

Being Manager, Leader and Coach

Practical leadership to help you succeed

Bengt Kallenberg



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Being Manager, Leader and Coach: Practical leadership to help you succeed

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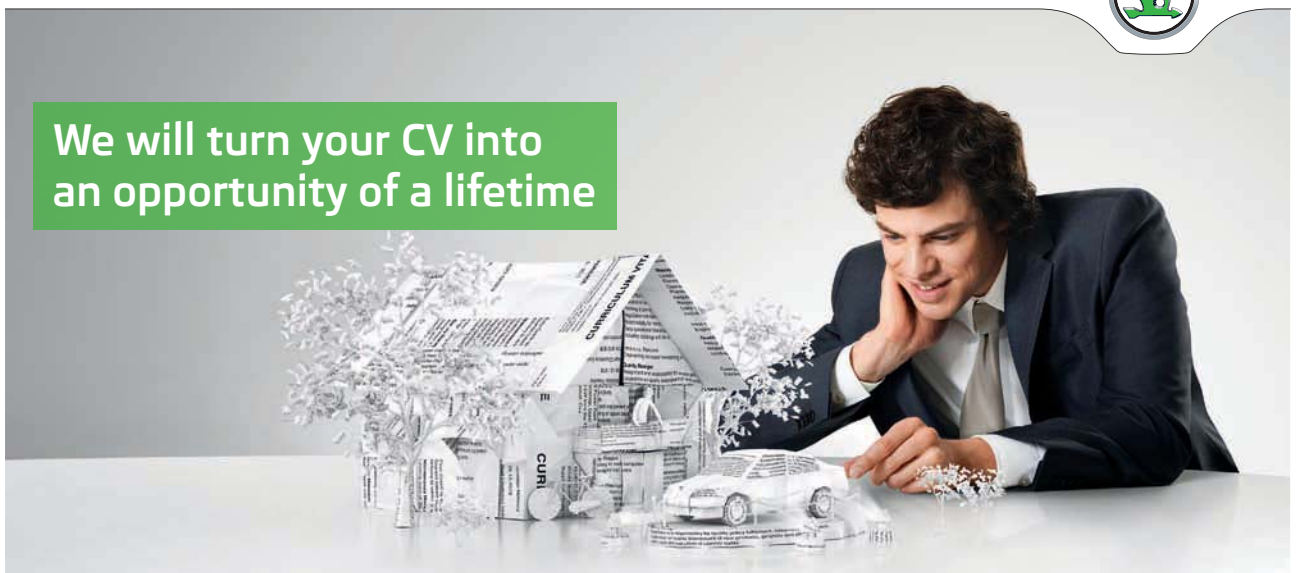
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1 Introduction

A coaching conversation with Chris

“Based on what you have said, your most important task as a manager here is to develop your people, just what does that mean to you in this case?” I asked Chris. “Well, then I have to take a step back and let Filippa take the difficult conversations herself, I shouldn’t do it for her. I have probably protected her until now. I shouldn’t have to tell Gail what I think good work–life balance looks like since she knows her job better than anyone else... She needs to take that responsibility herself.”

“What happens when you think of doing that?”

“I want to feel needed and that I contribute with something, it feels sort of strange not doing it. I don’t really know what to do when Gail comes with her questions. She wants to get good advice from me. How do you think I should do it?” asked Chris hoping he would get an answer from me.

“How do you think you can develop Gail best?”

“Well, she probably needs to come up with the solution herself and understand what the best way for her is and I need to be confident that this will be good. I need to be more coaching I think. Can you give me any tips here?”

How much of a coach you should be and when, is one issue you have to deal with as a manager. Being a manager involves meeting people with a plethora of issues; issues they want to find out more about or learn to deal with. The issue in question can range from a general desire to become “a good employee” to finding a solution regarding a specific and clearly defined problem of a practical or personal nature. The questions can be about being good enough, performing and developing, being new in a role, decision making, change, finding work–life balance or career development.

Although each person is unique, many of the questions and issues pop up over and over again, albeit in varying forms. This booklet has identified and attempted to answer some of the questions managers have to deal with.

As for Chris in the aforementioned conversation, many managers, especially those who are new to the role, unfortunately do not receive any basic management training and consequently lack both the tools and experience to handle certain situations. They are expected to cope with all the issues in the managerial position anyway. This can obviously lead to a feeling of inadequacy and insecurity, something that might be difficult to talk about at work. This booklet contains a lot of practical advice and tips, ready to use when you encounter uncertainty in your role.

Even experienced managers can sometimes feel unaccustomed to dealing with certain issues that occur less frequently and therefore have limited experience and/or skills to address them adequately. A manual of this kind can then be put to good use, such as being used as documentation for network events with managers, in leadership development training or in workshops and seminars.

Each chapter includes practical advice and tips, information and exercises to continue to work with – individually or together with others. Additionally, there are several ‘cases’ that highlight the various topics.

Fundamentally, it’s about being able to master three roles: manager, leader and coach.

“**The manager**” makes sure everything works here and now, sets goals and budgets, monitors, reviews quality, administrates and adjusts...a tactical role.

“**The Leader**” plans with a longer term perspective, is strategic and has a vision for both their role and the group’s. This role is also about planning for the having the right competencies needed for the long term, and what strategies are needed to achieve the vision and goals.

“**The Coach**” leads through questioning and listening and has the courage to be the one who does not have all the answers, however, supports and develops the employees’ growth.

A managerial role demands that you need to constantly perform all three roles, and furthermore feel confident when doing so.

It is my intention that this ebook will help you become successful at doing so.

Put simply, this ebook is thus about being, or becoming a “good” manager, although one could also say that it’s about being a “good” person.

2 Your personal leadership

As products and services become more and more similar in terms of quality, the importance of human action and leadership grows. Increasingly, everyone needs to become their own leader, and as a manager you show the way. It starts with you, what you stand for, what values you have and how these are reflected in your personal leadership.

An underlying trend in many industries is increasing competition. New and sometimes unexpected players are constantly entering the market. Meanwhile, more and more products and services seem comparable, and it is just as difficult to separate their offerings qualitatively. Critical to attracting customers is nowadays more dependent on the personal 'touch' and perceived high levels of service. To achieve this, employees need to take more responsibility, gain greater confidence and have the authority to act.

Every manager, therefore, needs to be their 'own' leader and execute personal leadership in alignment with the organization's values. Good leadership is thus an increasing source of competitive advantage. This development is highly influenced by you as a manager, your personal leadership and the standards you set.

Being a leader is about more than being a manager. A leader is someone who has a vision and that others choose to follow.

So what makes a person decide to leave (or start) at a particular workplace or for particular manager? Some contributing factors are:

- Being seen and confirmed.
- The internal relations/atmosphere in the company feels good.
- It offers goals, responsibility and trust.
- A feeling of pride in the company and their own efforts.
- Receiving continual feedback and the opportunity to develop.
- There is a vision and a clear understanding of how to think and act within the organization.
- Feeling of meaningfulness (a sense of purpose and knowing why you get up every morning and go to work).

As mentioned before, and as you can see, the quality of leadership has clearly an important role to play and the type of leadership primarily in demand is a “bottom-up perspective”. This approach involves collaboration and therefore a manager needs to be able to

- delegate responsibility and authority,
- regard their employees as capable,
- be willing and knowledgeable,
- behaving in a natural manner,
- having a coaching approach

In your managerial role you have three basic roles that you need to master, and switch between, depending on the situation and who you are interacting with. The qualities and factors mentioned above will fit in these roles.

The Manager/“Controller”

In this role you are somewhat of a controller that keeps track of daily activities, sets goals, follows up and achieves the shorter-term goals. You assure that processes and quality are effective. You administrate, prepare and keep track of budgets and do the reporting etc. This might be the easiest role since it is the most transactional one and more concrete than the other two. The other two might be more abstract to some. So beware of the trap spending all your time here in this role, you need to divide your time with the other two.

The Leader/Strategist:

Here you are the one who has a vision, pointing out the direction and plotting the strategies needed to achieve the long-term objectives. You inspire through your vision. You also prepare a competence plan aligned with achieving the goals and vision. People want to follow someone who has an inspiring vision.

The Coach:

In this role you help individuals grow through performance appraisals, coaching and feedback. You lead by asking questions and listening. You regard people as capable, having answers and wanting to make a difference.

Besides these three roles, you as a manager, need to be a good role model in general, i.e. a person who is honest, delivers on promises, is punctual, shows respect and follows the guidelines of the company.

So being a great manager can be both challenging at times and rewarding when you succeed.

Succeeding at this demands having confidence in yourself, knowing what you stand for and taking full responsibility for your actions. You need to be clear in communicating your guiding principles so that others know them.

2.1 Tips to develop your personal leadership

2.1.1 Courage: stand behind your opinions and decisions

Most people appreciate clear leadership where employees know where they stand and what they have to relate to. Better with a clear “yes” or “no” than an evasive “maybe” or “we’ll see”. Some employees may not like the answers they get, but at least they know what the answer is and can relate to it.

It is important that your leadership builds on your own values and the person you are. Then you will appear as clear and “authentic” to other people. You also become predictable and therefore perceived as consistent. Unclear leadership is often based on fears of various kinds, but if you are selfsecure and have “landed” in yourself, it makes it easier for you to handle these fears effectively.

Think about what your core values are. Examples of values might be honesty, to do your best, keep your promises, to deliver high quality, punctuality and being fair.

Think about your personal basic characteristics. You can, for example, be structured, caring, engaging, direct, forward-thinking, wise and compassionate. Based on your values and characteristics you design your own leadership characteristics. Three guiding principles are enough and are also easy to remember for your employees. It’s about things that you think are important and that you can and want to be known for. Communicate your values regularly to your employees so that they know where you stand.

Hereafter it is all about you living and acting in accordance with your guiding principles, a signal that you have the courage to be who you are. If you find yourself confused, you can always ask yourself the following question: ‘How would a person ‘X’ with these guiding principles act in this situation?’ and act accordingly.

2.1.2 Take full responsibility!

A leader always dares to take full responsibility. It may sound simple and obvious, but too often we see examples in the media of how leaders avoid taking full responsibility or acting in a way that contradicts the overarching values. Taking one hundred percent responsibility could be one of your guiding principles in section 1 above, but it is also a way of being and way of approaching things.

It could involve;

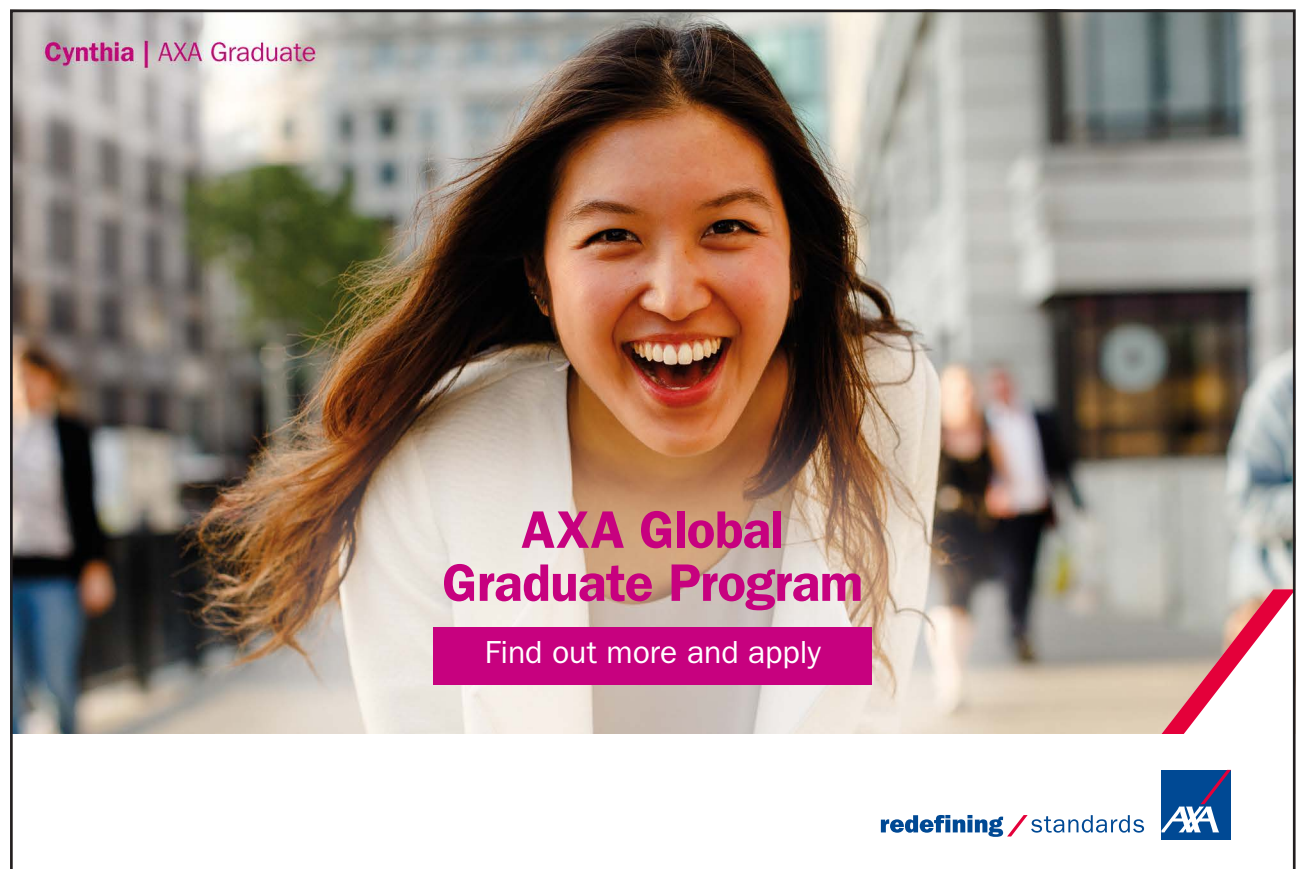
- Taking full responsibility for your results, decisions and choices.
- Not blaming anyone or anything, not accusing anyone of anything or making excuses.
- Not waiting for or depending on someone else to do it for you.
- Doing the things you promised to yourself and others – the big and the small things. It could be about day-to-day things such as being on time or answering emails and phone calls effectively.
- Keeping focus on the results that are important to achieve, rather than focusing on being constantly active. Ask yourself, from time to time: “Will this contribute to the desired result, or is it just me being busy?”

2.1.3 Be a good role model

The symbolic value of leadership is powerful. The strength of the signals you send out are multiplied when you are in a leadership position and much of what you do and say is noted, interpreted and discussed.

There are many areas where you can be a good role model. On top of living your values, you can:

- Give and receive feedback with your own manager, your colleagues and your employees.
- Manage conflicts that you are involved in and not avoid the responsibility by passing it on to someone else.
- Be on time for meetings, actively participate and be well prepared.
- Share knowledge and information.
- Be cost conscious.
- Treat customers in the same way that you want your sales representatives or customer service team to treat them.
- Act in accordance with established decisions and rules.
- Learn – and use – the systems and tools that you have agreed to use in the organisation.
- Respect others; regard all people as equally important.



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2.1.4 Increase self-awareness

A manager with good self awareness can truly be themselves and not just “play the manager role”.

The risk of having only limited knowledge about yourself is that you lead based on your own history and your personal needs, without considering other people and their needs. Another danger is that you do not stand firm when the demands on you increase or change. Good self-awareness is an important fundamental element of your leadership.

To increase self-awareness, you need to have the desire to learn more about yourself. You must be willing to observe and question your assumptions. You must be willing to study and learn from every situation. In fact, the first step is making an active decision to increase your own self-awareness.

One way to increase your knowledge about yourself is to regularly observe (in a non judgemental way) yourself, your way, your reactions and how others react to you. After a while, you can see patterns and behaviours, how you are towards others and how others are towards you. Then try – if you want to and dare – to understand the causes and contexts that indicate that you can/should change in some areas in order to take the next step as a manager (and human being). Ask for feedback on a regular basis, it gives you a good idea of how you are perceived by others.

Set aside time in your calendar for reflection. It is important for your own development to regularly consider your own direction and goals: “What is my attitude to work?”, “How can I use my strengths better?”, “What are the obstacles I encounter and what have I learnt?”etc. If taking time for reflection is difficult or impossible, try scheduling regular meetings with an external coach.

2.1.5 Building confidence and trust

It starts with you. The knowledge and self-confidence you display or emit spreads like ripples on the water to your family, the organization, market and society.

Building confidence and trust is about;

Respect: Treating everyone respectfully, even people who are not present. Don't feed the rumour mill.

Privacy: Keep the promises and commitments you have made to yourself. This way you are showing respect for yourself and stressing the importance of keeping the promises.

Openness: Regularly question your own assumptions and preconceptions. Do this by, listening actively, asking questions and understanding that you only have part of the truth. Do not let your own sense of individual prestige take over to the point where you maintain that you are right at all costs. When the reptilian instincts take over and you want to show who is right, your abilities to both listen and learn diminish. See and acknowledge others – many managers maintain that the daily management of spontaneous conversations and questions are more important than the appraisals. Making yourself accessible, both physically and mentally, helps you to give good feedback and allows employees to be seen.

2.2 Exercises and assignments

1. What are your 4–6 core values? Write them down.
2. How well do you live by these values? Which one is the toughest one to live by?
3. Give examples of any situations when you took full responsibility.
4. Ask for feedback at least three times. Reflect on the feedback, what happened? Then make it a habit asking for feedback on a regular basis.
5. Consider the three guiding principles you have, or want to have in your leadership, write them down.
6. What made you choose to become a manager and take on a leadership role?



The advertisement features a central image of a smiling teacher leaning over a laptop to assist two young children, a boy and a girl. To the right, there are two smaller circular images: one showing three children looking at a book together, and another showing children working at computers in a classroom. The background is a vibrant yellow and orange swirl design. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'e-learning for kids' consisting of a grid of colorful squares. In the bottom right corner, a green oval contains a list of achievements. At the bottom of the advertisement, there is a paragraph of text about the organization's history and mission.

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About e-Learning for Kids Established in 2004, e-Learning for Kids is a global nonprofit foundation dedicated to fun and free learning on the Internet for children ages 5 - 12 with courses in math, science, language arts, computers, health and environmental skills. Since 2005, more than 15 million children in over 190 countries have benefitted from eLessons provided by EFK! An all-volunteer staff consists of education and e-learning experts and business professionals from around the world committed to making difference. eLearning for Kids is actively seeking funding, volunteers, sponsors and courseware developers; get involved! For more information, please visit www.e-learningforkids.org.



3 Goals, meaning and motivation

One of your duties as a manager is to set goals, not just for the business but also for individual employees. By demonstrating a good understanding of what makes people feel like they are on the right track, you create an environment that will increase motivation.

Our motivation is not purely driven by external factors such as rewards or punishments. Even more essential to achieving sustained levels of motivation and overall well-being are your ‘internal’ drivers. This is hardly a ground-breaking revelation; however, you may find that many companies tend to allocate greater focus on external rather than internal motivational factors. Managers can also be more often than not, overly influenced by external driving forces when making decisions about their own career or when making strategic choices (it is more important what others’ think than what you think yourself), for example.

External driving forces can also result in us taking an entirely different direction than was initially intended. All too often, we read about senior managers and executives who make hasty, unethical or even harmful decisions simply because they are driven by their own bonuses. Research shows that when we allow internal motivators to play a more critical role, performance and well-being are affected in a very positive way.

Daniel Pink, in the book “Drive”, talks about the three concepts that are most critical to our motivation. They all come from within.

1. **Autonomy**

Being able to do what you want, to the greatest extent, when and how you want to do it. Preferably with the people you want.

2. **Skill**

The ability to feel the “flow” of what you are doing, your ability to develop and become really good at something as well as knowing that there is always a next level to develop to. To use your capacity and strengths and taking them as far as possible.

3. **Purpose and meaning**

To know that what you are doing is meaningful. The organization you work for has a focus with purpose and meaning, beyond pure profit maximization.

3.1 Results of research regarding happiness

In recent years, a lot of research has been conducted into the feeling of happiness and what factors influence it in both a positive and negative way. The results correlate closely with the three factors mentioned above.

There are many factors that affect our sense of happiness – contrary to what you may think, money, possessions, status and beauty are factors that have been found to have zero impact on a lasting feeling of happiness. A certain level of income provides security, and thus contributes, to some extent, towards a feeling of happiness. However its overall effect on happiness is marginal.

According to international studies, Danes seem to be the happiest people in the world. But even countries like Colombia, Nigeria and Tanzania rank higher in the happiness index than what one would expect when factoring in their level of material wealth. This illuminates the question of what exactly creates happiness, including those of a lasting nature. Factors that are important include:

- Close relationships and friends.
- To use and develop your abilities and talents
- To have a job
- To do something that feels meaningful
- An active life outside of work
- A positive and open attitude towards life
- Increased knowledge and understanding of yourself

Several of these “needs of happiness” can be satisfied at work where you, as a manager, play an important role for your staff.

3.1.1 Self-image and self-awareness is the foundation

Many people reach a point in life when they come to the conclusion: “I have come this far in my career – and it feels alright, but now I want to make a more conscious choice about my next step. But the problem is that I don’t know what I want or what goals I should set up”.

Making realistic choices and setting the corresponding targets and actions requires self-knowledge and self-awareness – otherwise a feeling of being ‘in the fog’ will prevail. By gradually forming a clear picture of your motivators, strengths, abilities, values, fears, interests, characteristics, self-image, etc., you illuminate what is important and it becomes increasingly clear what choices you should make and which goals you should concentrate on. Achieving this means you will be piloted ‘from within’ and therefore moving beyond the ‘fog’.

The same goes for your employees of course. The closer the targets are linked to their own personality and their driving forces, the greater their motivation will be.

3.1.2 To have a vision and a goal

Most people have different goals in their professional roles. Often the objectives are stated on an annual basis and involve, for example, sales, turnover, different customer satisfaction indexes, skills development or brand awareness. Beyond these goals, there are few people who have physically written down their personal goals for their career or other important areas of their life. Even fewer have a personal vision.

By creating a vision for yourself, and linking the objectives to that vision, you will have a compass heading that will help you to make different choices along the way. Inspirational goals also allow for ‘opportunity indulgence’ – you are more likely to pay attention to things that will help you along the way. Doing things that take you one step closer to your goal will also give you energy, you are moving towards something that you’ve decided, something that is important to you. As you decide what is important to you, and how to get there, the feeling of taking responsibility for your life becomes greater.

This doesn’t mean you can’t embrace unexpected opportunities that pop up.

Some people stubbornly avoid setting personal goals, common excuses for this include;

“I want to be spontaneous and keep all my options open. Something better might come along and I don’t want to miss anything.”

“I’m afraid I’ll fail.”

“I’m afraid I’ll succeed.”

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“I don’t need written goals – I have them in my head, that’s enough.”

“I’d prefer someone else to set goals for me.”

Waiting for the “best” option can lead to paralysis. By setting goals for yourself, you don’t have to use up energy thinking about where you are heading. You can let go of those thoughts and enjoy your journey more, giving you the opportunity to be spontaneous whilst you move forward. It is interesting to note that there is actually a fear that exists among some people of succeeding and making full use of their potential and capabilities.

If the short-term goals that you have are linked to longer-term career goals – which are harmonious with your other life goals – it increases your sense of meaning and harmony further.

If you have found the answers from within, are certain of your direction and your talent and understand the purpose, then you can match it with your job situation and ensure that you prioritize the right things and your efforts will be justified.

You can also help your employees find direction and identify their talents, encourage them to formulate inspiring goals, however, it may be a good idea to start with yourself first.

3.2 Tips for increased motivation

3.2.1 Setting goals

You probably know the SMART model used to set individual goals. A SMART goal should be;

S = Specific formulated

M = Measurable (or noticeable)

A = Attainable

R = Relevant/Realistic

T = Time-bound

It should also be positively stated, which means that not doing or stop doing something is not a good goal. To be a good goal there should also be a feeling of joy connected to it. You should also feel that you are in control of the outcome.

When setting goal, check it with the SMART formula to see if it is a good one.

3.2.2 Set coaching questions around the target

Make the goal more vibrant, inspiring and personal; ensure that it really is adequate, by asking coaching questions to your employee (or to yourself):

- What does “win” mean to you?
- What is the purpose of reaching this goal X?
- What will the benefits be for you to achieve X? What will change?
- How will you know that you have reached X? How will others notice?
- What are the signs that you are heading in the right direction?
- How can you have fun while learning more on your journey towards the goal?
- What are you willing to give up in order to achieve X?
- What is the cost of not doing this?

3.2.3 Tips for happiness

According to the researcher, Sonja Lyobomirsky, you can influence about forty percent of your own happiness. Here are twelve tips offered by Sonja on how you can achieve this:

- Be grateful. Think it, say it, write it down.
- Build your optimism. Picture your dream scenario for your life. Have a vision for yourself.
- Avoid social comparison. Don't begrudge your neighbour's success. Measure yourself only against yourself.
- Perform good deeds for others.
- Nurture your relationships. Investing time and effort into them and enjoy the relationships you have.
- Increase involvement in general. Join in on the activities that really engage you and grabs your attention.
- Stop, be present and enjoy what you can. Experience stillness and silence regularly.
- Focus on the objectives. Choose a couple of meaningful goals that you invest time and effort into achieving.
- Practice dealing with stress and adversity. Take a positive attitude and approach when things do not go as you planned.
- Learn to forgive.
- Let spirituality take up more space in your life, for example, read more about spiritual matters.
- Take care of your body. Move it, meditate, smile and laugh.

3.2.4 Seek the good conversations

Another way to feel good and improve your sense of purpose is to seek ‘good conversations’: conversations that are exploratory, challenging and build clarity. Conversations where time and space become irrelevant, where both your speaking partner and you, are given time and focus.

Such conversations are important in strengthening both your personal maturity as well as your relationships. Dialogue leads to discoveries. By saying things out loud (and by writing things done as well), they become tangible. If the conversations also cover spiritual topics or a person’s inner self, a number of the twelve “happiness points” will be addressed.

How far are you willing and even daring to go in your conversations with your co-workers? Should you go there?

3.2.5 Life and Vision wheel

a) The wheel of life

Life is a combination of factors and to achieve balance, several areas of your life need to work well together. The wheel of life is a tool that you can use to acquire a snapshot of a number of important elements in your life.

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Try: Take a blank piece of paper, draw a large circle on it and then divide it into 8–10 pieces. Each piece represents an area in your life, such as health, work, family, finances, personal development/growth, friends, spirituality, etc. Select the different ones that are important to you.

Then mark in each area how good you think the situation is in that particular field. The far end of the circle corresponds with 100% satisfaction, i.e. you are completely satisfied with the situation. Bear in mind that this doesn't mean that you have to be a world champion in that field; just that you are completely satisfied with your situation and that you don't want to nor need to fix anything right now. The nearer you rate an area to the centre of the 'pie', the more you are dissatisfied with situation, meaning that the situation is not looking good at all. Something has to be done here!

If one area ends up at e.g 45%, think about what you are 45% satisfied with, and consider what you want or can do in order to make it 100%.

Feel free to make any notes about what is good and what you want to improve. When you have completed all the fields, take a moment to look at it carefully. The areas that are closest to the middle make the wheel jagged and consequently your journey bumpier. Perhaps it is these areas that you need to focus on first to achieve a better work–life balance?

Questions to think about after you have completed the exercise:

- How do you use your time?
- How do you use your talents and your potential?
- How does the balance between work, leisure, rest, family, body and soul look?
- Do you give yourself breathing space and time to recharge your energy?
- To what extent do you allocate time to development, learning and trying out new things?
- Are you missing something in your life?
- What dominates your life?
- Are you satisfied with your current 'life'?
- What activities make you feel that you are getting the most out of your life?
- How is your surrounding environment impacted via the energy you give or receive?
- What aren't you doing, but should be doing?
- What are you doing, but should be doing less of?
- Which decisions can you make now?

b) Vision wheel

The wheel can also be used as a vision wheel. Within each area you can think about what your vision is, how you want it to look like in 5–10 years, provided that there are no obstacles impeding your journey.

Use the same wheel described in the exercise above, but for each area write down how you would like it to be in, say, five years from now, if you were living your 'ideal' life. Once you have made notes in all of the areas, you have a vision for your desired life. A powerful compass that provides you with a direction!

Imagine a film crew coming to your home in five years from now and making a programme about a week in your life. They follow you at work, at home and during your spare time, 24:7!. The material is compiled into a movie. Imagine yourself sitting there in the cinema watching the movie of your life as it is portrayed. What will you see? You can start writing the script now!

3.3 Exercises and questions

1. Reflect on what "good conversations" in your life have meant to you. Who have you had them with? What happened during the conversation? How did you feel about them? Do you have enough of these conversations?
2. Make a vision wheel for yourself. Write down, draw, find pictures or photos that symbolize what you want to achieve. Avoid making a Word or Excel document, as it limits creativity when compared to working with pen and paper.
3. Start a "gratitude book"! Note every night before going to sleep three to five things you are grateful for, things that you have learned during the day or things that have made you happy. If you routinely write these things down for a couple of weeks you will notice the positive effects:
 - a) You are looking for positive events and things to be grateful for during the day.
 - b) You go to sleep with positive thoughts.
 - c) You get a great list to draw inspiration from after you've done it for a few weeks. You get a kick out of reading it.
4. Think about the goals that you and your staff have. Can they be articulated in a more inspiring way? How well grounded are your goals in what you or your staff feel is meaningful? How well do the objectives correlate with your personal values and motivators?

4 Personal Effectiveness – a manager in balance

As a manager you never go home with a completely clean “to-do” list. It’s always being replenished, which can create a sense of stress and inadequacy on several levels. To maintain balance, it is worth seeking out a good level of personal effectiveness. It’s not about you working more; it’s about knowing how you want it to be, doing the right things at the right time and using your time in the most effective way. If you are stressed and if it shows you can be sure that other people are “infected” by it. You don’t want that.

To achieve the quality of life and the balance that you want requires only three things: the will to change, the commitment to do it and the self-discipline to make it happen. Only three, but maybe not that easy... First of all, you must decide how you want it to be in different areas, such as work, family, relationships, health, finances and your own personal time.

The feeling of being efficient is, to a large extent, about knowing that you are doing things that take you in the desired direction and towards the important goals that you have set for yourself. Most successful leaders have a personal vision, a vision that they constantly carry with them. They are always focused on targets and solutions as opposed to problems; they constantly work with the aim of achieving their objectives, in a disciplined manner. Put simply: ‘You become what you think about most of your time.’

Once you have decided how you want it to be, you can begin to identify the activities that contribute most in each field. You can then try to identify the ‘time thieves’.

One way to increase your effectiveness is to simplify life in different ways. By cleaning up and organising things around you, you can achieve a better sense of order, which makes it easier to find the things that you are looking for. Your calendar is not exempt, clean it up so you can find time to breathe and relax.

4.1 Time Management/Activity Management

Time is a unique and non-renewable resource. The time that has passed, will not be reimbursed. You only have a certain number of hours to do all of your different tasks, so you have to manage them in the best possible way, to keep things in balance.

Many have a work situation that comprises e-mails, meetings, phone calls, lots of small quick “just need to do this” stuff with many notes and to-do-lists scattered all around the place. The day is easily consumed by all those things that you felt capable of quickly managing, while the larger, more important and urgent things are neglected (you may find yourself finally addressing these issues sitting on the couch at home sometime after 10 o’clock in the evening). The next day, the “to-do” list fills up with more things once again...

This situation easily leads to the brain being overloaded and different signs of stress inevitably start appearing, such as poor sleep, restlessness, irritability, difficulty to concentrate etc.

The solution is hardly found via working harder or faster (or using drugs). These usually have the opposite effect, at least in the longer term. “There is more to life than increasing its speed” as Gandhi put it.

One of the key factors to obtaining time structure involves prioritization. A common pitfall is to write long “to-do” lists and then work aimlessly in pursuit of wiping it clean instead of structuring time according to what is important and urgent.

You probably have a number of daily recurring tasks, and you should therefore be aware of these and obviously reserve time for them first. Then you have meetings and some unexpected things that happen every day. Make sure you plan for them as well. Finally, you have your own time where you can implement and work on projects that are considered to be your main tasks. Arrange them on the calendar allowing for times of the day when you feel most rested and/or productive, take advantage of those rare moments where you can work undisturbed.

As already mentioned, a common trait among successful people is that they usually know what is most important and they do these things first. They have, in other words, their priorities in order and clear.



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A common question is how to prioritize projects, at work as well as privately. The Pareto Principle (80/20-rule) also applies here, i.e. 20% of your activities will give you 80% of the value, whatever the value is. In order to select the most valuable activities, it's important that you are clear about your main goals and values. They function as your compass and indicate the direction that will guide you when you need to prioritize.

4.2 Keys to success

In order to increase your personal effectiveness, self-discipline is a key concept which involves: doing what you have to do, when you need to do it, whether you want to or not.

Another key is to take full responsibility for doing what you have promised to yourself (and others).

4.3 Tips for achieving personal balance

4.3.1 Self-monitor

To learn how to use your time most efficiently, you can start by studying how you currently use your time. Analyse your own time allocation by dividing the days of the week by full and half hours, then take note of how you use the time during a day. Do this for about a week or two to get a clear picture.

Next, go through your log book and divide your activities into three different categories, namely time thieves, obligations and priorities. "Time Thieves" are those tasks that do not bring you closer to the goal, and do not add any real value; "obligations" are things that fall within your area of responsibility, such as reports, administration and salary negotiations.

The tasks labelled as 'Priority' are tasks which clearly create value. If you want to go into even more detail, you can create sub-groups. Go through the results after a period of making notes and reflect. How do you use your time? What should you do more of or less of? When do you perform best and create most value?

4.3.2 Formulate a vision, goals and plan

In order to prioritize, you need to know what is most important to you. A prerequisite, therefore, is forming a clear picture of what your most important goals are both professionally and privately. Many people have never formulated such objectives for themselves let alone written them down. In fact, only about three percent of adults have written down any goals at all.

You can make use of a Wheel of Life to visualize your current situation and your goals; alternatively you may use the Wheel of Vision, which was described in the previous chapter. Start by developing a vision for your life in 5–10 years, and apply the same procedure for the next 12 months. By doing so, the goal becomes more realistic and within grasp, which enables you to get a little closer to your vision.

Once you have done this, break the one-year target down into an action plan including how and when you can reach it. List all the activities you are going to do and incorporate them into your plan. Start your activities today! Then commit to doing something that will take you closer to your goal, no matter how big or small, on a daily basis.

You may also need to think about whether you need to improve your skills or change your way of doing things in order to get you to where you want to be. Look at your daily habits: what do you do that helps you, what do you do that prevents you from reaching your goal?

The importance of having written goals and having them readily available for quick reference cannot be stressed enough. Writing things down make them tangible, just having them inside your head make them vague.

Working simultaneously with all one-year goals will, in all probability, be overwhelming. Therefore select the 1–3 goals that you should focus on in the near future. Choose the ones that make the biggest difference for you.

4.3.4 Plan ahead

This is a simple but effective method. Towards the end of the day or in the evening, write down five things that are important to do the next day. List them in ascending order according to their priority. The following morning, go through the list and see if it still is relevant. You might want to change something. Then in the morning start with the first item on the list and finalize it, then take number two and so on. Maybe you need to plan to do the tasks at different times of day, or make changes in priorities; nevertheless, the important thing is that they get done.

This method will help you stay focused on one thing at a time instead of jumping between different tasks. It also helps you to finish a task rather than having several outstanding tasks hanging around (irritatingly).

Planning also helps you maintain focus on your priorities and use your time wisely. It is tempting to start the morning by reading emails or doing other simple, but less valuable tasks, but the chances are that you become so distracted that you never get started on your priority list. Try to start the day with the first task on your list. Even if you don't have time for all five, you have still completed two or maybe three valuable activities instead of devoting or wasting time on the "little things."

4.3.5 Make lists and prioritize

It is impossible to remember everything you should do and be doing. The brain may be able to keep track of 7–9 different things at the same time and therefore you need checklists to help you. Write down everything you have in your head, all the things that pop up and need to be done (if the task only requires a minute or two, you can do it directly). Just writing down things instead of having them in your head may feel like a relief. Arrange the list into sub-groups, or make different lists for similar activities. Groups can be linked to a person or a particular project and have titles such as “waiting for answers”, “reading” or “calling”.

Try out a method that best suits you when prioritizing activities. One proposal is to group them according to A to E, where A = very important, must be done, B = important, should be done, C = “nice to have”, D = delegate and E = eliminate/remove. If there are multiple A activities, divide them into A1, A2, and so on. The idea behind the system is that you do not start any B activity until all A activities are completed. You revise the list regularly and make changes accordingly.

Another system is based on regularly categorizing activities as “very important/less important” and “very urgent/less urgent.” It forms a matrix with four fields.

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Ideally, you should spend 65–80% of your time in the 'important/less urgent' quadrant, where you concentrate on strategic issues that build preventive measures, subsequently, you spend less time on things that fall into the "important/very urgent" quadrant, i.e. emergency interventions of various kinds. Things placed in the "less important" quadrant should naturally occupy the least of your time.

4.3.6 Delegate

Delegation is about how to get others to do things on your behalf, and at the same time, feel comfortable with it. By delegating, you increase participation, build trust and free up more time for yourself. Another positive effect is that it improves the skills of your staff.

How to do it:

- a) List everything that you could delegate in your job and to whom you can delegate to.
- b) Match the task with the person. People appreciate being able to show what they can do, so make sure that the task matches the person's competence. Start with a small task if you are unsure.
- c) Before you delegate, you should be clear about what you expect, what you want to be done, when it should be finished, what is needed to do the task and that the responsibility for the task is clear. If necessary, share your thoughts on how you think the task should be done.
- d) Be available when support is needed. Remember that you haven't just delegated a task; the objective of delegating is to achieve a desired result.
- e) Agree on milestones where you check up on how things are progressing.
- f) When the job is completed, evaluate and provide feedback. Give constructive feedback that the person in question can learn from thus making future delegation perceived as positive.

4.3.7 Time thieves

A survey conducted in Sweden 2012 by Kairos Future, involving 6,000 Swedes, identified the biggest time thieves at the workplace.

Time thieves consume nearly an hour of work each day according to the survey. In some areas, the company needs to be better, but every individual can also contribute to a better work situation and therefore better wellbeing. It is thus important to get a clear picture of how you spend your time (as in tip 1). Being aware of this is the first step towards a solution.

Here are the top ten time thieves:

1. I too often get interrupted at work.
2. Technology fiddling.
3. Misunderstandings or unclear communication.
4. I do not get time to devote myself to my real job.
5. The technology/tools/programs that I have access to are too bad.

6. I need to wait for others to do their job before I can do mine.
7. Poor leadership and management.
8. Meaningless or unproductive meetings.
9. Unclear guidelines of what I am expected to do.
10. The time it takes to reach someone I need to get a hold of.

4.4 Exercises and assignments

1. List the activities in your job that contribute the greatest value to your organization.
2. List your biggest time thieves. What can you do to eliminate or reduce them?
3. If you could improve a particular ability or skill, what would it be and how would it make a difference to your work?
4. Which of your daily habits will help you to become the person you want to be, and what habits stop you? What would you change and how?
5. Get a pen and paper and answer the following questions;
 - What ten goals do you want to achieve in the coming year?
 - If you success was guaranteed, what goal would you choose to focus on?
 - Write down your goals in detail, they should be specific and have deadlines.
 - Identify the potential obstacles you expect to encounter on your journey towards achieving the goals?
 - What skills or abilities do you need to acquire or develop in order to reach the goals?
 - Who or what can help you along the way?
 - List all of the activities you need to do in order to succeed?
 - Organize tasks in a plan that accounts for the task's importance and time limits. Set a deadline for each task.
 - Which activity will you start with as of today? What can you do each day?
6. One notable time thief is bad leadership. What type of leadership can you identify as 'bad leadership'?
7. Make an annual "time budget". Collect all the activities you want or need to have time to do in a year: work, travel, family-time, time with friends, own time, weekends, holidays, nights spent at work, eat, sleep, exercise, etc. Then write down the number of hours you want to spend on each activity. Merge the hours and subtract them from the 8760 hours you have in a year.

4.5 Case: Time study reduces stress

Lena works as a consultant in a consulting and development company. She experienced a frustrating period where she had a general feeling of inadequacy, of not getting anything done and not having enough time to focus on some of the key issues. It negatively affected her mood, both at home and at work. Stress levels were often high, which led to various stress-related symptoms resulting in behaviours that were less favourable. Lena simply was not the person she wanted to be and she realized that this could not continue.

In order to increase her understanding of the cause of the problems, for a two week period, Lena started to evaluate her own use of time and made daily notes on what activities she invested time into, for a period of two weeks. At the same time, she also noted her own mood on a scale of 1–10. The purpose of this was to get a better insight into what gave energy as well as what drained energy from her. All of this was done according to the principle that when you observe something about yourself, it almost always leads to an automatic improvement.

As Lena went through her two weeks of the notes, she realized that almost two hours of each day went into doing unanticipated and unplanned activities. She realized that she hadn't taken this time into account previously, somehow managing to squeeze it in here and there.

The change that Lena made was to, each day, set aside 1.5 to 2 hours of unplanned time in her calendar as a contingency. It gave her a greater sense of calmness and she was now able to focus better, be more engaged and less stressed during the day.

The ten-point “mood scale” showed that she was almost always on the upper half of the scale, indicating that most of it was positive. On days when she felt she was on the scale's lower half, she could just accept this and then share with her husband her feelings, which alleviated some of the discomfort she felt. From that moment, she wasn't pretending to be someone other than herself.

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5 Develop your coaching

To create a work environment that is characterized by commitment, initiative and participation a leadership that is based on collaboration is needed. A Coaching Leadership is a tool and an approach that will help you get there.

The traditional hierarchical leadership with its “top-down approach” provides security, control and predictability. It can sometimes be positive. But it can also lead to your co-workers waiting, becoming passive, less responsible and more dependent on you. This leadership is based on that the manager is the one who knows best how things should be done and the one who instructs and informs.

Coaching Leadership on the other hand helps employees to use more of their potential, becoming more involved, more responsible and taking more initiatives. This leadership style is based on interaction and is characterized among other things that the manager relates to the employees’ capabilities and potential, and supports and encourages them to carry out the job.

Being coaching is a way to lead, but does of course not mean that a “point-by-the-hand-leadership” is sometimes needed – it when depends on the person and the situation. The coaching style has so many advantages, both for you and your employees that it can be used much more often than you might think.

To pursue a coaching leadership is not a given. It may seem that it only seeks to ask some open-ended questions such as “what do you think?”, but it is about much more than that. As a manager, you need to be prepared to delegate responsibility and authority, you must be able to let go of control and the need of coming up with all the solutions yourself. If you manage to become a good coaching manager the benefits you get can be many: better solutions, better understanding of yourself and others, improved performance, increased motivation and greater commitment among employees, focus on solutions instead of problems, better cooperation and you as a manager can free up time.

It is entirely possible to develop your skills so that you become really good at coaching. It is, as usual, to commit to becoming it and then consciously work to get there. Coaching is as mentioned before, about so much more than just asking the “right” questions.

Important things to take into consideration in the coaching approach are:

- Have confidence in employees and relate to their potential and capabilities. Assume that you do not always have the best solutions or answers, someone else might have a better one. Your way of looking at and assess your employees is fundamental. If you assume that the person you are talking to is not capable, motivated and committed, it will shine through in your own behaviour, and will not be coaching successful.

- Practice your listening skills, both on what is said and what is “said under the surface”.
- Dare to be open, honest and clear. Be generous with your feedback.
- Ask “open” questions to move forward.
- Remember that the purpose of coaching is to unleash the power and resources of other people.

Coaching can occur during long conversation, such as appraisals, or in shorter meetings with employees. Regardless of the time or opportunity the coaching conversation focuses on making a change, reach a goal or find a solution. There is a forward movement in the conversation, to a target, rather than to drill deeper into a problem.

As a manager, you need to bring your coaching approach everyday and use it in a natural way when employees want to discuss matters with you. You can also agree with a co-worker or colleague to give or receive coaching on a specific issue.

It is increasingly important for companies to live up to its own formulated values and ethical standards. People want to work for companies with meaningful activity, sound values and a leadership that reflects this. The company culture is shaped in large part by you and your employees, and it is based on current values and how these are enforced.



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Here the coaching leadership comes in as an important tool to help employees understand the company's values and how these can be translated into behaviour and action.

Below are some tips and tools to use in your coaching. Getting started is not difficult, but to be really good requires continuous training. You also need a strong dose of courage to dare to be the manager who does not have all the answers and solutions, but instead leads by asking.

5.1 Tips to become a better coaching manager

5.1.1 Structure of the coaching conversation

The basic structure of a coaching conversation is simple and consists of introduction, middle and conclusion.

In the introduction, you decide the subject of the conversation and the desired results.

In the middle part, you ask about the current situation/problem and the consequences it brings. You are questioning about what already has been tested so far, and what this has resulted in. You also ask about the options that person can see in ahead, how he/she can contribute to the solution and the path he/she is willing to try.

The end point is to determine what steps to take, and when these steps will take place and to check if the conversation has given the desired outcome. Perhaps you also need to set a follow-up meeting.

The coaching conversation is different from a normal conversation, there is a specific result to be achieved, it is important to first agree that it is just a coaching conversation, you are about to have.

In summary, one can say that it is about to describing different phases; present situation and the desired situation and the way to get there. You ask questions and avoid coming with your own opinions or solutions.

The “TGROW model”

The basic structure of the coaching conversation is possible to develop into a coaching conversational model TGROW (Topic, Goal, Reality, Options and Will). Below are some examples of questions you can ask when you are coaching in the different steps.

Topic (T):

First, it is important to identify the topic of conversation/coaching and desirable results:

- What do you want to be coached about?
- What do you want us to talk about?
- What can be a good outcome from this meeting/conversation?

Goal (G):

The questions about the Goal (G) are about setting goals for the whole project/issue:

- What do you want to achieve? By when?
- How will you measure whether you have achieved the goal?
- What signs will indicate that you are heading towards your goal?
- How much of this can you influence yourself?

Reality (R):

Questions about Reality (R) are about reconciling and raising awareness of the current situation:

- What is the problem? What impact does it have?
- What have you tried so far? What has worked well?
- What do you think about it?

Option (O):

Questions about Options (O) are about finding alternative solutions and answers:

- What could you do? What options do you see?
- What are the pros and cons are connected to the alternative/options?
- What happens if you do nothing?

Want/Will (W):

The questions concerning Want/Will (W) are about coming to a commitment and deciding upon the plans:

- What do you choose to do? For By when?
- Who else needs to be involved?
- What obstacles might you encounter
- What help would you need?

Comment:

You don't need to follow the order above, sometimes the conversation begins with exploring the current situation, other times it can wave back and forth.

End the conversation by asking if the person you coached achieved what she/he wanted and what possible insights or lessons that conversation gave.

You can find more information about "TGROW" on Google.

5.1.2 Practice asking open questions

Your main tool when you are coaching is open questions:

- What?
- Who?
- When?
- What?
- How?

They give you more information than closed questions, i.e. those that can be answered with “yes” or “no.” They also create more energy and openness up for creativity. Remember to only ask one question at a time and try to keep them short.

Whenever possible, avoid the question “why?” It can be perceived as accusatory, judgmental and criticizing – and the respondent could end up being defensive.

Train yourself for a few weeks to ask as many open questions as possible and note the power of these questions. A good idea is to keep your own notes on progress and note how you react yourself when you get a “why” question.



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5.1.3 Develop your listening skills

To develop your listening skills are a very important part in the quest to become a good coaching manager. Listening involves both hearing what is being said and to understand what is going on under the surface. It can be symbolist to an iceberg where 10% is visible and the rest is hidden. In order to understand and ask the right questions, you need to increase the knowledge of those remaining 90% that is now said in words.

The part that is below the surface consists among other things of attitudes, feelings and values. A person's way to speak and behave gives you clues to the things unspoken.

To understand this you need to avoid some common pitfalls that prevent good listening:

- You are “in your own head,” that is, you sit and analyze/think out what to say, or are focused on your own performance and the desire to do well. Or if are you simply thinking about the next meeting, or what to buy for dinner.
- You already have a solution so why listen to it all?
- You are uncomfortable with silence and feel a need to fill it.
- You find it uncomfortable with silence and jump in when the other person is thinking.
- You have a (negative) biased opinion about the other person and you are looking for evidences that shows that you are right.

Practice listening in order to understand. Some tricks that you can use is to repeat what the other person has said, summarizing what you have heard and make sure you understood correctly, ask questions to clarify – or just be quiet for a while.

5.1.4 Avoid having your own agenda or your own solution

When you as a manager start to coach, it is often difficult not to come up with your own solutions, answers, advice and tips. It may seem easier to come up with an answer or a solution if an employee comes with a problem. You may be thinking: “I do not have time to ask questions, it is faster if I come with a solution” or “I need to show that I am the manager and that I am competent and can come up with a solution.”

In the short term it may be faster, but the risk is that employees become less motivated to come up with their own solutions and that you have an unreasonable workload – but above all, it may actually be that your solution is not the best ones. Those closer to the activity/day-to-day work in question probably are more familiar than you with the issue and probably have better solutions. Show that you believe in their potential and hand over responsibility to them.

Your questions should be for instance:

- “What do you suggest?”
- “What are the options?”
- “What if...?”
- “What is that...?”

5.1.5 Dare to give feedback

When you have a coaching conversation with a co-worker, and notice that there is something “under the surface” that is in the way you need to dare to leave the subject and address whatever you react to (approach, attitude or tone from the other). Follow your gut feeling – so the conversation can become several classes better.

Important, however, is to first ask permission: “Can I give you feedback on one thing?”. If the answer is “yes”, you tell them what you perceive/feel: “I get the impression that you...” or “I have a feeling that you disagree with x, even if you say so. What can it be?”. It’s not about criticizing the other person, but rather to capture an unspoken behaviour or a feeling. Trust your intuition.

5.1.6 Eliminate barriers to start coaching

When managers first are introduced to coaching or offered training to become more coaching in their leadership some of them have a mental resistance to move in that direction. If you have doubts about the usefulness of coaching you might recognize yourself in any of the following “argument” against not embrace or trying a more coaching style of leadership:

- “In this corporate culture coaching does not work.”
- “They will not understand what I do and will therefore lose confidence in me.”
- “They will understand that I have been on a course and will allow me to carry on a few weeks until everything gets back to normal.”
- “It takes too much time, I cannot coach.”
- “They expect me to talk about what needs to be done.”
- “They will think that I have gotten weird.”
- “I will lose my authority.”
- “I am an expert and they expect me to come up with answers and solutions.”
- “I already have a coaching style, I do not need to change anything.”
- “I’ll never be good at it. I will not know what questions I should ask.”
- “I will not achieve the same results as with my usual style.”
- “What I have done so far has worked well, why change?”

5.2 Exercises and assignments

- 1) Train to coach others, seek opportunities where you can use the coaching structure or “sneak in” a few open questions here and there. Note at least three examples of situations where you have been coaching and how it happened.
- 2) Try it for a couple of weeks to consciously stop using “why”-questions.
- 3) Pay attention to your listening. Where and when is it works well, and when it is more difficult? What are your personal pitfalls? What happens when you become an active listener?
- 4) How does it feel to refrain from coming up with the answers and solutions?



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6 The manager's most common fears

There is good leadership, but of course also less good. Regularly studies are presented that show the consequences of poor management and leadership. Researchers at Karolinska Institute in Sweden announced in 2009 the results that showed that the health effects caused by poor leadership can stay for as long as ten years. Another study (Infact, 2011) showed that poor management is one of the main reasons why people change jobs.

A major contributing factor to poor leadership is fears that takes many forms and creates behaviours that are not preferable. In the worst case this can lead to a direct destructive leadership and result in such cowardice, indecision, arrogance, aggressiveness or falsity. Fears can be both conscious and unconscious, often under other names than "fear".

6.1 What is fear?

Fear is a feeling that occurs when a situation is threatening or hazardous, real or imagined. Probably fear was a condition of survival if we go back to the time when man lived in caves and constantly was threatened by wild animals and other dangers – a to put it simply a defence mechanism. Fear stimulates our adrenaline, which allows us to run faster, or get really aggressive, to get away.

Fear helps us to be vigilant and get us to listen inward. Today, when we feel fear, it is important to try to understand what it really is. Nowadays it is less often about survival, but rather other types of threats. The feeling can vary from mild anxiety to phobias, paranoia or fear. An interesting phenomenon is that the more we try to avoid something that we are afraid of the greater power it gets over us.

Unfortunately, fear is often a barrier that takes over, controls us and limit our actions. This may involve, for example, fear of failure, the wrong choice or not being liked. That feeling might push us to remain in the comfort zone – where growth or personal development is not as frequent.

6.1.1 The most common fears

Here are some examples of fears that are common among managers:

- Fear of making decisions or making the wrong decision. May lead to no or very few decisions are implemented or that they are postponed.
- Fear of appearing ignorant or unproductive. Can often result in the manager comes with their own answers and solutions rather than coaching staff and let them take initiative.
- Fear of “difficult” conversations, such as termination or feedback about unwanted behaviour or bad performance. Can result in conversations not being done at all (“it is probably over,” “it’s the wrong time now”,...) or done in a bad way.
- Fear to be clear, stand up for something or have explicit goals and visions. Others might start creating their own image of who you are and what you think is important.
- Fear of really daring to lead and coach others. Can cause you to have employees who do not regard you as a leader and therefore do not want to follow you.
- Fear of not being liked (especially as a new manager of former colleagues). May cause you to take on too much work or that you do not dare to be straight and clear in your communication.

When fear controls, the result is that we stay in the mid-range, we hold back and stay in the comfort zone. We do not use our maximum capacity, but also we do not take the risk of failing (which in itself could be developmental). For some reason, there is a concern to use our inherent power and potential and what we really could do with it.

6.1.2 Five truths about fears

Susan Jeffers writes in the book “Feel the fear and do it anyway” that there are five truths about fears:

1. The fear will never go away as long as you continue to grow. As soon as you expose yourself to a new situation, you will feel more or less afraid.
2. The only way to get free from a specific fear is to expose yourself to it.
3. The only way to get better self-esteem is to face your fears.
4. It is not only you who feel fear every time you are in an unknown territory, so does everyone else.
5. Confronting fear is less frightening than living with the latent fear that is rooted in helplessness.

Good to know that everyone is afraid, right?

6.2 Tips on how fears can be handled

6.2.1 Take responsibility

In order to overcome the fear and grow as a person, you must first learn to master a number of situations and areas:

- Do not blame other people or circumstances, but take full responsibility for your actions, your development, your decisions and your results.
- Understand what you want to get out of your life in the long run. Create a vision and break it down into objectives and targets – and then take steps to move in the desired direction. Once you have the direction and goals, you get the strength to resist the fears that hold you back, and instead you can focus on the possibilities. If you let the fear control you will probably see the obstacles and what contributes to the fear. “You become what you think of most of the time” is a memorable quote from the author and leadership consultant Brian Tracy.
- Realize that in any situation there is always a choice, you can for example choose how to perceive and react to what happens.
- Learn to manage the “monkey mind” – the inner voice that tells you that you should not, cannot, will not succeed and so on. The voice tends to be stronger and more insistent the closer you come to the far end of the comfort zone. You can learn to notice the voice, listen to it and give thanks for the information it provides, but do not let it limit you.



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6.2.2 Dare to choose

The fear of choosing wrong, missing something or to repent is common. The discussion focuses on what you will lose if you choose one over the other. However, you can reverse it and instead use the win-win model: Write down the options on a piece of paper and note everything you will gain from each option. Whichever you choose, you win! And every path is the one of learning and growth.

The risk with waiting to make the “right” decision is that you become paralyzed and do not select anything. The conclusion is that your choices do not lead to something that is absolutely right or absolutely wrong but just to different results – and lessons learned.

6.2.3 Ask for feedback

Many feel the fear of being misunderstood both as a manager and human being. Instead of guessing how you are perceived by others, you can make it a habit to ask for feedback. You can also make personal tests and analyzes such as 360-degree feedback survey or a DISC test to get an idea of how others perceive your leadership. Then compare the results with your own self-image.

Always have a personal development plan, so you step by step get better as a manager. Write down the feedback you get into the palm. Try to identify your core strengths and use more of these. Identify also the areas where improvement would be most noticeable.

6.2.4 Learn to fail right

To avoid taking setbacks personally and thus get the feeling of not being good enough, a method can be de-personalizing activities and instead “see them as projects”. For example, suppose you are in search of a new job as a manager. You talk to people, answer ads, network, etc., but do not have the success you hope for. It is then natural for you to take it personally and feel that there is something wrong with you.

If you instead define the job search as a project with some detailed sub-projects (which in turn contains a number of activities), the whole thing becomes less personal. Would the results be less successful it is because it is not due to you, but that a certain activity/action did not work. Then you evaluate the action and instead try a new or altered activity. If adversity continues you may need to redefine the entire project and its goals. Maybe it was the wrong target from the beginning? Or do you need to redrawn the entire plan?

6.2.5 Take a risk every day

One way to learn to expand your comfort zone is to consciously take a little risk every day. Please plan in advance what you will do the next day to take a step outside the comfort zone. Complement this by writing a diary about the fears you feel, how you handle them, the results you achieve, and what lessons and insights you receive.

6.2.6 Question your preconceptions

Many fears stem from preconceived notions of how you should be, what you should do, what is considered right or what skills are considered desirable. Often it can be mental images that have been around for a long time. Reviewing these images can be valuable and to abandon some of them can give great results. Giving up “truths” about who you are or should be can open up interesting opportunities, but it requires that you go outside your comfort zone to discover them.

6.3 Exercises and questions

1. What is your biggest fear and how does it affect you in your managerial role?
2. When was the last time you stepped outside your comfort zone, even though you were afraid or unsure? How did you feel before and after you did that?
3. How successful do you dare to become? What are your main obstacles to get there?



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7 The first three months of a new job

When you start a new job, the first time is important. What you do and who you are in your first three months of will either lay the foundations for future success or give you a tougher time.

The first months in a new managerial position is important for you, your employees and the company. Statistics show that about 40% of the senior managers who starts in a new job fail in different ways within 18 months.

The first few months on the new job is exciting. You have on one hand a chance for a fresh start, you can see new opportunities and implement changes that may not have been made. On the other hand, you are quite vulnerable, you have not sorted out any relationship and you do not have full knowledge of what the job entails. And you can assume that you have all eyes on you.

A change from one industry to another is probably more challenging than switching within the same occupational sector, but also a change in the industry or in the same company demands that you get a good start from the beginning.

In fact, there are studies that show that it may be harder to change jobs internally than to come in from outside. The reason may be that when you “just” change internally you do not you take the challenge as seriously and therefore continue in the same way as before. It can also be more difficult to make a fresh start or make changes because the surroundings have preconceived opinions about who you are and what you can do.

What can give a new manager a bad start? The main reasons are:

- Unclear leadership: the manager does not track, is flaccid and/or unstructured, changes frequently, making it difficult for employees to know what they can expect.
- Lack of self-awareness: the manager has a poor understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses, does not understand how he/she is perceived by others, has an inability to adapt.
- Ambiguity of the goals and expectations: the manager has not clarified clear expectations with his/her manager, is relying on old merits, does not take responsible for communications upwards, instead waiting for his/her manager to takes care of it.
- Inability to build teams or relationships: the manager has poor leadership skills, cannot delegate, is not a good role model is non-empathetic and is sometimes manipulative.

7.1 The transition

The transition between the old and the new position should be done in three steps:

1) Closure

Let go of the responsibilities and tasks associated with the old position so you do not have dual positions to be reliable for.

Let go of identifying yourself with the old role. Do not rely on your old “modus operandi” works automatically; consider which ways are best suited for the new role. If you change jobs internally, it is also about making people around you to let go of picturing you in the old role as soon as possible. Therefore, it is important not to have two roles simultaneously.

Closure phase can begin before you have stepped into the new role.

2) Exploring

This phase may partly be initiated before starting on the new position.

This is about finding out what you need to learn and develop to get a good start. What relationships do you need to start building? Make a plan for learning. Identify the current business situation. Make a plan and set goals for what you want to have achieved by one, two and three months. Identify “early wins”. Agree your plan with your manager so that you have the same objectives.

Ensure expectations as early as possible – both with your manager and your team.

3) Start

In the beginning, it is about focusing on what is most important. Remember that first impressions are often lasting. Evaluate your team. Act according to the plan you set up in step 2. Report continuously. Build relationships with key people.

7.2 Tips for managers on new job

7.2.1 Accelerate your learning

There is a risk that you as a new manager starts making business decisions too early in order to show that they have chosen the right person and that you are energetic. But if you have not had time to grow into the role and is not yet up for the business challenges the decisions may be costly. At the same time, do not take too long to learn what you need to know.

Already at an early stage, you should make a systematic plan for your learning. You can start the plan even before the first day on the new job, then let it be a living document during your first time. Set a goal for what you should have learned on a monthly basis.

The plan focuses on the things that are most important for you to learn and how to do it. It consists initially of a number of questions to be answered and supplemented later with some hypotheses to test.

The questions are about:

The past: why is it as it is and what has been done before?

Current situation: strategy, people, processes, potential mines and possible “early wins”.

The future: opportunities and challenges, obstacles, resources, corporate culture.

Identify the people you need to talk to, internally and externally, to get the answers to the questions you have. Use other methods to gather information, such as surveys, focus groups, pilot study of existing material, check earlier measurements, analyze processes, etc.

After the first month you match your answers and impressions with your team and your manager.

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7.2.2 Ensure “early wins”

Even if you have approximately ninety days in you cannot wait that long to deliver something of value. You therefore need to identify a number of “early wins”. It increases confidence in you and affects the perception of you in a positive direction. A major challenge is to initially focus on what is most important, because it is always a lot to do the first period.

Be content with identifying two or three (not more) things to deliver of value and ensure that these build confidence for you, while contributing to long-term value for the organization.

Also remember to ensure that what you doing also is valuable by your manager, and that they really are perceived as “early wins” in the current corporate culture. The latter is especially important if you change jobs within the industry or change industry altogether.

7.2.3 Set the right expectations

One pitfall for both parties, when you as a manager start a new job, is that both you and your new manager take for granted what the expectations are and therefore no one take the time to clarify them in the beginning. When it later on becomes more serious the opinions might diverge completely, which can lead to unnecessary conflicts.

If your manager does not take responsibility for this you might think it is ok just to continue to work. Do not do that! Already during the first few days, it is important to clarify the expectations your manager has – and vice versa. If your manager does not take the initiative to have that conversation, you do. Reconcile how you want to work in the first three months, what you will do and what you are expected to deliver after the first, second and third months.

You should also be clear about what goals are most important to you and how your success will be measured. What does it mean, for example, to “do a good job” after 90 days, 180 days and 360 days?

You should also be the one who takes full responsibility for that the relationship and communication with your manager works well, do not wait passively for it to happen. Suggest (if not already) a way how the communication between you two will be managed.

Just as important as finding out the expectations of your manager, it is to agree expectations with your team. You should clarify how you will be working during the first 90 days, and what you expect to deliver when the time has elapsed.

Please ask each of our employees to write down three tips on what you should consider in order to succeed in your new role as manager. It gives you the knowledge of employees' expectations and the culture that exists. Furthermore, signal that you are ready to listen. Then it's up to you to decide what you want to listen to.

7.2.4 Request continuous feedback

To develop as a manager is an ongoing dynamic process. A new job requires new learning and new behaviours. A key to success is to regularly receive feedback on your strengths, areas for development, behaviour and ways to handle different situations. What worked before may not work on the new job.

Ensure that early on initiate a systematic routine of giving/getting feedback – it increases the understanding of yourself and how you work. Lack of self-awareness is actually one of the main reasons why managers fail in a new job.

You can get feedback by, for example:

- Ask for a so-called 360-degree surveys.
- Seek support and coaching from a neutral person who can observe you from some distance.
- Ask for informal feedback from colleagues, your manager and employee.



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7.2.5 Make sure to be in balance

An important prerequisite for success during the intense first time is that you are in good balance.

Some things to consider:

- Try to focus on the 20% of the activities that give 80% of the result. It's easy to do too many things, your challenge is to choose the most important ones. If you are unsure of what results you should focus on it, rather than guessing, to ask your manager for advice.
- Set limits. Be clear about what you can and are willing to do. Otherwise the risk is that others will demand more of you, you might lose in respect and may end up in a negative spiral. Do not start with a 60-hour week; it creates expectations that it will continue so.
- Avoid being isolated (which is not unusual for a new manager to do). Make sure to set aside time to network, make contacts and establish relationships.

Exercises and questions

1. Think about when you started a new job recently. What did you do to get a good start? What did your manager do? What worked well? What could have been done differently?
2. If/when you are hiring, what do you do to support your new employees so that they as quickly as possible to get into the job?

If you find yourself in the situation when you will start a new job fairly soon, please do a three-month plan for learning, networking and deliveries. Set clear goals for each month. Please have a “buddy” as a sounding board during this period.

7.3 Case: The right person in the wrong place

Tom now had a new job as a sales manager at consulting firm. He looked forward to working together with the new CEO who seemed focused and energetic. The CEO had also put together a solid management team in which Tom now was a part of. Everything felt positive.

In his last position as Marketing Manager at a software company Tom had been successful. He had appeared in panel debates and in the press, he had also appeared in several other contexts, and perhaps become a little overconfident about what he could accomplish. When the request came from the consulting firm Tom figured that since it had gone so well so far, “I can handle the job about the same way.” He guessed that it was so they wanted it to be done, otherwise they would not have asked him.

Tom and CEO of the consulting company got along well and worked well together, but they never made any real clarification on mutual expectations. The only thing Tom knew was that he had a sales budget of several million, and that a number of sales representatives (whom he had met before he signed on) were part of the team.

Sales were relatively good and somehow the team reached their goals all the time. Tom led the team, but did not participate very actively in the sales process, but worked more as a marketing manager – it was something he knew he could, and he thought that was the right thing to do. Naively, one might think.

This was at the end of the “new economy” and the consulting company had many “dotcom companies” as their customers. Suddenly many of those started going really bad, they stopped buying services from the consulting company, which quickly ran into trouble.

The CEO left the company and an interim CEO from another country started. She began to examine the results, achievements and roles and concluded that Tom had not delivered quite as expected. It did not appear that Tom’s own work could be seen in the sales statistics, although the team had reached their budget. Instead, he had worked with a few other things that were difficult to measure and see the results of.

It ended with Tom, along with several others, had to leave the company.

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8 Head over colleagues

Suddenly it happens – you are the manager! And just as sudden you will be seen in a whole new way by your old colleagues. You are now someone who can actively influence their lives. Some will become silent when you are around and you do will not participate in the conversations in the same spontaneous way as before. You are new as manager and have taken on the challenge of leading the people who were previously your colleagues.

In many organizations, career equals becoming a manager. It may be the only way to raise their salaries or to influence policies and decisions. For many, it's about to take the step from a specialist role to a management role, for example, someone within sales who becomes sales manager or a technician who becomes technical manager. Role change often means that a person will become manager of his former colleagues. It's a fun and stimulating step to take, but not easy – and there are some things to look out for.

Before you became manager you probably a valued and competent specialist in a field. As a specialist you were easy to identify and the role gave you a clear professional identity. As a new manager the old identity often follows you into the managerial role and there are a few pitfalls you should watch out for.

- One is that you continue to put a lot of time on the specialist role because that's where you get confirmation, can exhibit skills and feel confident. The time you devote to leadership then becomes too limited. It is not uncommon for managers who have been specialists “avoiding” leadership because the definition of a good manager's job is blurry. Additionally, if you as a manager do not have all the answers and can come up with the solutions, how do you otherwise contribute?
- The second pitfall is that you, or the person who has nominated you, might think that “leading the team in the specialist area, how hard can it be?” and handles the managerial role as if it was less important than your previous role. When reasoning like that, there is a risk that there is not given room for a good leadership.

To lead/manage often takes longer than you think, and should do so if the result will become good. As a manager, you have four main areas to focus on: administer, manage/develop/coach your staff, to be the leader/strategist and possibly a specialist role to a limited extent. Again, you should think about not “escaping” into the safer areas as your specialist is or administration if you feel uncomfortable with managing, leading and developing people. If you have thoughts in that direction, you should probably think about whether you want to be a manager at all.

It is important that you make a mental re-orientation and look at the managerial role as your new professional identity, a different kind of specialist role where you can develop yourself both professionally and as a person.

As a manager you do not belong to your previous group in the same way as before – the balance of power has changed. Your people look at you with new eyes and your role may create a certain distance. It started probably the day you got promoted. The perception now is that you have more power, more responsibility, and access to more information. You can now also affect your employees' salaries and development, and thereby have an influence over their lives. You also have the opportunity to make greater impact on the culture and atmosphere of the organization.

As a new manager, it may be difficult to realize this and even more difficult to accept that the relationship has changed. You want to continue to be a popular “friend”, one of the gang. You should watch out for this, you are not primarily employed as a manager to be liked, but in order to deliver against certain targets.

Although the relationship is changing, they do not get worse, just different, compared to the past.

Your employees expect you to step into the managerial costume, take ownership and be clear about what you want and what you stand for. They still want you to be yourself and not “play manager” or start having an attitude.

8.1 Tips for inexperienced (and some experienced) managers

8.1.1 Be aware of the expectations

Your people will probably wonder what will happen now, how you will act, what changes you will make and what kind of manager you will be. They have the image of the person you were before, and it will remain with them for a while. In the group, there may be several different emotions and attitudes towards your leadership. Make sure to “set the scen” early to avoid guesswork and speculation. One of the challenges that you face is that you now have to keep a distance to the employees. Maybe you need to “reset” yourself to thus make a fresh start.

You should be clear about how you will be working during the first 90 days, and what you intend to deliver when the time has elapsed.

Also have a conversation with your own manager, and most preferably before entering the position, where you go through the manager's expectations of you, the very definition of what “a good job” for this position means, how the communication between you two should be managed and responsibilities. Agree on milestones. Feel free to make an initial three-month plan and agree it with your manager. Require to get the skills and resources needed to match your objectives.

See also Chapter 2 (Your personal leadership) and Chapter 8 (the first three months of a new job) for more thoughts on expectations, guiding principles and what you want to stand for as a manager.

8.1.2 Don't forget your own development

Take at an early stage a conscious decision to invest in your own management development. Decide to be “good”! No one can help you become a good manager unless you are committed to this. It seems that many executives tend to forget about their own development, such as planning their own training, which can be a big mistake in the long run.

For your personal growth the development discussion with your manager is an important element. Ensure that the conversation actually take place (there are unfortunately many who avoid it). Please do your own development plan, including both work and private life. Finding a balance between these two can be crucial to your well-being.

Another way to develop is to try to observe yourself in different management situations and continuously decide whether you can stand up for the behaviour you show up in different situations. One effective way is to write a diary with focus both on your own and other people's actions as managers and leaders. In the diary, you can work on issues such as:

- Have I acted in any obvious leadership situation today?
- What went well? What could I have done differently? What did I learn?
- How do I think I am perceived by my colleagues and my manager?



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You can also ask to get a coach during the first months. This will allow you to get a neutral sounding board for questions that you cannot discuss at work.

If you need to, you can of course also get a basic management training so that you have a good tool kit to start with.

8.1.3 Become a networker

In your previous job you might have been a skilled specialist or expert with the possibility to act both freely and independently. It is easy to believe that this will increase by getting a manager title. However, be prepared that freedom might be different as a manager – you can even experience the role a bit more limited. As a manager, you (and you should be) are a part of a network where your manager, your manager's colleagues, employees and other people within and outside the organization are included.

You will meet many and conflicting requirements and expectations from different sources. At the same time you can use many relationships to your advantage, such as talking to more experienced managers who have done similar things and hence can provide tips and advice.

Accept that the job in large part is about managing relationships and focus on developing yourself in this area. Find out how your communication style is perceived and what you can customize it to how other people communicate. In a systematic way, become a skilled networker and use for instance LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) to help you to keep and build your network within and outside the organization.

8.1.4 Do not be too nice!

There is a risk that you, as a newly appointed manager, still want to be friends with and liked by your employees, and you thereby become too nice. On your table, there is lots of work, some funny, others boring, some urgent and some complicated. As a manager, you must learn to delegate!

The trap that you need to watch out for is that you, instead of delegating the boring tasks, do them yourself so that employees will not dislike you because they get those tasks. You will then be quickly seen as having an unreasonable workload. Most likely, you will not become more popular, but rather appear as a manager who cannot, or dare not to take on the role fully. The situation can be described as: “what you are afraid of will be drawn to you.”

Your employees expect clarity, they want to know what is what. Not everyone will appreciate what you say, what you think or what you delegate, but by being clear (and fair) at least they know what applies and can relate to it. You did not get the managerial role primarily be liked but to deliver results in some form. If your staff also appreciates you on the way that is of course no disadvantage.

8.1.5 If you doubt ...

...your ability or wonder how you got the job or why others do not appreciate you, remember that you have the trust and confidence from the person who found you suited for this managerial role.

8.2 Exercises and questions

- I. If you just have been appointed to a managerial position, or on the way into a role like that, you should make a plan for the next three months. The plan should contain:

Learning: what do you need to learn about the business, the customers, goals, plans, processes, etc.? Set concrete goals for your learning.

Networking and contacts: what are the most important people to contact and get to know during your first time in the role? Which support team do you need to start building around you?

Delivery and performance: what do you concretely need to achieve during the first months? Set goals for the one, second and third months.

- II. Set aside time for personal reflection and writing down a diary. You as a new manager has a unique opportunity to learn a lot about yourself and others in different situations. It is highly recommended that you take that opportunity in a structured manner, for instance by making daily notes.
- III. Who do you want to be as a manager? What values do you want to stand for? How should these values be expressed in your everyday life?
- IV. Think through how you want to represent your team and how you want to represent your manager and management of your department.

8.3 Case: A good manager does not need to be liked

“I need a method, tool or tips on how I can get better at time management,” said Conrad when he met me at the first coaching session. “I want to come home on time at night, it cannot continue as it is now.”

Conrad was new as manager of a consulting company, and had thus become manager of his former colleagues, people who he had worked with in various assignments and projects. He had not yet received any management training and thus lacked the basic tools that he really needed for his new job. However, he had decided to become a good manager, it was definitely nothing wrong with this enthusiasm for the role.

It soon became evident that there was much more to do than he had expected. Things piled up and the to-do lists filled faster than he could handle them. I asked how he prioritized and planned his time today.

“I have lost a bit of control, I think,” Conrad said. “I do what seems most urgent and sometimes I do something, anything, to tick things from the list so that it will be shorter so I can have the feeling that I am doing something. But for every thing I tick off, two new will come. I need a tool.”

When we later discussed the description of “a good manager,” Conrad mentioned “to be liked” as one of the most important factors. For him, it meant that employees would feel that they were having fun and did stimulating things. As Conrad was afraid not to continue to be friends with his old colleagues he avoided giving them tasks which he perceived as boring, he did them himself instead. And the piles grew... No tools in the world had helped him.

Conrad eventually came to the conclusion that his fear of both being clear and not being liked was something that he needed to challenge. The first step was to start delegating some “boring” tasks – and to do it in a clear way. The next step was to go to his manager and ask for proper management training. He had not dared to do this earlier as he feared that his manager would perceive him being the wrong person for the managerial role is he asked for it.

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9 Building an effective team

Teams with agreed targets, a common view of the big picture and who are comfortable with each other, become decisive and deliver results. However, such a team does not develop on its own or naturally. As a manager, it may be useful to know a little about team development and what you can do to build and develop your team.

Management teams may exist at different levels within the company. At the top of the hierarchy there is, in larger companies, a group that usually comprises a CEO, Sales Manager, Marketing Manager, CFO, HR manager, and perhaps a few more people. The level below is perhaps sales and service-/aftermarket teams led by department heads.

Regardless of the group's level, their function is to develop sufficient information for the decision-making processes, make decisions as well as streamline the management of the company or department. The group should keep an eye on the outside world, work with strategic issues, monitor key performance indicators and identify the need for change. They should, however, avoid diving too deeply into operational issues.

Many managers believe that one of the most difficult tasks they have is to put together a management team and make it work well. Many group members perceive themselves as ineffective. They believe that they are working on other things than what they really want to or for that matter should be working on. Put simply, they are more at an operational level than at a strategic one. Questions such as “How do we register prospects on our CRM system?” occur more frequently than “How do we increase our market share?” or “What skills do we need to build?”

If the group focuses too much on the daily operational business tasks, it becomes unclear who makes the ‘operational decisions’ and it furthermore loses focus on what is important for the long-term success of the company.

A key factor for a group working well together is that everyone feels responsible for the results and for what is best for the company; it also requires that members of the group can put their personal agendas and egos aside. There may be some lively discussions and exchanges of views before a decision is made, but once that decision is made, everyone will have to stand behind it. After a meeting, the information that follows to the rest of the staff needs to be consistent – no one should go out and say, “They decided to...but I do not think so.”

Good and effective groups don't occur naturally, for the group to act with the company's best interests in mind you need:

- First of all, trust for each other -trust that allows members of the group to be open and honest with each other without feeling that it will be used against them.
- Group members that agree on the values, goals and the commitments made by the group.
- Members who feel secure with each other, a spirit of respect, support and interest to give and receive constructive feedback. The group members communicate with each other frequently and regularly follow-up on results.
- Everyone feels engaged, motivated and willing to take mutual responsibility. There should be a focus on the future and a willingness to change.
- The group works together and operates in a clear and structured manner.
- The personalities and skills of the group complement each other.
- A leader who is interested in capitalizing on individual strengths and skills, to develop individuals in order to create trust and a sense of belonging in the group. (See tip number 4).

How can you get there? One method is to understand how a group dynamic process might look like – for example, by reading about FIRO (“Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation” – a model that is based on the differences in the group's effectiveness depending on the working relations between them and the members' way of communicating) or the research done by Susan Wheelan – following which stages a group goes through in their development. Another way is to use the tips below.

9.1 Tips on building an effective team

9.1.1 How do you recognize an ineffective team?

You may have been a part of or have seen a disastrous team first hand. Where there is mostly talk and little action, focussing more on their status than on the results. Knowing what distinguishes an ineffective team will help you avoid it or take actions to improve the situation. Here are some symptoms to be wary of;

- The leader is dominant and does not trust other members' capacity. Personal interaction is not genuine and there is a unhealthy atmosphere of suspicion, distrust, disunity and fear owing to the leader's approach. There is more focus on the members' flaws and mistakes than their strengths and development. There is a lack of mutual trust and no one looks forward to the meetings.
- There are many flaws in the way meetings are run, the meetings tend to focus on the wrong questions, diverts from the pre agreed agenda and become too operational. Participants come late to meetings; decisions made will be changed at the next meeting. Unresolved and destructive conflicts flare up more often than not.
- Participants focus primarily on what is best for them and are guided by their own agendas. Being part of the management team is more about status than it is about results.
- Members have limited or 'just enough' knowledge of what the others are doing in their daily work, which hampers communication and understanding.

9.1.2 Good meeting techniques

A group that delivers results often have both an efficient meeting procedure and methodology, meeting procedures are clear and the participants come on time prepared. However, creating good meeting formats is much easier on paper than it is in practice.

Some general advice:

- a) Before the meeting: determine the purpose and objectives of the meeting. What type of meeting should it be – a decision making meeting, briefing or brainstorming meeting? What do you want to achieve with the meeting and how will you know that the objective has been achieved?
- b) Send invitations clearly stating where and when, purpose, type of meeting, agenda, what preparations are needed, and the estimated time per agenda item. Attach any required background material so that participants come prepared.
- c) Demand preparation! Only those who have prepared themselves should be able to come up with ideas and observations. Preparation saves time and directs the focus towards generating ideas and solutions as opposed to problems.
- d) Try to keep control of the meeting so that all agenda items start and end on time. “Park” irrelevant points on a flip chart and then move them to another meeting.
- e) Write meeting minutes clearly stating the decisions made and what is to be done by whom and by when.



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9.1.3 The composition of the group

In a good team, there should be personalities and skills that complement each other. If possible, build your team based on this already from the start. In the case of an existing team, create an awareness of the competencies that are available in the team and which ones are missing, try to build on the strengths and fill the gaps.

The strengths which ideally should be represented in the group include:

The Driver, producer: goal oriented persons who organize, plan and make things happen.

The Administrator, strategist: the person who gathers facts and information, who has control, examines rationality and quality, can put forward future plans based on external factors and analysis.

The Entrepreneur, influencer: the one that sees the big picture and is visionary, sees opportunities and can communicate them, gets other people engaged in the ideas.

The Integrator, relationship builder: someone with a good feeling for the team, how it works and creates interaction. They ensure that everyone is included and involved.

Finding out how your team composition looks like can be done via using a personal and group profile tool such as Team Management Profile, DISC, Belbin or Strengths Finder. With these assessment tools, you can get a good picture of the strengths of the team and what is missing. Above all else it provides a common language about the different personality types and the different behavioural styles people have. Such a test will give you the opportunity to discover and use everyone's strengths, even people who had previously felt 'out of place' may suddenly be regarded as a valuable resource (see case below).

9.1.4 Link the goals and commitment

The sky is the limit when groups have a common goal and purpose. You've probably felt the power and energy of such a group at some point. Having this experience can be a source of frustration when you find yourself in a group that has no objective and no purpose. The key to successful teamwork is that everyone is involved and engaged and furthermore value being part of the group just as highly as any other part of their job. The big question is, however, where does the commitment to create energy come from?

There are primarily two basic needs that influence our behaviour in groups:

- The ability to do what I'm good at and be recognized for this.
- The ability to develop in my profession and as a person

If the targets and the group members' needs can be linked together, engagement will follow. How can you achieve this? Well..., by asking that exactly that question! Ask the member what he/she wants to get out of being a member of the group. Also ensure that the purpose and objective of the management team's work is clear to all. This will make it easier for members to see the connection and thus to decide whether they want to participate or not.

9.1.5 How good is your team?

If you want to measure how the group works and its development, try the following simple method:

- a) Start with setting up a “brainstorming” session with the group. Everyone writes down a number of characteristics that he/she believes a good and effective group should have. When everyone has finished, list all the suggestions on a white board.
- b) Then select 5–6 of the listed characteristics. You can select them through some type of voting system.
- c) Draw up a matrix where the characteristics are written vertically and the group members’ names are written horizontally. Draw then a grid.
- d) Ask each member to indicate, on a scale from 1–10 how well he/she perceives that the group is for each characteristic. Write down grades in the grid.
- e) Now you can summarize each characteristic and calculate the average scores, calculate an overall average for all characteristics. Feel free to make this evaluation a few times a year to monitor the group’s development and progress, looking at each characteristic as well as the overall rating.

	Donald	Eva	Peter	Sally	Richard	Total	Average
Honesty	7	8	3	5	6	29	5,8
Feedback	8	4	5	6	9	31	6,2
Openness	2	3	4	3	3	15	3,0
Respect	5	6	5	3	7	26	5,2

9.2 Questions and exercises

1. What, in your opinion, are the top five things that characterize an effective team? What rating would you give your team in each of those characteristics?
2. What does your group composition look like?
3. How could your team improve in terms of meeting technique?
4. How is your leadership style changing depending on which phase the team is in?

10 Leading in change

In times of change is the importance of good leadership even more obvious. You need to be clear in communication and information. You need to know what you stand for. Your leadership style is the new test.

“People are joining companies, but leave managers.”

There are several studies showing that the main reason why employees leave a company is because they are unhappy with their boss. When a company is facing, or are implementing, a major change is the quality of leadership is more evident and more examined. To go ashore with this task, you as a manager to take care of both your employees and your organization – and yourself.

There are many factors to take into account when dealing with restructures and changes affecting employees at some of them may negatively. It is therefore important to try to predict the practical, personal, internal political and legal implications of the change, and above all to plan implementation meticulously.



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A well-implemented change contributes to good image of the company and provides a good basis for the future of the organization. It gives too – in the middle of uncertainty – a sense of security for the employees if they know that the company treats them with respect in a difficult situation, while increasing understanding of the strategic decisions that form the basis for the change.

Different styles work differently in changing situations. Experience shows that the leadership style that works best and has the most positive impact on the climate is characterized by clarity on the direction and goals, decision-making power, and straightforward communication. Works well do the leadership styles that are more democratic, has a focus on people and how they feel, creating involvement in decisions and coaching. Worst effects on work climate, the manager who goes in with the attitude “do what I tell you to do” or “do as I do”.

Communication is very important in a process of change. Real communication occurs only when a message is received and understood. This can be difficult enough under normal circumstances, but the big changes will be a tremendous challenge for managers.

Important to keep in mind when it comes to communication with changes:

- Have a clear message.
- Believe in the message.
- Stick to the message.
- Ensure that the message gets through. Communicate often, maybe three times more than you do normally.
- Have knowledge of what has been said previously.
- Believe in the future.
- Make eye contact when you present your message.
- Be available afterwards.
- Have a plan for what happens after the message has been received.
- Have integrity.
- Be transparent, i.e, provide the same message everywhere.

10.1 Have a vision – faith in the future

This is always important, but the big changes will be critical. To visualize your vision to your employees allows them to perform in an environment of security. With knowledge of where the company is heading, and that they are involved in the trip, the employees will be more likely to roll up your sleeves and give that little extra that can be the difference between success and failure. Therefore, keep staff updated on developments – both the positive and the negative – and the realities in relation to vision. If you do this, people can go through fire and water for you and the company.

10.2 Communicate up

Involve your boss in the change that is going on in your business, the reactions that occur and the obstacles you encounter. Do not be afraid to vent any problems. You may also need to make demands on what is necessary for its implementation, such as providing certain employee training, coaching or assistance with outplacement. In tough times, you may need to close down parts of the business, and then it may be necessary to set the framework and objectives of your boss. It also requires that your head is clear and straight with their information about “what” and “why”, so that you can be clear when you talk to your team.

10.3 Leading in change – terminating employees

As a manager, you face a variety of problems when to make the call, including the following:

- To terminate employees is one of the most difficult tasks for a manager because it indicates that something has gone amiss. And if something has gone wrong, who bears the responsibility?
- A dismissal damages the employee’s self-esteem because it does not happen on its own initiative, and thus becomes a career break. People would not normally hurt each other and a dismissal is hurtful to both parties.
- Most of the layoffs are not because the employee does not do the job. Many times it is very competent employees who become victims of a situation which is beyond their control and which can often be difficult to accept. “Why me?”, Perhaps you ask. The phases a person goes through when a crisis occurs in life are shock, denial, anger, processing, exploration and opportunity. Employees need time to live through its crisis, and it is not always a straightforward process. Nor is it possible to jump from shock to opportunity.
- As a manager, you may feel uncomfortable and nervous about the call. Why do I do it right? Is there an alternative?
- It is understandable that it can be hard to keep a good balance in the termination call/difficult conversations and that therefore many derailed. It is easy to steel themselves, turn off emotions or control their emotions too much. Of course, the message is communicated directly, clearly and objectively, but it should not be perceived as uncaring or clinically because it can create problems. It is important to always ask the question “of who carried out the call?”

With the same reasoning, one can argue that if the employment is terminated in a professional manner, in which both parties retain their dignity, it can create a positive impact for the company.

10.4 Tips for a redundancy talks

10.4.1 Preparations

After the dismissal decision is taken, it is important for the manager to communicate this clearly. The conversation needs to be carefully planned, may be repeated and tested against a colleague.

10.4.2 Screenplay

A script helps you stay on topic. You may need to repeat the message several times during the call, so it is important that it be implemented properly and with respect for the person. Halka not go into areas other than issues in the first meeting. Script should contain key words that covers background information, details of the termination/redeployment, what happens now, practical details, support available, time of follow-up meeting, and anything else you find important.

10.4.3 Time – timing

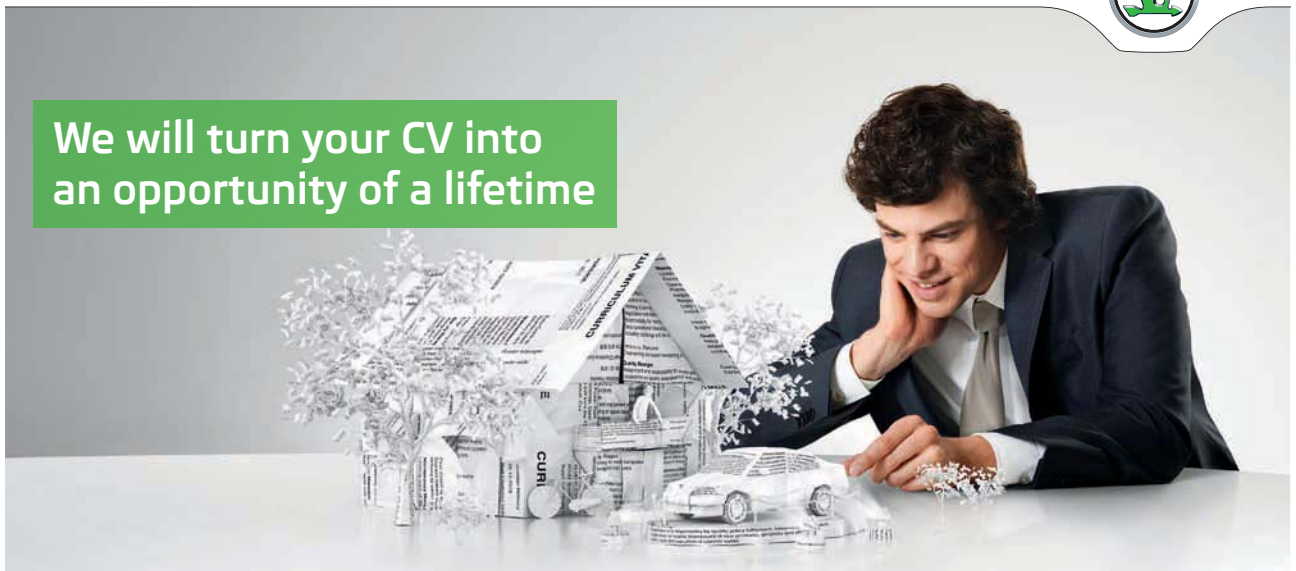
In most cases it is sufficient to set aside an hour. You need 5–15 minutes to the preparation. Communicating the message itself usually does not take more than about 15 minutes. In addition, required perhaps another 15 minute rehearsal of – and response to – what you have said. It is often better to give employees time to digest the news by booking a new meeting time next day. It often takes at least two and sometimes more meetings before a signature is on the documents, and it is “consistent”. For this reason, it is never a good idea to choose a Friday for the first call.

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10.4.3 Implementation

Whatever the reason, it is important that the manager will ensure that it is given with dignity, respect and compassion. It is a difficult task but it is part of the chief chore. “This is not easy for me either” or “I’m not used to doing these things” are phrases like the one above head easily take, but which of course sounds bad in the employee’s ears. How, then, the message is communicated in a dignified, empathetic and respectful manner?

Some tips

- The call must contain a clear message, free from ambiguity. If it is so that the employee is relieved of his duties at this meeting, this must be clearly stated and be beyond doubt.
- After the meeting, it is good if the employee has the opportunity to meet a representative from the Human Resources Department, a psychologist or an outplacement consultant to ensure that he/she recovers from the initial shock.
- In cases where employees are offered severance and/or special agreement, the terms submitted in writing. This is because the verbal information often does not reach after the initial shock.
- If career coaching is included, it is important to schedule an appointment for an information session. Such a meeting can instill security. “I will support and self-help and is not entirely alone in my effort to find a new job.” This in turn can help to reduce the fear to stop and facilitate the final hearing.

10.4.4 The call set-up

- Summarize the background information.
- Communicate how this affects the employee concerned and his/her employment. At the meeting, communicates the information and in the case of termination due to redundancy, employees for a certain period in which to appeal.
- Listen to the reactions. Do not go on the defensive. Respect and acknowledge the reactions and will repeat your message if necessary.
- Review what happens next and book as soon as a new meeting time when you can go through the practical details and information about the support available. Answer any questions.
- End the meeting.
- Already at the next meeting usually message have gone in and it is then easier to have a discussion on practical issues. In some cases, anger arrive at a second meeting, and then maybe it needed a third meeting before the dialogue is more constructive.

10.4.5 Be prepared for different reactions

- Denial
A common reaction is “you can not do this to me” or “this does not happen to me”. This is the usual shock reactions and therefore it may take some time to reach with the message. One way to handle this reaction is to repeat the message. Ask the person if he/she has understood what you have said and repeat the message if necessary. Often it takes several meetings before the employee has completely embraced the news.
- Relief and escapism
In some cases, a huge relief occur when tension is released: “Finally I know how I affected”. The sense of relief is often relatively short-lived and rarely lasts longer than a few days. After feeling let employees can experience worry and anxiety, but rarely deny the incident.
- Anger and disappointment
Almost everyone experiences anger in any form. This is a natural reaction that, as long as it does not turn into, is healthy and liberating. Suppressed anger can, however, lead to burning disappointment and bitterness which can be disastrous for both employees and companies.
- Sense of failure
Job loss may be associated with feelings of shame. This may be accentuated of belonging to a social context in which the job title and defines the position of the group. When you lose your job, it's easy to get the feeling of missing status.
- Resignation and depression
You are allowed to feel sorry for himself, and it can even help to ease the pressure. The danger is if you do not come out of the state without a stick and goes into a real depression.

10.4.6 After the meeting

- Make notes immediately after the meeting. Hopefully you will not need to refer to what was said, but it can still be useful. It is important not to add personal, emotional values in the description!
- Inform others concerned about the situation in agreement with the employee. It is important that colleagues and subordinates are told to avoid rumors but also for the convenience of the employee if he/she should keep working for a while.
- Do not hide after the call. Make sure you are visible and available for questions. It is also good if your boss is available for any questions from you.

10.5 Tips on how to lead the change

10.5.1 Provide information and inform

In order to successfully submit statements and information in a termination call, you should consider:

- Prepare practically and mentally. What should you say?
- Write a script and practice.
- Refresh your knowledge of each employee.
- Practice possible questions and answers.
- Tell about the purpose/reason for the meeting/call.
- Communicate key messages early in a meeting/call.
- Listen and allow reactions and questions.
- Ask to come back if you can not respond directly to a question.
- Have confidence, empathy, understanding, eye contact and presence.

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What not to do:

- Murmur, generalize or be too verbose.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Find the things in the moment or talk before you have thought clearly.
- Promise things that you can not keep.
- Talk about others.
- Begin argue, be condescending or sentimental.
- Abdicate responsibility as leaders (not stand for the decision that the organization has taken)

10.5.2 Manage reactions

For feedback call or layoffs, you can meet a variety of reactions rooted in fear, stress, anger or anxiety. Before the call, this can create fear and uncertainty among you as a manager.

You can manage different reactions by:

- Be mentally prepared for your own reactions.
- Give people permission to respond, express their concerns.
- Realize that anger and disappointment is not personally directed at you.
- Create silence that gives you time to react and think.
- Encourage questions
- Listen, repeat if necessary – do not be defensive.
- Keeping up to what is agreed upon (having FAQ's ready).
- Be accessible.

Also, be careful not to fall into the trap of automatically express sympathy and pity those who feel like a victim. Even if the person in question might feel good to hear things like “it’s terrible, it must feel a pain for you” or something similar, it gives the wrong message. A more efficient way to communicate, which also creates the right focus, is that instead of saying things like “yes, it is tough and I understand that you are angry. What would you be willing to do now? “Or” I wish it were different, but it is not. What is there which is nevertheless instructive in what has happened?’. That type of response moves the responsibility and initiative to the individual and suggests that there may be something positive from the incident. It’s about helping others to view things as they are.

10.5.3 Manage yourself

It is important that you are in balance so you will not be perceived as stressed or in the absence of empathy. Do not be afraid to get help if needed.

- Be clear about your role and the responsibilities that come with it.
- Understand the cause and identify realistic goals.
- Maintain perspective and humor – dare to show emotions.
- Take care of yourself – you can help others if you feel well.
- Proactive communication with your own boss – clear goals and expectations for you.
- Actively listen and show empathy with people and their issues.
- Ensure that there is support (internal and external). Understanding your own shortcomings makes you easier to ask for (right) help.

10.5.6 Implement decisions that are not yours

In a process of change, you as a manager need to enforce decisions that you have not been able to influence – decisions made higher up in the organization or the group. Whether you personally support the decision or not, it is your job to communicate it and to implement the measures. Crouch is not for your boss obligation by giving away responsibility and refer on. You are part of the management system, and if you have questions, comments or suggestions about the decision you take them up as your boss, not your co-workers.

- Talk to your supervisor about your dilemma
- Be prepared with sustainable and factual arguments
- Be clear about what consequences you think that the decision may have on yourself and others some
- Be prepared to listen
- Bolla happy with any third parties you trust, it may be useful to talk to him.

Follow up:

Whether you apply the decisions of others or himself carry out difficult decisions, it is a good idea to follow up on the decisions. It develops your decision making capability and allows for any adjustments.

10.5.7 Remember the customers!

During periods when a lot is about the staff and organization, it is easy to become too focused internally and the outside world is forgotten. It can almost be seen as customers, whether they are internal or external, is a distraction. Therefore, remember to spend time with and among customers, maybe even more now than before. Your customers can also provide valuable information about your organization and what you offer, which can provide ideas for how some things can be improved. Maybe it's time to reconsider some earlier assumptions that no longer correspond to reality? Maybe it's time to offer something that gives customers even more value, but it will be more expensive for them?

In tough times, it also happens that many starts chasing new customers. Keep rather focus on existing customers and listen to what they want. Although no business is done at the moment, it is important to keep relationships alive and try to create long-term trusts.

10.6 Exercises and assignments

1. How would your colleagues describe your leadership style when you have a good or a bad day? Which hallmark carry your personal leadership?
2. Identify a situation where you will have to provide feedback – or conduct a dismissal – due to lack of or poor performance of any of your employees. How do you plan for the call?
3. How are you affected by the different reactions of the “difficult” conversation? What reaction do you have the most difficult to handle?
4. Have you terminated any employee in the past? How did the conversation go? What went well? In light of what you know now, what would you have done differently if you had to make the call?
5. If you are in a redundancy process where multiple people to stop, how you take care of those who are left?
6. How would you like to be treated during a termination call?



The advertisement for e-Learning for Kids features a central image of a smiling teacher leaning over a laptop to assist two young children, a boy and a girl. To the right, there are two smaller circular images: one showing three children looking at a book together, and another showing children working at computers in a classroom. The background is a vibrant yellow and orange swirl design. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'e-learning for kids' consisting of a grid of colorful squares. In the bottom right corner, a green oval contains three bullet points listing achievements: 'The number 1 MOOC for Primary Education', 'Free Digital Learning for Children 5-12', and '15 Million Children Reached'. At the bottom left, a text box provides information about the foundation's history and mission.

e-learning for kids

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11 Test your managerial skills

As a manager, there are many things that you are expected to know whilst at the same time you should be in balance, feel good, take care of your relationships and numerous other things. In which of your managerial areas are you good and where you can make improvements? In this chapter, you have the opportunity to study and reflect on your management skills in ten different areas.

Anyone who has a leading position obviously wants to be a ‘good manager’, but what it really means can often be difficult to know. However, it is valuable for your own development to learn and understand what others’ expect from a manager (although these also may vary).

Numerous studies have been conducted where the topic circulates around identifying the characteristics of a good manager. None of them provide an ‘absolute truth’, but the results are sufficiently consistent to provide a ‘top five’ list of good managerial skills:

1. Clarity in communication and values.
2. Empathy and respect for employees.
3. Self-awareness and integrity (recognizing that “it starts with me”).
4. Able to delegate, coach and provide feedback.
5. Understanding the big picture, what is most important to do and focus resources accordingly

11.1 What are you good at and how good are you?

In this book you have received several tips, new insights and ideas on how you can develop your leadership. Some of it you probably already knew, some other parts might be new or have inspired you to try something you have not done before. Now it’s time for a review to see where you actually are in your managerial skills and development. The test below will give you a good indication of where your strengths are and where you can make improvements.

The demands on you as a manager do not differ greatly from industry to industry. You will always be expected to master a variety of areas, have many good qualities and be in good balance.

In your leadership role, you have three main roles: manager, leader and coach. Basically, it’s about leading, steering and developing the business.

Leading is much about coaching, displaying entrepreneurial skills, change management and conducting appraisals etc.

To steer means working with more strategic, developing the business and competence base further as well as working with the mission and vision.

To develop means working with quality management, process development, benchmarking and performance management.

It is obvious that there are some clear requirements for you to succeed in all of these three roles. Due to leadership's complexity, it can be tempting for some to follow the latest trends in management. A weak manager follows current trends religiously while a strong manager adapts new ideas and theories, designs his/her own path based on their own knowledge and needs.

Now it's time to see what you can do. How are you as a manager? What are your most distinctive abilities and behaviours? Where are your strengths and where is there potential for improvement?

The test consists of 80 statements divided into ten areas in which you should have some insight and ability to work effectively with. The intention with the test is that you do it now and note how many points you get per area and overall. Then, repeat the test after about six months to monitor your progress. You can get a maximum 80 points (8 per area). Areas where you get a lot of points (6–8), are rated as strengths. Areas where you have zero or only a few points (0–3) are potential areas for development. View the test as a guide and indication, not as an absolute truth.



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Manager Test

The manager test covers the following areas:

- A) Productivity
- B) Self Management
- C) Communication
- D) Boundaries
- E) Quality
- F) Initiative
- G) “Manage Up”
- H) Teamwork
- I) Career
- J) Personal Balance

A) Productivity

- I have an efficient method for how to prioritize, plan and delegate my duties.
- My meetings have clear aims and objectives, and begin and end on time.
- I regularly monitor projects, goals and delegated tasks.
- I know what my main objectives are and I achieve them all the time.
- I can find and quickly access information and other things I need. My folders are in very good order.
- I know my job and I like it, because I have control of the situation. There are rarely crises or ‘ad-hoc small fires’ to deal with.
- My time and meeting plan has some degree of flexibility can deal with events and circumstances that are unforeseen
- I have the technical equipment I need and I have mastered it (computer, phone, backup...)

B) Self-Management

- I am always on time (and well prepared) to meetings, I rarely need to rush to be on time.
- I have mastered time management and have a system that works well for me, which allows me to prioritize tasks and allocate time for them.
- I continuously seek opportunities to grow and develop.
- I know my limitations and never make promises I cannot keep.
- I am usually in a good mood (in a straightforward manner).
- I anticipate and eliminate problems, or act directly to solve problems.
- I leave my workplace for lunch or to take a break.
- If I run into problems or obstacles, I ask for help.

C) Communication

- I am constructive in my way of communicating – I don't complain, gossip and whine.
- I realize that I do not sit with the whole truth, but ask questions and listen before I draw conclusions.
- I give my employees constructive feedback on bad behaviour, I do not criticize or condemn them as a person.
- I express what I want to say clearly and forcefully. I am rarely misunderstood.
- I master situational leadership and can adapt my communication and leadership style based on the person and the situation.
- My communication style is solution-oriented, not problem oriented.
- I am straight forward in my communication without upsetting others.
- I am completely 'present' in a conversation with another person. I don't let the phone disrupt me for instance.

D) Boundaries

- I take full responsibility for my mistakes without blaming others or other things.
- I rarely let myself getting stressed when I am working close to ma deadline.
- I do not answer the phone or email when I've set aside time to focus on a specific task.
- I do not let others offload 'to-do-things' on me or treat me disrespectfully.
- I can say no when necessary, without making others upset or disappointed.
- I do not take on additional tasks other than those I have given priority to in my work, unless I am on track and therefore have time for other tasks.
- I am clear in my communication with my manager about my workload and my ambitions.
- I'll finish what I've decided to do during the day and leave work on time almost every day.

E) Quality

- I do not deliver sloppy work and rarely need to re-do anything due to bad execution.
- I am proud of what I deliver and achieve.
- I deliver on time and on budget.
- I strive to continually improve and develop myself as well as the workplace.
- I ensure equal participation in team activities that aim to improve the quality of what we do.
- I encourage my staff to always do their best, and expect them to do so as well.
- My work is delivered consistently with high quality, and I rarely make errors.
- I often make suggestions for new products/services or ways to improve existing ones.

F) Initiative

- I handle problems quickly and efficiently and then try to find a way so that they will not occur again.
- I am fearless, I feel I can ask anyone about what I need.
- I do not postpone things, I act immediately instead.
- I always inform others when I discover a problem or an opportunity.
- Before doing something risky, I do a risk assessment and try to be proactive. if possible, be proactive.
- I go outside my comfort zone, or take a risk, at least once a week.
- I am prepared to make mistakes and learn from them.
- I trust my intuition and my instinct.

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G) “Manage Up”

- I allow my manager to be a good manager to me.
- I keep my manager continuously updated, especially when it comes to bad news.
- I have weekly meetings with my manager to report and learn.
- I request things from my manager so that I have the prerequisites to do a good job.
- If I encounter a problem that I cannot solve, I discuss it as soon as possible with my manager.
- I give my manager well prepared reports/presentations containing facts, options and recommendations.
- I can put myself into my manager’s situation and thereby increase my understanding of what is important to me.
- No matter what happens, I take responsibility for the communication with my manager, I do not wait for him/her to take the initiative.

H) Teamwork

- I know what it takes to be a good team member, and I live up to the requirements.
- When I put together a team, I look at combining the different strengths and abilities of the members. I try to surround myself with the most talented people.
- I focus on collaboration rather than completion, I focus on ‘win-win’ solutions.
- As a team member, I am straight forward, clear and open to others.
- I focus on the people in the team and their accomplishments, not just on the results.
- When I lead a team, everyone works in a focused and dedicated manner, rather than sitting back and waiting for tasks to be delegated to them.
- I seem to be able to get team members to work well together and respect each other’s needs.
- Each member of my team knows the purpose of the business, the objectives to be achieved, the current situation as well as the deadlines that apply.

I) Career

- I have good contacts with people who can influence my career.
- I am updated on events and developments in my industry.
- I am respected as a manager/leader.
- I have a plan for my career.
- I’m not afraid to hire someone with more expertise than myself – someone who can take my place if I move on.
- I know what it takes to achieve my goals or get what I want – and I’m working on it.
- I contribute to the company culture and act according to the company’s values. I am a good role model.
- I fully understand and support the company’s vision, mission, values and goals.

J) Personal Balance

- I have a rich and fulfilling life outside of work, there is more to my life than just work.
- I have a coach or mentor to help me in my personal development.
- I am honest with myself, I try not to lie or fool myself.
- I know what my core values are and I set goals that are linked to them.
- I have a strong personal value base to stand on.
- My life outside of work rarely conflicts or interrupts with my working life.
- I am healthy, I have energy

	First Score	Second Score	Third Score
Productivity			
Self Management			
Communication			
Boundaries			
Quality			
Initiative			
Manage up			
Team work			
Career Development			
Personal balance			