

hp

HEWLETT
PACKARD

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From: John Minck

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To: To Whom it May Concern

Re: Empowerment

"Empowering people" may be a dictum of POM, and it may be the intention of SPD management to follow that dictum, but for many of us in the trenches, we have to work with a system that is set up to "follow good business practice" or "meet the audit". These practices, in fact, seem just about the opposite of empowerment, and instead seem to inhibit and frustrate the bulk of our employees. I'm sure that the intent might be the good result of curtailing theft or expense control. But from my perspective, the cost in poor employee morale far exceeds any savings in actuality.

1) Camera Passes

Under the principle that someone may steal product secrets or business secrets, any camera, video recorder, personal or HP must have a pre-approved camera pass before the guards will let it in the door. The pre-approval includes a justification of the need. A noble cause. But the actual result is that people arrive at the door to do a project, often urgent, with no pre-approval, and no knowledge of that requirement. Then they are looking desperately for someone to help. That someone, more often than not, turns out to be me, partly because cameras are used in Marcom efforts.

A typical case was an engineer from the Fundamentals Training Center who was tasked with cloning one of our SPD sales engineer training courses for FTC. He logically figured that taking a picture of the equipment setup while the course was going on here would help reproduce the same setup later. For whatever reason, maybe their small building 16 never required such rules, he had no reason to know about the preapproval camera rule. So the deal ends up taking 5 or 10 minutes of my time getting back and forth to the lobby a couple of times, and antagonizing security about their dumb rules. That may be security's job, but it's not the sort of thing I want to spend time on.

2) No-charge shippers.

Are you aware that if you want to send an 8x10 black/white photograph to any non-US country, that you can't use the corporate mail room to catch the corporate mail pouch? Nor can I send color film, overhead slides, microfilm, "brochures", or any merchandise like disks, and a long list of items. I can understand the disks part, because of certain other countries attitudes toward intellectual property.

The upshot is that the corporate traffic department has edicted that EVERY such item be shipped through the shipping department with a separate bill of lading, and all the usual signatures and admin time tieups. For a photo that costs 35c, I find that decision appalling. The story from corporate traffic says that HP failed some customs audits. I'm sure that certain countries are very mean on customs rules for merchandise, photos,

etc. But to have a world-wide rule made on that account seems to me an unreasonable answer to some local problems.

No-charge shippers are a pox on the land. Bruce Fitzgerald noted that last month SPD had 599 no-charge shipping actions. Many of them are involved with items that have literally no value, say the training binders that new Neophyte FEs are sending back to their office. Say overhead slides being sent to a overseas field office. Say a disk worth \$3.00.

I'm aware that a new process is being set up with the bill of lading itself to be put onto a computer screen. That means I still have to write it out long-hand to have Sigrid type it on the screen. That means that shipping people still have to process it. That means that accounting still has to audit it. For what? Why audit a shipment for an item that costs \$5.00?

There are two separate issues here. I plan to appeal the corporate traffic decision which eliminates the corporate mail room from mailing anything but paper. If they can't refine the rules to separate tough countries from easy countries rules, then my suggestion is that we mailers in the divisions should be allowed to mark our envelopes with simple customs documents. I mail simple merchandise items to my daughter who lives in Geneva, with a simple 2x3 inch green tag which glues on the front of the envelop. Why can't we do that for a whole raft of simple mailings out of Palo Alto? I could walk to the post office and do that. Why can't the mail room help us instead of hassle us?

The second no-charge shipper issue is the entire rule set for signing, who signs, how much are they authorized for? Why do they have to be in the management chain of command? As it stands now, if you are shipping something, the signature MUST be your manager. If you can't find your manager, you must go to Marc or higher up the chain. Technically, I am not permitted to sign for people who don't report to me. But of course, I cheat, because the employee is trying to get the job done, and not waste time looking for managers who are always in meetings.

I hate to spend the time signing, but I do, dozens per month, estimate.

My recommendations are to get the system fixed so that no signatures at all are needed for values below \$25. Fix it so that a whole set of managers can sign for no-charge shippers, as long as their amount is adequate.

The final issue with no-charge shippers is that values of shipments going out these days of FASS are not anywhere sufficient. FASS itself is only shippable with the signature of Marc or Seely. As in the shipment to Europe for the Symposium, I think no one in the division was authorized since I think the value was \$350,000 or 400.

3) Property Passes

(THIS ONE IS FIXED)

Same problem here on authorized values and the signing sequence. If a busy employee can't find his boss, the next step is Marc who is often in long meetings. I believe that signing authority should be allowed with sideways managers.

I also believe that we overdo the property pass system also, in the name of "good business practice". Anyone intent on stealing something isn't going to be restricted by the present system. In the process of our

paranoia, we are clearly showing that we don't trust our good employees who are working their hearts out, fighting the processes.

4) System 2

The HPDESK system is the 8th wonder of the world. It is magnificent. You could have easily organized the invasion of Europe if it were available in 1944. But in 1989, HPDESK is held hostage to System 2. I think every manager should have to sit in front of the blinking dash waiting for the computer to respond, about 15 minutes every day. Maybe then, things might change. First off, with the various security codes, it takes way too long to even get logged in. Then on typical days, the lost time wasted merely on watching the blinking dash while the time-share is working elsewhere is simply stupid.

It's not just the people-time wasted, it is the frustration of sitting dumbly waiting for an inanimate object to help you out, and being totally not in control.

There has got to be a better way to partition a message-switching computer since its job ought to be a lot simpler than 90% of what system 2 is supposed to do for its livelihood. Put HPDESK onto some sort of message-switcher which does nothing else. Make it respond like greased lightning. If we need to link into the room reservations or order statistics or Pedro to get to the literature computer, we don't mind waiting for that because it is infrequent.