

## 6. Value Judgements

Companies must change their approach to employees to reflect the needs of individuals in the workplace, according to a survey of more than 300 senior executives throughout Europe.

Regaining staff loyalty, will become one of the key issues for companies in the 1990s, according to Susan Rice, author of the study 'Future Businessman/Woman' and communications director of international advertising network BBDO Europe.

The 12-month survey, based on interviews with managers in 15 European countries, highlights a significant shift in employees' attitudes to work, according to Rice. 'People say work is no longer the dominant philosophy. They are not willing to give everything to a company.'

By comparing changes in attitudes to work over the past 30 years, the survey was able to identify the 1960s as broadly a period when people sought spiritual rather than material goals. The 1970s and 1980s brought preoccupation with material gain. Today, Rice says, executives still want physical comfort, but have values beyond the merely material. 'People want to be treated as individuals and to express themselves as individuals.'

Executives also told her they felt disenchanted, insecure and misused. This alienation was felt at all levels, by men and women. Of particular concern for companies is the finding that younger, rising stars within an organization appear to feel particularly alienated.

Their stated loss of corporate loyalty has serious implications for future employment. A student at INSEAD, the international business school based outside Paris, said he would leave a company as soon as he felt it could give him nothing more and he had nothing left to give it. 'This happens very quickly when you are young,' he admitted. Clearly, says Rice, this student will enter the job market with no sense of loyalty to an employer.

Companies that choose to ignore these findings will not survive, she warns. Successful businesses will be those that 'encourage rather than suppress' the individual by channelling individual missions into corporate goals, rather than the other way round the pattern that has been the norm during most of this century.

The rising star seeks different modes of working. As a result, the traditional, topheavy, hierarchical organization will have to give way to a flatter, co-ordinated 'team' approach, Rice says. She describes this type of organization as one structured by 'free-floating circles' in place of the hierarchy. The aim would be to increase the scope for self-expression and self-development.

Companies must also adopt a corporate vision that employees can share, Rice says. She cites international sports clothing and footwear retailer Nike and the UK's environmentally friendly Body Shop chain as examples of new companies which successfully promote shared values at work.

Other solutions which help to encourage shared values include the use of outsourcing and self-employed staff. Traditional companies could abandon hierarchical management in favour of getting employees and managers to work together in teams to complete tasks, Rice says.

The casualties in the collapse of hierarchical institutions will be middle managers. They will be replaced, according to Rice, by 'pro-active, self-motivated, multiskilled team leaders more akin to team coaches than traditional, essentially reactive department managers.' More radical still is the idea that leadership of the team is not fixed but will pass to whoever is best-qualified to carry out a particular project. 'In this context management will come to be regarded as a responsibility, not a privilege,' she says.

This new, looser corporate structure will create the need to formulate a coherent company vision linking products, employees and consumers. Inherent in this new approach to individuals is a claim by some of those surveyed that in future consumers will be less concerned with what they buy, and more with whom they buy it from.

As technical standards advance it is becoming increasingly difficult for consumers to distinguish between branded products. By introducing corporate branding, however, marketers can ensure that their products will stand out from competitors' goods. Markets are moving away from a mass consumer for whom a mass product was developed by one of a multitude of employees on a production line, to individual consumers who want individual products. This will call for smaller product runs and smaller production units developed by more pro-active and self-motivated employees.

Finally, the survey predicts that the less formal business of the future will be more 'woman-friendly.' Women are seen as possessing qualities such as openness, sensitivity, innovation, perception and motivation – as well as having the ability to communicate well and exercise a 'civilizing' influence on the workplace.

## Feladat

A feladat elolvasása után töltsse ki a táblázatot legfeljebb 7-8 szóban a példa (0) szerint!

<b>0. What did European executives think about handling employees?</b>	<b>It must be changed</b>
How have employees' attitudes towards the companies changed in	1. 60s? 2. 70s-80s? 3. today?
What feelings have young executives when they start their carrier?	4.
Where should individual goals be integrated into?	5.
Why should hierarchical organisation be changed?	6.
What are the characteristics of the new-type companies?	7.
By whom will middle-managers be replaced?	8.
What trends will be followed in leadership management?	9.
What can loose corporate structures enable?	10.
What will future consumers take into consideration?	11.
How can competitive goods be differenciated	12.
What influence will have future businesses on the workplace?	13.