



WORKING WITH OTHERS

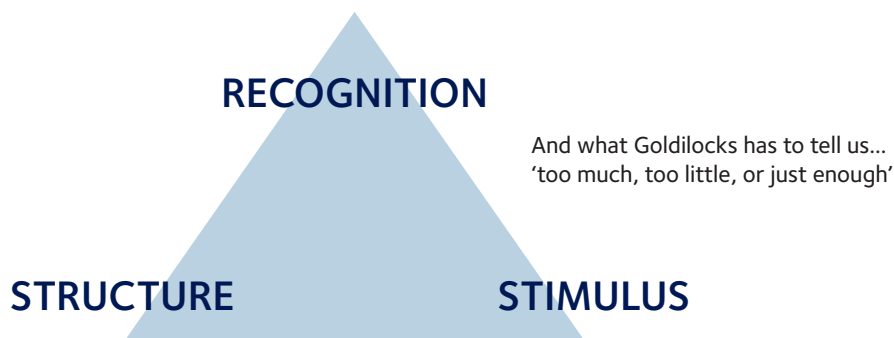
Builds effective relationships

Relationships at work – What’s really going on!

Healthy working relationships rely on us getting enough of our needs met so we can work together on our joint tasks and goals. If we know what drives us and the people around us, we have a better idea of how to encourage relationships of mutual benefit.

Eric Berne’s Psychological Hungers

These are hardwired drivers in the brain which underpin our actions and relationships. We need a certain amount of interaction and the right kind of interaction, to keep our shape so we bring our best selves to work.



Not all of our triangles are the same shape and as a manager you need to be aware of this. The Goldilocks rule applies – we each need just enough of each to perform at our best. If we don’t get enough or our ‘stroke’ patterns change suddenly – our role changes, significant people leave the team, for example – we may start ‘acting out’ because our needs aren’t being met.

Example A

A manager put aside the last 30 mins of the last Friday of the month to think about her team, who were widely dispersed across the county, and to send them emails of appreciation. Some weeks she sent a few, some weeks many, they had to be authentic and valuable. She had realised that her ‘tetchy team’ was actually craving recognition – they just weren’t getting enough. She was always rushing from A to B, she didn’t see people face to face for weeks at a time. Appreciation had just got lost in the rush of it all. She realised this was a serious part of her work and she needed to schedule in the task as she would any other – very quickly, her team settled, became ‘happier’ and worked better together. Recognition and Structure.

Example B

A team of admin workers in a school found Friday photocopying so boring that they turned it into a competitive game along with a cake and a cup of tea as a treat for all at the end of the task. Structure, Stimulus and Recognition to motivate staff to get on with a tedious and important job.

RECOGNITION

The need to feel validated and significant – I’m doing well, or I’m struggling and my challenges are acknowledged, and I matter.

People know what I am doing and how I feel about it.

I am recognised and valued. I need to be seen. Money, status, promotion, public accolades are all relevant here.

STRUCTURE

I need to feel safe enough to do my job – physically, clarity of roles and tasks, processes that I can follow when things go wrong.

I need a level of stability, dependability and protection. I need to know my manager is there for me and my team have ‘got my back’.

STIMULATION

I need to know I have an impact.

I need contact with others – not to be left out.

I need to express myself positively and be accepted.

I need to be engaged with my work. Interest, variety, challenge

Adapted from A Model of Eight Relational Needs Erskine et al. (1999)

ACTIVITY

- Think of this in relation first to yourself – what shape are you?
- Now choose 2 or 3 significant work relationships and see if you can draw a triangle for each of these colleagues. If you can, choose one that is working well and one that is more ‘tricky’.
- What do you notice – are there differences?
- Is there a mismatch between what you are doing and what your colleagues need?
- What could you do more of or less of that might make a positive difference?

Are you **getting** and **giving** what you need to perform at your best?



Complete the Reflection sheet