



Chapter 11

“The iWAM Clock”

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One of the most amazing features about the *Inventory for Work Attitude and Motivation* (iWAM) is the ability to calculate a “Clock” for an individual.

What’s an iWAM “Clock?”

It is the chronological answer to the question: “How long is this individual likely to be comfortable and fully engaged in a job or major project until he or she is burned out or bored?”

That’s a significant question!

- #1-What, for example, if you were hiring a person into a major executive position in a fairly stable company and the individual only had a “Clock” of 1-2 years?
- #2-What if you had a top performer whose production on the job suddenly began to decline for no apparent reason?
- #3-What if you hired a person with a “Clock” of 7-8 years into an executive development program that requires a job rotation every two years?

Assuming that the individuals in these questions are (a) competent and (b) well-matched to the work they are doing, the answer, based on the “Clock” may be:

#1 – This individual may well be back in the job market looking for another job in a couple of years (which could be a problem if you invested a lot of money recruiting and retaining this individual).

#2 – Time in the position may be a factor in performance decline. If, for example, the individual had a “Clock” of 4-5 years and he or she had been in the position for six or more years, boredom or burnout may be a factor.

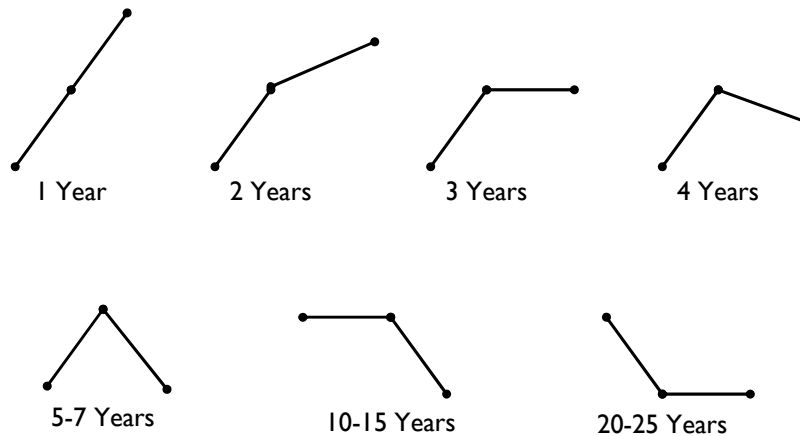
#3 – Here we have the reverse of a shorter (1-3 year) “Clock.” In this case, the career development cycle requires a move. If an individual has a medium- or long-term “Clock,” the constant change could be disruptive and cause declines in performance. There is also a possibility that the change would only have the effect of “resetting” the “Clock.” (See below.)

Calculating the Clock

The iWAM “Clock” is an indicator of *change*. The “Clock” is calculated by graphing the results of the three iWAM change scales (Similarities, Evolution, Differences) and comparing the resulting graph to the template below. The shape of the graph that most closely resembles one of the template shapes is the “Clock” for the individual.



The iWAM “Clock”



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Patrick Merlevede, the president of jobEQ, offers a couple of pointers about the relationship between an individual and the “Clock”:

- A person must change something about their job/task when the “alarm” rings or their energy or emotional state declines, productivity suffers, or other inadvertent changes occur.
- The longer an individual waits before resetting the “Clock,” the larger the change will need to be for the person to feel like the change met their needs (i.e., to reset their “Clock”).

The Effect of the Clock

We offer two quick examples:

1. We found a sales organization in which three good to great performers were looking for another job (without the organization’s knowledge). When asked, all three indicated that (a) they liked the company, (b) they liked the person for whom they worked, and (c) they enjoyed their job. When subsequently asked why, with those conditions, they were job-hunting, all three gave some version of “. . . it just feels like its time for a change.”
2. We found a professional who had a history of what personnel people would call “job hopping.” Every couple of years, she would change companies. When we looked at her iWAM change scores, we found that she had a “Clock” of about 2 years. In this case, the coaching process brought the “Clock” to awareness and we counseled on some strategies for resetting her “Clock” in order to reduce the probability that she would leave a position after a couple of years. In addition to giving her a personal strategy for dealing with the condition, she also had the opportunity to discuss this situation with prospective employers as well as to explore ways to adjust her “Clock” in the future.

Conclusion

The iWAM takes an average of 30 minutes to complete. With only forty questions, it is amazing to see how much information is gained from it. The “Clock” is one valuable piece of information that can be useful to HR organizations and recruiters.

The “Clock” can be useful to managers as they implement specific strategies with high performing individuals to increase the probability that they will stay with the organization and not leave as a way of resetting the “Clock.”

Finally, individuals will find the “Clock” valuable as they assess various job opportunities and contexts and evaluate the fit between those opportunities and themselves.

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