



# Managing People During Stressful Times: The Psychologically Defensive Workplace

*By Seth Allcorn, Michael A. Diamond*

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## **Managing People During Stressful Times: The Psychologically Defensive Workplace** By Seth Allcorn, Michael A. Diamond

Allcorn and Diamond argue that the workplace has become ever more threatening to employees, and that they respond by creating psychological defenses that make the workplace ever more dysfunctional. To keep organizations competitive and sustain the value of their stock, management demands constant improvements in their employees' performance, but often the result is just the opposite of what management wants. Allcorn and Diamond explore this process in depth, and introduce a comprehensive and internally consistent, psychologically informed model of human development and behavior, one that explains for the first time the nature of the psychologically defensive workplace. In doing so, they challenge readers to think systematically about the psychological side of the workplace and to understand the importance of dealing effectively with employee defensiveness. The result is an authoritative study with valuable lessons and immediate benefits for corporate executives, and for scholars and researchers in organizational behavior in the academic community.

Allcorn and Diamond's model is applicable to understanding five aspects of the workplace: first, how individuals respond to its stresses and anxieties; second, the psychologically defensive nature of interpersonal relationships at work; third, what the psychologically defensive group processes are; fourth, the dynamics of psychological defenses; and fifth, how the model is used to understand the connection of all organizations to the larger society in which they are imbedded. The authors' goal is to help management understand what actually is going on in today's workplace, the consequence of downsizing and other cost-reduction initiatives, and how important it is for management to relieve the problems they cause.

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**Managing People During Stressful Times: The Psychologically Defensive Workplace** By Seth Allcorn, Michael A. Diamond **Bibliography**

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"[a]n excellent exploration of workplace dynamics and tensions from a psycho-dynamic and psychoanalytic perspective. It really is a good read and is one of the best expositions of psychoanalytic thinking applied to leader and employee behaviour that I have read."-The Occupational Psychologist

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#### **From the Back Cover**

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#### **About the Author**

SETH ALLCORN is a principal of DyAd, a consulting firm in Asheville, North Carolina. For 20 years he

was an academic health-science center executive, during which time he wrote seven other books, more than 50 papers, and contributed several chapters to various volumes edited by others.

MICHAEL A. DIAMOND is Professor of Public Administration at the University of Missouri-Columbia, where he teaches and writes on the psychodynamics of organizational change. He is a principal of DyAd, and a past president of the International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations. Dr. Diamond received the American Psychological Association's 1994 Harry Levenson Award for Excellence in Consulting Psychology. Among his various publications is *The Unconscious Life of Organizations* (Quorum, 1993).

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