

Behavioural Digest

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Tickets on Sale Now:
BMT for Leaders Conference &
Workshop
May 17th & 18th, 2023
Manchester, UK
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Quiet Quitting By Rachel Edwards

Quiet quitting describes when employees only do the minimum that's required of them. It's the opposite to discretionary effort - when people do over and above what is expected of them, because the environment encourages and supports discretionary behaviour. One might conclude the difference between these two states is down to careless or careful leadership.

Quiet quitting is not a spontaneous event; there will be clues in the environment, some hidden, some more obvious. Perhaps hard to spot as it begins, but ever more apparent when results begin to suffer. Numerous businesses run on discretionary effort and as Joni Mitchell said, "You don't know what you've got till it's gone." Surely, it's less effort to avoid falling into the hole, than expending the necessary effort to get out of it?

Behavioural Leadership Conference and Workshop

Our two-day event comprises the Conference (17th May) and the Workshop (18th May). The theme this year is 'Reflections on Leadership.'

Visit www.hollin.co.uk to book tickets.

Job Titles Say Nothing About Skills And Capabilities By Bruce Faulkner

Some people feel trapped in their job. They've tried leaving, but can't seem to break free. When you ask, they'll tell you they're struggling to find a new opportunity. And if they get an interview, it hasn't worked out well.

I've had several conversations with people in this position, and I've noticed a pattern. They see themselves in terms of the roles they've held. I suppose writing a CV does place that idea front and centre. They focus on their past titles, or some highly specialised tasks. The problem — they're presenting a narrow view of themselves.

This is called the Curse of Knowledge. They already have all the background information about themselves. So they use an abstraction or shorthand, such as job titles, thinking that it explains what they're capable of. The assumption — this person has a shared understanding of the specific skills and capabilities they've accumulated over the years. Often, that's not the case.

Fortunately, there's a way to escape this trap. It's another interview, but with a twist. This time, the person conducting the interview seeks to capture details about their experiences. They get past those summary level descriptions by asking clarifying questions. This decomposes those job titles into the raw materials of specific skills and capabilities. And it creates a shift. The person is no longer bound by narrow titles. Instead, they see the full range of their capacity and that opens them up to new ways of talking about themselves.



[Click here](#) to join the BMT group on LinkedIn.

Rochdale Surprises Everyone

By Bryony Sherry

When you have studied Behavioural Science, your life will change. That sounds bold and a tad dramatic. But the truth is, you will pay a much closer eye to your environment and how it shapes behaviour. This can provide a welcome distraction when you find yourself in a particularly dull or frustrating situation. Being 3-0 down at the football, with little excitement you are forced to look around at the environment. What are the antecedents? Having lost eight games in a row, being bottom of the league facing relegation, a manager who has no confidence in the team, abuse hurled from fans online and at the match, a rigid structure of players- failing to adapt through the game.

Small changes in the environment can facilitate drastic changes in behaviour, causing a significant impact on results. If performance is in decline, it is time to adapt the environment. Concentrate on the antecedents you have the power to change- and learn to mitigate the ones you can't. Wait a minute: What we need is some levelling up. Has anyone out there got the phone number of Ryan Reynolds or Rob McElhenny?

Corporate Punishment

By Howard Lees

It's that time of the year when we get news from people in organisations suffering the tiresome nonsense thrown at them by their corporate departments. Every March, like clockwork (Orange!). Reminders to carry out an annual safety visit (in the last week of the year, potentially 10 visits in one day). Annual performance reviews which are shoe-horned into a forced ranking of 2 A's, 4 B's, 2 C's and one D for this particular group of 9 employees. 7 disappointments out of 9 work colleagues. Why do they do this? Why do sane leaders allow this kind of demotivating punishment to occur? We just got through winter; the trains keep getting cancelled, it's freezing cold, I was just starting to look forward to the summer, and I get a B!

Shades of BMT

- If you don't create conditions for success, you can't have success.
- Effective feedback needs a paint by numbers approach, not an impressionist, abstract or a surrealist one.
- Let's make this easy: What about you make your list of stuff you have to do and ask yourself 'is there any reason I can't do the things on this list right now?'
- Sometimes life can be like solving a crossword; you look at it and can't answer anything. Time passes, you look again and solve it all.

The Guilty CEO (But Not Guilty Enough) Part Two

The Guilty CEO column in February's Digest prompted numerous people to send in their contributions. The original article's premise was: "I know I shouldn't, but I don't have the self-discipline to stop."

Our contributors said:

- Bullshitting when I know that no-one in the room is going to challenge me.
- Deliberately waiting until someone reminds me to do something.
- Holding suppliers' invoices up (consciously or subconsciously).
- Breaking rules that everyone else is on pain of death if they do it.
- Overtly swanning out of the office at 11am to play golf with my chosen ones.
- Inviting the fun people to my table at awards ceremonies.
- Asking unnecessarily detailed questions that people don't know the answer to, just to rattle them.
- Checking my phone when you are explaining something important to me.
- Behaving differently with my subordinates when the Chairman is in the room.
- Creating a fuss every time something goes wrong but rarely after a great success.
- Announcing another reorganisation of the company; it's the most fun I ever have.
- Attending the leadership conferences that are in great locations.
- Gapping posts to maintain the bonus pool; the staff always pick up the slack.
- When people say there's a problem, saying, "How hard can this really be?"
- Saying "I am going to have to think hard about that" when everyone knows that it's code for 'this subject is now closed'.