

HANDOUT

Human Relations Case Study

It didn't come as a surprise to Gary's friends when they heard he was in trouble with his company because of absenteeism and chronic lateness. It was the same pattern he had followed on campus--always missing classes and always showing up late. Of course, it was a little different on campus, because he could turn on his charm and manipulate teachers. With his immediate supervisor, personnel people, and other company managers, however, it was another matter.

Gary was called on the carpet for the third time three months after he started the management training program. Everybody was nice in his approach to the problem, but it was finally made clear that Gary should either start changing his habits or consider working elsewhere. The strange thing about it all was that Gary really wanted to be successful. It was a good job. It was a fine company.

Why had he permitted himself to build such a poor record? Here are three reasons: (1) he had underestimated how difficult it would be to change the habits he had developed in school, (2) he couldn't bluff as easily in the business world, and (3) he failed to understand that by being late or absent he was hurting his relationships with others because it put an extra burden on their shoulders.

At any rate, Gary admitted that he had started off on the wrong foot. He did have a poor record as far as absenteeism and lateness were concerned. He did have a reputation for being undependable. Now he had a very difficult decision to make. Should he stick with his company, try to change his habits, and work hard to live down the poor record? Or should he resign and start over with a new company?

What would you advise Gary to do?