

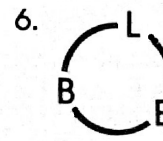
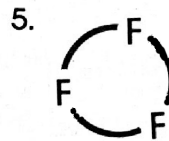
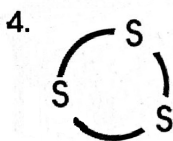
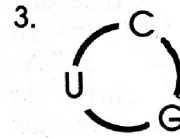
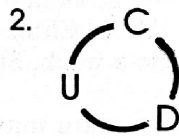
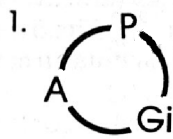
THE GET FIRED LOSER'S LOOPS

by Stephen B. Karpman, M.D.*

Last fall, while working with patients who had been fired from jobs or could not get hired easily, I uncovered six new Relationship Loser's Loops. I have called them the "Get Fired" Loser's Loops. In checking and rechecking them for their universality, I found that the stereotypes also apply to people who are eventually fired from love relationships.

These six are used primarily in psychotherapy in relating personality stereotypes to job failure. These loops apply to people who are doing their job satisfactorily, but get fired for "other" reasons.

The Relationship Loser's Loops are drawn in a circle, as are the other hundred or so Loser's Loops collected since 1971. This not only illustrates how people close themselves off from others, and presents a "portrait" in a catchy way for the Child to understand, but also shows that the people-blocking behaviors are a specifically interrelated constellation.



1. Pushy-Accusatory-Guilt-inducing: These persons harass others with guilt probes, or are constant critics exposing crooked intentions and faulty morality. They are always watching, making digs, harping on faults. The Persecutors, disguised as everybody's Rescuers, are not welcomed for long.

2. Cheap-Ungrateful-Demanding: Often this type is seen in combination with the first type. These persons have an illusion of scarcity that makes them ungrateful for what they do get, and therefore they become demanding of more than their share. They are cheap in giving out money or strokes, basing this on the idea that "If I'm not getting anything, I'm sure not giving anything." The fault in the first two types is in the faulty Adult assessment of what is actually there. What boss wants to go on the defensive month after month explaining that everything is OK. If it is too taxing, try axing.

3. **Cold-Unhookable-Guarded:** This unreacting cold fish bypasses Child-Child desire for stroking with Adult-Adult cross transactions, putting a wet blanket over the boss' "one big happy family." The guardedness gets people uncomfortable and "frozen out." Attempts to reach the unhookable kid are met with frustrating logic, or worse, cold silence. Often this person doesn't get hired in the first place, and gets into relationships only as someone else's humanitarian project. The cure is for this type to break out of the stereotype by offering strokes and jokes.

4. **Slow-Sneaky-Stupid:** These persons create great suspicion and paranoia in the boss, even though they are doing their jobs quite satisfactorily. The boss will assume something must be wrong and constantly be checking around to get evidence. Being upfront and thorough with factual information will help break up the stereotype; otherwise, enough evidence will eventually be found to fire them.

5. **Flighty-Flakey-Frivolous:** This person looks so scattered that people assume that there are no brains or determination there, and try everything to get rid of the ditherhead. The next person hired is often too Parent, as a reaction to the no-Parent display of the predecessor. The remedy is to gain respect by listening carefully, and not throw around "helpless" hooks.

6. **Loud-Bumbling-Embarrassing:** Complaints and pressure will cause these persons to be fired, as they clumsily attack the internal and external boundaries of the organization, as well as attacking the unspoken social rules. More restraints should bring less complaints.

This list of six stereotypes has remained fairly stable over the past six months, although new ones are still being sought. One was dropped recently (Angry-Uninformed-Overwhelmed) because it did not apply to people who did their job well. In using all six with couples that had split up, each partner was able to fit their reject into one of the six categories. The usefulness with couples is still being studied, most probably to help a partner from advancing into one of the stereotypes.

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