

Are your employees no longer the assets they once were?

Helping employees regain their productive rhythm

By Carolyn Thompson

Are your employees growing or growing bored? Are your experienced employees no longer the assets they once were? Do you have some people who seem to be stuck on dead center?

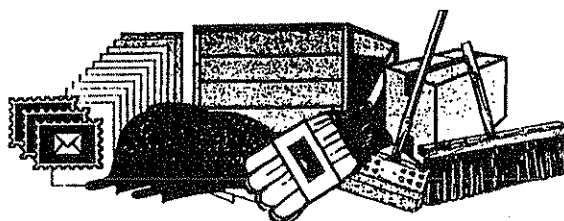
Job and career plateaus are part of the rhythm of people's lifework. For the individual, a plateau can be a vantage site from which to review one's career – a time of challenge, reflection and choice. For the organization and the individual's co-workers, the plateau can be frustrating as the employee seems to produce less both in the way of real work and contribution of ideas.

Plateaus occur for many reasons and you need to know what the reason is for your employee before you respond by isolating the person because they're "deadwood" or, if you let this go too long, firing them.

- Structural plateauing – when there are no available position in your organization that allow the person to move up.
- Content plateauing – when the person has mastered their job and it is no longer challenging.
- Life plateauing – when the person's life in general hasn't changed much, their routine is the same daily and nothing seems to spark much interest or joy.
- Job extinction plateauing – the job, any job, is simply no longer a good way to get work done. It is a vanishing historical artifact, a product of the Industrial Revolution and with the advent of the Information Age, it is beginning to disappear. Unfortunately many

employees are not prepared for this and are therefore unsuited for many of the functions our companies need done.

So which is it for your employee? The organizations with a strong commitment to career development will recognize when plateauing is occurring, know what's causing it and work with the employee to help them plan their career. Why lose a previously great employee (you've seen the statistics on how



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