



HUMANISE THE WORK- PLACE

Q&A



By Dr Michael Hoah

CREATING A CONDUCTIVE WORKPLACE

Q Although the company is doing well, we do not like the high level of stress we have to put up with to get the profitable results the management wants. Last-minute meetings, crazy deadlines, conflicts, and quarrels... all this cannot go on forever. We may look good in the eyes of customers and competitors, but we are actually "bad" behind the

scenes. We need to improve our work environment before something fatal happens. Can you offer some help here?

A There are two sides to your workplace situation. The upside is everyone is very result-oriented and willing to work hard to reach goals, while the downside is inefficiency which is the cause of the negative experiences everyone is getting. This is the area to work on.

In improving efficiency, one area to look at is reducing what is too much on your people's plates. If it is merely to save cost, then you need to ask yourself whether it is worth pursuing at the expense of your people's well-being and the loss of the human touch. Seriously, if you can afford the additional expense, it is worthwhile to humanise the workplace a little more for a better quality of life. Sooner or later your people will not be able to take the strain, with many leaving for a better life elsewhere. However, sometimes it is not always about having additional manpower but a case of shortening the work process, throwing out unnecessary work, or delegating some tasks to others. Think hard about how you can enhance the processes in your organisation.

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What is the desired workplace you want for your organisation?
- What is the state of your workplace now?
- What needs to change for this to be a reality?
- What challenges need to be overcome for this to happen?

DEVELOPING THE 'MIND SUPERVISOR' INSIDE YOU

Q People have been telling me I interrupt them too much when they are speaking. Some even say I talk more about myself than about the other person. I somewhat sense they are telling me indirectly that I can be irritating and arrogant. This is worrying as I am now a senior manager where good communication skills are very important because I have to interact with more people now than before. What strategies do I need to adopt?

A It is less about improving your communication skills which is the easier part and more about managing your inner self which has a lot to do with your self-image and value system which is more challenging that requires special effort.

Working on the internal side requires developing the "mind supervisor" in you where you attain "in-the-moment" awareness each time you fall out of line in your conversations with people. This will help you gain immediate self-realisation of your actions to quickly fix things. Developing this requires space for yourself to reflect on your actions. In the beginning, your awareness will be limited to knowing your wrongdoings after you have communicated with them. But over time, you will be able to know this even before the action takes place. So spend quiet time with yourself to connect with yourself better. You may also want to consider doing some kind of self-journaling where you record what has happened to yourself in conversations as another way to develop and strengthen your "mind supervisor".

POWERFUL QUESTIONS

- What do you want people to take away after a conversation with you?
- What results are you getting now?
- What can change the results for the better?
- What do you want to be self-aware about?

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