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Those Rude and Unfair Customers!

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Editorial

Mark Stanarevic
Editor-in-chief, InfoLeader Magazine

Welcome to the October 2003 edition of InfoLeader Magazine.

Where is the direction of Information Technology employment heading? More recently there has been increased outsourcing overseas, job losses and uncertainty. These are some of the questions that are passing through the minds of many IT professional's at the moment. Fortunately, we have some answers. Based upon our research which includes interviews with leaders and recruitment agents, we are starting to see part of the hologram emerging. This months feature article with ANZ Chief Operating Officer David Boyles and also Darren Taylor indicate part of the requisite skills that IT professionals will need to engage in to survive the current climate and capitalize on future trends. Adaptation and flexibility are the key terms and the methods of adapting to new economic and working climates indicate that there is a knowledge and behavioral component inherent in becoming successful in this transition.

We also bring you powerful information to deal with different personalities in the workplace as well the power structures inherent within teams and how to utilize different forms of power. We are also pleased to have an article by the world famous business trainer John LaValle in relation to handling difficult customers. Each one of our articles is focused on delivering substance so that you can implement the knowledge into action and obtain measurable value in your enterprise.

Next month we will feature articles on Knowledge Engineering, career changes, high profile executive interviews and more special techniques at your disposal.

The hologram is becoming clearer and we are noticing the future of the InfoLeader is bright. Dead are the days of the techo in the corner churning away. Companies want leaders skilled at technology who understand business process and who deliver value. To do this is easier said and done. It involves a personal journey and transformation involving total focus and commitment in this endeavor. Our mission at InfoLeader is to take you through that journey and help you obtain the knowledge and behavioral skills to succeed. Here at InfoLeader we believe that success is not an endpoint but a journey.

Interview with ANZ Banking Group Chief Operating Officer David Boyles

InfoLeader had the pleasure of speaking to technology visionary David Boyles recently.

Q. David, you are well known in the management circles as having a competency in efficiently linking IT strategy with core business strategic goals, especially with the e-transformation initiatives that you have instigated at American Express and ANZ. What methodologies and beliefs have helped you succeed in this cause and selling it to the business units?

A. What I have found is I have great strengths in technology as well as business. Having the combination of these skills allows me to understand the value of technology and its role in business. Bearing this in mind it allows me to be able to leverage technology in the enterprise appropriately and at a faster pace.

Q. What do you see as the next logical evolution to e-commerce and how should business leaders be preparing?

A. I believe that leaders need to look at opportunities that the Internet has provided for. The infrastructure investments Internet enabled efforts have resulted in allow firms to be more adaptive and scalable. Technologies such as SOAP and REST allow opportunities for enterprises to communicate business transactions using a common protocol. E-commerce is more than a web page but a whole new way that an organization conducts its internal and external processes including how it interfaces with clients and suppliers.

Q. Many organizations have been creating Centres of Excellence and for a while ANZ had an E-commerce

Centre of Excellence. How has the use of such an organizational structure helped ANZ to become more adaptive to the demands of the consumers?

A. Centres of excellence allow a concentrated effort on a specific area of skill with like-minded professionals. ANZ has used such centres to expedite the delivery of critical web enabled banking applications and services so that our consumers can benefit.

> *"Projects need a strong sponsor. It is integral for projects that involve a change in the organizations processes and culture to include change management as a priority."*

Q. What in your opinion David are the critical factors that are needed to help lay the ground for a successful process improvement project in an organization?

A. All relevant stakeholders need to be involved with a strong emphasis on shaping behaviour towards the end goals of the project. We encourage our staff to participate and grow in endeavours that allow the improvement of processes with various initiatives already in place.

Q. ANZ recently had implemented a very large scale ERP project on record time and on reasonable budget, whilst in the IT industry we hear of many other organizations having delays and huge budget blowouts. What has been the key for ANZ's success with this project implementation?

A. We had a situation at ANZ where we had a number financial systems which were distributed across a number of different systems including multiple Charts of Account. We had a prime reason for moving to a newer and consolidated

system so we can streamline our resources as well as leverage from the latest market offerings. We chose an ERP package , Peoplesoft and decided to implement this on a Wintel platform (Microsoft Windows 2000 Servers and Intel based processor machines).

The implementation of such a system on a flexible architecture allowed us to implement this system in record time as well as reduce our TCO.

Q. *Where do you see the future of IT and the employment of professionals with the outsourcing trend?*

A. I can see the employment market dropping off for traditional roles such as the typical administrator and product specialist. This is due to the changing nature of development efforts as well as the consolidation of infrastructure, thin client implementations and demand. There will be more focus on integrating components across the enterprise as components become more prevalent and standard. The IT professional who is adapt at component integration as well as understanding the underlying business processes organizations need to work with will become a more valuable resource.

The Importance of Ongoing Education

Darren Taylor
Recruitment Consultant

Darren Taylor is a Senior Consultant with Peoplebank Australia and has over 10 years IT recruitment experience.
The views expressed here are his own personal views and do not necessarily represent the views of Peoplebank.

It is an often asked question in the recruitment process: "How important are formal qualifications?". The answer has generally been that relevant experience is more important than pure qualifications. However qualifications, or the lack thereof, is becoming increasingly used as a means of qualifying or disqualifying candidates from the recruitment process. As discussed in the previous article if we look at and analyse the reasons for this they are fairly obvious i.e. there is generally a large number of candidates for most roles, and most recruiters or managers are looking for an easy way to reduce the size of the shortlist.

But aside from the pure recruitment process, there are also a number of other reasons that ongoing education is important for any professional and also for the companies for which they work or provide services.

For those not working, the most obvious reason for ongoing education is to keep your skills and knowledge relevant and also as an opportunity to network with other professionals. In particular if you have been out of work for an extended period of time it is an indication of your commitment to your career that you have continued to learn throughout your time off. About 12 months ago I was recruiting for a number of graduate technical positions, and a quite senior ex-mainframe developer rang me and wanted to apply for the role. This role was for a company that wanted very pro-active, self managing consultants, even if they were inexperienced. This particular candidate had been out of work for over 12 months and wanted to apply – the first question I asked him was about the level of self-education he had undertaken while he wasn't working. The answer he gave was that he was waiting for an opportunity to arise so that the company could educate him. Needless to say he didn't make the shortlist.

In the Financial Review recently, there was a detailed analysis on the IT industry based on profitability and revenue growth for listed IT companies. The outcome was that the industry is still expected to face a tough time for the rest of the financial year at least, and there are sure to be ongoing redundancies and restricted budgets, which will affect recruitment for new positions and for ongoing education. This and the fact that many middle management positions have become redundant over the past three years which has decreased the amount of time that management can afford to career management with each of their staff, means it is increasingly important for professionals to manage their own career.

From an organizational perspective it is commonly considered that the ideal level of staff turnover is between 5% and 10% per year. In the current market, most organisations are either losing people and not replacing them or some staff are not leaving. There seem to be a shortage of alternative roles in the market – less than 20% of roles are filled by candidates transferring directly from other roles. Therefore, the main way to introduce new ideas into an organization is not by staff turnover, but by ongoing industry-related education and training. The other consideration is that when redundancies do arrive, who is going to be made redundant? Alternatively, who is more marketable and therefore more likely to pick up another role sooner? Obviously, the person with the more recent, relevant education is in a better position to get a job sooner and will also generally be paid more.

Some other trends that we are seeing is that for the last 10 years it has been increasingly rare for new entrants into the industry to be unqualified. As these entrants mature and compete with more experienced candidates education becomes an increased differentiator. Therefore it is important for professionals not only to be able to do their job but to be seen to be passionate and genuinely professional in progressing their career and growing their capability by ongoing education.

The other trend is the increasing level of outsourcing of base level tasks to external companies that can provide the service cheaper. There is a theory that the IT industry is becoming "mature" and many skills are becoming a "commodity". It entertains that the days of generally highly paid employees with considerable pay rises have finished and that the industry has entered a period of controlled, slow growth where salaries and budgets will closely reflect the wider market. Various large Australian companies do a proportion of their software development tasks off-shore. For each of us to remain relevant and to have some chance

of having our salaries increase as we have become used to in the past we must be able to provide better service, better business benefit and more value add to our clients. Specialist qualifications that teach industry and world best practice is one of the best ways of doing this – consulting companies have been differentiating themselves by doing this for years. Qualifications such as MBA, specialist project management or technical qualifications and certifications or adding a business oriented qualification to existing IT qualifications is where things are going now and in the foreseeable future.

Those Rude & Unfair Customers!

John La Valle MBA

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Every now and then, we, like you, get those rude and sometimes even unfair customers. Maybe you messed up, maybe you didn't. Maybe someone else in your organization messed up and you're the one who answered the phone. In any case, you now have an irate, and also rude, customer, perhaps even bordering on abusive.

Well there are a few things to keep in mind. One is that you have a certain customer philosophy that is (hopefully) ingrained in your business. You may have the modus operandi that taking care of your customer always takes priorities, and that means that even if you're working on other things that you STOP, and give the customer your attention.

Also keep in mind that, just because they are being negative, you don't have to be. It's contagious, so don't let it be. You also do NOT need to be defensive, either. Doing either of these communicates that it is the customer who *is* the problem, not that the irate customer *has* a problem that needs to be solved. (And while it may seem that they *are* the problem, doesn't allow for the solving of the problem easily.)

You do want to attend to the customer and do what you can to salvage the relationship, etc. (Some people have asked me if there are times when I'd just like to tell these customers where to go and then ignore them and my response is, "Yes!" But that doesn't mean I do it. We still want to find ways that we can keep that customer, and so that we can discover new ways that we can teach others!)

Whenever we get someone who is rude, unfair, etc. we remember that there is the possibility that this is the only choice they may believe they have and are used to getting their way in this manner. And so we have another opportunity to educate, to teach new choices.

> *"You may have the modus operandi that taking care of your customer always takes priorities, and that means that even if you're working on other things that you STOP, and give the customer your attention."*

Problems, just like everything else that's "presented" by people, exist in the present time: NOW! That's what to deal with. You can't change the past, only the way it's remembered, can't change the future, but can influence it based on what you do NOW! in the present! So, when going for a solution, ask the following, "What do you want right now?", or some form of that. Other suggestions are, "So, what is it that we can do right now to resolve this?" "What can I do right now to make this right?"

Now most people will say to me, "John, you're crazy. If I ask them, they may come up with something ridiculous!" My response to this: they're right on both points! However, think about it this way: They are not focusing on any solution, just the problem, which has them well fired up. As soon as you ask them the question, it redirects their attention to where they weren't. It also communicates to them that you are attempting to *solve* the problem, which is really why they called to begin with. And in addition, if they had some solution in mind anyway, why not find out what it is, rather than coming up with all your own scenarios and getting them even more frustrated because it doesn't match what they want anyway? Once you have a response, now you are into a new operation, one where you can either give them what they want, or negotiate something in the event you can't give them what they want.

But at least you have a point to start negotiating from.

Will you get those unreasonable people who are irate, unfair, and everything else? Count on it. To us, they really aren't problems. They are opportunities. After all, if you can keep them, you can keep anyone! And your business will THRIVE!

Beyond eCommerce: the Next Wave

George Vlachodimitropoulos

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George Vlachodimitropoulos is a Director of Instream, which is an eBusiness consulting firm. Instream offers a wide range of services relating to the integration of the Internet and associated protocols within a corporate environment to deliver business value.

The Internet has had a profound affect on many organizations and the technology industry as a whole. Therefore it is vital that CIOs and senior managers understand the future impact that eBusiness will have on their organizations'. This article looks at the transformation companies will have to go through from eCommerce to eBusiness. This is the first of a collection of articles looking at the topic of eBusiness.

eCommerce to eBusiness

Organizations will need to move from simply offering eCommerce to structurally changing their organization to embracing eBusiness. eCommerce is generally considered as the buying and selling of goods and services over the internet. eBusiness is the digitisation of not only the organizations operations from an external but internal perspective as well. Furthermore it includes the operations that cross over both these two perspectives. Therefore including operations such as; training, supply chain management and relationship management.

There are a number of organizations that have been able to transform themselves and digitising their operations. Thus allowing business process that span from their suppliers through to their customers to be interlinked via the internet or other electronic means. There are three key reasons why these companies have been able to successfully achieve this feat. These are as follows: the right architecture in place, the right people and a close alignment of eBusiness and the goals of the organization.

Companies need to have the right architecture place. This means that the current technology infrastructure has to be properly in place and managed. It does not matter what vendor products have been used as long as they are properly integrated. What is vital is that they conform to Internet standards such as TCP/IP, HTTP and XML. These protocols allow organizations to access data and information systems in a flexible manner.

An organization wanting to transform itself from offering eCommerce to embracing eBusiness requires the right people to be utilised. These individuals exist both within and external to an organization. The internal people are vital because they have a feel on the pulse of the organization. Furthermore they have a grasp on the tacit knowledge that exists that can not be explicitly documented about an organization. External consultants are also required to assist an organizations transformation. This is because they bring the vital industry based knowledge that is key in delivering a successful outcome.

The last vital ingredient required to transform an organization is the close alignment of eBusiness to the company's goals. Senior management needs to determine what the goals of the organization are. This may be to increase sales, increase process efficiency and so forth. From this point senior management will need to determine what business projects need to be undertaken to support these goals. This could be a review of business processes in a particular area where efficiency gains could be made. After this is determined the direction of a company's eBusiness strategy can be outlined. This is because the business projects that have been earmarked can be used to set out what business activities need to be digitised. Therefore allowing the eBusiness direction to support the strategic thrust of the organization. Predicting what is going to happen in the field of I.T is a mugs game. You would probably have better luck at the track or the casino than trying to figure out the trends, ebb and flow, and if I dare say 'moods' of the I.T sector. Innovative thinking and innovative litigation have both played a major role in how the sector has developed itself and in-turn tells us what we must use for our I.T needs. Cynical? Hell yeah, who isn't these days.

Fact Points

Check list for moving from eCommerce to eBusiness:
- the right architecture
- the right people
- eBusiness closely aligned to the goals of the organization

The Future of I.T. Personnel

Skeeve Stevens

General manager, United IP
Internet Visionary and famous ex-hacker

Universities in I.T

I believe that the I.T sector would slowly fall over and collapse if the number of people doing I.T at universities started to fall in some key critical areas. Although, I do firmly believe that it is more a case of Quality than Quantity. Do 'medium' skilled jobs such as Network Administrators; Unix Systems Administrators; Web Designers; PHP/mySQL or Visual Basic programmers; 1st level or perhaps a 3rd level Helpdesk guys need a degree to be successful in their jobs? No, they don't.

The above positions, while not needing a degree to be a vehicle for a successful career, are likely to account for about 85% of your I.T human resources. There are some areas in I.T that a university education is imperative: Systems Analysts, High level Network Engineers, Hardware and Software Engineering. Also some of the higher level programming and design professions definitely require a structured teaching environment and specialised training in areas such as mathematics, physics, programming and design theory. I.T management in corporations, especially at the level of CIO should have the appropriate business degree or other recognised management training.

I.T Certification has been replacing the need for a university degree over the last couple of years, although having both certification and a degree will give candidates an edge. I do think that certification alone is all that is required for a pretty solid and well paying career in the I.T sector. The teaching at universities is also getting more current and relevant because they have been forging alliances with industry leaders like Cisco and Microsoft in which they have developed state of the art teaching labs which have resulted in degrees with bonus I.T certifications such as CCNA. While I.T degrees have become less relevant over

> *"Your enterprise will be able to get younger kids who have been educated earlier who may well be a little Cisco wiz on paper, but just how well-adjusted will these kids be to the pressures and stress of the demanding I.T world?"*

the past couple of years, the universities making these alliances with big businesses are going to help give their vanilla I.T degrees a new lease on life.

Smart Schools

The effect of 'Smart Schools' on the education of today's youth and on the I.T sector itself is going to be quite significant. Cisco, Microsoft and now RedHat are setting themselves up in high schools around the world looking for the I.T prodigies of the future. In Australia, at some of these 'Academy' schools, you can choose HSC subjects which results in you completing high school not only with the HSC but also some I.T certification such as an MCSE, CCNA or RHCE. Most of these academies have formed a relationship with a local TAFE college and students also can receive not just I.T certification; but also Certificates and Associate Diplomas. I think this is only the beginning of this trend where high schools are starting to take on some of the areas of I.T education that is currently performed by the Higher Education system and the commercial I.T training sector. More kids -learning more – earlier.

Kids with Certification

Is a 17 or 18 year old with certification good news? Well, personally I think it is a double edged sword that in some ways might do more harm than good. Your enterprise will be able to get younger kids who have been educated earlier who may well be a little Cisco wiz on paper, but just how well-adjusted will these kids be to the pressures and stress of the demanding I.T world? If we are going to look at hiring on these kids then we are going to have to carefully evaluate their needs and our needs as they learn to fit into the corporate world. I am no HR expert, but as General Manager of an ISP, I know that if you don't carefully consider the welfare of your employees, with

extra attention to the younger ones, then over time that it will cost you dearly when they breakdown.

Taking 17-18 year olds straight from school with a CCNA might be an attractive option to get qualified young staff at a good price, but here are some things to consider:

- Little or no experience working in an office/corporate environment.
- No experience of the stress, demands and pressure of the workplace.
- Lack of interpersonal skills – working in teams especially.
- Time/Project Management skills – not hard to get, but hard to absorb for someone with no way of relating to what they are being taught.
- No actual experience doing the job required – currently is it all academic knowledge only. They have no idea of the effects of most of what they know on a live network.
- Cross-Platform is becoming the norm – what else can they do?
- Having very little exposure to the I.T workplace to really know what they want to be doing. Having a CCNA might be nice enough, but how can an 18yo really know that the certification they did through school is what they want to be specialising in.

I will add one final note about 'Smart Kids' though. There will be those exceptional kids who simply were born to amaze. I have been told about one of the year 12 kids at one of our School customers who are a Cisco Academy. This guy is apparently a wiz and the Sydney Cisco TAC love this guy and he seems to have a huge future ahead of him. Hopefully there will be more and more kids like this one to come.

Cross Platform

I have a CCIE friend who has been looking for work for over a year now. He is not amazing, but he is pretty decent – I know that I call him regularly for help. He has spent a LOT of money and time obtaining his CCIE and now that he has attained his dream, he is finding out the fact that he has focused on one specific area, disregarding Unix or the MS world has turned out to be a negative for him. Almost all the job advertisements require CCIE's to have other skills, whether it be Microsoft or Unix or other Networking hardware vendor skills.

To the corporate world, having a flexible employee who can work in a couple of different roles is very much more valuable than a guy who can only focus on one area – the more you know the better your "value proposition" is going to be and the more money you can ask for. These days when I am interviewing staff I am looking at all the areas they have skills in, and if they currently don't have a certain skill I am looking for, I find out if there are any other areas they are interested in getting into. There is nothing more of a turn off to me than someone saying they only want to play with Cisco, or they are Unix specialist and will never touch Microsoft. These guys just get shown the door. As an employer I am looking at the entire package and "flexibility" and the candidates "value proposition" are the most important things for me.

Security Staff

Where to start? Firstly, you are not going to find these guys coming out of Uni – not for a while yet at least – unless they have been thrown out ;-). Hot security personnel which 'have a clue' are born, rarely made. Many people working in the field of security currently have got there because they were already in the I.T game doing something else such as systems or network administration and when security became a hot issue. They were delegated the role of looking after security and developed their skill range from there. Most of the time you will find these guys are sadly lacking in many areas.

The same goes for most of the current people in law enforcement. They were regular cops until a role needed to be filled (or crime occurred) and they either volunteered or got assigned the job. More funding and access to joint intelligence from international law enforcement does give these guys an extreme edge. Organizations like ISS's X-Force are commercial 'grey-hats' who work for governments and corporations filling in where they don't have the expertise to defend themselves or perform forensic work. The best way to describe these guys are as 'guns for hire' or mercenaries (perhaps with a good edge).

A guy I know went from finishing a university I.T degree (with an Infosec specialty) straight into the security department of one of Australia's top 4 banks – great… but with no experience in the "dark arts of computer security" it meant there was a lot of further training required before he was actually much use to the bank.

Recent corporate computer security training fads such as 'extreme hacking' and alike are becoming very popular with the big accounting firms where they arrange a so-called 'expert hacker' type to train others in hacking methods and techniques (mostly quite out of date). It's not that these courses are bad, it is just they cost a lot (thousands of dollars per day) for very little real knowledge. In reality, academic theory doesn't give you much if you don't have the innate ability of computer security. I believe that you have to have the desire; perspective; be able to see through the eyes of; and think like a hacker to be able to beat a hacker – you need to

have walked the darker side before being able to walk in the light of corporate security world successfully.

Is it worth employing a (reformed?) hacker to work for your enterprise? Well, I think is a very similar case to employing kids with certification. They are often un-disciplined and for the most part do not really fit into the corporate mold. But in the opinion of this reformed hacker, it is a lot easier to fit the hacker into the corporate world than putting the hacking/security ability into the corporate I.T guy. Hacker types are relatively honourable and they quickly learn who is helping them buy their toys. Some boutique – how do I refer to them for fearing offending them by calling them I.T Recruiters, perhaps something more the neutral such as 'Security Recruitment Consultants' would be less offensive ;-) Anyway, there is one agency I know of in Sydney called 'Xpand IT' (www.xpand.biz) which has a specific focus in the security area – finding people for roles which are perhaps a little indefinable, and placing people who are hard to define into roles that perhaps best fit them. These types of recruiters treat candidates as though they are actually a person and work closely with the employer/client to best fulfil their needs – but these guys are few and far between.

There is a lot to say on this subject, for and against, so will leave it for a future article where we look more closely at the advantages and disadvantages of employing ex-hackers in your enterprise.

I.T Recruitment Agencies

Would I offend anyone if I started out with the word 'Clueless'? These guys simply match a bunch of requirements that an employer gives them against a list of certifications and education that the applicants (say they) have. These days it is painfully obvious that many of the certifications that people have might as well have fallen out of a box of cereal.

Most I.T recruitment agencies are sadly out of date with the I.T world, not understanding new technologies or products till long after it has been available. When I was looking for a new job a couple of years ago, the half dozen agencies I talked to had no idea what a RedHat Certified Engineer (RHCE) was. Not only that but most of them didn't even know how to open my PDF resume.

Recently Microsoft reviewed its entire MCSE certification stream for Windows 2000 in an attempt to weed out all the 'paper' MCSE's out there. In I.T certification a bit of paper saying you can do the work, doesn't mean you can. One company I was working at a couple of years ago had an MCSE in the accounts department – the guy would be lucky if he knew where the 'any' key was ;-) Both RedHat and Cisco, along with security certification CISSP sit at the top of the best certifications available today. These certifications are more practical than theory and challenge you to perform actual scenarios and use problem solving skills to be able to pass your exams.

The Moral

Well, a couple of things I would like to point out in relation to I.T human resources. Those outdated employers who look at a resume and immediately dismiss anyone without a degree – you are doing your enterprise a great disservice. There is a great deal of top notch cutting else people with amazing ideas out there who have trained themselves and then gone on to get certification (but more often not even bothered with certification exams). These people are often the exact thing enterprises need in the quickly changing I.T world. They are (most of the time) more up-to-date with technology than the bosses who manage them.

The final word on Smart Schools and the certified kids they will be churning out is: be careful. You can cause as much damage to them as they can do to your enterprise if not looked after very carefully. These are kids, not seasoned contractors. But, get some good kids early on and grow them and they will help change you enterprise for the better.

They say I.T jobs will be shed over the next couple of years. I still don't quite understand why. It is hard to get rid of the people who build and support your networks. Networks are getting bigger and more involved needing more people to run them. Jobs may be moving around, such as to outsourcers or contractors, but I don't think that the number of jobs will be going down too much.

Now if we are talking about I.T executives, well then there may be a valid statement to make. There are a lot of people in I.T management which are quite clueless about the actual technology they are implementing as well as understanding the staff the are managing. The middle management needs to thin out considerably. The techies need to move up the line, get management training and breath life and experience into the decision making process of enterprises.

The Power and Influence of a Quality Action Team

George Ambrose

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Reflection

A quality action team (QAT) was formed to identify and implement a number of improvements between application releases. This team was made up of non-executive project members from different functional teams. An analyst was made responsible for the process of organising and facilitating the meetings.

Over a six-week period, through a series of meetings, the team identified 24 improvement opportunities and 25 suggested solutions. Of the solutions only nine were implemented.

Conceptualisation

Six different sources of power have been identified. Authority power, or power stemming from ones position in the hierarchy. Expertise power, power derived from ones training, qualification or experience. Task allocation power, or power that comes from the importance of the particular tasks or functions that a person carries out. Information power, that is power that stems from the communications and interactions with others and knowledge of what is 'going on'. Coalition power which stems from working closely with other groups. And referent power that comes from identification with or attraction to, a person.

These different sources of power can be used in a number of influencing strategies.[1] The table below identifies, describes and aligns with the appropriate power source these influencing strategies.

Implementation

The sources of power available to the QAT were;

■ Information power due to the cross-functional make

Influencing Strategy	Description	Type of Power
Exchange	Offering a trade for their support for your way of thinking.	authority, information, expert
Pressure and legitimating (pulling rank)	The use of ones status within the organization to encourage others to your way of thinking.	authority, task allocation
Rational Persuasion	Using the power of logic to influence others into your way of thinking.	information, expert
Personal and Inspirational Appeal	Targeting others' feelings or emotions in order to communicate your way of thinking.	referent power
Consultation	Using your decision-making responsibility to involve others in decisions.	authority, task allocation
Coalition and Ingratiation (using liaisons)	Using ones alignment with powerful others to lend credit to ones way of thinking.	coalition

up of the team the QAT members were made aware of the activities of the other teams.

- Referent power as each of the QAT members was able to utilise some level of referent power and therefore the team was able to exert some referent power.

- Limited task allocation and coalition power as the lack of executive presence signalled the lack of importance placed on the team, therefore limiting the influence of these powers.

The QAT's influencing strategies were exchange, rational persuasion and to a lesser extent personal and inspirational appeal. This aligns with the source of power that the QAT possess, i.e. expert, informational, and referent.

Immersion

The QAT's efficiency could have been improved with the inclusion of an executive. This would have added authority power to the sources of power available and increased the significance of the task allocation and coalition power. Accordingly this would have added the possibility of utilising pressure and legitimating, consultation and coalition and ingratiation influencing strategies.

1   Yukl, G. and Falbe C. M., "Influence tactics and objectives in upward, downward and lateral influence attempts", *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75, 1990, pp. 132-140.

Emotional Vampires – People That Sap Your Energy In The Work Place

George Gintilas

George Gintilas is a Body Psychotherapist and corporate consultant with a private practice and consultancy in Melbourne Australia. George offers corporate programs and one-on-one sessions for effective on the job stress reduction, and freeing more energy in your work with a specialty in Emotional Intelligence. George's website is located at http://www.relaxedmind.com.

What are the types of people you have to deal with in the workplace?

In the IT industry as with any industry or sector there are some common types of people that are found in any organization. The negativity of some people can sap you of vital energy that is required to work effectively. This energy between people is normally emotional energy. Some people uplift you, some weigh you down.

When emotional energy is sapped from you by others you can tell by how you feel after you've been with them. You can feel drained, weighed down, stuck in your thinking, unsupported, misunderstood, reactive (you dislike/hate/fear them), your mind spends time trying to deal with them in your head, distracting you from your job at hand. It is not a good state to be working from and I believe it affects productivity much more than we realise.

I'm reminded of one of my jobs years ago with a

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small software firm. The director would often flare up and slam the phone after a call. When that phone slammed down, everyone in the office jumped and another piece of emotional energy got sapped out. Eventually I left because it got to the stage where I was so weighed down by all the emotional baggage that I couldn't efficiently accomplish simple tasks anymore. My emotional body was so busy catering for the emotional negativity that I had little energy and zip left for the job.

In my profession's (Body Psychotherapy) terms to keep it simple there are five types of personalities you can encounter on the job:

Each one has certain behaviours that can drain you or sap you of emotional energy when dealing with them. Spotting them and dealing with them is important. Keeping your emotional energy is critical to consistent high energy levels and focus for your job without distractions.

THE FIVE PERSONALITY TYPES

MR & MS INTELLECTUALISER

These people tend to have a body type that is of thin body build but with a highly developed intellect. They look like a head walking on a skeleton. They can have a very creative personality (for example Artists tend to look like this.) They are a very common type of person found in I.T.

They use intellect to answer everything. They have very little feeling or empathy for you. They can have high ideals, and they tend to not tolerate slack principles. So they can be very idealistic. They can look weak – a push over, but can infuriate you with their intellectual answers. They are often the best programmers. They can drive your head nutty with impractical theories. They can be perfectionists.

How They Can Suck You Dry Emotionally:

They can drive you nutty with details and over analysing. They do not know how to offer any emotional support. It is not of major importance to them. They almost relate better with computers then they do with human beings. So you can end up carrying the emotional support and making sure they can communicate properly what needs to be done. They don't really care about people. So some

of their comments can be cutting and sarcastic. They can make you feel like you don't care about them at all.

What To Do To Not Get Drained:

Just give them the facts and the results you want and leave them alone. Do not give them team-building responsibility they don't care about people. Give them the most challenging technical jobs and then leave them alone in their corner to do it. Don't expect to learn too much about their private lives. Value them for their expertise and don't feel guilty if you do not know them well personally. That's the way they like it.

MR & MS NEEDY/COMMUNICATOR

These people are very needy and over friendly. They are great feeling people. A real people, touchy feely, person. They make the best HR staff. They need lots of people contact emotionally. They are the YES people, who want everything to be fine and not rock the boat. They agree to things too readily. They can easily sit on the fence and never commit to anything. They want everyone to get along. They can be chatterboxes. They stick out a mile in I.T. They don't seem to fit in because the intellectualisers are hogging the computer expertise.

How They Can Suck You Dry Emotionally:

The can tire you out from gossip and the need to be liked. They can have dramas going on around them that need your attention and rescue. The 'drama queen' comes under this heading.

What To Do To Not Get Drained:

Do not go out of your way to over help. They will lap it up and ask for more. Don't buy into the sob stories or the dramas of their lives. You can't fix them and they need to talk it out elsewhere not at the office. Don't feel guilty for seeming unfeeling. Be empathetic and understanding but do not go out of your way to support them. They are grown-ups now!

MR & MS MASOCHIST ENDURER

This personality has a heavy, upper body build. They may slouch like the world is on their shoulders. They tend to move slow and look burdened. The Masochist type can take any workload. They beat themselves up if they make a mistake, they never feel good enough and they are always too serious. They can be very stubborn. They hate change. Will always see the worse side of a problem or situation. On the positive side, they are great consistent hard workers who won't complain. They make the best workers long term. They will make the sacrifices.

How They Can Suck You Dry Emotionally:

You can feel 'heavy' just talking to them. They won't lighten up and relax and enjoy their work enough. It can bring you down and wear you out. They'll dampen any enthusiasm you may have for an idea. 'Yes we can do this but what if..', and what if the sky should fall!

What To Do To Not Get Drained:

Ignore the pessimism. Listen to it but realise they will always overdo it. Feed them positive comments about their work. They never feel good enough. Take them out to lunch, lighten their load for a time so they understand that they tend to over worry for nothing. Some great jokes will help! Make them laugh.

MR & MS INSPIRING CHALLENGER

The challenger type loves to put on airs and graces, and look very good. They tend to wear the best suits, but it is all very shallow and fake. They can look good, but in reality they are going nowhere. They tend to office politics and smart behaviour to win favours without real substance and merit behind them. They make the best sales people. They can make any product seem like the best thing around. The warning signs with the challengers is when they don't follow up on their promises to you. When they have an excuse for everything and can side step any direct issue you try to raise.

How They Can Suck You Dry Emotionally:

They are the great pretenders, who love to be on show and look good. And they will push aside who ever they need to, to continue to look good. This is the person who talks positively about you, but the minute you turn your back they are scheming at how to surpass you and make you look bad. They will sometimes have the devious looking eye planning and plotting in their head, how to use you to their advantage and theirs alone. So they can sap you of your ideas and use them for themselves. They are the most sociable of people but only if it gets them ahead at the expense of others. They will take credit for things where

ever they can and ignore you. In the worse case scenario, they can make you feel 'used'.

What To Do To Not Get Drained:

Set deadlines on their promises ahead of time, don't accept any excuse

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for not delivering. Ignore the 'sweet talk' and ask for facts. Get an intellectualiser onto them to interrogate them. They can be great networkers but make sure they are not networking you out of a job.

MR & MS RIGID ACHIEVER

This type has a rigid, military like attention. They are high achievers, a great worker, or so it seems initially. They can be very rigid, and demanding, almost military like, to get things done. They get things done, but burn good people along the way. Whatever it takes we'll do it. Like the 'Bull in the China shop'. This one is very common in business. Its all work and no play, and heaven help you if you are caught relaxing or enjoying yourself too much. You must work and keep working. This type of person is considered the best type of employee bosses would like. They make some of the best leaders. Most partners of highly successful software firms and consultancies will have this trait very strongly. But it has its problems: They sap you or emotional energy each time they push and ask for more out of you. They don't care about you, only what you can achieve with sweat. Robot like. They can overwork you, with long hours and demand it of others. The best and 'seemingly' most successful firms in the world love achievers.

How They Can Suck You Dry Emotionally:

They can intimidate you by placing a high expectation of you. They can force you to ignore the rest of your life and make your job the most important thing in the world. Many a personal relationship has collapsed because of the influence of an achiever.

What To Do To Not Get Drained:

Don't buy into the dictator type talk. Don't feel guilty if you want to have a life outside work. Don't worry about it if you didn't get very high distinctions in all your subjects in your training and education. Don't be intimidated by the pressure they place on you. If you want to be happy long term, your health is important. Care about yourself and your health first, the company and your boss second.

These are the common personality types that can sap you of emotional energy during the day and get you down. Do you recognise where you fit predominately? Most people are combinations of two or more types. Different environments bring out a different trait. By being aware of these common personality types it can help free you of buying into what they demand and thus drain you of vital energy to do your job properly.

OTHER DRAINERS: EMOTIONAL UNDERTONES

Do you notice how many people in the office (if you scratch the surface) will tend to predominately express a certain emotion as an undertone to their communication? When the undertone is a good positive emotion it uplifts us. The main ones are (1) a trusting/open tone, (2) a caring/loving tone and (3) a fun/pleasurable tone. People who can exude this emotion as an undertone to their communication with you are naturally uplifting and good to have around because it rubs off on others. The ones to watch for are the ones that have the opposite undertone, a negative feel to them. The opposite tones are (1) fearful/withdrawn, (2) angry/forceful and (3) the painful/hurt tone. Such qualities drain us of energy because it takes more internal effort to hold ourselves together as this type of energy comes at us.

If you find yourself stuck in any one of these emotional undertones, especially the negative ones, you will need to be aware of it's affect on those around you. People will feel it and they will avoid you, or limit time with you, or react to this tone by dishing it back into your face.

So be very aware of your emotional state each time you communicate. The undertone is normally picked by the receiver if not consciously definitely subconsciously and a reaction can follow.

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU REALLY HATE

People who drain you can only do so with your permission. If you find you are reacting to another persons behaviour where you hate the traits they are displaying, it's probably time to look inside yourself. Any person who seems to

'hook you in' is offering you a lesson to learn something about yourself. Even if you hate it.

There is a great technique that can be run on a person to help breakdown the reactivity you may experience with a particular person you find yourself having difficulty with. The process takes a few hours to run-it-by someone and there is no room to talk about it here, however, what I can say here right now is: the big key to it all, is to admit that…

YOU TOO have this same quality that you hate about this other person.

Doing this, it then becomes easier to accept the other person – much easier. This can be a hard thing to do, to admit what you automatically will try to bury in yourself.

The more you can admit to having this trait/quality, the less you will hate the other person and the less you will react to them in future. People are always a mirror for us. Other people do not ever make you react, YOU DECIDE TO REACT TO OTHER PEOPLE – ALWAYS. Therefore YOU are responsible for your reactions. If you blame other people, or justify your reactions, feelings, behaviours, then you do not have a chance to change because you want to be right and therefore stuck the way you are.

People you hate represent the opposite of the people you love.

The people you get along with and love, are people that exhibit traits that you find appealing. You like those traits.

Which means you like them in you. And those that can exhibit good traits better than you, you probably admire. This is normal, there is nothing wrong with it. But the opposite is also true. What you hate in someone else is a trait YOU DO NOT WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT YOU HAVE INSIDE YOU. You have probably buried it, ignored it, denied it and covered it up well, believing that this way it is gone. But it isn't. And it won't ever be until you eventually accept this part, this trait within you as part of being human. If you never had a role model in your life to help you accept this part of you, then you have probably just buried a time bomb. A reactive bomb that ignites every time someone else in the office or around you exhibits the trait you have done a good job burying.

Once you acknowledge you have the trait then you can accept the person more readily. By accepting them, you can IDENTIFY the behaviour in you, which means you can understand the other person better and meet them from where they are coming from.

You cannot get along with someone you hate. But you can get along with someone you understand, even if you do not like one or more of his or her traits.

In the next issue I'd like to expand on how YOU personally sap your own emotional energy in the work place and the effect that this has. This is an area that wise people take time to maintain and it is critical to your ongoing real success in life.