

## Dealing with difficult employees

All managers will have to deal with difficult employees during their careers. First, there will always be difficult employees. Second, it's your job as the manager to deal with them. If you don't deal the problem, it will only get worse.

### Why Are Difficult Employees Like That?

Difficult employees are that way simply because it is a behavior that has worked for them in the past. They may not know any other behavior or they may choose this behavior when they think it will be most effective. You will be successful in dealing with difficult employees only to the extent that you can make these undesirable behaviors no longer effective for them. In many ways, it's like dealing with children. If every time a child screams, its parents give it candy, what will the child do when it wants candy? It will scream, of course.

The same is true for the employee who "blows up" whenever anyone disagrees with him. When he does that people stop disagreeing with him and he thinks he has won.

### How Can A Manager Deal With Difficult Employees

#### Evaluate

It is important when dealing with difficult employees to act quickly. Often you will need to act almost immediately to neutralize a dangerous situation. However, it is always appropriate to think before you act. Clearly if an employee comes to work with a gun, you will need to act more quickly than when someone complains that another employee is always taking credit for her work.

In either case, take the appropriate amount of time to evaluate the situation before you act. You don't want to make it worse.

Recognize that most employees can be "difficult" from time to time. This can be caused by stress on the job or away from it. Some employees are difficult more often than others. It is not always your least-productive employees who are difficult. So take a moment to evaluate each situation for the unique situation it is.

#### Do your homework

Always act on facts. Don't base your actions on gossip or rumor. The person spreading the gossip is a difficult employee in their own way. If you have not seen the inappropriate behavior yourself, look into it. Ask the people reportedly involved. Collect all the facts you can before you act.

Don't use the fact that you haven't seen the inappropriate behavior as an excuse to delay doing something. It is important to act promptly.

Make sure you aren't part of the problem. It will be much more difficult to remain calm and impartial in confronting the difficult behavior if you are partly responsible. If that's the case, be sure you acknowledge your role in it, at least to yourself.

#### Develop a plan

You're a manager. You know the value of planning. This situation is no different. You need to plan the timing of the confrontation. You need to select a quiet, private place where you won't be interrupted. You need to decide whether you need to have others, like an HR representative, present

in the meeting. Plan the confrontation and then make it happen.

When you have prepared, it is time to act. You do not need to act impulsively, but you must act quickly. The longer an inappropriate behavior is allowed to continue, the harder it will be to change it or stop it.

#### Confront the problem

Don't put it off. It may not be pleasant, but it's an important part of your job. It will not "fix itself". It can only get worse. You have planned this confrontation. Now you need to execute.

Deal with the behavior, not the person

Your goal is to develop a solution, not to "win". Focus on the inappropriate behavior; don't attack the person.

Use "I" statements like "I need everybody on the team here on time so we can meet our goals" rather than "you" statements like "you are always late".

Don't assume the inappropriate behavior is caused by negative intent. It may be from fear, confusion, lack of motivation, personal problems, etc.

Give the other person a chance to develop a solution to the problem. They are more likely to "own" the solution if they are at least partially responsible for developing it.

Try to draw out the reasons behind the behavior

As you talk with the difficult employee, actively listen to what they say. Stay calm and stay positive, but remain impartial and non-judgmental. Ask leading questions that can't be answered in one or two words. Don't interrupt.

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# New employee training - Is it worth the investment?

Getting off on the right foot

Many companies provide some sort of introductory training or orientation for most of their new employees. It may take the form of an older employee assigned to show the new employee "the ropes." Or it may be left to the HR department or the individual's new supervisor to show them where the coffee pot is and how to apply for time off.

Many organizations, especially in government and academia, have created new employee training that is designed, exclusively or primarily, to provide mandated safety familiarization.

Yet some companies in highly competitive industries recognize the value in New Employee Orientation (NEO) that goes much further. They require several weeks or even months of training to familiarize every new employee with the company, its products, its culture and policies, even its competition.

There is a measurable cost to that training, but is it worth it? Let's look at some of the issues.

Some Background Facts

The technology in the workplace is changing very rapidly and companies that can't keep up will drop out of competition.

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) reports that less than \$1500 per employee was spent for training in 1996. The largest part of that (49 percent) was spent for technical and professional training. Only two percent was spent for New

Employee Orientation and three percent on quality, competition and business practices training.

Reasons To Not Do New Employee Training

Even at the less than \$1500 per year for training an employee we reported above, it is still a cost. For some companies, especially those with traditionally high turnover, it can be a major expense. If your profit per employee is less than \$1500, it would be difficult to convince the stakeholders that training is justified. Besides, we all know it is the responsibility of the school system to train people to be workers. And it is the worker's responsibility to learn how to do a job so they can get hired.

Why Do New Employee Training

Not surprisingly, all the reasons not to train new employees (except cost itself) are actually reasons to do that training. If you have high turnover, training new employees will make them more productive. They will feel better about themselves and the job. They will stick around longer.

If your profit per employee is less than \$1500 per year, you have major problems. You need to start training all



training for their staff because AIA "recognizes that the training and development knowledge, attitude and skills of the staff and agency field force are fundamental to its continued efficient and profitable performance."

Orchard Supply Hardware considers its New Employee Training programme important enough to include in their list of benefits for full and part-time employees.

An Interesting Proposal

your employees, not just your new employees, right away. Show your stakeholders the potential ROI of the training as we will discuss below.

And if you still believe that our schools provide adequate training to make students labour-ready you are living in a dream world. Yes, some job seekers make the effort to learn on their own the skills needed for a new job, but most get that training on the job.

Required Training

Government regulation, insurance coverages, and common sense dictate some training that MUST be given to every new employee.

Other Reasons For New Employee Training

American International Assurance is an ISO 9002 certified insurance company. AIA makes a commitment to

Dr. Edward Gordon recommends companies make training a stand-alone function, separate from HR. He points out a twenty percent increase in training expenditure since 1983 has not kept pace with the twenty-four percent increase in workers in the same period. He suggests Training Managers use Return on Investment (ROI) to demonstrate that the training function is a profit center, not just a cost center.

Summary

In Dr. Gordon's article cited above, he points out that companies such as Sprint, Xerox, General Electric and General Motors have opted to establish Corporate Universities, reflecting the importance they place on employee training.

The value for smaller companies is arguably even greater. And there is no better time to start employee training



## SRI LANKA AIR FORCE OFFICER VACANCIES



Applications are invited for Male / Female Commissioned Officers in the Logistics, Administrative, Administrative Regiment and Air Field Construction Branches in the Regular / Volunteer Force of the Sri Lanka Air Force

### PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

#### LOGISTICS BRANCH

##### Logistics Officers - Male / Female (Regular)

\* A minimum of six passes at the GCE O/L examination with four credits including credit passes in English language, Mathematics, Science and an ordinary pass in Sinhala / Tamil language in one sitting (additional and optional subjects not considered) **and** ordinary passes in three subjects at the GCE A/L examination in the Physical / Bio Science / Commerce Stream in one sitting **and** Graduate in BSc Logistics Management / BSc Supply Chain Management / Diploma in Supply & Materials Management / International Diploma in Supply Chain Management / Graduate Diploma in Supply Chain Management.

\* Minimum of 2 years work experience in similar capacity will be an added qualification.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE BRANCH

##### Audit Officers - Male / Female (Regular / Volunteer)

\* Chartered Intermediate Exam with 02 years experience in auditing / accounting **or**

\* Chartered Final (Passed finalist) with 03 years experience in auditing / accounting **or**

\* Fully qualified Chartered accountants with 02 years experience in auditing

#### ADMINISTRATIVE REGIMENT BRANCH

##### Band Master Music (Western) - Male (Regular)

\* A minimum of six passes at the GCE (O/L) Examination with four credits including credit in English language and an ordinary pass in Sinhala / Tamil language in one sitting **and**

\* Qualified up to grade V or above of the Royal College or Trinity College of Music London or equivalent qualifications.

\* Ability to train and conduct Military Band / Orchestra and a Credit pass in Music at the GCE (O/L) examination will be an added qualification.

\* Ability to compose music in western and oriental tradition as well as a Sound knowledge on playing western and oriental instrument will be considered as a special qualification

##### Band Master Dance Troupe - Male / Female (Regular)

\* A minimum of six passes at the GCE (O/L) Examination with four credits including credit in English language and an ordinary pass in Sinhala / Tamil language in one sitting **and**

\* Degree in Fine Arts from the Institute of Aesthetic education (Dance) in Sri Lanka or passed final level (Dance) in National Dance and Music Examination of Sri Lanka.

\* Ability to train on traditional and foreign dance style will be considered as a special qualification.

\* A Credit pass in Dancing at the GCE (O/L) examination will be an added qualification.

### Band Master Music Oriental Male / Female (Regular)

\* A minimum of six passes at the GCE (O/L) Examination with four credits including credit in English language and an ordinary pass in Sinhala / Tamil language in one sitting **and**

\* Degree in Fine Arts from the Institute of Aesthetic Education (Music) in Sri Lanka or passed final level (Music) in National Dance and Music Examination of Sri Lanka or "Visharadha" Part II level from "Bahathkande" Music Academy in India.

\* Ability to train and conduct oriental / western bands and a Credit pass in Music at the GCE (O/L) examination will be an added qualification.

\* Ability to compose music in both oriental and western traditions as well as a sound knowledge on playing western and oriental instruments will be considered as a special qualification.

### Golf Course Superintendent - Male (Volunteer)

\* A minimum of six passes at the GCE O/L examination with four credits including credit passes in Mathematics, Science, Horticulture and an ordinary pass in English and Sinhala / Tamil languages in one sitting (additional and optional subjects not considered) **and** two passes at the GCE A/L examination in Agri Science Stream including a credit pass in Agricultural Science in one sitting **and**

\* Diploma in Agricultural Science **and** successfully completed the Turf & Turf Grass Management / Global Turf Grass Management course.

\* Minimum of 5 years experience is required in Management & Construction of 18 holes Golf Course with driving range.

\* Selected candidate will be commissioned in the Volunteer Force of the Sri Lanka Air Force in the rank of Pilot Officer.

### AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION BRANCH

#### Civil Engineering Officer - Male (Regular)

\* BSc Civil Engineering with chartered qualifications.  
\* BSc in Civil Engineering or equivalent qualifications  
\* NDT / NDES / HNDE in Civil Engineering or equivalent qualifications

#### Electrical Engineering Officer - Male (Regular)

\* BSc in Electrical Engineering or equivalent qualifications.  
\* NDT / NDES / HNDE in Electrical Engineering or equivalent qualifications.

#### Quantity Surveyor - Male / Female (Regular / Volunteer)

BSc in Quantity Surveying conducted by the University of Moratuwa **or** Graduate member of the Institute of Quantity Surveyors in Sri Lanka **or** Technical member of the Institute of Quantity Surveyor in Sri Lanka and one year post qualification experience in the relevant field.

### OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Nationality : Must be a citizen of Sri Lanka.  
Civil Status : Married / Unmarried  
Gender : Male / Female (As applicable)  
Age : As at 15<sup>th</sup> April 2011

Logistics Branch : Not more than 25 years  
Administrative & Administrative Regiment (Golf Course Superintendent) Branches : Not more than 30 years  
Administrative Regiment (Band Master) & Air Field Construction Branches : Not more than 35 years

Height : Male - 5' 5" and above  
Female - 5' 4" and above

Chest : Minimum 32" (Male)  
Vision Colour Standard : CP2  
Visual Acuity : Left eye 6/6 and right eye 6/6 (With or without spectacles)

\* Any candidate who may have special qualifications may at the discretion of the Commander of the Air Force be considered, even though he / she may not have the requisite height, provided he / she possesses the requisite professional qualifications.

\* Approximate gross pay including allowances for Pilot Officer Rs. 30,880/-, Flying Officer Rs. 34,306/-, Flight Lieutenant Rs. 38,370/- and Squadron Leader Rs. 41,079/-, Food, accommodation, uniforms, transport and medical facilities are provided free. For married individuals, an allowance of approximately Rs. 14,500/- is paid in lieu of food and accommodation.

\* Selected candidates will be commissioned in the Regular or Volunteer Force of the Sri Lanka Air Force in the rank of Pilot Officer, Flying Officer, Flight Lieutenant or Squadron Leader in keeping with his / her qualifications and experience.

\* Candidates likely to be suitable for their final interview will be required to present themselves before an Air Force Medical Board.

### SPECIMEN APPLICATION

\* Full name (As per National Identity Card)  
\* Branch applied  
\* Post applied  
\* Permanent address  
\* Nearest Police Station to permanent address  
\* Present postal address  
\* Date of birth  
\* Height  
\* Telephone number  
\* Professional qualifications  
\* Work experiences (Organization, duration & job description)  
\* Achievements in sports / extra curricular activities  
\* Details of previous service in the Armed Forces if any  
\* Other achievements of note

I hereby certify and declare that the details furnished above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Date.....  
Signature of Applicant

\* For further details see Government Gazette Number 1697 of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011 and www.documents.gov.lk

\* The envelop should be marked "APPLICATION FOR COMMISSION IN THE ..... BRANCH" on the top left corner. Applications should be forwarded under registered cover to reach "CHIEF RECRUITING OFFICER, SRI LANKA AIR FORCE, EKALA, KOTUGODA" on or before 1200 noon on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

Web site: http://www.airforce.lk