

Trimming Shrubs Is Not For Me!

We have been enjoying unbelievably nice weather here on the east coast. Usually, you feel like you are opening an oven door when you step outside this time of year. But, instead, we have the windows open and are enjoying a wonderful cool breeze through the office all day long.

So, my wife thought we should take advantage of the weather and suggested I trim the bushes around our house last weekend. This is not something I particularly enjoy doing but I agreed since it was certainly something that needed to be done. I had been working for about 30 minutes when she came out to help me finish. She followed the trail of clippings and found the hedge trimmers lying on the ground beside the one remaining bush to be trimmed. But, she could not find me.

Her search led her to the garage where I had started on another little project. My inability to finish something that I find to be very boring in order to start something else would have led to an argument early in our marriage. But, since she is very familiar with my survey, she knows that I am a challenge oriented person and someone who gets bored very easily. So, instead of getting mad (although I think I did see her jaw clinching a bit), she simply redirected me back to the bushes to complete the task. You might just say, *“John needs increased supervision when trimming shrubs”*.

My survey indicates that I am not a particularly hard worker or much of a team player but that I am very challenge oriented. It is hard for me to stick with something like trimming bushes long enough to get it done. Yet, I can sit in my office hour after hour without taking a break writing hiring or coaching reports. I can do this because I find it very challenging and enjoyable to look at the survey of a person whom I have never met and try to determine if he or she can be successful in the job you are trying to fill.

Many of you have probably read one of our hiring reports that states the potential candidate could be very successful in a particular job if he or she finds the job challenging or enjoyable. Unfortunately, that is something we cannot determine here at Staff Development Services but is something that may be determined by a follow-up interview with the candidate or by talking with previous employers.

By finding out what they have done successfully in the past provides insight to their chances for future success. But, everything must be considered when doing this research—did they work in a small office previously but would be working in a large one with your firm, did they work on their own before but would be working as part of a team with your organization, etc?

And, consider this. You have a new employee who is really doing a good job and seems to fit well into your firm. But, six or seven months after being hired, there is a noticeable decline in both the quantity and quality of his or her work. This may be a good time to review that employee’s hiring report. Did we indicate that this person was challenge oriented? If so, perhaps the challenge of learning a new job has ‘worn off’ and now they are becoming dissatisfied in the role. Could their job be restructured to give them more variety or responsibility in order to keep them challenged and to ‘save’ a good employee?

While I may be able to sit here and focus on writing reports all day, I could become quickly bored and seek another opportunity if working for someone else. A challenge orientation is a ‘double-edged sword’ that can be positive or negative, depending on the situation.

**“I never came upon any of my discoveries
through the process of rational thinking.”**

Albert Einstein

Best Regards,

John

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