

figures. Rather than taking responsibility for changing, people look to better techniques or another iteration of the model.

Idealisation occurs where an individual identifies so totally with their project, their system, their branch or their baby that it becomes a part of themselves. In suggesting the need for change, rejection of the system is experienced as rejection of self. Challenge to the project is seen as personal annihilation.

One of the reasons why organisations find it so hard to reverse obsolete practices is because individuals ARE those practices — the director of manufacturing IS assembly line, rather than automated manufacture. Challenged, he or she responds defensively to main-

"The overall organisational good is neglected..."

tain face. If you don't like this system, then I go too.

Other systems of idealisation are over-identification and 'territoriality'.

An individual becomes so attached to the fate of her or his project, branch or employees that the big picture or the overall organisational good is neglected. They also find it difficult to admit that anybody else might have useful ideas or expertise to contribute.

"I've built this branch. I know better than anyone what's needed."

Omnipotence is a deceptive defence. People respond with a flurry of phone calls or memos, orders may be given and meetings called, all creating the illusion they are on top of everything. The illusion is seductive. The individual, colleagues and superiors may all actively conspire to believe in it, producing in turn other symptoms such as grandiosity and an inability to express vulnerability or ask for help. Some organisational cultures, of course, actively nurture such a culture of action for its own sake.

Other responses to change include regression or a longing for earlier days when tasks seemed

simpler, as well as displacement, where people focus on some other issue or more tractable problem rather than confront change.

Splitting and projection occur when a resisted or hated object within oneself is separated from self and, in projecting, attributed to someone or something else. What this enables us to do is locate the blame elsewhere. A common form of this is passing the buck but there are more insidious forms now at large, such as the scapegoating of entrepreneurs and deploring the lack of leadership.

A recent example of this defence at work is the finance industry's claim that it has suffered from a decline in corporate morality. It displaces the responsibility and absolves the victims from having to examine their own behaviour.

There is disagreement about how much any of these defensive responses in the face of change are tolerable. Yet there is much scope to improve our change management processes by anticipating defensive reactions. Both individuals and organisations can then take actions to ensure they don't acquire an overpowering hold.

Such actions would include, firstly, the recognition of habitual mechanisms an individual employs as part of his or her personality and management style.

Organisations, because of their cultures, also tend to encourage and reinforce some mechanisms. Bureaucratic organisations are more likely to encourage responses of denial and paralysis, entrepreneurial organisations may encourage grandiosity, while task organisations may intellectualise and displace or divert into information gathering.

Once there is a greater understanding of the mechanisms by which change is resisted in organisations, interventions can be designed to help surmount dysfunctional patterns.

Job rotation, training and experiential learning, changes in structure and reporting arrangements, shifts in cultural rituals or signals, can act as catalysts or triggers to break out of or go around dysfunctional patterns. •

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People may be the most valuable resource of all but like any other resource, they need care and understanding to perform at their best.

This applies in few occupations as markedly as it does in policing, where the stresses of everyday work can play a devastating part in preventing people consistently performing at their best.

Police administrators have accepted the fact and from this recognition have grown personal support services designed to ease the rough spots encountered during a career in policing.

Helping resolve personal problems has become the province of the AFP's Welfare team, with specially-selected staff located wherever they can be of most assistance.

Every member and staff member of the AFP has access to help and advice.

Welfare Adviser Rod McBride sees his job as going even further.

"Our aim in the Welfare system is to offer whatever level of support is required by members, staff members and families of the AFP," he said. "When we work in a profession such as policing that responds to other people's actions, it is sometimes very easy to forget that we or our families have needs also, or that we might be affected in some way by the type of work that we do."

The Welfare Scheme has grown out of a system initially established to assist supervisors and to provide a sympathetic point of contact for those members who may not wish to disclose a personal problem to their superiors. It was felt the stresses inherent in police work, as well as the pressures faced by members and staff members in their private lives required such a scheme.

Its work is carried out by the Welfare Adviser, a full-time officer located in Canberra, supported in all Regions by Regional Welfare Officers appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the officer-in-charge of the relevant Region, with the concurrence of the Australian Fed-

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eral Police Association.

The program provides officers-in-charge of a Region or Department, members and staff members, as well as their families, with the opportunity to discuss in confidence any matters which may cause them concern.

Help and advice is available also to retired members, staff members and their families.

The success of the scheme depends to a considerable extent on supervisors being aware of their responsibilities in relation to the well-being and contentment of their charges and ready to give advice and help.

It is important that they pay special attention to this aspect of their duties and give careful and sympathetic consideration to any matter relating to welfare or efficiency, individually or collectively, which comes to their notice.

Each has direct access in welfare matters to the officer-in-charge of his or her Region, the Welfare Adviser and to other Regional Welfare Officers and is aided by special guidelines.

Because of the impartiality required in the work, the Welfare Officer can not be regarded as an investigating officer in disciplinary matters nor advocate in proceedings involving members or staff members.

The Welfare Adviser, as pivotal officer in the scheme, has a wide range of duties to perform includ-



Welfare Adviser Rod McBride

ing the task of identifying welfare problem areas and providing advice on their solution, co-ordinating welfare policies, disseminating information on welfare and welfare-related matters, assisting in training, liaising with Welfare, Personnel, Industrial Relations and AFPA officers on welfare aspects of personnel administration and with Government and non-government welfare agencies which may be enlisted to assist AFP personnel suffering welfare problems.

The Adviser also acts in the direction of the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner (Personnel and Training Department) in matters involving general welfare of members and staff members.

"Hopefully, Welfare is not something that is seen as necessary only when something bad happens, although support following crisis is certainly important," Rod McBride said.

"Our plan for Welfare is to provide support and information at all times, so as to enable our staff to be better prepared when the pressure is on. In the near future, we will be promoting the 'Employee Assistance Program' which is designed to provide information, education and referral systems for a wide range of welfare issues," he said. "This information will be available to everybody in each Region and will complement the work presently being done by the Welfare Officers."

Duties performed by Regional Welfare Officers are more orientated to the personal requirements

of members and staff members in their Regions. Their role is to guide and counsel their charges and, where appropriate, extend this service to families of serving and deceased members and staff members.

They visit members and staff members on extended sick leave or in hospital, undertake inquiries relating to compassionate leave or transfers on behalf of the administration or members and staff members, and, when required, interview those contemplating resignation.

Above all, they must observe the strict confidence of members and staff members.

The Welfare Officer may become involved in all kinds of major areas of concern which contribute to problems. These may range from compassionate situations, hardship or frustration resulting from poor administration, shiftwork and its effects on members and staff members and their families, curtailment of social activity because of shiftwork or the nature of the job, marital discord, health, alcoholism and resignations.

Welfare staff find themselves being able to assist in a number of areas. These include associated aspects of illness, such as exhaustion of sick leave credits and compensation, family illness and accidents.

Financial problems are another area where difficulties such as debts or overcommitment, hire purchase commitments, personal loans and referrals to financial agencies may require Welfare assistance.

In domestic situations, Welfare Officers can find themselves providing aid in cases where a spouse or member/staff member leaves the family, where a spouse complains about a member, or where marital legal problems arise.

For members or staff members nearing retirement, the Welfare Officer is available to provide referral advice on early planning, superannuation or other rights, and future resettlement. This service continues into retirement with maintenance of contact and assistance to a widow or widower. •

Welfare Officers

Central Region: Bob Fisher, (08) 274 8811.

Western Region: Liz Harrison (09) 320 3531.

Northern Region: Brisbane, Bede Pond (07) 368 5872. Townsville/Cairns, George Street (077) 79 0855. Darwin, Bob Craven (089) 47 2288.

Eastern Region: David Clarke (02) 286 4025.

Southern Region: Monica Fletcher (03) 607 7352.

ACT Region: Lisa Howard (06) 279 3559.
