

PSYCHOLOGY IN ORDER TO FOSTER FUNCTIONALITY:

The field of psychology has focused a lot of effort in developing a working definition of dysfunctional states. Lately the profession has found that it might be **more** helpful to define what we mean by functionality. Some good research seems to be painting a rather interesting picture:

The Functional Person:

- Gives “I” messages. Listens and communicates actively and accurately
- Feels happy, calm and clear-minded a majority of the time
- Is not easily offended. Does not perceive most things as offensive or as a direct attack unless there is clear and direct evidence over a period of time. When this does occur they either deal with the issue directly with the person involved or put it behind them and out of their mind.
- Sets goals
- Has a broad base of knowledge and is constantly adding to it. This knowledge base is not overly polluted with personal opinions or bias.
- Has good problem solving and decision making skills
- Has and understands clear values
- Is congruent and open. Makes little or no effort to hide thoughts and actions from direct observation of others and does not attempt to obfuscate.
- Feels basically in control of most aspects of their life. Does not feel uncontrollably drawn into certain thinking or behavior patterns.
- Generally feels confident and glad to be alive.
- Enjoys the company of others
- Is sensitive to the feelings and needs of others around them and has the ability to choose to put the needs and feelings of others above their own.
- Does not live to please, placate or appease
- Does not blame, accuse, or criticize
- Does not withdraw, clam up, or depart

- Does not give gratuitous advice or attempt to control others

The Functional Family or group:

- Is built on a quality relationship between parents, leaders or members of the group who see one another as equal partners
- Has the focus of attention on building an environment which will encourage the growth and development of each individual member of the group or family
- Spends more time teaching and mentoring than punishing
- Has family or group members more interested in listening and communicating than being in control
- Encouragement is more common than criticism
- All members are involved in the process and efforts are made to individualize the environment for each family or group member
- Has love evident. Energy and effort are spent on inclusion rather than isolation or distancing

The Functional Organization is an organization where the leaders are:

- Both customer and employee oriented
- Customer and employee advocates
- Organizationally astute
- Influencing
- Interpersonally diagnostic
- Goal-oriented
- Persistent
- Organized
- Mentoring of subordinates
- Collaborative
- Initiating
- Professional
- Conceptual
- Innovative

- Communicative
- Self-confident
- Not likely to attempt to force others to follow their lead or decisions
- Not likely to emphasize the outcome over the process
- Not likely to attempt to control through administrative directives or controlling behaviors

A Sample Corporate Constitution for a Functional Organization:

As an organization we believe in the principle of promoting the individual growth and development of each and every member of our organization. We believe that investing in our employees will ultimately result in an effective and dynamic team of independent, creative, and responsible individuals capable of making significant contributions. We believe in the following basic principles to govern how we work together to achieve the goals of our organization:

1. We believe that there must be a framework of basic principles of honesty, reliability and responsibility, which govern our behavior as a group and as individuals within the group.
2. We feel that each staff member has a significant contribution to make to all decisions made by and for the organization.
3. We are committed to the idea that the responsibility of taking care of our work environment is shared equally by every member of the staff. We will regularly make specific assignments for specific tasks to be done by individuals, but the general care and keeping of how we work together and the quality of the products and services that we provide to our customers as well as the quality of the interactions among and between is the shared responsibility of all of us.
4. We agree that each of us has a responsibility to help create a positive and nurturing environment where each of us feels secure, safe, valued, and that each of us knows that we can count on one another to follow the principles that we have established. We will help each other to achieve significant personal and professional growth. We do not believe in, nor do we accept any behavior that might be considered or perceived to be sexual, emotional, or physical harassment or purposely offensive.

5. We agree that any time any one of us feels insecure, unsafe, harassed or not valued that we will discuss our feelings with the individual most directly concerned to attempt to resolve the situation in private. When this direct one-on-one approach does not seem to be successful we will bring the matter to a grievance process designated by mutual agreement with an acceptable third party. We agree to be open and direct in our communications with one another.