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Columnist

## Professional Development

### Managing the Selfless Worker

If you have employees who can't say no when someone asks for their help; who sometimes give of their time, talents, and resources almost to a fault; who may neglect their own needs to serve others – then you're dealing with someone high in the Social value. If you understand what it means when someone has this as their highest value, you can manage them very effectively.

#### **Social Value: A Passion for Service**

High Social workers are passionate about helping those in need. These altruistic people prize others and are, therefore, kind, sympathetic, and unselfish. They regard helping others as the only suitable form of human interaction.

They believe it is better to give than receive, even in an organizational setting. They have a humanitarian attitude toward improving the whole of society.

#### **General Characteristics**

Here are some qualities you'll notice in people high in the Social value. They:

- Are sincere people; their helping attitude will be demonstrated in the things they do
- Freely give of their time and energy to others, even without being asked
- Will seek to contribute to the welfare of others
- Cares about the feelings of others on the team

#### **Value to the Organization**

Here are some of the strengths of those with the high Social attitude. They:

- Demonstrate a high personal and professional regard for others on the team

- Are excellent team players
- Show a high degree of willingness to help, teach, and coach others
- See things that need to be done, then do them

## **Keys to managing and motivating**

Here are tips on how to get the most out of these selfless people:

- Recognize they are very “giving” people, yet don’t take advantage of their giving nature.
- Provide flexibility to allow them to help others on the team.
- Show a genuine interest in what they want to give to the job.
- Monitor that they are not being overly giving to the point that their own work suffers.

## **Training and Professional Development**

When you train these workers, keep in mind their learning should be linked to:

- Their expertise in helping others on the team
- Amplifying their need to teach, coach, or help others
- Increasing their personal knowledge base they will then share with others.

## **Continuous Quality Improvements**

Areas in which those high in the Social value may need coaching and mentoring:

- Help learning to say “no” more often.
- Help understanding it’s not productive to leave their own work needing to be done as they help others complete their own
- To be aware when they’re trying to help too much and getting the way of someone who may not want their help.

One time when I was coaching a corporate management team, one of the women took me aside and told me how stressed she was that everyone in the company asked her to do things for them just because they knew she would. It was taking a toll on her, she was taking anti-depressants, and she was thinking of quitting her job. Since she was a religious person, I reminded her that Christ said we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, not more than nor less than ourselves.

The best way to retain good workers high in the Social value is to recognize their desire to help people while, at the same time, not permitting others to abuse their good nature.

Business management performance software identifies worker behavior, attitudes, and personality type, which The Estes Group's clients use to improve employee recruiting, increase employee retention, and reduce employee turnover. Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, Trainer, and Behavioral Safety Consultant. She is author of the award-winning book *Why Can't You See It My Way?*

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