

Management Ideas



FOR STILL BETTER

RESULTS

RELATIONS

REPUTATION

a monthly newsletter to key executive-leaders
on practices, possibilities and ideas generally
for stepped up performance

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on problem-solving and creative ideas

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3042 A TALISMAN: Gandhiji gave a talisman, a clear guideline to his followers. If they had followed it, we would all be much better off. The talisman reads:

"I will give you a talisman. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. will he gain anything by it? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny? In other words, will it lead to Swaraj for the hungry and spiritually starving millions?"

Then you will find your doubts and yourself melting away."

3043 TOMORROW'S EMPLOYEE: We hire men for tomorrow. And what are the likely demands of tomorrow? Studies in the West - and this becomes relevant because we tend to follow the West in some respects show that successful employees bring to job interviews 10 key skills. They are :-

1. The ability to use information
2. An emphasis on interpersonal skills
3. Marketing skills
4. Change experience
5. Time management
6. The ability to be a team player
7. Knowing when to act and when to respond to direction
8. Involvement
9. Personal accountability
10. Computer literacy.

If these are the demands, the logical question is : How do we identify them?. Here are some typical questions we can use to identify these abilities and capacities.

The ability to use information:

- * What do you feel are the critical and relevant issues with respect to your job?
- * What do you feel have been the major content changes in your job in the last year?

An emphasis on interpersonal skills:

- * What kind of presentations have you made to clients, associations and personnel within your last organization?.
- * What do you believe comprised one of your successful presentations?
- * What examples do you have of working effectively with others in previous organizations?
- * What examples do you have of the use of negotiating skills in previous assignments?

Marketing skills:

- * What examples do you have of managing an idea or issue through your previous assignment?
- * What were the strategies employed?
- * What were the roadblocks?
- * What did you learn from the experience?

Change Experience:

- * How did you experience change in your last assignment?
- * What role did you play in a change effort?
- * How did you feel about the change experience? How would you critique the process?
- * How do you feel you adjusted to change in the workplace? What examples amplify
- * Your views? What is an example of a creative idea you have contributed to the work environment?

Time Management:

- * What example would you use to illustrate your ability to manage work time?.
- * What do you feel are the key elements of successful time management?
- * Do you have example of situations in previous jobs that forced you to make judgments with regard to prioritizing issues and assignments?

The ability to be a team player:

- * What can you tell me about the business teams you have been on?
- * What were the cultural rules?
- * What did they value in doing business?
- * Did the environment promote company goals over unit needs?
- * Were the individuals encouraged to do more than expected?
- * What were the respective weights of the shareholders', customers' and employees' roles?

Knowing when to act and when to respond to direction:

- * Can you provide an overview of the various roles that interconnected with your last assignment?
- * How would you describe your span of control in your last assignment?
- * What criteria did you use when acting outside of normal operating guidelines?

Involvement:

- * What strategies did you employ when presenting sensitive work issues to your superiors? Peers? Subordinates?
- * What examples do you have of positive and constructive confrontation in your last assignment?
- * What would you do in establishing a comfortable operating environment with those working around you?

Personal accountability:

- * What mistakes do you feel you have made in previous assignments that provided a learning opportunity?
- * What examples do you have of receiving constructive criticism? Of receiving counterproductive criticism? How did you respond in both settings?
- * How would you define safe behavior? What would you do to eliminate risk aversion in the workplace?

Computer literacy:

- * What is your background with microcomputers?
- * Based on your experiences, what do you feel are the strongest barriers to effective use of this technology in the workplace?
- * Have you any first-hand experience in bringing about effective use of the micro-computer in a work setting?

3044 WHERE DO IDEAS COME FROM? When Nalley's Foods found out that Kraft was dropping its imitation mayonnaise, Nalley's came out with a similar product of its own in 9 days.

International Rubber, a small Louisville, Kentucky, company that now makes the most expensive radial tires on the market, sells through quality tire dealers who were piqued when Michelin abandoned its one-dealer-per-town franchise system.

3045 TRENDS AND POSSIBILITIES:

COMMUNICATORS: The United Methodist Church has begun using satellite communications for its 73 annual regional conferences. The satellite network, sponsored by the United Methodist Publishing House, will reduce money spent on travel and housing for conferences. The church also plans to use the satellite network to improve communications among its 13 seminaries.

Source: United Methodist News Service, P.O. Box 320, Nashville, Tennessee 37202

SLEEP-INDUCERS: A scented fabric that helps you go to sleep has been developed by a Japanese manufacturing firm. The material consists of a polyester fiber that is coated with more than 50 kinds of aromatic oils such as lavender. The fiber, which is used for both sheets and pillows, has a sweet smell that helps people to relax and sleep better. Unfortunately, the aroma only lasts a few months, and material is unwashable. The manufacturer, Mitsubishi Rayon Co., is looking for other ways to use the coated fiber.

Source: Look Japan, September 1987, Look Japan, Ltd., 2-2 Kanda-Ogawamachi, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101, Japan.

**ROBOTS
COMMUNICATING:**

Scientists are training robots to learn and to communicate with each other. Robots being developed at the Turing Institute in Glasgow, Scotland, will be able to program themselves automatically and react when things go wrong. The Institute's "Freddy 3" system can learn and modify its behaviour and can write its own programs by using its senses to evaluate critically what it has just done. The system can also communicate with other robots and humans with both gestures and speech, which the Institute labels "a major step toward narrowing the culture gap between humans and machines."

Source: The Turing Institute, George-House, 36 North Hanover Street, Glasgow G1 2 AD Scotland.

EMERGENCY CARE: Doctors are testing a computerized vest for emergency care of heart-attack victims. The vest rapidly inflates and deflates to rhythmically squeeze the chest and keep blood flowing to the stricken heart. The vests, developed at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, will require little training to operate and could be used by ambulance attendants, emergency personnel or family members of high-risk individuals.

Source: Cardiovascular Research Report, Summer 1987, American Heart Association, Health and Science News Division, 7320 Greenville Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75231.

3046 MANAGING JETLAGS: Jet lags are a modern reality. They can hurt us, if not properly managed.

An experiment conducted by British businessman David Morean in collaboration with NASA and TWA established that almost every body-system was disturbed by changes in time Zones:

- * Manual dexterity is impaired.
- * Soundness of judgement decreases by 20 per cent.
- * Reflexes are dulled.

People also become more volatile (especially if confronted by slight aggression soon after arrival), insomniac, forgetful, depressed to the point of paranoia, clumsy and susceptible to colds.

Adjusting to a new time scale itself takes time. Some sources suggest you need a full day's relaxation for every hour lost or gained.

In the absence of any effective remedy, all you can do is to minimize the risk of damage.

One expert suggests the following:

1. Choose the most sensible flights. Ideally, you should reach your destination in the early evening, in time for a shower, dinner and an early night. Try to do without sleeping pills.
2. Plan ahead. It helps to prepare for your destination by going to bed and getting up an hour earlier than usual, and adjusting your mean times to a newbody clock rhythm.
3. Don't fight to stay awake on the plane. Seven hours' sleep per day (however distributed) is a necessity for the average traveller.
4. It is not necessary to deny yourself alcohol completely, but go easy. One drink too many will worsen your jetlag.
5. Adjust yourself mentally to the time scale at your destination as soon as possible. Set your watch to the new time and think to yourself, 'Ah, it'll be lunchtime soon' even though your internal system is shouting that it's really 3 am. When you arrive, don't spend the first day reminding yourself of the time back home. There is, however, one exception to this rule:
6. **Don't take important decisions at times when you would normally be asleep. Travel, shifted time zones, and food at the 'wrong' time will have reduced your judgment. Delay making any business decisions until after your first proper night's sleep.**

3047 LAUGHING MATTER?

A man with a worried look on his face ran into a drug store and asked the druggist if he knew a way to stop the hiccoughs. Without any warning the druggist slapped him in the face. Amazed and angry, the young man demanded that the druggist explain his unusual behavior.

"Well," said the druggist, "you don't have the hiccoughs now, do you?"

"No," answered the young man, "but my wife out in the car still does."

3048 UKI: *Stands for Useful Knowledge and Information. We are introducing this feature because of a general reason and a specific one. The general reason is that useful knowledge and information does not come our way automatically. We have to make a special effort. The specific reason is that the benefit your Editor or his friends have derived should be yours too, ofcourse if it is relevant. In these columns, therefore, we will give details of likely useful items. In case you know of other items wherein you have personal beneficial experience, please do send in the details and we will be delighted to share them with the Readers.*

UKI: 001 WORTH SAVOURING: There is now a new marketing journal. Its name: HIGH TECHNOLOGY MAREKTING REVIEW, Address: 201 E. 50th St., New York, NY 10022. Subscription: \$12yr. Publishers: Random House.

In format and style, it reminds one of the Sloan Management Review. HTMR uses case histories, company profiles, and appraisals of strategic marketing approaches to give you insights into the world of high-tech marketing in which market creation, not capture of market share, is the key. Feature articles are backed up by departments such as "Emerging Companies." "High-Tech Marketing and the Law," "Global Scene," and "CEO forum," among others.

UKI: 002 VALUE FOR CONFERENCE MONEY: There are a few associations and conferences that give good value for your money.

One of them is The Institute of General Semantics (163 Engle Street Englewood, NJ 07631), Its Annual seminar-workshops and conferences are particularly valuable. This year the Introduction Seminar will be on July 12-15, the Comprehensive Seminar, July 15-26, the International Conference (celebrating the 50th Anniversary), July 27-31. All in the Conneticut area. Says their modest brochure:

As a participant, you will:

- * Restructure your critical thinking and evaluating ability
- * Increase your perceptual awareness and creative self-expression
- * Sharpen your communication skills and insights
- * Gain experience of modern scientific paradigms and how they can be applied in in your everyday life
- * Learn how to cope with uncertainty and fruitless controversy, and promote inner and other harmony.

UKI: 003 A PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP: worth considering is for the International Society for General Semantics. The address: PO Box 2469 San Francisco CA 94126-9951. Annual subscription: \$25.00.

Among your benefits as member: You receive the Society's quarterly, Et cetera containing

- * Significant articles exploring the role of symbols in human thought and behavior.
- * Training aids and techniques for stimulating general semantics insights in teaching and everyday life.
- * Feature on the mass media and folklore.
- * Verbal and nonverbal problems for readers.
- * Reviews and notes on timely books.

You receive the Society's little periodical 'Glimpse,' which touches, in a light way, on what people do with signs and symbols.

You receive a catalogue and other informative mailings to keep you posted on new general semantics material, most of which is available at a 20% discount to members.

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