



Annette Estes
Columnist

Professional Development

Managing the Traditional Worker

If you have employees or co-workers who highly religious, who put their spiritual beliefs above all else, who are systematic and orderly, who more often than not “practice what they preach” – then you’re dealing with someone high in the Traditional value. If you understand what it means when someone has this as their highest value, you can manage them very effectively.

Traditional Value: A Passion for Order

Workers high in the Traditional attitude are passionate about having unity, order, and tradition in their personal and professional lives. In fact, this attitude is often referred to as the Regulatory value. These people are seekers of truth and generally have a strong belief system and correctness about how life should be lived.

Their system can be found in the church, or in conservatism, or any authority that has defined rules, regulations, and principles for living. Even those who have non-traditional spiritual beliefs tend to make these beliefs their top priority.

General Characteristics.

Here are some qualities you’ll notice in workers high in the Traditional value. They:

- Have a very high drive for traditional practices and procedures
- Are highly organized on projects
- Accept the established perspective regarding rules, regulations, and procedures
- Believe in obedience to the promises they make
- Desire a high degree of structure and want the authority to control the structure
- Pay strong attention to quality control issues and procedures

Value to the Organization

Here are some of the strengths of employees with the high Traditional attitude. They:

- Help bring structure to any project, task, or assignment
- Can organize tasks very effectively
- Stay on top of projects and make sure they keep moving
- Show a strong sense of group support and identification
- Honor events that build on a sense of quality, history, or tradition

Keys to Managing and Motivating

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

- Tell them why they're responsible for a specific job; if it makes sense to them, they will have a positive attitude toward it.
- Maintain routine to maintain accuracy.
- Listen when they want to alter procedures as it may benefit the project at large.
- Don't present criticism in front of co-workers.
- Put assignments in writing so they can stay on track and focused.

Training and Professional Development

In a training environment these workers:

- Prefer individual activities or those with high structure, detail, or protocol
- Tend to be well disciplined in learning and professional development situations
- Like knowing why a learning project is being initiated and why they need to be involved

Continuous Quality Improvements

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

- They need to learn to allow for flexibility when needed.
- Make them aware when others on the team think they're being overly rigid.
- Help them to be more accepting of changes in methods or procedures.

The best way to retain good employees high in the Traditional value is to appreciate their adherence to the rules and recognize their strong desire for order and tradition. At the same time, help them be more accepting of those whose beliefs differ from theirs.

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? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Freight shipping companies can subscribe to her free newsletter at <http://www.hiresafedrivers.com>