

From: Steven Sinofsky <[REDACTED]>

To: Jeffrey Epstein <jeevacation@gmail.com>

Subject: why are israeli's hard to work with

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<http://www.quora.com/Israeli-Culture/Why-are-Israeli-people-so-hard-to-work-with/answer/Oren-Shamir?srid=trDd&share=1>

Oren Shamir, Worked with several multinational corporates

Votes by Marc Bodnick, Anne Hoodie, George Thampy, Tal Hoffman, and 712 more.

I'm an Israeli. My grandmother was American and my mother grew up in Brooklyn. I've worked for (and with) a few American companies. The following story might highlight some of the cultural differences, the way I see them.

Imagine you're an executive in a big American company that makes home appliances. Your market research team suggests that people may want to have straight bananas, since Americans love to slice bananas up and put them in a sandwich or a cereal bowl, and straight bananas are easier to slice.

You decide to try and solve this problem using both of your R&D teams. One is located in the US and the other in Israel. You call the two team leaders and tell them what you need - a machine that bends bananas backwards to straighten them up.

The American team leader says they will get right on it. The next morning he posts a job opening on LinkedIn, looking for a banana expert. He hires a guy from CalTech who knows everything there is to know about the molecular structure of bananas. He also hires two more engineers and an industrial designer. Initially.

After around 24-30 months of hard work, you have a sleek, shiny new machine that bends bananas backwards and produces perfect, straight as an arrow bananas 100% of the time, with any kind of banana that currently exists. It costs about 300 dollars and needs as much power as a small refrigerator.

At the same time, the Israeli team leader listens to you for about 3 minutes then interrupts to say that this is a really stupid idea. He doesn't know anybody who slices bananas. Israelis just eat them. Although we usually do peel them first. He suggests you might want to build a machine that peels bananas.

After a long, frustrating meeting you give up. But on his way home, the Israeli team leader thinks about what you asked him to do, and while he still thinks it's a stupid idea, he likes the challenge. The next morning he calls a couple of friends from the Kibuts who grow bananas and then he lets you know that his team will have a machine ready within a week.

After exactly 11 days the machine is indeed ready and a demonstration is scheduled. The machine is made out of spare parts of Uzi guns and costs 13\$ to build. It also functions as an emergency torch. It looks like a scaled down model of a tractor accident. It also produces perfect, straight as an arrow bananas... in about 62.5% of the cases. 37% of the bananas are either broken, squashed or toasted beyond recognition. About half a percent of the bananas mysteriously disappear.

When you note these shortcomings to the Israeli team they look at you with complete puzzlement. The machine, they would tell you, does exactly what you asked for and the PRD never stated it has to do it to ALL the bananas you throw at it. Some bananas are obviously defected. Besides, it was a stupid idea to begin with.

So this is how we are:

- We're really good at improvising
- We think we're smarter than most
- We help each other out

- We prefer to cut corners, and get to the chase
- We say exactly what we think (but we're not always happy with criticism)
- We LOVE to argue. We argue with our commanders in the army, with our professors in the university and with our bosses at work. We have a "healthy" disrespect for authority
- We love challenges and dislike wasted talent
- We like to tell stories