



The under utilized, highly motivated secretary

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Company: DuPont

The challenge: A secretary, Karen G., felt strongly that her true talents did not lie in administration and so sought personal career development opportunities. She wished to discover more about herself and her personal creativity.

Purpose:

To find ways within the DuPont culture for this woman to discover herself and make full use of her talents.

Existing conditions:

She was assigned a typical administrative role in the manufacturing section of DuPont. She could do the work, but felt under utilized and not assigned work that provided her the opportunity to excel.

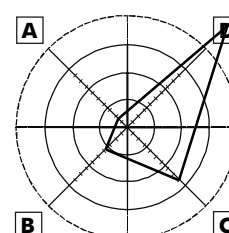
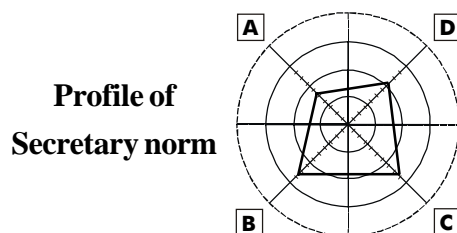
Desired outcomes:

Short term: Let her attend a development experience that would allow her to discover her true talents and capabilities that could be applied to her work at DuPont.

Long term: Find ways within the DuPont culture to allow her to go beyond the confines of her secretarial duties and contribute more effectively to DuPont's bottom line.

Whole Brain intervention methods, processes and strategies:

There was mounting evidence that professional employees who had attended Herrmann International's Applied Creative Thinking (ACT) workshop were returning with a new array of creative skills and strong personal motivation. There was an opportunity to encourage local management to bend the rules limiting such personal development activities to professionals and managers, and allow her to attend ACT 1 as a full fledged DuPont employee. The pre-work for the workshop required completion of the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument, the results of which revealed that she had a profile diametrically opposite the norm for secretaries.



She thrived in the workshop setting and demonstrated a natural problem solving capability which, when supplemented by creative processing skills and techniques, made her an outstanding participant and graduate.

Summary of outcomes:

In returning to her work assignment, she was strongly motivated to use the concepts and techniques she had learned in the workshop. She saw her workspace through different eyes and decided almost immediately to recreate that workspace. In doing so she discovered she had a lot of items in her office that she did not use. Always resourceful and strongly motivated, she asked if anyone else needed those items. She discovered that many people did, and also that they had items in their office that they did not need or use. Using problem solving techniques that she had learned, she invented and established a network of people interested in trading office supplies. As a result, countless “useless” items were removed from one office and put to use elsewhere. Requisitions for office supplies decreased significantly. The system she put in place resulted in an overall saving of \$125,000 in the first year. People in this informal network were delighted with the results and felt better about their work and their company.

Optimizing the results:

Short term: Give the secretary freedom to develop her network and recruit other secretaries to participate in the “trading office supplies process”. Since her supervisor had also attended the Applied Creative Thinking workshop, he was very supportive of her efforts and provided her with the needed “air cover” to allow her to claim her creative space and fully apply her idea.

Long term: Allow the network to expand beyond its original plant location and grow to whatever extent could be supported by the cost savings results.

Measurement criteria applied to actual outcomes:





This success process allows for up to 100 points.

A quadrant: Cost savings of \$125,000 in 1st year

B quadrant: Organized network, implemented results

C quadrant: Personal development of Karen

D quadrant: Invention of “trading office supplies” process

Metaphors		Success measurement points	
A 	 D	A 100	D 100
 B	 C	B 100	C 100

