

## Unit 5 - Organizing Skills Case Studies

### 1. Moving to Learn

#### SCENARIO

Moving employees around from job to job within an organization (job rotation) is nothing new for many companies. It trains employees in new skills and experiences, and it helps them learn more about the organization and its strategies.

Nicole has been with her company for three years. She has a chance to take a new assignment with it that will last three to four years. If she accepts the lateral transfer, she'll move to a different department that she doesn't know much about. It will be harder to have coffee with her friends from her present section, and she's a little anxious at having to learn a whole new way of doing things. She has two weeks to make her decision.

#### CRITICAL THINKING

What are some of the strategies Nicole can use to get information that will help her make a decision whether or not to transfer? How can management benefit from a planned policy of job rotation?

### 2. Managing Conflict

#### SCENARIO

Bill Wong manages 15 employees, and they seem to be dividing into two antagonistic groups. The reason for this division—and potential feud—appears to be a conflict between two members of the group, with the other members taking sides with one or the other. One of the members, Anil, is trying to take all the credit for a project's success, but Wanda, who was a major contributor, needs recognition and has been quite vocal about it.

#### CRITICAL THINKING

What can Bill do? How can he handle this conflict between two of his employees?

### **3. Bananas Are Worth Disputing**

#### **SCENARIO**

U.S.-based companies who'd like to sell their products abroad don't always find it easy. The European Union (EU) disagrees with the U.S. on tariffs for bananas. In fact, EU's policy, adopted in 1993, imposes strict quotas and high tariffs on bananas from Latin America. Instead, the policy favors bananas from EU producers and from former European colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific. The U.S., Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico have challenged the EU rules.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) backs the U.S. and its neighbors. When the European Union didn't meet the WTO-imposed 1999 deadline for compliance, WTO authorized the United States to impose retaliatory tariffs of \$191.4 million a year. That's the level of damage to U.S. companies that WTO arbitrators agreed on. Every six months the U.S. trade representative has to revise the list of products on which the retaliatory tariffs are charged.

#### **CRITICAL THINKING**

Why might Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico—all of which grow bananas—side with the United States in this trade dispute? What do you think is a reason for the EU's position? If you were a banana producer in the U.S., what actions might you consider taking because of the dispute?

### **4. Fitting Format and Function Together**

#### **SCENARIO**

There is an old saying that you can't put a square peg in a round hole. It isn't the function of the square peg's form to go into a round hole. Organizational problems are a lot like this adage: form and function can't be forced together.

Wanda, Henry, and Maria work in the commercial loan operations for a medium-sized bank. They have numerous pieces of paper to file all the time. They have notes (the obligation to repay a loan), security agreements (rights to the borrower's collateral), and financing statements (public notice documents with an expiration date). Everything is

filed alphabetically so that the bank can have quick and easy access to its customers' records. But recently when the bank's lawyers tried to collect on some collateral, they found that the financing statement had expired. They couldn't get at the collateral and the bank suffered a loss. Your boss, the department head, has called a meeting and wants you to present him with your ideas for making sure this doesn't happen again.

### **CRITICAL THINKING**

What ideas can you offer to help the bank? Think in terms of the finance statement—provide public notice to other possible lenders of your interest in the collateral for a specific time period (usually five years). Therefore, the finance statement has an expiration date. That expiration date should warn the bank to check and make sure to renew its public filing to protect its rights in the collateral. These are the functions of the document.

What did the operations people miss? What format can you create to protect your bank from having them expire? Where is the square hole for the square peg? How can you create one?