

TO WORK ON SATURDAY¹

Mr. Ward is a manager of a computer software group. He personally wrote large portions of a time-sharing executive now being used throughout the engineering division of the corporation he works for. He is in the process of phasing out of the participative end of the project and is turning the maintenance and tuning of the executive over to Mr. Holt. To enable the system to run faster some additional hardware was purchased. The system needed some major changes to take advantage of the new hardware. Since Mr. Ward is phasing off the project he could not do it. Mr. Holt had a work load far above the level that would allow him to take on this extra task and complete it within a reasonable length of time. For that reason Mr. Jones, one of the group's best programmers, was asked to take on this six-month project.

For a few months all went well. Mr. Holt spent most of his time keeping the present system functional while Mr. Ward supervised Mr. Jones's reworking of the executive to handle the new hardware. The conflict did not arise until the new code was ready to be tested. At that time the computer was being used for the time-sharing system during the entire working day. Mr. Ward and Mr. Holt always worked overtime when it was necessary to do work on the executive. All three men are salaried professionals and are not paid extra for overtime efforts. Mr. Jones's testing required the use of the computer system for long stretches of time which were only available at night or over the weekend. Mr. Jones refused to work on weekends without overtime pay. He agreed to work for an hour after five if he could arrive an hour late. This slowed the testing down considerably and angered Mr. Ward.

Mr. Ward wanted the new code used as soon as possible. He assumed that Mr. Jones was aware from the start that this overtime would be necessary. After all Mr. Jones could readily observe that Mr. Ward worked at least fifty hours each week and that when truly necessary Mr. Holt worked overtime without question. Mr. Jones felt that he should have been informed at the inception of the project that this extra time would be necessary so that an equitable agreement could have been reached in advance.

Mr. Ward went into a slow burn about the situation and Mr. Jones held firm. The project is now more than a month late and is still being delayed.

¹John V. Murray and Thomas J. Von der Embse, Organizational Behavior: Critical Incidents and Analysis, (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1973), pp 35-36.