's morale and productivity would have been a model for success.

Research supports the conclusion that the most effective people are those who understand their own behavioral style, recognize the demands of different situations, and adapt strategies to meet those demands. Since few careers allow an individual to work alone, the challenge to become effective in all customer and co-worker relationships is key to the success of both the individual as well as the organization that employs him or her. Organizations whose workforce is made up of individuals who are highly effective in their interpersonal relationships significantly outperform average organizations, generating higher revenues at lower costs with lower employee turnover and greater teamwork.

Tools That Work

For this reason many organizations, businesses and institutions incorporate behavioral training as a vital part of their organizational development plan. Popular behavioral assessments include Myers-Briggs' MBTI™ and Inscape's Personal Profile System®. Using these instruments, employees learn about their own natural behavioral style and the behavioral styles of others, and learn to flex or adapt their style to work more effectively with others. Managers learn how to be more productive in their relationships with the different individuals on their staff and with each other, and increase the effectiveness of work teams by ensuring that the talents and abilities resident within each behavioral style are brought out and developed. Salespeople and customer service representatives learn to adapt their approaches to deal with prospects and customers in the customer's preferred style. Human Resources departments consider behavioral styles as one of the evaluation factors when filling key roles within the company.



Many businesses and organizations utilize behavioral assessments to help unlock the human potential of their workforce.

The secret to remaining competitive - and even thriving - in the challenging business environment of the new millennium may very well rest in the ability of your company or organization to become adept at training its staff to better leverage relationships by working effectively with all behavioral styles.

To learn more about how to utilize behavioral training to unlock the human potential of your organization, contact Boyer Management Group at 215-942-0982, visit us at www.boyermanagement.com, or e-mail Hank Boyer at hank@boyermanagement.com.