

BS2 - PEOPLE

"BRIAN AND FRANK"

B3 Case Study

'If you take your eyes off them for one minute they'll probably walk off with half the shop,' said Brian Brimpton to Frank Shore. Frank was a business colleague of Brian who found it difficult to hide his surprise that Brian was talking about his own workforce! 'I pay them well to make sure they get out of bed in the morning but I watch them all the time. I've had too much money taken out of the tills and stolen from the shops in the past to be able to relax for one minute,' continued Brian. 'I've got security cameras in all my shops and they're focused on the tills not the shoppers! I make them empty their pockets in the morning and put everything in their lockers so if I ever catch them with money on them I know they've stolen it. I do random checks every day and not surprisingly I'm catching more and more of them doing it.'

Frank pointed out that he did not have any of these policies but that theft in his stores was much lower than in Brian's. 'You're either lucky and have managed to find some honest employees or more likely you

haven't discovered how much is being stolen yet!' said Brian. 'You know, Brian, I used to think like you,' continued Frank, 'but a few years ago I changed my approach. I started listening to my staff and found that much of what they said was valuable. I've now decided that you should always try to involve your employees more in making decisions. It's worked for me.' 'So far, may be,' said Brian, 'but just you wait and see. Trust me, Frank, I know. They always bite the hand that feeds them.'

Questions (30 marks; 45 minutes)

- 1 In what ways could Brian be described as a Theory X manager? (4)
- 2 Outline the problems that might result from a Theory X approach. (6)
- 3 Is Frank right when he says 'you should always try to involve your employees more in making decisions'? (8)
- 4 Consider whether Frank would be able to cure the security problems if he took over as manager at Brian's business. (12)

Source: Marcouse et. al. pg 240