



Annette Estes
Columnist

Professional Development

How to manage the high theoretical worker

In 2002 I began a series of columns on understanding the values of the people with whom we live and work. The columns eventually became the core of my first book, *Why Can't You See It My Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*.

The six values I write about in the book were originally defined by German psychologist Eduard Spranger in his 1928 book, *Types of Men*. They are the basis of an assessment I use in my work called Personal Interests, Attitudes, and Values, developed by Target Training, Intl.

TTI has another values assessment, Workplace Motivators™, which describes the work characteristics and attitudes of people who are high (and low) in each of the six values. They give valuable information for managers and team members on how to tap into the strengths of each person.

I'd like to share those tips with you in a new series of columns beginning with the Theoretical value. I'm writing them in the order in which they appear in the Workplace Motivators™ assessment.

Theoretical Value: A Thirst for Knowledge

High Theoretical people are passionate about learning and discovering knowledge. They take a cognitive attitude and their chief aim in life is to order and systematize knowledge – knowledge for the sake of knowledge.

General Characteristics

- Enjoy learning.
- Have a high interest level in new initiatives.
- Stay mentally alert and like mental challenges.
- Look for deeper meaning in things.

- Believe continuous learning is healthy for the mind and body.

Others often seek this person out to help answer questions about projects or procedures.

Value to the Organization

- Do their homework and come to meetings well prepared.
- Will work long, hard hours to resolve a problem.
- Ask necessary questions to gain the maximum amount of information.
- Have a logical approach to problems and patience to analyze solutions.

Keys to managing and motivating

- Call upon their knowledge and expertise whenever possible.
- Include them in future projects.
- Give them opportunities to explore a variety of knowledge-based areas and to act on them.
- Channel information of interest to them.

Training and Professional Development

These employees seem to have an on-going personal development program already in progress. They enjoy learning and will support most training and development programs. You can depend on them to do their homework, thoroughly and accurately.

Continuous Quality Improvements

- Areas in which those high in the Theoretical value may need to improve are:
- Their sense of urgency may vacillate depending on their level of interest.
- They need to bring balance between acquiring knowledge and putting it to practical use.
- Don't rush from one learning experience to another. Managers must make sure these workers have applied their knowledge before moving on.

Next time we'll look at those who are high in the Utilitarian Value, practical people who demand a return on investment of their time, talent, and resources.

Contact me if you'd like to have your own personal Workplace Motivators report.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. She is a professional speaker and author of the book, *Why Can't You See it My Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Annette won Matrix Awards in 2004-05 from Women in Communications for her columns in *The Easley Progress*. The Estes Group is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. Contact Annette through her website at www.CoachAnnette.com.