

Step 1 - Huffing and Puffing

Huffing and puffing is an effective step that most managers make toward organizational dysfunction.

Huffing and puffing is usually observed in new and insecure managers, but is unfortunately a trait that managers often don't outgrow. When a leader or manager is insecure in his leadership, his first tendency is to act as animals do in the wild. When confronted with a conflict, he puffs himself like an alarmed cat so that he may look larger than he really is. Instead of effectively addressing the conflicts which naturally occur in any organization, he prefers to be defensive, thinking that he is showing that he is a competent leader and is in complete control. In reality, what he shows is that he is both an insecure manager and out of control.

Other leaders prefer to continuously demonstrate their prowess, both towards their subordinates and towards their peers, who manage groups whose functions affect his subordinates. While demonstrating his management prowess, he believes he is continuously gaining the respect of all whose paths he crosses. In reality, he is continuously exposing his lack of confidence. The result is that both his subordinates and his peers want nothing more than to avoid any conflict with the insecure and irrational manager. Therefore, he never learns about the realities of the challenges his subordinates face. When people stop coming to him with problems, he ceases to lead. He also fails in gaining support from other managers, which can be even more disastrous. When those peer managers don't provide support to his goals, it affects the attitudes and performance of employees in other departments and undermines many of the efforts of his subordinates. He rarely realizes it, but his demonstration of prowess and his show of management insecurity actually makes his department weaker and less capable of excellent performance.

Employee frustrations range from feeling belittled and humiliated to feeling unsupported when facing work challenges with other departments.