



POSITIVE WORKPLACE ALLIANCE

Out of the Closet

Jocelyn S. Davis

I have the bona fides to be a manager (controller, chief financial officer, director) who focuses principally on the hard stuff: a manager who is highly skeptical of the so-called soft stuff.

That said, honestly, I've always been a closet fan of the soft stuff. Practical experience built over the years has taught me that individuals do their very best in the right environment. Actually, I've found they will often do more than even an unreasonable manager would demand. People in the right position are able to do amazing things, again and again.

Daniel Goleman writing in "Working with Emotional Intelligence" writes that his studies of 181 different positions in 121 companies worldwide indicated that 67% of the "abilities deemed essential for effective performance were emotional competencies" (31).

Other writers (Gallup Organization, Martin E.P. Seligman, Mihaly Csikszentimihalyi, and Robert E. Quinn, among others) are advocating a working environment wherein individuals are managed consistently from the vantage points of their strengths.

Gallup's research using meta-analyses indicates that strength-based workplaces with high levels of employee engagement produce more of the good stuff (profitability, productivity, safety, customer loyalty, life satisfaction, sales) and less of the bad stuff (theft, employee turnover, stress, absenteeism).

So, with the science emerging all around me, I'm proud to say that I'm no longer a closet fan of the soft stuff. I'm a true believer -- with the facts to support it.

Indeed, I'd say that the soft stuff is the new hard stuff, the real stuff of which future competitive advantage will be made.

So - Let's hear it for the positive workplace!
Well, that's my opinion anyway.

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