

## **Staff Development Services**

building strong businesses one employee at a time.

### **Work -- The fifth in our series discussing the 13 tendencies in our reports.**

If you missed or, would like to review, the first four articles of this series that cover Emotional Energy (18), Stress (19), Self-Esteem (20), and Optimism (21).

Although all thirteen tendencies discussed are important, a person's work ethic is one that employers probably tend to key in on immediately when reading our hiring reports. Of course, every employer wants to create a work force consisting of responsible workers who are willing to get things done—after all, a good work force is the basis for an organization's success. But, as previously discussed, none of the behavior tendencies stand alone. In other words, when writing hiring reports, we are always looking at other tendencies and how they may impact a candidate's work ethic as well as considering the environment for which the candidate is being considered.

Is it possible for someone to have too much of a work ethic? Believe it or not, it is. A person can be so responsible and so willing to take on work that it can actually be detrimental to their success. But, again, this is based on the position for which a person is being considered as well as their other behavioral tendencies.

People with a high desire to take on work and to be responsible can actually confuse being busy with being productive and may not use their time wisely. And, if this person is also a very people-oriented person who has a strong need to be helpful, you end up with a person who feels compelled to interject themselves into others' work to satisfy their own needs rather than considering how effective they are truly performing. This person may be acceptable if working in a role in which they receive close supervision to keep them on task. But, if this person is in a management role, they will tend to get too caught up in helping subordinates with their work rather than holding them accountable for their responsibilities.

So, having a lower work ethic is not always an undesirable thing. A person who is responsible for overseeing others can actually be more effective if their work ethic is in the lower range. This enables him/her to maintain an overview of an organization's goals while holding others responsible for doing what is necessary to achieve those goals. Of course, a very low work ethic usually negatively impacts a person's success, regardless of the role.

A person with low energy and a lower commitment to work usually likes having a job that does not pressure them to get things done. For example, a person with this character make-up might make a good night watchman since they could read or, perhaps, watch television and be required to only occasionally stroll around the facility. If certain other tendencies, such as courage, are supportive enough they could handle an occasional emergency situation but they would need time to recuperate after one of these events.

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In an office setting, this type of person meanders to the copy machine rather than quickly accomplishing what they need to do in order to get back to work. And, if this is a very social person, they may spend a good deal of their time talking with others in the office on their way to and from the copy machine. Lower energy people are very happy to work in a slow paced environment where they have plenty of time to get things done.

Higher energy people with a low work ethic may not put much effort into doing their tasks but are always looking for more interesting activities to become engaged in. However, if this is a challenge-oriented person, they can be more effective in the workplace if they are doing something they find challenging. We often use the term 'bull in a china shop' to describe the person who has a lower work ethic in combination with very high energy and an extremely high desire for challenge.

There is a work environment suitable for everyone and, when a person finds that right environment, they may spend many years happily working away. But, it only takes one character tendency that does not match the work environment to reduce the possibility of that person succeeding. Of course, the more the organization modifies itself to fit an employee's character make-up, the longer they can do the job. But, the environment cannot change to suit everyone so a 'workplace culture' is developed in which some can be successful but others cannot.

On the lighter side:

A Careerbuilder Survey found that 33 percent of employees admit to calling work with a fake excuse to explain an absence at least once this year.

But the real reasons for doing so included:

- 30 percent needed to relax and recharge
- 27 percent had a doctor's appointment
- 22 percent needed to catch up on sleep
- 14 percent had to run personal errands
- 11 percent needed to catch up on housework
- 11 percent wanted to spend time with family and friends
- 9 percent wanted to miss a meeting, buy some time to work on a project that was already due, or avoid the wrath of a boss or colleague

Many of these people likely have a lower work desire so they look for excuses to skip work. Or, some may be so responsible that they miss work to help out someone in their personal life.

Health and Happiness

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