

I is for Insect

Characteristics:

Insects come in many varieties but can loosely be categorised into two types; the rare beneficial type and the ubiquitous pestiferous type that Pandora should never have let out of the box. The beneficial insect facilitates cross-pollination and can generate a wealth of new opportunities and value. While some insects already mentioned, like the bee and the ant, are positive creatures, they largely assist others without knowing they have done so. The beneficial insect I refer to here is a more advanced version of these. Some cross-pollinating insects build a highly specific mutually beneficial relationship with a specific plant.



For example, the female Yucca moth lays her eggs in the Yucca plant flowers, where the caterpillar larvae live in the developing ovary and eat Yucca seeds. The Yucca flowers have co-evolved with the Yucca moth and are specifically shaped so that only this tiny moth can pollinate them. Both parties win from the relationship. The moth ensures genetic diversity for the plant, and the plant provides exclusive food, shelter and accommodation for the moth's offspring.

Unfortunately, the insect type most frequently encountered is not the beneficial type. The one we are all more familiar with is the unwanted pest, who flies or crawls in from outside the Zoo and consumes resources without being invited or wanted. These insects are extremely ravenous and multiply very rapidly if uncontrolled. Pestiferous insects include the negative swarming types of insects like locusts, mosquitoes and cockroaches.

Relating to the Insect:

Insects can be put to good use, provided you ensure that you select the right one for your purpose. You must be in control of them and manage their activities to your agenda. If you have selected well and have a beneficial type, your harvest can be greatly enhanced and they will be worth every effort you put into them.

However, if you have the wrong type and allow them to manage to their own agenda, they will quickly find ways to consume all of the resources you have. When resources are abundant, they quickly attract many additional insects to consume as much as possible and as quickly as possible. Once all of the available resources have been consumed, they will all swarm to the next pasture. They leave your Zoo greatly depleted and often worse off than when they arrived. It is unlikely that you will have received what they originally promised to deliver for you and highly likely that it will take a lot of work to bring your Zoo back to where it was before they arrived.

The common swarming varieties of insects are very difficult to control. Today you have one, tomorrow dozens, next week hundreds. Where insects have been put to the best use, it is where they have been used as a biological control against more pestiferous varieties of insects. For example, you can engage mantis varieties to exterminate (or at least control) the other swarms that have infiltrated your Zoo.

In the organizational world, beneficial insects can be found as members of small consultancies, industry bodies or external advisors who have your interests at heart. They focus on applying their knowledge to enhance your opportunities and wealth (and of course, for this they are justifiably rewarded handsomely). There is always a win-win relationship from them, and they assist periodically rather than attempt to create a dependency to ensure a long-term revenue stream from you (as pestiferous types do).

The Organizational Zoo

Sample Chapter: Insect

Pestiferous insects can be found wherever there are resources to be exploited. These self-interested consultants, advisors or management product retailers give the good insects a bad name. They are eager to “help” you through your crisis (even if you don’t have one). They focus on how much value they can extract from you, before they consider what you get in return.

Beneficial insects are proud of what they are and what they do. They put great thought into where they can generate benefit and then get on and do it. Pestiferous insects are proud of what they can get out of what they do. They twitter to each other about the latest things they have and where the productive fields are. Others don’t often see a true beneficial insect, but when they do they try to forge a long standing relationship with it. However, being bitten once by a pestiferous insect is usually too much and most would prefer never to see a swarm again.



Yucca Moth

Success for the Insect:

Beneficial insects:

Assisting you to get more from existing opportunities or generating new opportunities for you (while remaining independent, being respected and well rewarded for their services).

Pestiferous insects:

Consumption of all available resources before moving on to other tasty fields.

Attributes often applied to the Insect:

Beneficial Insects

- Beneficial
- Resourceful
- Helpful
- Positive
- Forward thinking

Pestiferous insects

- Arrogant
- Ubiquitous
- Ravenous
- Self-interested
- Swarming
- Costly

Attributes not often applied to Insects:

Beneficial Insects

- Selfish
- Arrogant

Pestiferous insects

- Caring
- Productive
- Beneficial