

Applying the Enneagram theory to human resource management

Sudhir Kale and Samir Shrivastava

Bond University

ABSTRACT

The Enneagram is a circle enclosing nine equidistant points connected by nine intersecting lines. *Ennea* is Greek for nine and *gram* means drawing. The Enneagram pictorially conveys a system of personality classification. It has its roots in ancient spiritual practices of the East. The actual origins of the Enneagram are shrouded in mystery. References in various spiritual texts however indicate that Enneagram has been in use for over 2,500 years. Untold generations of spiritual seekers in secret brotherhoods are believed to have developed this system of personality classification to hasten the spiritual liberation of their wards. The technique was considered so powerful that its knowledge was zealously guarded lest it fall into wrong hands.

The credit for introducing the Enneagram to the West in the first half of the twentieth century goes to George Gurdjieff. Since then various other teaching "traditions" begun by Jesuit priests, and others like Oscar Izaho have gained wide currency. More recently, scholarly works by Claudio Naranjo (1990) and Don Riso (1990) have made some useful contributions to the Enneagram theory. Despite a number of publications on the Enneagram, confusion exists about whether the Enneagram is primarily a psychological system or a spiritual one. But this psychological versus spiritual debate appears to be misdirected. As Riso (1990) points out, "Knowing ourselves so that we can transcend ourselves and attain balance and integration is what psychology is about – while transcending ourselves to make room for the Divine is what spirituality is about. Both go together and are not at odds with each other" (p.14). Like Riso, we believe that the Enneagram lays the groundwork for a more mature spirituality by providing a more accurate and complete description of each personality type. Indeed, the connection of personality with spirituality has important implications for the workplace.

In this paper, we point out that the Enneagram can be used by organisations to enhance spirituality in the workplace. Being proponents of action learning, we hold that people can learn and change through action. Accordingly, we put forth some guidelines for practitioners to enable them validate and increase the efficacy of this ancient tool even as they use it to develop (or "liberate") their employees.

The Enneagram

The Enneagram is an ancient technique of personality classification that dates back at least 2,500 years. Practitioners of the Enneagram (pronounced any-a-gram) regard it as a vital link between the psyche and the spirit. Figuratively, the Enneagram is a circle enclosing nine equidistant points connected by nine intersecting lines (see Figure 1).

The nine points in the Enneagram circle represent the different ways in which the nine underlying personalities constituting the Enneagram perceive and defend their "mental models" or realities. Peter Senge (1990) observes that the mental model each of us possesses determines not only how we make sense of the world, but also how we take action. This paper makes a case for including the Enneagram theory in the repertoire of tools and techniques to study organisational behaviour. We discuss the role Enneagram theory could play in motivating employees and illustrate how knowledge of the nine personality types can be applied in various HR sub-functions.

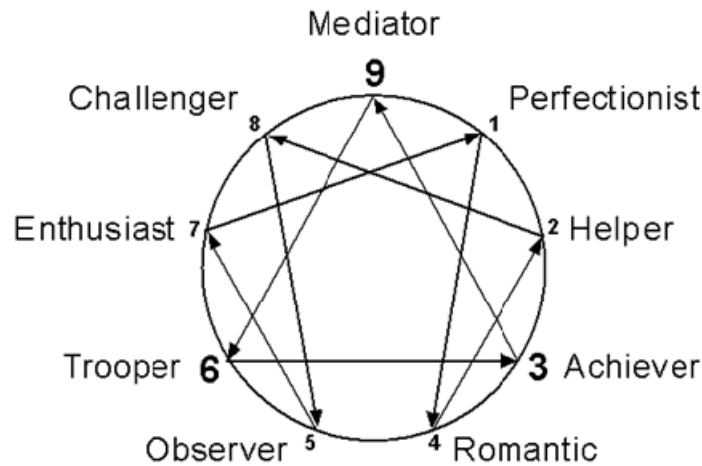


Figure 1. The Enneagram symbol

Evolution of the Enneagram

The history of the Enneagram remains vague and controversial. Riso (1990) has suggested that in order to better appreciate Enneagram origins, one needs to differentiate between the Enneagram symbol (Figure 1) and the descriptions of the nine types which are gaining such worldwide attention. The Enneagram symbol depicted in Figure 1 is ancient, dating back to Pythagoras or earlier. General agreement exists that George Gurdjieff brought the symbol to the West around the 1940s. The concept of the *nine personality types* seems to have surfaced later, and has its roots in several traditional teachings such as the Seven Deadly Sins (beginning in the 4th century), and the Kabbalah (beginning in the 12th century). *Descriptions* of the nine personality types, however, are legitimate contributions of modern authors such as Oscar Ichazo and Claudio Naranjo. Oscar Ichazo (1982) was the first to synthesise the symbol with elements of the teachings about the types. He also identified the basic core qualities of each of the nine personality types. This work was further expanded on by the psychiatrist Claudio Naranjo (1990) who also set up panels for gathering empirical information on each type. Toward the later stages of Enneagram theory development, Don Riso and Russ Hudson (1996) added new features to the Enneagram system such as elaborate systematic descriptions of each type and the within-type levels of development.

The Enneagram is widely used as a tool for enhancing self-awareness and self-growth. Several religious institutions deploy it for spiritual insight and development.

The spiritual and philosophical aspects of the Enneagram are indeed inspiring and fascinating. For the purposes of this paper, however, we will confine our attention to the ways in which the Enneagram can be harnessed in understanding employee behaviour and motivations. As Riso (1995) correctly observes, "Understanding the Enneagram is like having a pair of special glasses that allows us to see beneath the surface of people with amazing clarity: we may in fact see them more clearly than they see themselves."

We shall begin by examining the personality traits, drives and motives of each of the nine personality types. Each type develops an effective way of living in the world that is different from other types. Each type has a distinct worldview, and its placement of attention to various facets of the outside reality is also somewhat unique. People of each type exhibit characteristic habits of behaviour that impact their choices and shape their possibilities in various life matters.

The nine personality types

TYPE ONE: THE PERFECTIONIST

Type One in the Enneagram can be characterised as the rational idealistic individual. Ones live life in a principled, purposeful, and self-controlled manner. The basic desire of the One type is to do good to the world and live a balanced life. Ones possess a strong sense of right and wrong, and solidly adhere to religious and moral values. These values often cause them to be dissatisfied with reality. Such expression of dissatisfaction by Ones leads others to perceive them as being high-minded idealists or as being highly opinionated. Ones are very concerned about how others perceive them. Overly sensitive to criticism from others, they manifest

strong apprehensions of being judged negatively. They are also quick to form opinions about other people. In judging others, Ones look for evidence of ethical character as manifested in discipline, manners, appearance, and respect (Palmer 1995). Preferring doing to feeling, Ones focus more on work than on relationships. Ones dread being compromised by the mistakes of others. Extremely risk averse, they do not believe in taking chances as risks and chances lead to mistakes and doing the "wrong" thing.

TYPE TWO: THE HELPER

Type Two symbolises the caring interpersonal type whose basic desire is to feel loved. Twos exude a compassionate and empathetic persona that manifests in warmth, thoughtfulness, and sensitivity toward others. Forever wanting to be close to others, they sometimes tend to become "people pleasers", engaging in seductive attention and flattery (Riso and Hudson 1996). Highly responsive to approval and encouragement, Twos expend considerable effort in seeking positive strokes from those around them. They like to feel needed and even indispensable. This dependence on people results in a lack of personal freedom and in Twos experiencing a neglect of their own needs. Twos virtually tend to wear their emotions on their sleeves. Their exaggerated emotional displays can sometimes mask their true feelings. "Over giving" on the part of Twos often brings out their escapist tendencies and can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion (Palmer 1988). Twos get very angry when their real needs are at odds with their habitual pleasing behaviours. The people-centered approach makes them adept at relating to people and making friends. Generous, caring, and warm, they intuitively know what others need and what will make the lives of others better. Although outwardly unselfish, Twos do expect reciprocation for their good deeds. They feel devastated, hurt, and angry if their good actions are not acknowledged by way of cards, gifts, or other signs of appreciation.

TYPE THREE: THE ACHIEVER

Threes can be described as self-confident, adaptable, energetic, and outgoing. Possessing high self-esteem, they take a great deal of pride in themselves and their abilities. Striving for excellence is the singular hallmark of Threes. This success-orientation drives them towards becoming social climbers and careerists (Riso and Hudson 1996). Type Three comes closest to the "narcissistic personality," which usually goes hand in hand with exhibitionist and seductive behaviours. Threes sometimes tend to employ opportunistic and exploitative means to preserve their perception of self-superiority. In quest of the perfect public image, Threes crave affirmation and always want to be the center of attention. The uncommonly strong desire for achievement in Threes motivates them to acquire social sophistication and skill. Fiercely competitive and highly efficient in their manner of living, Threes believe that "love comes from what you produce, rather than from who you are" (Palmer 1988). Focused in their chase of success, Threes shoot for well-defined goals and feel amply rewarded when they achieve their goals. This reward seeking impulse often blinds Threes to their intrinsic value *devoid* of external accomplishments. Whatever insecurity Threes may have is masked and compensated for by their arrogance. Threes recover quickly from setbacks thanks to their optimistic nature. They do not like to be burdened by negative emotions or people and actively seek affiliations with successful and powerful individuals. Threes effectively use their credentials, titles, and degrees as means to impress their value and worth upon the world. Addiction to success can make Threes highly susceptible to workaholicism and manic-depression.

TYPE FOUR: THE ROMANTIC

The basic desire of Fours is to "find themselves" and reveal their unique significance (Riso and Hudson 1996). Fours take on an artistic, romantic orientation to life, often creating beautiful and aesthetic environments around them. They are capable of phenomenal inspiration as manifested in works of art, literature, or music. Fours crave for a deep emotional connection in all their experiences. As such, they are attracted to melancholy and intense situations including grief, death, and depression. Survival for Fours is contingent on being true to their emotional terrain. They take pride in being "special" or "different". Fours invariably complain that something is missing, something that would make their life whole. They secretly envy that others have that "something" which they do not. Consequently, Fours develop an obsession for the element in their life that is absent: a lover, a friend, or an unfulfilled dream. This preoccupation subjects them to experiences of dark moods, emptiness, and despair. Fours crave intensity and stimulation in order to feel alive. This sometimes leads them into dangerous situations like taking physical risks, breaking the law, or taking chances with their money. Ordinary reality is treated with disdain and Type Four will go to any lengths to intensify the experience of day-to-day living. Mundane experiences are often transformed through artistic sublimation or through fantasy and drama.

TYPE FIVE: THE OBSERVER

Fives are characterised by their singular ability to detach themselves from feelings, needs, and people. This ability arises in response to their basic fear of being overwhelmed by the world. Fives structure life in a manner that makes them as independent as possible. Disengagement with life translates into the Five's preference for thinking over acting and for observing over participating. Fives observe the reality around them with extraordinary perceptiveness and insight (Riso & Hudson 1996). This power of observation, combined with their aloof persona, makes Type 5 mentally alert, endowed with a searching intelligence. Fives are motivated to possess knowledge and believe that only knowledge can shield them from the world's intrusions. Such cognitive orientation inevitably leads to postponement of action (Naranjo 1990), and the delaying of emotions (Palmer 1998). Rather than experiencing emotions, Fives want to understand emotions. They take a special interest in analytic systems that explain human behaviour. Preoccupation with thoughts often results in Fives neglecting their physical health and appearance. They have little patience for big parties, loud music, overdone emotions, or anything else that they may deem as intrusion of privacy. Fives' sense of integrity translates into actions that they believe are right and not influenced by social pressure (Baron & Wagele 1994).

TYPE SIX: THE TROOPER

Type Six symbolises the committed, security-oriented type. Sixes are deeply devoted to individuals and movements in which they firmly believe. They are hardworking and persevering in their quest for stability and security. Sixes keep looking for an authority figure they can trust but also believe that most authority figures abuse their power. They have therefore been termed as "loyal skeptics." Doubt and anxiety in most facets of a their life results in "amnesia with respect to success and pleasure" (Palmer 1988). It is imperative for Sixes to have a support system in place. They tend to be the least independent of all types. As allies, Sixes are extremely loyal, expecting loyalty to shield them against life's doubts and anxieties. They exhibit great potential for emotional bonding with others, and value group identification, sociability, industriousness, and commitment to larger efforts (Riso 1992). The most security-conscious of all types, Sixes exhibit feelings of being persecuted, abandoned, and trapped when that security seems to be lacking. They are averse to assuming responsibility for their own actions and tend to blame others for their problems and mistakes. In their interactions with others, Sixes tend to be direct and assertive. Always anxious and hypervigilant, they tend to look for danger where none exists. Sixes critically analyse the ramifications of their actions in order not to jeopardise their safety (Baron & Wagele 1995). They stand by their in-group and are often sceptical of outsiders.

TYPE SEVEN: THE ENTHUSIAST

Type Seven is the "fun-loving" type; spontaneous, extroverted, and enthusiastic. Sevens tend to be practical, productive and worldly-wise (Riso & Hudson 1996). They want to maintain their freedom and happiness, to immerse in worthwhile experiences, and to keep themselves excited and occupied. Believing firmly that life is an adventure offering unlimited possibilities, Sevens see the bright side of any situation. They are idea people endlessly conjuring up visions and potentialities. Sevens value options over closure and this leads them into difficulties when committing to tasks and people. They are often perceived as being hedonistic and gluttonous. These qualities stem from their need to maintain high levels of excitement and from their "rationalised escapism to avoid difficult or limiting tasks" (Palmer 1988). Sevens seek people who will admire them and are thus most prone to sycophancy. Their desire for change and variety often translates into hyperactivity, superficiality, and impulsiveness (Riso 1992). Instant gratification is the hallmark of Type Seven. They absorb themselves in seeking out and maintaining high levels of stimulation, engaging in multifarious activities, and focusing singularly on the bright side of life. Stimulated by intellectual sparring, by different experiences, and by the possibility of being on the cutting edge, Sevens cannot bear the thought of their life being stable, secure, and routine.

TYPE EIGHT: THE CHALLENGER

Riso and Hudson (1996) describe type Eight as "the powerful dominating type." Eights tend to be self-confident, decisive, willful and confrontational. They are driven by self-sufficiency, financial independence, and autonomy. Eights like to exert their influence on those around them and feel a sense of accomplishment when their attempts of influence are successful. Direct and straightforward, Eights tend to be "what you see is what you get" kind of people. They are able to take charge and make quick decisions. Believing that only the strong survive, Eights divide the world into those who are worthy and those who are not. Eights do not care about being liked, to them respect is more important. They look for power in all situations and often tend to inflate

their presence in the company of others. Eights' desire to dominate often results in their being perceived as insensitive and punitive. They are given to aggression and open expression of anger (Palmer 1988). Type Eight is most comfortable viewing the world dichotomously: fair or unfair, strong or weak, good or bad. There is no possibility of a middle ground. Eights cannot tolerate ambiguity or lack of information. They have little patience for even small oversights on the part of others. Eights enthusiastically enforce those rules that match their personal agenda and flagrantly bend the ones that do not. Their main strengths are self-reliance and self-determination; their main weaknesses are ruthlessness and combativeness.

TYPE NINE: THE MEDIATOR

Nines tend to be easy-going, receptive, agreeable, and complacent (Riso & Hudson 1996). They are patient and unpretentious, radiating equanimity and contentment. Nines have a deep fear of conflicts and tend to be self-effacing and accommodating. They find it easier to go along with others' preferences rather than trying to find their own. Often, it is difficult for them to figure out what it is that they want. They are also fearful of their desires conflicting with those of others. Wanting life to be harmonious and comfortable, Nines develop a deep acceptance of different people and viewpoints. They feel energised by other people's enthusiasm. Nines often display a preference for procedures and set processes. They are perennially in quest of peace and harmony, and this pursuit tends to make them over-accommodating. Forever pacifying others, Nines are prone to neglecting themselves and their legitimate needs. They often engage in rituals such as watching TV, sleeping extra long hours, or working on the computer to suppress their feelings of anxiety and dissonance (Baron & Wagele 1995). While Nines have a difficulty in maintaining a personal point of view, they readily resonate and support the position of others. Staying on the fringes is their preferred mode of avoiding conflicts.

Complexities of human personality

At first glance, the above descriptions may seem nothing more than an exercise in stereotyping individuals. Detractors of the Enneagram system may even believe that such descriptions of personality types can make people jump to wrong and simplistic conclusions. This is certainly not the case. We believe that the Enneagram is not in any way more susceptible to being misused than other typologies currently enjoying a wider appeal (eg. MBTI, the Big Five dimensions, etc). Furthermore, the Enneagram acknowledges the complexities of the human psyche that other systems fail to recognise. It does so by introducing the concepts of *Wings* and *Security* and *Stress Points* and by providing a succinct explanation of the complex psychological defences used by each personality type.

Wings. While we have described the nine personality types, it is important to understand that no one is a "pure" personality type but is also influenced by a number on one of its flanks called the "wing" (Palmer 1995). In describing the "wing", Riso (1995, p14) observes, "Everyone is a unique mixture of his or her basic type and one of the two types adjacent to it on the circumference of the Enneagram. One of the two types next to your basic type is your wing". While basic type describes one's dominant personality, the wing complements it, adding other, sometimes contradictory, elements to personality. For example, someone with type Nine will have either a One-wing or an Eight-wing.

Security and stress points. The Enneagram asserts that people, under certain conditions of stress as well as security, abandon their basic personality type and temporarily access the attitudes and motivations of other personality types. But this "movement" to other personality types is not random; it follows a set pattern. Each number has its own stress and security points and when under stress or when feeling secure it tends to embrace the personality of these "pre-ordained" points. Notice in Figure 1 that each number either has an arrow going away from or moving towards it. Following the direction of the arrow that moves away from a number takes the number to its stress point and moving against the direction of the arrow that comes towards a number takes the number to its security point. For example, the figure shows that a Five has an arrow coming towards it from Eight and it has an arrow moving away from it towards Seven. Eight is therefore, the security point and Seven the stress point of Five. To understand how this movement takes place, consider the case of a Five under stress of meeting a tight deadline. Under such a circumstance a frightened or withdrawn Five might begin to act like a hyperactive Seven. Later, when vacationing after having met the deadline, this Five might manifest the powerful high side of an Eight.

The defence system. According to Enneagram theory, our defences are organised into a cohesive pattern by three specific functions: idealisation, avoidance and the defence mechanism (O'Hanharan 2000). These specific functions work in a tri-partite arrangement to keep the structure of an individual's personality in place. The

first function, idealisation is about who we think we ought to be in order to have value and self-worth. For example, Threes say "I am successful," Sixes say "I am loyal," and Nines say "I am harmonious." They can spend a lot of effort deceiving themselves to maintain the illusion that they actually are successful, or loyal, or harmonious. Or they can end up feeling very bad about themselves at failing to live up to their ideal (O'Hanharan 2000). But irrespective of whether they are successful in achieving their idealised state, this part of their personality can exert what may be called a "tyranny of their number" – everything is judged and measured by the yardstick of this number. We all like to avoid something that does not fit into our picture of who we are or how we should be. Our personality protects us from those traits that we want to avoid. This second function, avoidance, though the opposite of idealisation operates in symmetry with it and in fact reinforces the idealisation pattern. Idealisation is supposed to keep us away from what we want to avoid, but there is a catch. For example, Nines want to stay harmonious so that they can avoid conflict, but as O'Hanharan (2000) points out, conflict has a way of building up when not directly dealt with. So, at first idealisation and avoidance patterns keep us away from the place we do not want to experience, but eventually work to exacerbate the very situation we want to avoid. Finally, the third function, the defence mechanism, supports the dichotomy between idealisation and avoidance and keeps the whole system in place. Almost sub-consciously, we manifest behaviours that ensure that our idealisation and avoidance patterns remain intact. Given below is O'Hanharan's (2000) brief description of the defences of the personality types. The first phrase is the defence mechanism, as in "Ones use reaction formation" followed by description of the avoidance pattern and the idealisation.

1. Ones use reaction formation to avoid anger (i.e., direct anger) and to maintain a self-image of being right. Reaction formation is feeling one thing and then doing the opposite, such as feeling resentful but acting nice.
2. Twos use repression of personal needs and feelings to avoid being needy and to maintain a self-image of being helpful. Repression is putting one's "unacceptable" feelings out of awareness and converting them into a more acceptable kind of emotional energy.
3. Threes use identification to avoid failure and maintain a self-image of being successful. Identification is a kind of pervasive role playing and losing oneself in image.
4. Fours use introjection to avoid ordinariness and maintain a self-image of being authentic. Introjection is both an attempt to overcome deficiency by bringing in value from outside oneself and the habit of internalising blame for what goes wrong.
5. Fives use isolation to avoid emptiness and maintain a self-image of being knowledgeable. Isolation can be physical and geographical, but it also means being cut off from one's emotions.
6. Sixes use projection to avoid personal rejection and to maintain a self-image of being loyal. Projection is a way of attributing to others what one can't accept in oneself, both positive and negative.
7. Sevens use rationalisation to avoid suffering and to maintain a self-image of being okay. Rationalisation is a style of explaining and justifying in order to keep pain away or refuse to take responsibility.
8. Eights use denial to avoid vulnerability and to maintain a self-image of being strong. Denial is a kind of forceful re-directing of attention and feeling based on wilfulness and control.
9. Nines use narcotisation to avoid conflict and to maintain a self-image of being comfortable or harmonious. Narcotisation is using food and drink, entertainment, or simply repetitive patterns of thinking and doing to "put oneself to sleep."

Clearly, the Enneagram does take into account the myriad shades and complexities of human personality. According to the Enneagram theory, *a part contains the whole*. A personality number is but a partial expression of a person's essential self that contains all numbers. Though a person may have one dominant number, each individual possesses an essence that includes the qualities of all the nine numbers. The challenge of each person is to come in touch with his or her essence to be all that he or she can be. One of the obstacles that prevents individuals touch base with other numbers is their defence mechanism. The Enneagram acknowledges that we need some kind of ego defence system to protect us from harm and to maintain our sense of identity. But it also draws our attention to the fact that this very defence system is responsible for our biases and for our sub-conscious and instinctive patterns of thinking, feeling, and doing.

Applying the Enneagram theory

The potential of the Enneagram to inform the corporate world is immense. David Daniels, an Enneagram consultant, contends that organisations can apply the Enneagram at four levels: at the individual level to build self-awareness, at the dyadic level to improve inter-personal communication, at the group level for purposes of team-building and conflict-resolution, and at the organisational level to develop a conscious corporate culture (Issacs & Labanauskas 1998). For the purposes of this paper, we shall restrict ourselves to the organisation-individual interface.

HR APPLICATIONS

At the individual employee level, the role of the HR function has traditionally revolved around describing and analysing jobs, recruitment, and selection. Post selection, the HR function involves training and developing individuals, appraising their performance and compensating them. Let us take a brief look at how the Enneagram might inform these traditional and basic HR sub-functions.

Recruitment and Selection: Enneagram theory implies that a personality type is predisposed to enjoying certain types of jobs/tasks. For example, Ones are likely to revel in jobs that demand a perfectionist's attention to detail. While recruiting for such a job, HR professionals could draft a realistic job preview by highlighting certain aspects of the job that would appeal to Ones. Thus, the Enneagram can engender a desirable self-selection bias amongst job applicants. Moreover, while selecting an individual for such a job, instruments that measure personality traits could be used to identify the more evolved Ones. However, further work needs to be done to validate the instruments that are currently in vogue to accurately identify personality numbers.

Training and Development: Since the Enneagram identifies an individual's propensities and deficiencies, it can greatly assist in training and development. The training program could either choose to further the inherent strengths of a particular number or it could aim to develop individuals by showing them the way to connect with other numbers that lie within them yearning for an expression. As we have discussed, Enneagram theory states that individuals unconsciously/consciously suppress other numbers to maintain their sense of identity. While this defence mechanism plays a useful role, it also keeps individuals stuck in the lower aspects of their personality. Enneagram helps us understand how a defence mechanism operates in individual cases and therefore, it thus has the potential to enable individuals transcend their defence mechanisms.

Performance Appraisal: The Enneagram could prove particularly useful in improving the validity of performance appraisals. Knowledge of the Enneagram can raise self-awareness and sensitise people to interpersonal differences in a non-biased manner. The tool can particularly assist organisations that wish to implement 360-degree performance appraisals. Such performance appraisals are known to work best in organisations that foster an open participative culture with an emphasis on self-evaluation (Cardy and Dobbins 1993). We believe that Enneagram is one of the most potent tools available for raising self-awareness.

Pay and Compensation: The Enneagram can assist professionals customise an effective compensation system by providing them inputs on what is truly valued by a particular number. For example, it may not be enough to privately congratulate a Three for a job well done. A Three would, more than anything else, appreciate a public recognition. Similarly, if we wished to truly reward a Seven, we could do no better than to make the Seven in charge of starting a project from scratch – a Greenfield venture.

It is easy to appreciate the potential uses of the Enneagram theory in the field of managing people. In fact, each of the HR applications alluded to merit greater scrutiny in their own right. In the sections that follow, we discuss an issue of vital concern to most organisations. Our focus now shifts to examining how organisations might apply the Enneagram to motivate individual employees.

ENGENDERING INTRINSIC MOTIVATION THROUGH THE ENNEAGRAM

Organisations offer their members "deals" – inducements in exchange for contributions – with a view to convince them to adopt the goals of the organisation (Barnard 1938, March & Simon 1958). These deals, Heath (1999) observes, must address the various needs of employees in order to motivate them (cf. Maslow 1954, Alderfer 1972, Vroom 1964, Locke & Latham 1990). Heath (1999) goes on to add that while past research has recognised a deal's importance and its content, it is guilty of overlooking the deal's social psychology, ie how well does the organisation that is proposing the deal understand the person to whom the deal is targeted. Organisations are forced to make inferences as to what deal would effectively motivate a particular individual.

Currently, there is no theory that can assist them in making accurate inferences. It is much like shooting in the dark with both eyes closed and hoping for the best. We believe that Enneagram can come to the rescue of organisations. We now proceed to demonstrate how Enneagram theory can augment the efficacy of one of the existing theories on motivation.

It is generally accepted that when pay is contingent on performance, performance of employees is higher than when this contingency is not present. Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory, which enjoys widespread empirical support, advocates linking pay with performance in order to motivate performance. Expectancy theory can be summarised by a simple equation:

$$M = E \Sigma (IV)$$

Where,

M = Motivation

E = Expectancy (an individual's perceptions of the probability that effort will lead to task accomplishment or performance)

I = Instrumentality (perceptions of the probability that performance will result in rewards such as pay or recognition)

V = Valence (the subjective value or desirability that an individual places on the attainment of a certain reward)

As an example of how expectancy theory works, consider an organisation that decides to motivate its salespeople by sponsoring a contest. A ticket to the opening ceremony of the summer Olympics is announced as the reward for the top performing salesperson by the organisation. According to expectancy theory, the motivation of a salesperson will depend upon the salesperson's perception of his or her chance of emerging as the top performer, the belief that the company will actually live up to its word, and the desire of the salesperson concerned to watch the opening ceremony. According to the equation, all the three components (E, I, V) should be high to motivate high performance. If an individual believes that she has absolutely no chance of excelling other salespersons (zero E), or thinks that her organisation does not have the wherewithal to obtain a ticket for the opening ceremony (low I), or if she does not enjoy witnessing opening ceremonies (low V), then the contest for salespeople will fail in its objective of motivating her performance.

Expectancy theory identifies components of what may be called extrinsic motivation, i.e., motivation contingent mainly upon external factors. In the above example, a person's belief in her own ability gets tempered by the ability of others, the organisation's *actual* ability to deliver a reward also plays a role, as does the type of reward promised by her employer. All these factors form part of an external environment over which the employee has little or no control. But motivation need not necessarily be contingent on external factors. Furthermore, several government and unionised organisations are not in a position to make pay (or other rewards) contingent upon performance. Such organisations rely mainly on the ability of their leaders to motivate employees and the innate ability of employees to motivate themselves. The armed forces are a case in point. Conventional wisdom limits the applicability of expectancy theory in the case of such organisations. We contend that an organisation can combine Enneagram theory with expectancy theory to engender intrinsic or self-motivation. The equation essentially remains the same:

$$M_i = E_{s\Sigma} (I_s V_p)$$

Where,

M_i = Intrinsic motivation

E_s = Expectancy (an individual's expectation from oneself to accomplish the task in question successfully)

I_s = Instrumentality (individual's self-awareness that performance will result in satisfaction/pleasure)

V_p = Valence (the subjective value or desirability that an individual places on the anticipated feeling of satisfaction or pleasure)

Enneagram theory identifies the internal motivations of each of the personality types. According to the theory, each number is pre-disposed or "hard-wired" to enjoy doing a particular type of task. Fives, for example, are likely to enjoy intellectually intriguing tasks. People generally like to do what they are good at and they prefer to avoid doing things that they are not very good at. Moreover, people expect of themselves to perform well in tasks that they enjoy doing. Further, they are aware (from experience) that they derive a very special kind of pleasure in accomplishing tasks that their internal value system consciously or subconsciously subscribes to. In other words, Enneagram theory suggests that individuals cannot help getting motivated, provided their energies are engaged in a manner that answers their calling. The accomplishment of a task, in fact, the very act

of engaging in a task can act as a reward unto itself. Table 1 summarises the underlying motivations and inspirations of different personality numbers. This table can guide managers to design jobs and allocate tasks. Enneagram theory can potentially lend new meaning to the term, "right man for the right job".

Table 1. What motivates and inspires personality types

Personality number	What motivates or inspires
One	Empowerment to improve and reform
Two	Making a difference to others
Three	Winning – being known as the best
Four	Making a unique creative contribution
Five	Quest for wisdom
Six	Commitment to a cause or higher ideal
Seven	Unlimited options and possibilities
Eight	Power – opportunity to serve through strength
Nine	Working through harmony

(Excerpted from Sheppard, L. 2000 "The Everyday Enneagram")

We had earlier stated that the challenge of each person is to come in touch with his or her essence to be all he or she can be. Here we seem to be advocating that jobs be tailored to tap the peculiar energy patterns of a number. This may appear to be contradictory. One could argue that tailoring of jobs has the potential to hinder all round development of an individual and prevent the person from being all that he or she can be. Besides, it may not always be possible to tailor jobs around individuals. Competitive advantage often accrues from having versatile employees who can rise to any challenge. These are legitimate concerns, but the Enneagram theory does address them. Challenging jobs are seldom unidimensional. In the process of rising to the challenge, individuals are forced to move to their stress and security points, to connect with their other-selves and shed off self-serving defence mechanisms. Enneagram suggests that the very design of a job and appropriate tasking of individuals to perform the job in question can develop individuals and make them versatile. For some jobs that cannot be "customised," the answer may lie in hiring highly evolved personality types suited for a particular job. Evolution in the Enneagram implies connectivity of an individual with other numbers. The underlying philosophy of "*a part containing the whole*" implies that a truly evolved person has the enviable capacity to draw from within whatever resource that may be needed to accomplish a job. It is no doubt difficult to find such individuals. Fortunately, most of the jobs in the current work environment lend themselves to being performed by teams. Enneagram theory can again come to the rescue by helping us select team players whose skills complement each other. Indeed the areas in which this ancient body of knowledge can be applied to are as limitless as the power of one's imagination.

References

- Alderfer, C.P. 1972. *Existence, relatedness, and growth: Human needs in organizational settings*. NY: Free Press.
- Barnard, C.I. 1938. *The functions of the executive*. Cambridge, M.A: Harvard Univ. Press.
- Baron, R. and Wagele, R. 1995. *Are You My Type, Am I Yours? Relationships Made Easy through the Enneagram*. SanFrancisco, CA: Harper.
- Cardy, B and Dobbins, G. 1993. The changing face of performance appraisal: Customer evaluations and 360o appraisals. *Human Resources Division News*, 16 (Spring): 17-18.
- Heath, C. 1999. *On the social psychology of agency relationships: Lay theories of motivation overemphasize*

extrinsic motivation.

Ichazo, O. 1982. *Interviews with Oscar Ichazo*. New York, NY: Arica Institute Press.

Issacs, A. & Labnauskas, J. 1998. A conversation with David Daniels (Part I). *Enneagram Monthly*: 4 (3).

Locke, E.A. & Latham, G.P. 1990. *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

March, J.G., & Simon, H.A. 1958. *Organizations*. NY: John Wiley.

Maslow, A.H. 1954. *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper & Row

Naranjo, C. 1990. *Ennea-type structures*. Nevada City, CA: Gateway.

O'Hanrahan, P. 2000. The Defense System. *Enneagram Monthly*: 6(2)

Palmer, H. 1988. *The Pocket Enneagram: Understanding the 9 Types of People*. Harper & Row.

Palmer, H. 1995. *The Enneagram in Love and Work*. New York, NY: Harper Collins.

so, D.R. 1992 *Discovering Your Personality Type*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Riso, D.R., & Hudson, R. 1996. *Personality Types: Using the Enneagram for Self-Discovery*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Riso, D.R. 1990 *Understanding the Enneagram*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Senge, P.M. 1990. *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York, NY: Double Day/Currency.

Sheppard, L. 2000. *The Everyday Enneagram*. Nine Points Press: CA.

Vroom, V.H. 1964. *Work Motivation*, Willey: New York.