

# Scenario Analysis: An Example

## Situation Summary

Mr. Henry Myway is the chief executive officer (CEO) of the TLS nursing home where I serve as activities director. I have observed that Mr. Myway treats his staff as if they are lazy and incapable of independent thinking. Rather than asking for input, Mr. Myway tells the staff exactly what and how he wants them to perform. He acts as if he looks down on the staff, believing they will not perform without direction and coercion.

Individuals in my group seem to be afraid of Mr. Myway and are hesitant and uncertain to speak up or challenge anything. In addition, Mr. Myway has been very dissatisfied with their performance. In my previous job, I had a boss who expected individual desire and initiative and encouraged employee participation and involvement.

## Analysis

Mr. Myway treats his staff as if they are lazy and incompetent. His employees act afraid, unmotivated, and are observed to have poor performance.

Douglas McGregor observed that managers lean toward one of two ways of seeing and thinking about their employees. Theory X managers believe that employees are unintelligent and lazy, dislike work, and should be closely controlled because they have little desire for responsibility (Pendergastly, 2007). Mr. Myway is exhibiting the behavior of a Theory X manager.

The Pygmalion effect or self-fulfilling prophecy helps us understand why the staff exhibits "unmotivated" behavior and poor performance (Hungadunga & Hungadunga, 2009). They are behaving in a way that is consistent with their boss's expectation of them. In contrast, Theory Y managers believe that employees are creative and competent; they want meaningful work; they want to contribute; and they want to participate in decision making and leadership (Pendergastly, 2007). The previous boss appears to be a Theory Y Manager.

## Recommendation

In this situation, I would have treated my staff differently by believing that they are creative and competent and also want meaningful work and want to contribute (Theory Y). As a result, my employees would show that they are confident, capable, take on challenging goals, provide meaningful input, and have high job satisfaction.

## References

- Pendergastly, S. (2007). X, Y and Z: Which are you? *Human Management*, 45(1), 58–66.
- Hungadunga, H., & Hungadunga, C. (2009). *The Pygmalion effect*. Ithaca, NY: Marx Press.