

Is Your Work Environment Fulfilling?

People occasionally dream of having a job where they enjoy coming to work every day. This expectation may be unrealistic. For most people, the simple fact is that there are some aspects of their job that they do not like. Although you may understand and accept this fundamental truth, a more important concern remains: How can you and your colleagues develop a more fulfilling work environment?

Even in the most open workplaces, it is unusual for a work group to come together and talk about how individual team members are responsible for the work environment. Yet this could be an invaluable discussion, for the work environment itself creates either a good or bad work experience for each team member.

Who is responsible for the work environment? Many employees believe that the company or organization is somehow responsible for creating conditions that allow employees to be perpetually happy with their jobs. This, of course, is simply not true. Team members possess more influence on their jobs than most realize. Their influence is most obvious in a negative context – for example, team members who complain about their job create an attitude that drags down the morale of everyone. While organizational support is certainly required to create a good work environment, team members themselves are responsible for creating satisfaction with their job. The assumption of personal responsibility for job satisfaction is the cornerstone of emotional maturity.

Positive, Productive Attitudes

When a positive, productive attitude pervades the work environment, team members tend to be happy with their work. When these two elements do not coincide, employees are often unhappy and not as productive as they could be.

You can act your way into a feeling. To do so, you must consciously choose a good attitude, carefully manage your work priorities, and focus on the important tasks at hand. This process involves the elimination of distractions and interruptions, and requires you to appropriately manage your attitude and your efforts on the job.

As you practice and perfect this process, you will realize even more fully that your response to what happens to you at work – not the event itself – can make or break your job performance. By controlling your attitude and your actions, as well as your response to what happens to you in your

work environment, you can also make a significant contribution to the overall climate of your work group and ultimately to your organization. In addition, as you learn to act your way into a feeling, you will enjoy newfound enthusiasm for doing your job better and better.

Controlling Your Attitude

To successfully control your attitude and response to workplace events, circumstances, and situations, consider taking these action steps:

▲ Always strive for excellence. Excellence is not perfection. Nothing is ever absolutely perfect. If you strive for perfection, you create a critical environment for yourself in which nothing is ever done “right.” Attainable excellence is a level above “good.” Ask yourself, “If this is good, how can I make it excellent?” Excellence is an

attitude, and it begins with the way you think.

▲ Make work a positive experience. You are responsible for making your work a positive experience. Through your attitude and positive actions, you can help make your work environment a positive experience. Remember, it is easier to act your way into a feeling rather than feel your way into an action. As you think, you act. This principle applies to entire orga-

nizations as well as individual team members. Effective organizations seem to exude the confidence that only excellent performance can instill.

▲ Go the extra mile. Make a habit of putting forth that little extra effort that separates “good enough” from “excellent.” “Going the extra mile” means pushing beyond your own self-expectation. Work to rid yourself of the attitude of, “I’ve done my part, just let it go.” Go the extra mile to make sure you move the project beyond your current capabilities. The attitude of “going the extra mile” pushes you to use more of your untapped potential for achievement. The personal satisfaction you gain from this attitude makes it well worth the effort.

▲ Make a conscious decision to make a difference. You can choose to work each day and produce only the minimum required. Or you can decide to excel in your job and make a difference in your work environment and within the organization. Be unique in your job. Find out what you do best, and do it consistently, day after day.

