

Solcom Engineering Ltd.

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S. L. McShane *Canadian Organizational Behaviour*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2004); S. L. McShane & M. A. von Glinow, *Organizational Behavior*, 3rd ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005); S. L. McShane & T. Travaglione, *Organisational Behaviour on the Pacific Rim*, 1st ed. (Sydney: McGraw-Hill Australia, 2003)

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Solcom Engineering Ltd.*

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Solcom Ltd. is a large engineering firm which employs over 1,500 people in its operations throughout Canada. The company's headquarters are located in Winnipeg and has been in operation since 1962.

The Personnel Records office at Solcom consists of five clerical employees who compile and maintain the necessary record keeping on personnel files and answer questions about personnel-related issues. Each clerk keeps records and answers enquiries in a different functional area within personnel records. One person is responsible for handling employee pensions, another does for insurance plans, a third is responsible for vacation entitlements, and so on. For example, when someone becomes a Solcom employee, the Personnel Records office clerk responsible for pensions receives the new employee's file and prepares information within her area of responsibility. The file is then passed on to the other clerks to input information on their functional area.

Solcom's operations have been expanding quickly and several problems with Personnel Records office are emerging. Line managers complain that it is difficult to determine who in Personnel Records is responsible for each particular personnel function. They also note that the clerks seemed to "care" more about their particular personnel area (eg. vacations, pensions) than about the overall quality of the personnel records and employee needs. Furthermore, personnel records are sometimes incomplete because one or more clerks do not receive the file from other clerks for updating.

The Personnel Records clerks are also showing signs of frustration as it becomes more difficult to coordinate the workload with other staff in the Personnel Records office. This is creating some tension among the clerks. The job is somewhat monotonous after employees spend more than one year responsible for the same personnel records area. These factors are resulting in serious morale problems, high turnover, and decreasing productivity within the Personnel Records office. The manager of Personnel Records and the Director of Human Resources realize that changes are needed, but it is not clear to them how to improve the situation.

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