

Fall 2018  
Bruce F. Webster

CS 428  
Peopleware: Part III  
(chapters 14-20)

# Part III: The Right People

- ◇ Get the right people
- ◇ Make them happy so they don't want to leave
- ◇ Turn them loose

# Ch 14: The Hornblower Factor

- ◇ Getting the right people in the first place is all-important
- ◇ Companies often tend to push to hire the company average, “people that look like, sound like, and think like everybody else”
- ◇ Ditto for corporate dress standards
- ◇ “Unprofessional” is often used to characterize surprising and threatening behavior – “professional” is unsurprising behavior
  - ◇ Note: this is quite different from how I use “professionalism” in [TEPES](#)
- ◇ Entropy (uniformity) is always increasing in the organization
- ◇ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 15: Let's Talk About Leadership

- ◇ Leadership is *not* a “work-extraction mechanism”
- ◇ Leadership is a form of service
- ◇ Real leadership involves (useful) innovation, which often involves rebellion
- ◇ Most innovation that happens is unwelcome because it requires accommodating change
  - ◇ Key point: humans hate and resist change
  - ◇ “Can’t we just do what we’re currently doing, but better/faster/cheaper?”
- ◇ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 16: Hiring a Juggler

- ◇ Much of the hiring process often involves tasks or evaluations unrelated to the actual work being done
  - ◇ Puzzles or brain teasers
  - ◇ Asking to write code on the spot w/no access to books or the net
  - ◇ Aptitude tests that have no bearing on long-term contributions
- ◇ Three different approaches
  - ◇ Portfolio of work done to date, which actual examples
  - ◇ Audition: 15-minute presentation on some aspect of past work
  - ◇ Give candidate 30 minutes to critique sample of flawed or unfinished code
- ◇ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 17: Playing Well with others

- ◇ Once you have screened for talent, knowledge, and experience, then diversity becomes a bonus
- ◇ Bringing new and different people in can shake up a team for the better
- ◇ However, don't grow team size just for the sake of growth
- ◇ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 18: Childhood's end

- ◇ Technology (new stuff) vs. environment (what you grow up with)
- ◇ Continuous partial attention – the opposite of flow
  - ◇ Difference between a 10% block of time and 10% of continual activity
- ◇ Articulate the contract: expected performance / behavior
  - ◇ In your case, work to find out what management expects and then live up to that
- ◇ Need to understand where attention lies (texting v. phone/e-mail)
- ◇ Observations and feedback?

# Ch 19: Happy to be here

- ◇ Key problem with 'industrial' management viewpoint: turnover costs are seen as minor
  - ◇ In real life, they can be devastating to a project and to an organization
  - ◇ Hidden costs of turnover: management takes a short-term view to employee development and satisfaction
- ◇ Why people leave
  - ◇ #1 cause across all industries (recent study): their immediate manager
  - ◇ Just passing through, feeling of disposability, no reason for loyalty
  - ◇ Key point for would-be managers: **loyalty is a two-way street**
- ◇ Low turnover: mentality of permanence
  - ◇ Preoccupation for being the best
  - ◇ Investment in developing employees (education, training, etc.)
  - ◇ Clear career paths upward for all employees
- ◇ Observations and feedback?



# Ch 20: Human Capital

- ◆ Essential to see spending on employees as an *investment* not an *expense*
- ◆ Common management sin: focusing on improving near-term performance by sacrificing the longer term (“eating the seed corn”)
- ◆ Replacement of a valuable team member almost always causes a drop of team productivity (imperfect knowledge transfer, coming up to speed)
- ◆ Layoffs for the sake of layoffs can easily trigger a negative downward spiral
- ◆ Observations and feedback?

# Bonus slide: Keeping a strong IT staff despite layoffs

## [\[link\]](#) (Baseline, 2009)

- ◇ Avoid or reverse the Dead Sea Effect
  - ◇ Get rid of underperformers; keep best people happy and on board
- ◇ Reduce Staff, Not Tools and Benefits
  - ◇ Need to keep people productive and happy
- ◇ Evaluate Teams, Not Just Individuals
  - ◇ When possible, keep high-functioning teams intact
- ◇ Shape Your Teams to Fit Your Projects
  - ◇ Keep people to fit what projects will go forward
- ◇ Act Quickly and Decisively
  - ◇ Don't let things drag out; your best people will leave before you can retain them

# Assignments for next class (10/29)

- ◇ By midnight on Saturday (10/27)
  - ◇ Create your team's test plan documentation
  - ◇ Revise other deliverables as required (esp. PERT/Gantt)
  - ◇ Submit status report
  - ◇ Watch one podcast
- ◇ By start of next class period:
  - ◇ Peopleware, Parts IV-VI (chapters 29-36)
  - ◇ Webster #6 (online)