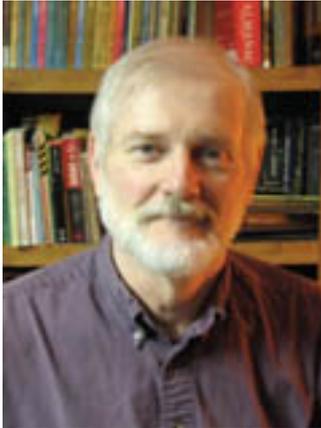


## Viewpoint: Why Are You A Manager?

Written by Randall Noon, P.E., Cooper Nuclear Station  
Saturday, 01 November 2008 21:08

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Randall Noon, P.E., Cooper Nuclear Station

There are perhaps a thousand and one ways to make money and earn a living. Why have you chosen your line of work, your particular management position and your specific company?

Are you working in your particular field because you think it is the one in which you can earn the most money? In MBA parlance, are you maximizing your total earning potential vis-à-vis your available talent resources by this decision option? Perhaps it is the job itself that you enjoy, the people with whom you work or the challenge to apply special skills you have developed.

On the other hand, perhaps you have simply drifted with the currents and tides of opportunity. Maybe you passively accepted whatever life choices were the simplest, easiest or the most lucrative, and simply have ended up where you are. Be that as it may, if you really wanted to do so, you could quit work today and look for a new job.

If you as a manager don't know why you are doing your job, how do you expect to lead? Can you lead other people if you, yourself, do not have a clear idea of what it is you want to do? More personally, if you have no enthusiasm for your job, do you think that you can work with your cohorts, day in and day out, and not telegraph your feelings to them? When your co-workers and subordinates see the little things that give away your private thoughts, will they mistake this as contempt for them and what they do? Are they not a part of your job, too?

It is said that a fish rots from the head. This also applies to the workplace. Subordinates study their manager. They learn over time what makes a manager happy and how to avoid those things that displease him/her. They hone this activity to a science. Every move a manager makes is weighed and carefully measured by his employees and subordinates. Knowing the character of their manager is important because he controls their pay, their professional

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development, their working conditions and, to an important extent, how happy they will be when they get back home.

If a manager brings to the job a consistent sense of purpose, integrity and fairness, subordinates will follow that pattern. They will realize that to get ahead in your department, they also will need to demonstrate these qualities because you—as *their manager*—value them.

Work groups that are honest, fair, and purposeful are fulfilling places in which to work. Their managers have no problem finding employees who want to work there.

So, let's start over again.

Why are you a manager, and why do you do this type of work? **MT**

The opinions expressed in this Viewpoint section are those of the author, and don't necessarily reflect those of the staff and management of MAINTENANCE TECHNOLOGY magazine.