

Management Skills & Competencies

Make yourself **valuable!**

Evaluate Career Situations

What Would You Do?

1. Putting Down Seniors

While standing on line at the office coffee machine, you overhear the person in front of you saying this to his friend: "I'm really tired of having to deal with the old-timers in here. It's time for them to call it quits. There's no way they can keep up the pace and handle all the new technology we're getting these days." You can listen and forget, or you can listen and act. What would you do or say here, and why? What does this comment suggest regarding age-based attributions of technology personality?

2. Compulsive Co-worker

You've noticed that one of your co-workers is always rushing, always uptight, and constantly criticizing herself while on the job. She never takes breaks when the rest of you do, and even at lunch it's hard to get her to stay and just talk for a while. Your guess is that she's fighting stressors from some sources other than work and the job itself. How can you help her out? What might you say?

3. Bad Mood in the Office

Your department head has just told you that some of your teammates have complained to him that you have been in a really bad mood lately. They like you and point out that this isn't characteristic of you at all. But, they also think your persistent bad mood is rubbing off on others in this situation. What can you do? Is there anything your supervisors or co-workers might do to help you get out of your funk?

Reflect on the Self-Assessment

Self-Monitoring

Instructions

Indicate your agreement with the following statements by circling the value that aligns with your belief. For example, if you believe that a statement is always false, circle the 0 next to that statement.⁷⁹

5 = Certainly, always true

4 = Generally true

3 = Somewhat true, but with exceptions

2 = Somewhat false, but with exceptions

1 = Generally false

0 = Certainly, always false

- | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. In social situations, I have the ability to alter my behavior if I feel that something else is called for. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 2. I am often able to read people's true emotions correctly through their eyes. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 3. I have the ability to control the way I come across to people, depending on the impression I wish to give them. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. In conversations, I am sensitive to even the slightest change in the facial expression of the person I'm conversing with. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

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|--|-------------|--|
| 5. My powers of intuition are quite good when it comes to understanding others' emotions and motives. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | <p><i>My job will be satisfying when it—</i></p> <p>(a) is respected by other people.</p> <p>(b) encourages continued development of knowledge and skills.</p> |
| 6. I can usually tell when others consider a joke in bad taste, even though they may laugh convincingly. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | <p>(c) provides job security.</p> <p>(d) provides a feeling of accomplishment.</p> <p>(e) provides the opportunity to earn a high income.</p> |
| 7. When I feel that the image I am portraying isn't working, I can readily change it to something that does. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | <p>(f) is intellectually stimulating</p> <p>(g) rewards good performance with recognition.</p> <p>(h) provides comfortable working conditions.</p> |
| 8. I can usually tell when I've said something inappropriate by reading the listener's eyes. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | <p>(i) permits advancement to high administrative responsibility.</p> |
| 9. I have trouble changing my behavior to suit different people and different situations. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | |
| 10. I have found that I can adjust my behavior to meet the requirements of any situation I find myself in. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | |
| 11. If someone is lying to me, I usually know it at once from that person's manner of expression. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | |
| 12. Even when it might be to my advantage, I have difficulty putting up a good front. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | |
| 13. Once I know what the situation calls for, it is easy for me to regulate my actions accordingly. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 | |

Instructions

Form into groups as designated by your instructor. The group should be split by gender into two subgroups—one composed of men and one composed of women. Each group should first rank the items on their own. Then, the men should develop a consensus ranking of the items as they think women ranked them, and the women should do a consensus ranking of the items as they think men ranked them. The two subgroups should then get back together to share and discuss their respective rankings, paying special attention to reasons for the rankings attributed to the opposite gender group. A spokesperson for the men and for the women in each group should share their subgroup's rankings and highlights of the total group discussion with the class.

Scoring

Scoring

Add the circled numbers except for 9 and 12. These are reverse-scored and you should add them into your total using these conversions: 5 = 0, 4 = 1, 3 = 2, 2 = 3, 1 = 4, 0 = 5. High self-monitoring is indicated by scores above 53.

Interpretation

This instrument offers an indication of your awareness of how you are being perceived by others and their reactions to your behavior in social situations. Persons with a high self-monitoring score tend to be quite aware of their public persona—the impression that they are leaving others with. They can use their ability to self-monitor to create a favorable social impression. Their behavior tends to change to match the demands of the situation. Persons with a low self-monitoring score, by contrast, are less aware of the impact that their words, actions, and expressions are having on others. They tend to maintain a fairly consistent self-presentation style and manner, regardless of their audience or the circumstances.

Contribute to the Class Exercise

Job Satisfaction Preferences

Preparation

Rank the following items for how important (1 = least important to 9 = most important) they are to your future job satisfaction.⁷⁵

the women in each group should share their subgroup's rankings and highlights of the total group discussion with the class.

Optional Instructions

Form into groups consisting entirely of men or women. Each group should meet and decide which of the work values members of the opposite sex will rank first. Do this again for the work value ranked last. The reasons should be discussed, along with the reasons why each of the other values probably was not ranked first or last. A spokesperson for each group should share group results with the rest of the class.

Manage a Critical Incident

Facing Up to Attributions

You are the senior section manager for a medium-sized manufacturing firm producing high-tech digital devices. You've worked with this company for 8 years and supervise teams of materials engineers. As senior manager, you manage these teams, keep them working together effectively, and find ways to cut costs and increase profits. Because of recent government regulations, your manufacturing processes have undergone substantial changes. The firm has had to hire outside consultants to help with the manufacturing transition. The consultants have been tasked with training the engineers on the new protocol and evaluating their performance, which has declined substantially since the transition. Although historically the engineers have been very productive and received high performance evaluations, this last quarter the majority received poor evaluations and has been formally reprimanded by upper management. You have also been reprimanded for the reduced performance. The consultants have attributed the performance declines

ethics > KNOW RIGHT FROM WRONG

Is Personality Testing in Your Future?



© Rob Wilkinson/Alamy Limited

Dear [your name goes here]:

I am very pleased to invite you to a second round of screening interviews with our firm. Your on-campus session with our representative went very well, and we would like to consider you further for a full-time position. Please contact me to arrange a visit date. We will need a full day. The schedule will include several meetings with executives and your potential team members, as well as a round of personality tests.

> *If you want the job, take the personality test.*

Thank you again for your interest in working with our firm. I look forward to meeting you during the next step in our recruiting process.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Human Resource Director

Getting a letter like this is great news. It serves as confirmation of your hard work and performance in college. You obviously made a good first impression. But have you thought about the whole “personality test” thing? What do you know about personality tests and how they are used for employment screening? Some people might even consider their use to be an invasion of personal privacy.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What are the ethical issues associated with personality testing? What responsibilities does an employer have if these tests are being used to make selection or promotion decisions? Should your employer be required to have data showing that personality tests actually predict key areas of employees’ performance on the job? Just when is personality testing inappropriate and an invasion of privacy? How should all these issues be handled by a job candidate as in the case just presented?

> "You can decide you're going to be happy today . . . the little things in life are the big things."

Little Things Are Big Things at Life Is Good



Erick Jacobs/The New York Times/Redux Pictures

Imagine! Yes, you can! Go for it! Life is good. We'll make that: Life is really good! These are the kinds of thoughts that can help turn your dreams into reality. They're also part and parcel of a multimillion-dollar company that really *is* named Life is Good.

It all began with two brothers—Bert and John Jacobs—making T-shirts for street sales. Picture a card table set up at a Boston street fair and two young brothers setting out 48 T-shirts printed with a smiling face—Jake—and the words "Life is good." Then picture the cart empty, with all of the shirts sold for \$10 apiece, and the two brothers happily realizing they *might*—just might—have come up with a viable business idea.

From that modest beginning, Bert—Chief Executive Optimist—and John—Chief Creative Optimist—built a company devoted to humor and humility. John says: "It's important that we're saying 'Life is good,' not 'Life is great' or 'Life is perfect'; there's a big difference. . . . Don't determine that you're going to be happy when you get the new car or the big promotion or meet that special person. You can decide that you're going to be happy today." According to Bert: "The little things in life are the big things." That's the message of the Life Is Good brand.

How did the two brothers turn their belief in happiness and that life is good into a successful firm? They didn't start with business degrees or any real experience. They developed their business with good instincts, creativity, and a very positive view on life. They stuck to their values while learning about business as their firm grew. They still live the brand while enjoying leisure pursuits like kayaking and ultimate Frisbee. They also support philanthropic enterprises like Camp Sunshine for children with serious illnesses and Playmakers for traumatized children.

FIND THE INSPIRATION

Bert and John Jacobs built a successful company with a positive message and approach to life that has an almost universal appeal. Just how far can positive thinking carry these entrepreneurs? Does there come a point where continuing to build and expand a business requires systematic, professional management approaches and tactics? How about us, personally? Is there more to be gained by looking for positives than negatives in our everyday experiences and relationships with others? What about when it comes to our own lives—your life—who's in charge of the "good" factor?

analysis > MAKE DATA YOUR FRIEND

> Managers don't have a good handle on the real costs incurred when employees are rude and disrespectful toward one another.

Paying a High Price for Incivility at Work



© Ariel Skelley/Corbis

Look for losses in the bottom line when rudeness rules the workplace. Most managers say they are against incivility and try to stop it whenever they can. But it's also the case that managers don't

have a good handle on the real costs incurred when employees are rude and disrespectful toward one another. When researchers asked 800 workers from different industries about how they responded when exposed to incivility at work, results showed:

- 48% decreased work effort
- 47% cut back time spent at work
- 80% lost work time due to worry
- 63% performed less well
- 78% were less committed to the organization
- 25% took frustration out on customers

YOUR THOUGHTS?

How about it, have you been on the receiving end of incivility? Is incivility taking a toll on the teams and organizations in your life? Is improved civility a hidden pathway to higher performance in our workplaces? How can such improvements be achieved? Are you, for one, ready to put your best foot forward?