

Quintessential kelly

Business, Management



Quintessential Kelly Andrew Kelly has been employed by the Wearever Tire and Rubber Company for more than twenty-five years. Kelly is, despite his long service, only 43 years of age. He began employment in the mail room right after high school, received several promotions, and was, at the age of 21 transferred to the credit department. Kelly has been there ever since and is now the senior employee in the department of sixty people. Kelly is the quintessential "valuable employee." His loyalty to the company has never wavered or been questioned. His attendance and punctuality records are virtually without blemish. He is a consistent worker, though, "no genius," and has efficient work habits that only years of service bring to a man of his sort. Kelly is friendly but not gregarious. He makes no waves, and when he sees a problem, he takes care of it without comment. Kelly was often portrayed by his supervisors and colleagues as a "good soldier." Robert Bennington, who had been credit manager for twenty-six years, has announced his retirement. Management is now faced with the problem of selecting his replacement. This is no easy task since Bennington and Kelly have been good friends for many years. The retiring manager has, as would be expected, recommended that his friend Kelly replace him. Top management, however, long ago pegged Kelly as "not good management material." While the people who originally rated Kelly have long since retired, the present management simply believes Kelly is not aggressive enough to be the effective leader of fifty-nine other workers. Moreover, a younger man with five years of experience in credit has caught management's eye. Mike Fitzmaurice is 30 years old and "looks like management material." Too, he outclasses Kelly in education with an

accounting degree from a prominent school of business, along with some additional work toward an MBA. From the start, Fitzmaurice has been a Wearever “ junior executive” in the company’s training program. He appears to make up for his limited experience with drive and originality. People at Wearever seem to think he can “ go far. ” Top management would like to promote Fitzmaurice to the position of credit manager but fears that the senior employee, Kelly, might be so offended that his effectiveness as a hard-working employee would be diminished. There is also an element of management’s appearing ungrateful for Kelly’s years of service. Other employees might come to believe that service counts for nothing. Wearever, like many other large firms, has rewarded worker longevity with a package of benefits, incentives and often promotion. The retirement of the credit manager has forced the issue. Wearever must now decide on old reliable Kelly, or the bright newcomer Fitzmaurice. Case Questions: 1. Should the company promote Kelly on the basis of seniority and reliability. What are the risks if it does? What are the risks if it doesn’t? 2. What alternatives exist beyond the simple Kelly-or-Fitzmaurice choice? Source: James A. F. Stoner. Management ----- 2