

case 1-429-112  
September 20, 2010

## Friction and Frustration at TMG, Inc.: Leading and Motivating Teams

Kevin Schubert emerges from the TMG, Inc., building in downtown Chicago and strides angrily toward Millennium Park. He barely notices the other professionals spilling out of office buildings, quickly brushing past him to catch buses and trains in the summer heat. Taking a deep, measured breath to calm his racing heart, Kevin replays the situation in his mind. After three months of working harder than anyone else on his team and delivering a quality client presentation, he had gone to his performance review meeting with solid confidence. However, his manager, Christina Rodriguez, had spent the entire meeting harshly criticizing one small section of his project deliverable, without even recognizing the quality of other parts, on which he had spent the majority of his time. She had also questioned his leadership and teamwork skills.

Once at the park, Kevin slams his briefcase down on the side of the fountain, sits down exhaustedly, and rubs his eyes. He had been looking forward to going out with his apartment mates that night, in celebration of the successful completion of this project, but he is no longer in the mood for revelry. *That was a waste of three months*, he thinks. Kevin had excelled both throughout his undergraduate career at the University of Pennsylvania and in his three years at TMG; a senior partner of the consulting firm, Ralph Jonas, had recognized him as a “rising star.” There had been no reason to expect anything less than a stellar review of his performance on this project. His face hot with frustration, he thinks, *Christina obviously has no idea what really happened on our team*. After replaying the meeting in his mind for another twenty minutes, Kevin finally gets up and makes his way home, his mind hazy from too many sleepless nights.

**Friday, May 21st, 2010**

### Ralph Meets with Christina Rodriguez, Case Team Leader

Ralph Jonas leaned back in his desk chair and gazed out at the Chicago skyscrapers. From his corner office on the 64th floor, he can almost see Lake Michigan. In his past five years as a senior partner of TMG, Inc., the management consulting firm had gained considerable respect across the world. He attributed much of this success to the sharp, high-achieving people working at his firm; Jonas tried hard to foster a culture of rewards and promotions, in order to retain and develop superior talent.

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