

Read "An Organizational Behavior Moment" on page 161 at the end of Chapter 4 and on page 202 at the end of Chapter 5. Choose one of the two "Moments" and present your answer to the "Discussion Questions" at the end in a discussion posting, clearly identifying the topic chosen in the subject of the posting. Support your opinions by referencing sources such as the textbook or internet research. Be sure to cite your sources using APA format.

To receive full credit, respond to at least two other students' posts.

people have extreme scores on all or even most of the items (a "1" or a "5" is an extreme score); most people have midrange scores for many of the items. Read each item carefully, and then circle the number that corresponds to your choice from the rating scale.

	1 Not at all like me	2 Somewhat unlike me	3 Neither like nor unlike me	4 Somewhat like me	5 Very much like me
1. Spend time reflecting on things.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Enjoy spending time by myself.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Live in a world of my own.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Enjoy my privacy.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Don't mind eating alone.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Can't stand being alone.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Do things at my own pace.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Enjoy contemplation.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Prefer to be alone.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Have point of view all my own.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Don't like to ponder over things.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Want to be left alone.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring Key for Approaches to Handling Difficult Learning Situations

To create your score, combine your responses to the items as follows:

$$\text{Private reflection} = (\text{Item 1} + \text{Item 2} + \text{Item 3} + \text{Item 4} + \text{Item 5} + \text{Item 7} + \text{Item 8} \\ + \text{Item 9} + \text{Item 10} + \text{Item 12}) + (12 - (\text{Item 6} + \text{Item 11}))$$

Scores can range from 12 to 60. Scores of 50 and above may be considered high, while scores of 22 and below may be considered low. Other scores are moderate. High scores suggest that a person prefers to spend time alone considering major issues (high private reflection). Such a person spends quality quiet time considering the possibilities. Low scores suggest that a person prefers to talk through problems with others (low private reflection). This type of person spends time exchanging information and viewpoints with others.

Reflection Time

Think of a time when you faced a major problem with no clear answer. Did you handle the situation mostly by thinking alone, mostly by consulting with others, or with a mix of these two approaches? How effective was your approach? Explain.

Source of the Assessment Tool: International Personality Item Pool (2001). A Scientific Collaboration for the Development of Advanced Measures of Personality Traits and Other Individual Differences, at <http://ipip.ori.org>.

It's Just a Matter of Timing

Teresa Alvarez ate dinner slowly and without enthusiasm. Mike, her husband of only a few months, had learned that Teresa's "blue funks" were usually caused by her job. He knew that it was best to let her work out the problem alone. He excused himself and went

to watch TV. Teresa poked at her dinner, but the large knot in her stomach kept her from eating much.

She had been very excited when Vegas Brown had approached her about managing his small interior decorating firm

At the time, she was a loan officer for a local bank and knew Vegas through his financial dealings with the bank. As Vegas explained to her, his biggest problem was in managing the firm's financial assets, mostly because the firm was undercapitalized. It was not a severe problem, he assured her. "Mostly," he had said, "it's a cash flow problem. We have to be sure that the customers pay their accounts in time to pay our creditors. With your experience, you should be able to ensure a timely cash flow."

Teresa thought this was a good opportunity to build her managerial skills, since she had never had full responsibility for a company. It also meant a substantial raise in salary. After exploring the opportunity with Mike, she accepted the job.

During her first week with Vegas, she discovered that the financial problems were much more severe than he had led her to believe. The firm's checking account was overdrawn by about \$40,000. There was a substantial list of creditors, mostly companies that sold furniture and carpeting to the firm on short-term credit. She was astonished that this financial position did not seem to bother Vegas.

"All you have to do, Teresa, is collect enough money each day to cover the checks we have written to our creditors. As you'll see, I'm the best sales rep in the business, so we have lots of money coming in. It's just a matter of timing. With you here, we should turn this problem around in short order."

Teresa, despite her misgivings, put substantial effort into the new job. She worked late almost every day and began to realize that it was more than simple cash-flow timing. For example, if the carpet layers made an error or if the furniture came in damaged, the customer would refuse to pay. This would mean that the customer's complaint must be serviced. However, the carpet layers disliked correcting service complaints, and furniture reorders might take several weeks.

Thus, Teresa personally began to examine all customer orders at crucial points in the process. Eventually, this minimized problems with new orders, but there remained a large number of old orders still awaiting corrections.

Teresa also arranged a priority system for paying creditors that eased some financial pressures in the short run and that

would allow old, noncritical debts to be repaid when old customer accounts were repaid. After six months, the day arrived when the checking account had a zero balance, which was substantial progress. A few weeks later, it actually had a \$9,000 positive balance. During all this time Teresa had made a point of concealing the financial status from Vegas. But with the \$9,000 positive balance, she felt elated and told Vegas.

Vegas was ecstatic, said she had done a remarkable job, and gave her an immediate raise. Then it was Teresa's turn to be ecstatic. She had turned a pressure-packed job into one of promise. The future looked exciting, and the financial pressures had developed into financial opportunities. But that was last week.

This morning Vegas came into Teresa's office and asked her to write him a check for \$30,000. Vegas said everything was looking so good that he was buying a new home for his family (\$30,000 was the down payment). Teresa objected violently. "But this will overdraw our account by \$21,000 again. I just got us out of one hole, and you want to put us back in. Either you delay the home purchase or I quit. I'm not going to go through all the late nights and all the pressure again because of some stupid personal decision you make. Can't you see what it means for the business to have money in the bank?"

"No, I can't!" Vegas said sternly. "I don't want to have money in the bank. It doesn't do me any good there. I'll just go out and keep selling our services, and the money will come in like always. You've proved to me that it's just a matter of timing. Quit if you want, but I'm going to buy the house. It's still my company, and I'll do what I want."

Discussion Questions

1. What did Teresa learn?
2. Other than quitting, what can Teresa do to resolve the problem? What learning and perception factors should she consider as she analyzes the situation?
3. If you were an outside consultant to the firm, could you recommend solutions that might not occur to Teresa or Vegas? What would they be?

Best Bet for Training

Management-development programs are expensive. When organizations are determining which of several managers to send to these programs, they must evaluate each person. Some of the criteria considered might be whether the manager has the ability to learn, whether the manager and the organization will benefit, and whether a manager is moving into or has recently moved into a new position. The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate three potential candidates for developmental training, thus gaining insight into the process.

an organizational behavior moment

Whatever Is Necessary!

Marian could feel the rage surge from deep within her. Even though she was usually in control of her behavior, it was not easy to control her internal emotions. She could sense her rapid pulse and knew that her face was flushed. But she knew that her emotional reaction to the report would soon subside in the solitary confines of her executive office. She would be free to think about the problem and make a decision about solving it.

Marian had joined the bank eight months ago as manager in charge of the consumer loan sections. There were eight loan sections in all, and her duties were both interesting and challenging. But for some reason there had been a trend in the past six months of decreasing loan volume and increasing payment delinquency. The month-end report to which she reacted showed that the past month was the worst in both categories in several years.

Vince Stoddard, the president, had been impressed by her credentials and aggressiveness when he hired her. Marian had been in the business for 10 years and was the head loan officer for one of the bank's competitors. Her reputation for aggressive pursuit of business goals was almost legendary among local bankers. She was active in the credit association and worked long, hard hours. Vince believed that she was the ideal person for the position.

When he hired her, he had said, "Marian, you're right for the job, but I know it won't be easy for you. Dave Kattar, who heads one of the loan sections, also wanted the job. In fact, had you turned down our offer, it would have been Dave's. He is well liked around here, and I also respect him. I don't think you'll have any problems working with him, but don't push him too hard at first. Let him get used to you, and I think you'll find him to be quite an asset."

But Dave was nothing but a "pain in the neck" for Marian. She sensed his resentment from the first day she came to work. Although he never said anything negative, his aggravating way of ending most conversations with her was, "Okay, Boss Lady. Whatever you want is what we'll do."

When loan volume turned down shortly after her arrival, he called a staff meeting with all of the section heads. As she

began to explain that volume was off, she thought she noticed several of the section heads look over to Dave. Because she saw Dave only out of the corner of her eye, she couldn't be certain, but she thought he winked at the other heads. That action immediately angered her—and she felt her face flush. The meeting accomplished little, but each section head promised that the next month would be better.

In fact, the next month was worse, and each subsequent month followed that pattern. Staff meetings were now more frequent, and Marian was more prone to explode angrily with threats of what would happen if they didn't improve. So far she had not followed through on any threats, but she thought that "now" might be the time.

To consolidate her position, she had talked the situation over with Vince, and he had said rather coolly, "Whatever you think is necessary." He hadn't been very friendly toward her for several weeks, and she was worried about that also.

"So," Marian thought to herself, "I wonder what will happen if I fire Dave. If I get him out of here, will the others shape up? On the other hand, Vince might not support me. But maybe he's just waiting for me to take charge. It might even get me back in good graces with him."

Discussion Questions

1. What role did personality play in the situation at the bank? Which of the Big Five personality traits most clearly influenced Marian and Dave? Which of the cognitive and motivational aspects of personality played a role?
2. Working within the bounds of her personality, what should Marian have done when trouble first seemed to be brewing? How could she have maintained Dave's job satisfaction and commitment?
3. How should Marian proceed now that the situation has become very difficult?

an exercise

Experiencing Emotional Labor

Have you ever been forced to smile at someone who was annoying you? Have you ever had to be calm when you felt very afraid? If so, you have probably engaged in emotional labor. The purpose of this exercise is to examine how emotional labor can affect us in different ways and the factors that impact the toll that emotional labor can take on us.