



## ***Workshop #1: Negotiations - Role Play #1***

### **Role Play**

#### ***Focusing the Problem***

Cigarette breaks are a source of problems for management. It has been a custom which has been very hard to break, although anti-cigarette rules have been in place for many years. As well, non-smokers dislike smokers and see them as lazy employees who get extra time to go outdoors and smoke. Many companies are reluctant to state a clear policy, especially when employees who smoke are an important part of their workforce. The question of assertiveness must be raised at all levels of management in order to deal with this problem.

#### ***Process***

The instructor signals Mrs. Margaret Stewart to approach her crew and take a seat provided for her. The instructor is allowed to intervene if there is difficulty. Observers may indicate the reasons for the difficulty and suggest a new approach. Interruptions are encouraged in this particular role.

#### ***General Instructions***

Mrs. Margaret Stewart is the supervisor of the repair crew at a computer warehouse repair depot. The men take pride in their work and are well paid. The warehouse is located in a large garage-type area which is central to the city. There are other companies using adjoining space for storage of city service trucks, and automobile repair shops. Many of the employees in the area are smokers, although Mrs. Stewart's crews are not allowed to smoke in their warehouse as it can cause damage to the machines. Mrs. Stewart has noticed over several months that some of her employees have increased their time smoking with members of other companies. She is concerned about lost time, and the perception that she cannot enforce the rules.



## Facilitator Notes

### *Role Descriptions*

#### **Mrs. Margaret Stewart, Supervisor**

You are a supervisor in a large repair facility, in charge of a well-educated and in-demand workforce. A supervisor at head office has reported to you that it is not appropriate for employees of this stature to be seen smoking and fooling around with grease monkeys. The company must be sensitive to the public's perception of the depot and that this smoking must be stopped.

You feel as the company does, however, you are an easygoing person who is quite please with the quality of the work done by your employees. You know it is a sensitive issue and you reluctantly tell all your employees that you will be holding a meeting to discuss the smoking issue. Before the day is over, the smoking group has delegated a spokesperson to speak on behalf of all of them. Now you are very nervous about tomorrow's meeting.

#### **Bob Stone, Computer Technician**

You are a diligent worker and get the job done, no matter how long it takes. You are very independent and know you can get a job anywhere in the city. You smoke and feel that the company is invading your private rights. Your smoking has never caused a problem for the company and the breaks help cope with the intense workload you have. You enjoy meeting all kinds of people and you feel that the company is telling you who to hang around with and that get you and your group angry. The group feels the company is taking control of their lives and the group does not like it at all.