

for the future. Even when you sit in one place, which means the brain is stationary, does the mind wander around, visit many places, and come back? How will you tame the monkey mind? Do you see correlates with Monkey God Hanuman?

THREE QUESTIONS

1. Reflect on this story and review if there is a Jambuvant around you who will give you feedback on your strengths, which you may not be aware of. What is the role of trust in self and trust in others for you to be able to succeed in these behaviors? How will you establish trust?
2. What belief systems or fears stop you from expanding the open window? How will you overcome them?
3. Make a list of behaviors you want to experiment with to expand yourself. How will you increase your risk-taking ability? How will an expanded open window benefit you, your team, and the organization in achieving performance results?

NOTE

1. The curse is highlighted in Kishkindha Kanda and Sundara Kanda.

2.2 Learning from Nature

Chellie Spiller

Keywords: attitudes, behavior, conflict management, emotional intelligence, internal locus of control, managing stress, organizational culture, organizational commitment, performance, personality, person-job fit, resilience, valuing diversity

Courses this story can be used in: Workplace Diversity, Leadership, Organizational Communication, Organizational Behavior

Topics: understanding personality, emotional intelligence, internal locus of control, person-job fit, conflict management, managing stress, building social capital, organizational culture

THE STORY

For Māori, learning from nature can be a powerful and enlightening experience that leads us to better understand ourselves. For example, the pāua,¹ a member of the abalone family that lives in the rocky coastal regions of New Zealand, provides a wonderful opportunity for developing insights into organizational behavior. The pāua is oval-shaped, punctuated by a row of holes used for breathing and reproduction. The black-footed pāua eats seaweed with a rough tongue embedded with thousands of tiny sharp teeth and usually grows up to 180 millimeter in size. The strong, muscular foot enables them to glide across the rocks when foraging. Its predators include crabs, lobsters, octopuses, starfish, and tube worms.

Pāua is much loved in the tribe I come from, Ngāti Kahungunu, both as a *kai moana*, an edible seafood delicacy, and as a *taonga*, a precious gift. When I was growing up we would race along the wild beaches hunting for pāua shells to decorate our house and garden. Hunting for pāua at the lowest spring-tide level we would use broad, blunt knives to prise them off the rocks to which they cling with tremendous suction. Later, after pounding them into tenderness, my family would gather together and eat delicious pāua fritters. My mother would often joke and call me a pāua if I was being clingy, in reference to the black muscular foot of the abalone that can cling staunchly to rocks. When visiting marae, the communal meeting houses, the pāua eyes in the carvings of the ancestors would glow in the evening and I would feel deeply reassured and safe in their spiritual embrace.

As you study the pāua shell you will see that the thick inner layer is composed of very strong, resilient, and opalescent nacre, or mother-of-pearl, which changes when turned in the light. Each shell has its own unique inner layers of brilliant greens, blues, mauves, and pinks. The black swirls that help create beautiful patterns come from layers of protein that are laid down between the layers of calcium that make up the shell. The outside of the shell is rough and typically covered with coral-like seaweeds.

REFLECTION POINTS

For this exercise it is recommended that pāua shells, or shell chips, be handed around and participants invited to reflect upon them (they can easily be purchased online). Studying pāua can stimulate discussion about diversity in the workplace and show how to harness the unique and varied contributions of each person so that an organization accomplishes more as a group. Associated with valuing and encouraging diversity is the importance of creating a culture that seeks to truly understand what lies beneath employee attitudes. Often the “exterior” of a person belies a rich and dazzling interior life—just as the pāua has a hard coat on the outside and stunning layers of color on the inside. The leader’s task is to release the potential in people by helping individuals better understand their layers, including thought, feeling, and behavior. Leaders are also encouraged to understand the layers of

culture, spirituality, beliefs, and values systems that contribute to the multi-layered tapestry of each individual.

Studying the pāua can be used to emphasize the importance of person-job fit so that employees' personalities and talents are well-suited to the tasks they are expected to perform, and thus help in supporting a high-performance culture.

Another angle in this story is to highlight the importance of emotional intelligence. The inner layers of the pāua can be used to encourage self-awareness and self-management.

This story also emphasizes the importance of providing ongoing learning and growing opportunities so that people in the workplace can keep adding to their layers, and self-actualize.

THREE QUESTIONS

1. What do you do in your organization to encourage and release the opportunities in diversity?
2. How do you build emotional intelligence and resilience in your organization?
3. How do you manage conflict and stress in your organization?

NOTE

1. Useful website links that contain information about the pāua: <http://collections.tepapa.govt.nz/theme.aspx?irn=988>; <http://www.paua.org.nz/>; and www.teara.govt.nz.

2.3 Rude Awakening: A Story of Two Trees

Joan Marques

Keywords: relationships, ridiculing, respect

Courses this story could be used in: Workplace Diversity, Leadership, Organizational Behavior, Principles of Management