

Middle managers now caught in career bind

By JOHN CUNIFF
Associated Press

NEW YORK — Thousands of corporate middle managers are becoming caught in a career bind that threatens to end their upward mobility and terminate their dreams of the comfortable, affluent life.

Most of the victims are in the middle years between ages 40 and 50. Having advanced steadily in their jobs, they have long assumed that eventually a top management position, with more money and a comfortable retirement, was theirs.

These aspirations now are being threatened. With the ranks of middle management swollen by past hiring excesses and the slowdown of business expansion, many of them find they have to win their jobs over and over again.

There's no way for them to reposition themselves, said Eugene Jennings, professor, author, student of routes to executive success and confidential adviser to the heads of large corporations. "They're squeezed from the top and the bottom."

The pressure from the top is by upper management that seeks to cut costs and raise productivity. From the bottom they are being pushed by younger managers seeking to pull themselves up the ladder.

They find themselves too young to retire and, in their own minds, too old to start over again. And they find

themselves too high up the ladder to incur risk, and too low to dictate to the corporation," said Jennings.

The professor, who maintains "listening posts" in many of the largest corporations, reports that "few major companies aren't over-

Analysis

supplied with these middle managers."

Some companies are offering early retirement to encourage them to leave. "However, some of them don't accept the opportunity and have to be pushed." Others are phased into positions known to be deadends.

Jennings, who is trained in psychology as well as in business administration, notes that the common complaint of such men is that they are misunderstood by the company and unappreciated by family and friends.

Having been upwardly mobile since their earliest days in business, many of them cannot explain to their families why they are not continuing to advance into positions and money-ranges they had all but taken for granted.

The problem is vexing to both employe and corporation, says Jennings, who teaches at Michigan State University. Neither is happy with the situation.

A&M, apartment officials to discuss dorms, housing

COLLEGE STATION — Texas A&M University officials are hopeful of more meetings with local apartment owners and managers following the first conference between the two earlier in the semester.

Karen D. Switzer, Texas A&M student development coordinator, said Friday that local businessmen have expressed a desire for a second meeting.

At the first meeting, A&M officials explained a new policy allowing students to apply for an on-campus residence hall 15 months prior to the date of entry to the University.

Under those guidelines, on-campus hall assignments are made by March 15 for the fall semester and students know by that date if they need to arrange for off-campus housing.

Apartment owners and managers present stated, however, that they could not currently agree on a uni-

form policy in accord with the University's timetable.

Remarks were made specifically in response to a proposal by Texas A&M student Ronnie Pechacek, a volunteer with the Student Affairs Office, that fall leases be made available April 1 or any other date agreed upon by the lessors.

One of the reasons for advocating earlier fall lease agreements, Pechacek said, would be to offer them to new and transfer students attending orientation meetings in May, June, July and August.

Presentations to the businessmen were made by Glenn Jennings, assistant director of student affairs, Switzer and Pechacek.

Switzer also added that the preliminary outlook for off-campus housing is that there will be adequate lodgings.

No firm dates for a second or subsequent meetings with apartment lessors have been established.

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