

Puti Indaswari

MGT764

Case 2 - Blessed with the Boss's Son

1. What do you see as the fundamental, underlying problem here?

The main problem in this case is that Roger does not take his job seriously. He lacks accountability and does not feel the need to work hard. This is likely because he has always been treated differently from the rest of the crew. His father, Harold, gave him more manageable tasks, better pay, and special treatment just because he was his son. This kind of favoritism, also known as nepotism, made Roger believe he could do whatever he wanted without facing any real consequences.

This favoritism also created confusion about who was really in charge. Even though Bob is supposed to be the temporary boss, Roger still sees Harold as the one with real authority. When Bob tried to assign Roger new tasks, Roger ignored him. Roger believed that he didn't have to listen to Bob because his father was still "the boss." The manager didn't help either. He knew about the problem but didn't back Bob up, making Roger feel even more untouchable.

Because Roger got away with doing very little and still got paid more than others, the rest of the crew started to feel frustrated. It's hard to stay motivated when someone is getting special treatment while doing less work. This unfair situation has brought down team morale. The workers used to be close and hardworking, but now they are upset and losing motivation. This is shown clearly when the whole crew stops working before lunch just because they are frustrated with Roger.

In short, the real issue is not just Roger's behavior but the way the workplace allows it. Without clear leadership and fair rules for everyone, people stop caring about doing a good job. The longer this continues, the worse the team's performance and attitude will get.

2. Analyze this situation from a motivational standpoint using the following models. Use the concepts and the terminology of each model as you apply it.

Roger's needs using Maslow's Hierarchy

Using Maslow's Hierarchy, Roger's basic physiological needs are met. He has a job, gets

paid more than others, and receives easier tasks. Because he is Harold's son, he enjoys privileges that protect him from being held to the same standards as the rest of the team. This helps cover the bottom level of the hierarchy, but it doesn't go much further.

His safety needs are only partially met. While his job is secure due to nepotism, he doesn't have emotional or psychological security. His father, Harold, dominates the workplace and has little time to guide or support Roger personally. Harold's obsession with work may have left Roger feeling neglected or pressured to live in his father's shadow. This lack of emotional support can leave someone feeling unstable, even if their job is safe.

Roger's love and belonging needs are clearly unmet. He struggles socially and tries hard to win over Sue, who doesn't feel the same way. His acne and awkwardness have likely made dating hard, and his nickname "Little Harold" shows that others don't see him as his own person. Instead of feeling like part of the team, Roger is often seen as an outsider who only has his position because of his dad.

Roger's esteem needs are also not satisfied. He gets more money and easier tasks, but not because he earned them. His coworkers don't respect him, which affects his self-esteem. He acts defensive and difficult, possibly because he knows deep down that he hasn't done anything to deserve his spot. Lastly, his self-actualization is not being met at all. He's smart and described as a mathematical genius, but he doesn't use his skills or challenge himself. He wastes his time chasing Sue and avoiding work, showing no interest in growth or purpose.

Roger's perspective using Expectancy Theory

Using the Expectancy Theory, we can understand why Roger chooses to goof off instead of doing good work. This model looks at three things: expectancy (if effort will lead to good performance), instrumentality (if good performance will lead to rewards), and valence (how much the person values those rewards).

If Roger chooses to do good work, his motivation is very low. His expectancy is weak because he has not shown much interest or belief that working hard will change anything. His instrumentality is also weak to moderate because he already gets high pay and easy jobs without trying, so working harder doesn't seem to bring better rewards. Finally, the valence is low or even negative. He doesn't seem to care about things like earning respect or personal growth, and working harder might actually take away some of the perks he gets now.

On the other hand, goofing off has high motivation for Roger. His expectancy is strong, he knows he can slack off and still keep his job. His instrumentality is also strong because this behavior leads to the same pay, little stress, and no consequences. The valence is positive because he gets time to flirt with Sue, avoid hard tasks, and relax. These are all things he values more than working hard or being respected.

So, from Roger's point of view, goofing off makes sense. It gives him what he wants with little effort and no risk. Unless something changes, like a real chance to earn rewards for working hard or a real risk of consequences for slacking off, he has no reason to change his behavior. According to the Expectancy Theory, his lack of motivation is a logical outcome of how the system is set up around him, especially under his father's management.

Roger's perspective using Equity Theory

From Roger's view, the situation seems fair. In Equity Theory, people judge fairness by comparing what they put into a job (inputs) and what they get out of it (outputs). He doesn't put in much effort, but he still gets higher pay, easier tasks, job security, and free time to socialize. He might believe that being Harold's son is a valid reason for getting more. In his mind, that family connection is an "input" that makes the rewards feel deserved.

Roger probably doesn't value hard work the same way others do. So when he looks at his coworkers doing harder jobs for less pay, he doesn't see it as unfair. He may feel entitled to what he gets, and since he's never faced consequences, nothing is pushing him to think otherwise. Even though Roger feels it's fair, the rest of the crew sees things very differently. They work more, get less, and see him getting special treatment for no real reason. This creates a strong sense of unfairness and lowers motivation. To fix this, the workplace needs to reward people based on effort, not personal relationships.

The crew's perspective using Equity Theory

From the crew's perspective, the situation feels unfair and frustrating. They work hard, take on both easy and challenging tasks, and follow the rules. Many of them have been at the Harborside for years and care about the quality of their work. They show up, do their part, and expect to be treated fairly. But when they compare their own input and output to Roger's, it doesn't add up.

Roger puts in minimal effort. He skips out on complex jobs, flirts by the pool, and does the easiest work available. Despite this, he earns more money and faces no consequences. The

rest of the crew sees this and feels disrespected. They know that if they behaved like Roger, they'd be disciplined or even fired. This difference in how people are treated destroys trust in the system.

In terms of the Equity Theory, the crew's input/output ratio is much worse than Roger's. They bring more to the job and get less in return. This creates what's called "negative inequity"—they feel under-rewarded for the work they do. Seeing someone receive rewards without earning them makes people feel cheated, and that can lead to burnout, anger, or even quitting.

The impact is already showing. Team morale has dropped, and the unity they once had is starting to break. When the crew sat in the garage and stopped working early, it was a clear sign they'd had enough. If management wants to keep this team strong, they need to fix the imbalance by holding Roger accountable and making sure all workers are treated fairly.

3. If you were Bob, specifically what would you do, both regarding Roger and regarding the crew?

If I were Bob, I would start by checking in with Roger privately. His behavior is clearly a problem, but it's also important to remember that his father is sick and about to step away from the job, which likely shakes Roger's sense of security. Harold has been Roger's primary support system at work, and now that foundation is unstable. Before jumping into consequences, I would ask Roger how he's doing, how he's coping, and what's on his mind. Building that trust might help Roger open up and see Bob as someone who's trying to help, not just control him.

Once that connection is made, I would be clear with Roger about what needs to change. I'd remind him that his dad has worked hard for years and helped build the inn's reputation. If Roger continues to slack off, he's not just harming the team, but he's damaging the legacy his dad built. This would be a chance to show that Bob isn't just calling him out but giving him a chance to step up and grow. I'd explain that things will be different moving forward. Like everyone else, Roger will be expected to do his fair share of the work.

Next, I would slowly start rotating Roger into everyday tasks, including tougher ones. I wouldn't throw everything at him at once, but I'd start small and make it clear that he's part of the crew and not above it. I'd track his progress with short weekly check-ins. If he makes progress, I'd praise it to build confidence. If he doesn't, I'd give clear warnings and document

everything. This step-by-step approach allows Roger to earn respect and feel capable without feeling attacked or embarrassed. At the same time, I would increase transparency across the crew. I'd create a task schedule and rotation chart that everyone can see. This would show that jobs are now being assigned fairly. I'd also introduce a weekly check-in system where people can track progress and speak up if there are problems. Making the process visible helps remove doubts about favoritism and gives everyone a clear picture of who's contributing what.

I'd hold a short team meeting to rebuild trust with the rest of the crew. I'd acknowledge that things haven't always been fair, but changes are happening to fix that. I wouldn't call Roger out directly, but I'd explain that everyone will now follow the same standards. I'd also invite the team to give feedback and be part of the decision-making on things like rotating duties. This shows respect and helps them feel valued again.

Lastly, I'd keep coaching Roger. I'd remind him that he has potential; he's smart, capable, and he has a chance to earn genuine respect. But to get that, he has to work for it like everyone else. Instead of punishing him right away, I'd guide him. His motivation may shift if he can start seeing value in doing a good job. This approach doesn't just solve the problem short term, but it also gives Roger a chance to grow and possibly become a better team member in the long run.