

## CHAPTER 7.8



### FEED YOUR FOCUS

It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see.

—Henry David Thoreau

**Stage characteristic: The child can get diverted and lose a sense of purpose.**

*When some things you do don't reap the expected outcomes, you feel it's not worth it. But when you are opened to seeing that activity in a new light that actually enhances you some way, you rediscover your own self. The Father Manager tells you how.*

An escalation mail from a customer read, "How can your service staff say that this phone doesn't support video player?" Freddie asked Arnold to find out the problem. Arnold rushed after a while and said, "Freddie, something funny happened. I asked that guy to search the knowledge base. It's true, he couldn't find the video feature. That's because he searched with a weird spelling—VEDIO."

Freddie smiled with his dimples seeming deeper. "I'll address it to the customer. But this is interesting, Arnold. Let's not leave it here. There is always more than one purpose, reason, and benefit from any incident in life. The more we find, the more successful we are. Why can't we present every error in an entertaining way? It is possible."

The weekly creative newsletter was a runaway hit. People loved it! The impact of a few errors in that week was connected creatively to an interesting story with cartoons. The moral of the story was related to tips to prevent errors. Arnold's team was excited to have drafted those weekly newsletters that

## Father Of Your Team

had a message with humor. Arnold and his team started reading stories from folk tales to Anton Chekov's stories to biographies. Arnold's team realized that there's a lot more to enjoy in learning. In less than three weeks of the launch, the client sent in an appreciation.

Three months passed.

Arnold looked dull and muttered, "I don't think there's a point in rolling out the creative newsletters."

Freddie was baffled and asked him, "Why do you think so?"

Arnold replied, "I found that only ten of the forty guys had read the last two newsletters! Others said that they didn't have time to read. We'd put so much of effort into it. I am feeling it's a waste."

Freddie then asked with some interest, "Do you gain from the effort of creating newsletters?"

Arnold suddenly turned excited and said, "Yes. My team and I read at least ten stories every week to be able to get four stories for it. I learned fascinating things about leaders, celebrities and have saved over thirty industry case studies in my folder. My writing style has improved as well."

Freddie assured him. "That's the point, Arnold. You've gained and you'll continue to gain in many ways. Your articulation and exposure improve. Think again. Do you want to lose an opportunity that gives 'you' this gain? It's my desire to continue with something that gives you the growth."

Arnold thanked Freddie for opening up a new perspective and committed to continue with the newsletter not just for readership but for improving his skills as well.

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## CHAPTER 7.9



### DIFFICULT ROADS, DESIRABLE DESTINATIONS

Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.

—Albert Einstein

**Stage characteristic:** The child's needs grow. The child may want a college education abroad or a car. The Father tries his best to fulfill the child's aspiration. There will be times when the father may not be able to fulfill considering his own constraints. At times, the child may not understand that the father desires the best for his child and tries to his fullest.

*Expecting the unexpected is not only an attitude worthy of following in life but also when you are on a job. How will you react if you are told pay rise will not happen this year? The Father Manager negotiates that difficult situation and also sees some changes happening.*

This has never happened before. The news was unbelievable. Freddie knew that he is answerable to his team. The problem is he didn't have an answer that convinces his team. The conversation with Martha three weeks ago haunted him. "I am here for you, Martha. You'd done an awesome job! Transferring you to the publishing team will not affect your increment. Don't worry about money," recalled Freddie.

Freddie was deeply worried, "How can I tell my team that no one gets increment this year? What will they ask when they know that the increment applies only to the Research team and critical staff at the Seattle site? Vishy is already in financial trouble. How would he manage? I always wanted them to outgrow me. Their financial needs have outgrown them. Leaving motivation aside, how do I satisfy my team's aspirations?"

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Freddie broke the news to Arnold, Martha, and Henry. Martha was carefully noticing Freddie's face to find out if he was playing mischief. A small smile shined around Martha's lips. They couldn't believe it easily. Reality took time to sink in.

Freddie listened to them for long and explained, "It's important for the organization to survive for the employees like us who depend on it, for survival. The unexpected has happened. Yet, this is not the worst that could happen."

"What's the point in all the efforts, Freddie?" Arnold echoed the question that Martha and Henry wanted to ask.

Freddie tried his best to counter that question. "You have been putting these efforts every year, Arnold. This is the only occasion it didn't give you a 'monetary result.' You've got the 'skill result.' That's why you were able to win an award amidst our competitors at the summit. You are one among the many who don't have the option to change this," sighed Freddie. "I wish I could do something wonderful for you. Every due will come in its due course."

Freddie waited for a response. Their silence worsened the mystery. Martha wept. Henry stood frozen. The only words from Henry were "This is ridiculous!"

Freddie opened up again. "It pains me that I'm not able to get you what you want. The business scenario and the organization's profit are not predictable. Financial situation will change for the better—for you and the company. Let's give time for it to happen."

With confusion writ on their faces, the team moved out in silence. Freddie had a hard time not convincing them, but thinking how Martha and Vishy were to manage their situation.

The next day, Arnold bounced back and was almost normal. Henry was reclusive. He started to take the Wing-B lift and avoided meeting Freddie until the end of the week for his review. Freddie didn't get his increment either. His worry was on not being able to get his team what they expected him to.

Three weeks rolled on.

## Differentiation Stage

When collecting stories for the next creative newsletter, Arnold came across a story of a street-smart prince. He narrated that story to Henry. Henry found a messiah in Arnold. That story was so timely. Henry returned to his usual self. Realization dawned on him that caring advice from an experienced mentor can be more powerful than money.

**How did a prince become street-smart? It's not a fairy tale. Arnold has posted it for you at <https://www.authorvenkat.com/book/Freddie4u/streetsmartprince>**

Within two weeks, Freddie took time to draft a compelling proposal for interim compensation revision to his next level. Arnold, Martha, Henry, and some of their deserving team members featured in the recommendation. Meeting with Valerie to push through recommendations became almost a daily affair. Yet, Freddie couldn't turn a stone in seven months.

Martha got ready to move on to the Publishing team. She knew Freddie would have attempted for compensation revision. On the day she decided to move on, she asked Freddie for advice. Freddie responded, "Understanding the reality on what you can control in a business braces you for being successful. Only when you understand that you will focus on what matters."

Vishy thought that his earning potential could be higher in a different team. Months later, Vishy completed his long-pending course in Augmented Reality and applied for a position with the research team.

Freddie knows that this is a part of the journey that his team members and he are required to pass through. He would miss seeing them daily. Yet he was happy that their exposure will make them grow bigger. When Arnold asked him about Martha and Vishy leaving, Freddie observed, "They need their space to grow. They will now be seen by different other people in the organization. That's important for them to grow. My pride is in seeing them fly and not seeing them in my nest and under my wings." Freddie knew that the experiential wisdom and care he invested on them will only make this move better for them.

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To summarize, the Father Manager distinguishes in the Differentiation Stage by

- Making employees value and own a sense of discipline. Recognize discipline as a facilitator and not a restraint.
- Mirroring—understand what their heart beats for, identify likes and incorporate these in people processes for greater bonding.
- Mentoring and encouraging focus on long-term success factors, break the habit of focusing on short-term gains more so if the short term gains do not support long-term gains and vision.
- Mentoring the team and guiding their effort toward continued learning and share the acquired learning with other team members. This would help the individual to grow in stature. The team grows in terms of knowledge.
- Displaying concern on the staff's overall well-being rather than being mindful of their performance at any cost.
- Recognizing mistakes as an opportunity to review and improve staff's leadership growth.
- Not ignoring any signals that impede growth and addressing it. Making staff realize the need for change.
- Encouraging team to demonstrate behavior and preferences, which lead to creating a positive perception and image of the team.
- Helping staff find the rationale behind tactical decisions taken in organizations from time to time.
- Spending off-the-job personal time with the team, for enhancing their personal effectiveness.
- Supporting employees to identify multiple roles which they can perform by leveraging their present skill sets and thereby, enhance their career prospects.

## Differentiation Stage

- Coaching staff to take a balanced decision during a crisis.
- Expanding intellectual horizons of staff by getting them enthused to learn.

Let's pole-vault to the "On Demand Stage", the seventh stage of natural relationship. Pole vault stick takes the pole-vaulter high. Yet, the pole-vaulter cannot take the stick along to the other side. You will see how the growth of the team member is almost on an auto-pilot mode in the "On Demand Stage". Their roles transform even when the Father Manager spends lesser time with them and the relationship grows strong.