

# Multitasking Organized Motivational Strategists

by Bruce A. Love

In recent years, society has struggled with labels for its most important members – Moms. Mothers employed outside the home have been called “working moms.” But this tag implies that moms who take care of their homes and children on a fulltime basis don’t work. The term “housewife” was once used to describe mothers who stayed at home to manage the rigorous activities and responsibilities of the household. But, this label was obviously flawed since the marriage certificate does not list “house” as one of the partners in the relationship.

After a while, the title of “homemaker” was adopted, and this remained politically correct for a number of years. More recently, “stay-at-home moms” have been recognized for their technical skills and given a more professional image with the title of “domestic engineer.” However, this label too narrowly defines the role of moms. For this reason, I would like to suggest a new title - Domestic Manager.

Management is defined as “the planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of human and material resources to effectively and efficiently achieve organizational objectives.” Families have a variety of objectives. For example, the goal of providing a safe, nurturing environment in which children can live and learn is a fundamental desire of caring parents. The goal of raising children to become compassionate, productive members of society is another objective of responsible parents. If we accept the notion that the family is an organization (a collection of people who work together to achieve shared goals), we can begin to see the role of moms as managers as they use various methods to achieve desired goals.

As with any organization, some family members don’t contribute as much as others. This is evident when we consider the marginal contributions of two-year olds, teens, and some husbands. Moms can often improve family member performance, however, by applying the same motivational techniques available to any manager. Withholding rewards, offering incentives, or threatening severe consequences, can all be effective motivators. Motivation is just one aspect of leadership. Moms also lead

by example when children observe the way in which moms consistently conduct themselves ethically, and morally, in day-to-day activities.

Moms often exemplify the qualities of efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is demonstrated every time moms achieve remarkable results with very limited resources, which include time and money. Somehow, moms always find a way to make sure social, sporting, and scholastic schedules are met, and dollars are stretched enough to be able to pick up a little something special for her kids or husband. To the extent that these objectives are met, moms prove their effectiveness in accomplishing the desired goals.

Other managerial activities in which moms excel include planning and organizing. While growing up, Mom always had lists of things to do for weeks prior to family vacations. There were clothes to pack, services to suspend, menus to plan, and ultimately sites to visit when we reached our destinations. Mom often delegated the less-important tasks to other family members. I don’t ever remember forgetting anything, and we always enjoyed the perfect vacation. At the time, perfection was just taken for granted.

Moms also perform controlling functions associated with management. These activities often include managing the checkbook, monitoring report cards, and keeping tabs on the behavior of each member of the family. When moms sense a discrepancy between actual performance and desired outcomes, they understand that it is necessary, once again, to apply behavior modification techniques to remedy the situation. Moms instinctively know the right amount of “technique” to apply!

As we finally recognize moms as the domestic managers that they are, let’s also be sure to wish them:

Happy Mothers Day!

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