

School District had opened school premises to student organizations for meetings of all sorts, and could not deny access to this forum simply because a meeting would include student-initiated religious activity.

The district had established a policy permitting student organizations to hold meetings during a regularly scheduled activity period. Requests were routinely granted until one group of students sought to use the time for purposes of prayer and Bible reading. Although the request was initially granted, and 45 students met, with a teacher acting as a monitor, permission was subsequently withdrawn. The court observed that over 25 student organizations were utilizing the activity period; none besides the plaintiffs were refused. School officials had indicated that they would grant the benefit to any student organization

"deemed to be a 'legal and proper one.'"

The court concluded that the period constituted an open forum, limited to students but unlimited as to type of discussion that could take place. District officials offered no reason for denying access to these students, other than their opinion that it violated the establishment clause. The court found that, first, the purpose underlying the activity period was to promote intellectual, physical, and social development of students; second, the primary effect given the larger number of students participating in a broad range of activities was to achieve this purpose, and the advancement of religion remained incidental; and, third, permission for these events would not lead to excessive church-state entanglement. On the second point (effect) the court also noted that the organization did not seek the full range of

benefits available to other student organizations—such as provision of supplies or mention in the school yearbook.

On the entanglement issue, the court found very little interaction between students and officials, except for the teacher who would be a monitor, and responsible for order in the room. This was not entangling. Having rejected the district's position under the establishment clause, and finding no other basis available for denying these students an opportunity to meet during the activity period, the court ordered that they be given access to this forum.

The case is *Bender v. Williamsport Area School District*, Civil No. 82-0692, N.D. Pa., May 12, 1983. □

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Selected Abstracts

CHERYL G. SULLIVAN

Successful Supervisor Communication

Supervisors and supervisees operate from different perspectives. Actually, says Walter D. St. John, they operate in two different worlds. St. John cites avoidance, abusive actions, withdrawal, and tension as common sources of conflict.

He notes it is important that supervisees be given information about expectations, reporting and organizational relationships, constraints, resources, information updates, performance reviews, training, and what their future opportunities might be.

St. John stresses that the supervisor must develop a high degree of credibility with his or her peers and supervisees—credibility built through candor, consistency, keeping promises, accessibility, accepting responsibility, personal style, and interest in others. Supervisors need to stay informed of progress and problems, rules and regulations, and employee feedback.

Assessing Management Styles

Surveying 370 employees and supervisors, Norman Harbaugh, John Sulli-

van, and Joseph Walker report that supervisors often interfere with work to be done because of their irritating work habits. The irritating behavior that respondents mentioned most often was "rarely or never compliments me on a job I think I've done well." They felt that supervisors took their work for granted.

The next four irritating habits listed in order of frequency were: "acts as if she/he knows it all," "procrastinates on problems," "makes impractical suggestions," and "passes the buck." The authors conclude that it is important to compliment or in some way recognize a job well done. Demonstrated evidence of trust might go a long way toward promoting subordinates' self-confidence. □

References

Harbaugh, N.R.; Sullivan, J.F.; and Walker, J.F., "How Does Your Management Style Measure Up?" *Business*, (March 1983): 51-54.

St. John, W.D., "Successful Communications between Supervisors and Employees." *Personal Journal* (January 1983): 71-77.

Design Factors Affecting Responses to Jobs

In a literature review of research findings on job design and careers, Kenneth R. Brousseau notes that a complex array of factors shape job-person relationships. The scope of the job appears to be but one factor in an individual's inclination to respond positively or negatively to a particular job.

Other factors include: organizational context surrounding the job; the amount of time the person has spent on the job; the influence of previous job experiences or the individual's personal characteristics (such as work values, needs); the type of career that the person wishes to pursue; and the degree to which the job falls into a developmental career sequence consistent with his or her type of career.

Time is an important factor. The "goodness of fit" is likely to change as

the person accumulates experience and moves into new career stages.

In a developmental work system design, Brousseau notes that movement, diversity, and choice processes are key factors. Within the movement aspect is an implication that some amount of movement between jobs is required to sustain high motivation and job satisfaction. Likewise, different types of jobs are needed to provide diversity.

Clearly, choices about placement and movement of employees cover a broad spectrum. Regardless of which factors are included in the choice processes, the decisions should consider job-person matching and directions and rate of movement. □

References

Brousseau, K.R., "Toward a Dynamic Model of Job-Person Relationships: Findings, Research Questions, and Implications for Work System Design." *Academy of Management Review* (1983): 33-45.

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