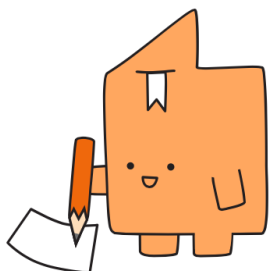


Notebook



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CASE STUDY: STEELFAB CORP.

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By Steven L. McShane, University of Newcastle (Australia)

Jackie Wong was an enthusiastic employee when she began working in the accounting department at Steelfab Corp. In particular, she prided herself in discovering better ways of handling invoice and requisition flows. The company had plenty of bottlenecks in the flow of electronic documents throughout the organization and Jackie had made several recommendations to her boss, Mr. Johnston, which would improve the process. Mr. Johnston acknowledged these suggestions and even implemented a few, but he didn't seem to have enough time to either thank her or explain why some suggestions could not be implemented. In fact, Mr. Johnston didn't say much to any of the other employees in the department about anything they did.

At the end of the first year, Jackie received a 4 percent merit increase based on Mr. Johnston's evaluation of her performance. This increase was equal to the average merit increase among the 11 people in the accounting department and was above the inflation rate. Still, Jackie was frustrated by the fact that she didn't know how to improve her chances of a higher merit increase next year. She was also upset by the fact that another new employee, Jim Sandu, received the highest pay increase (7 percent) even though he was not regarded by others in the finance department as a particularly outstanding performer. According to others who worked with him on some assignments, Jim lacked the skills to perform the job well enough to receive such a high reward. However, some employees thought Jim Sandu had become a favored employee to Mr. Johnston and they had even gone on a fishing trip together.

Jackie's enthusiasm toward Steelfab fell dramatically during her second year of employment. She still enjoyed the work and made friends with some of her coworkers, but the spirit that had once carried her through the morning rush hour traffic had somehow dwindled. Eventually, Jackie stopped mentioning her productivity improvement ideas. On two occasions during her second year of employment, she took a few days of sick leave to visit friends and family in another state. She had used only two sick days during her first year and these were for a legitimate illness. Even her doctor had to urge Jackie to stay at home on one occasion during the first year when she instead showed up at work. But by the end of the second year, using sick days seemed to "justify" Jackie's continued employment at Steelfab. Now, as her second annual merit increase approached, Jackie started to seriously scout around for another job.

Discussion Questions

1. What symptoms in this case suggest that something has gone wrong
2. Using any two motivation theories in this chapter, explain why: (a) Jackie Wong is less motivated to provide good ideas to her boss, Mr. Johnson, and (b) Jackie is motivated to take sick days when she isn't sick.
3. What actions would you recommend to Steelfab so that Jackie Wong's experience and behavior is less likely to occur in future?