



## Staff not Performing as Required

### Problem Presented

The Chief Executive of a small company asked me to provide assistance as he felt that his staff were not using their systems efficiently.

### Action

It was agreed that I would meet all of the management and staff in order to understand the company's objectives and administrative processes. In particular I examined what each person was actually doing.

It quickly became apparent that many of the staff had become focussed on minor issues and were neglecting parts of their work which related to key company objectives, for example reducing debtors.

They did not have a clear view of their priorities. No-one among the staff or management had taken time to stand back and look at the overall picture. Several areas had specific issues which were raised in conversation, but despite this there were no plans to tackle them.

### Actual Problem

Staff were vague about their roles and received little direction from management. Managers did not look at what their staff were actually doing, and assumed they were getting on with the most important issues, when in fact several staff spent much of their time addressing historic matters which no longer affected the company significantly.

As with other organisations, many activities were being processed manually when they could be carried out more effectively through better use of the existing computer systems. This resulted both in time being wasted and results being inaccurate.

### Outcome

It was agreed that the issues which had been identified as requiring action would be prioritised.

The top three priorities were then tackled by setting up specific projects with prioritised actions. Once these were in place and resources were available, the next two would be tackled, and so on.

As a result, staff had clearer direction regarding the company's priorities, and management were much more aware of what each person was doing. For example instead of "having an accounts person" they had a person whose role was "to ensure debtors were kept to a minimum while carrying out the statutory accounting function".

The result was that costs were reduced while staff were both more efficient and also clearer about their aims, which I believe made them more committed.