



#3 – March  
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NUCA -  
Leadership at  
Lunch

## The Fence-Sitter

The Fence-Sitter is your average worker. Nothing fancy; just do *only* what they're told, when they're told, and how they're told to do something. They are normally present each day, showing up just minutes before start-up. They're often a clock watcher, often slowing down well before quitting time, being the first to leave work.

Fence-Sitters frustrate leaders because they appear apathetic or not interested. They are, however, consistently...average!

# Actions of a Fence-Sitter

Fence-Sitter Workers reflect many of the following traits:

- ◆ Never bully or project negative attitudes or behaviors.
- ◆ Knowledgeable about work tasks, systems, tools, equipment, etc.
- ◆ Clear about the direction of work to be done.
- ◆ Good to identify step-by-step instruction if needed.
- ◆ Consistent and willing to initiate communication.
- ◆ Focused on teamwork; prefers “Team over I.”
- ◆ Prefers to be upbeat, positive, and looking out for “next steps” and likes others who prefer the same.
- ◆ Will be cautious before taking “calculated” risks.
- ◆ Looks for contractor/leader to support and follow; will bring others along with their steady commitment.

## Fence-Sitters Respond to...

- ◆ Daily and weekly goals; self-made list of “To Do Today,” and directions if needed.
- ◆ Regular communication with peers and leaders about work day/week to confirm clarity, updates,, etc.
- ◆ Follow-up shortly after handing off or receiving a task to address questions or concerns.
- ◆ Interactions that are “soft and private.”
- ◆ “Processing” time to adjust to new ideas, policy, or directive. (Don’t read slower response time to resistance!)
- ◆ Determined time limits for task completion.
- ◆ Clarity about their role, responsibilities, and expectations.
- ◆ Leadership that is inclusive and encouraging.
- ◆ Leaders who follow-up with them for personal insights.

## Fence-Sitters Influence Others By...

- ◆ Sharing ideas and concerns; raise alert level in others.
- ◆ Not being too emotionally committed; can help others to “Stop...Look Both Ways Before Proceeding.”
- ◆ Requesting next week, month, or quarter schedules and expectations.
- ◆ Looking after others by following up with those also engaged with work at hand.
- ◆ Touching base with others when work appears to be off-track.
- ◆ Circling back around to individual privately when comments made or perceived actions are unclear.
- ◆ Working on the pre-described goals, objectives, schedule, etc.
- ◆ Practicing consistency...”staying the course” in the midst of challenges.
- ◆ Wise utilization of resources and respect for other’s time.

# Leading the Fence-Sitter

Fence-Sitters require more leadership. Most Fence-Sitters respond best to these leadership traits:

- Not bullying or negative.
- Knowledgeable about work tasks, tools, equipment, etc.
- Clear about the direction of work to be done; providing step-by-step instruction.
- Consistent and willing to initiate communication
- Focused on teamwork.
- Upbeat, positive, and looking out for “next steps”.
- Protective.

## Leadership Techniques...for the Fence-Sitter

- Give the Fence-Sitter daily list of instructions.
- Build some regular time for communication into work day/week.
- Follow-up shortly after handing off a task to address questions or concerns.
- Make your interactions “soft and private”.
- Give Fence-Sitter time to adjust to new.
- Determine time limits for task and inform them.
- Make Fence-Sitter an “assistant” to Thoroughbred.

Leadership Techniques...for the Fence-Sitter, continued...

- Ask the Fence-Sitters for ideas; they've got them.
- Don't read lack of expression as disagreement or lack of interest.
- Prepare Fence-Sitter for upcoming schedule demands.
- Repeat yourself 2-3 times over the course of a day or week.
- Ask the Fence-Sitter to look out for others.
- Create a clear responsibility list for Fence-Sitter and go over with them when they fall off.