

Are You A Value-Added Employee?

By Rhobera Shaler

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What is your focus when you go to work? Are you thinking "What can I give today?" or "What can I get?" Both questions are important, however, the former will get you further faster. It's that simple.

Often, when I am consulting with a company or team, the hew and cry is "The company/management does not do enough for me/us." This may certainly be true, however, my first question is the opposite, 'What are you doing for the company/management?'. That's the way the equation works best. You give and then you get. Strangely, that's the way it works best in any relationship. Have you noticed that?

What you pay attention to expands. If you are focused on what you think you are not getting, that overshadows everything. Attitudes shift and conversations turn into whining sessions. Soon, morale dips and everyone is complaining. Often, the complaints have grown completely out of proportion and no one remembers why they were attracted to the company in the first place.

You can change this. Be a 'value-added' employee. Build your strengths rather than focusing on company weaknesses. What a concept! You choose your focus and attitude. You choose how you use your time. You choose your perceptions and perspectives. Use that power to become 'value-added'!

Now, I'm not talking about giving 'til it hurts. No, I'm talking about the way you use your energy to focus on your career path. Sure, there are employers who devour employees and spit them out spent, burned out and disillusioned. They exist. If you're working for one of those...and examine it carefully to be sure...move on.

I am talking about your choices to create the career you want. How do you want to be seen in the workplace? How does your current position further your progress towards your goals? Why did you choose it? What is your plan and how can you best follow that blueprint in your present position? Be pro-active in your own life.

How do you want to be seen in the workplace? As competent, confident and valuable, or, as adequate, mediocre and expendable? Unless you are working for Attila, the Hun, the way folks see you is mostly in your control. Good employees come to work on time, do their tasks well, and cause few waves. Great employees do all that and more. They are focused on the company's mission and vision. They can be excellent team-players and excellent leaders when needed. They are clear about their own purposes and visions and know why they have chosen to work where they work. They care about others and help them to achieve their goals. They do these things because it

clearly moves them further along their career paths. It is in their own best interest to do so. They have their 'eyes on the prize'.

Here are a few secrets. Many folks would rather complain about things than fix them. By being a 'fixer', you are being 'value-added'. Many folks would rather find fault than good. By catching people doing things well and commenting on it, you are being 'value-added'. Many folks would rather see what they can get away with than see what they can give. By giving just a little more than expected, you honor yourself and you are being 'value-added'. Many folks would rather feel 'done wrong' than state their needs and boundaries. By being clearly communicating what you need and want, you are saving time and energy...and being 'value-added'.

Which side of these equations are you working from? Only one will get you where you want to go...although you'll have much more company on the other. Your choice!

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Rhoberta Shaler, PhD, speaks, coaches & conducts seminars for entrepreneurs & professionals who want the motivation, strategies and inspiration to achieve, to lead and to live richly.

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