

Let's Get Gruntled

Not too long ago of group of colleagues and I were discussing unhappy workers. (Sadly, these days, this topic is taking up way too much time.) "Postal," was how someone described an angry worker. Unfortunately for the U.S. Postal Service their occupation has become synonymous with the "DISGRUNTLED" worker. There seems to be a lot of unhappy people in the American workplace today.

So I posed this question to my coworkers. "In order for a person to become DISGRUNTELD, is it safe to assume that at one time they were **GRUNTLED?**" Everyone laughed at my suggestion. They all insisted, "There's no such word as "GRUNTLED". Well, in my world, you can't become a "dis" of anything without the other half existing on its own. So, I hopped onto the Internet and sure enough there is such a word. The word GRUNTLED actually means the opposite of DISGRUNTLED.

It means - to cause to be more favorably inclined; gain the good will of someone.

OK, English lesson out of the way.

The question is how does a person get to be DISGRUNTLED without ever having been GRUNTLED? Have you ever been GRUNTLED? What has been done to you that has made you feel more favorably inclined or given some good will? I have always believed that most of us can be made happy by a regular dose of sincere attention. A well-meant question of genuine interest about the important things in your life, outside of work itself, is what most people would settle for as a gruntling work experience. But sadly for some, particularly managers and owners, small talk is not on their agenda. I'm not sure if it is being drummed out of them in today's business schools or not, but in most of my work experiences small talk is not being encouraged in the workplace. Exactly why, I'm not sure. If I knew I'd gladly share it with you. One excuse I've heard is that many managers and bosses don't want to get too close to someone in case they have to let them go. The only thing this is an excuse for is poor leadership.

"Work is hard." We know that. But that doesn't mean the workplace has to be hard too. Members of the same team should be pulling together to cement their mutual endeavors and provide a comforting and workable environment for all. The natural objective of life is to be gruntled not the opposite. The path to making the workplace a happier place to

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work is to make deeper connections.

Coworkers + A Connection = Gruntled Workers

So, don't wait for someone to reach out to you. Make the journey across the bridge on your own. Connect with your coworkers. Connect with your employees. Connect with your vendors. Connect with your customers. The more you share, the stronger your bonds will be during these unavoidable tough times. Have no fear of getting too close to those you manage. Whatever the eventual outcome of your enterprise they will respect you more because they will know you. If you live in fear of tomorrow you will undoubtedly miss the joys of today. So, "Don't worry, be GRUNTLED."

And that's The Don E. Smith Experience.