MANAGEMENT

Getting the best out of others

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Contents

Introduction to Management

Although we tend to think of management in terms of the organization of a company, and some may regard management as equivalent to business administration and therefore exclude management in places outside the commercial sector, in reality management structures are evident throughout society, from government bodies through military forces, right down to personal home environments.

This is because management may be defined as all the activities carried out by one or more people with the aim of planning and controlling the activities of other people so that an objective can be achieved that would not have been possible through individuals acting independently.

Most accepted authorities on management believe that there are several parts to the concept of management:

➢ Planning

➢ Organizing

➢ Staffing

➢ Leading

➢ Controlling

This means that anyone in a managerial role will carry out the above functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling to varying degrees, depending on the specific needs, practices and methods of the organization, and according to the level at which the managing is taking place. For example, lower level managers may not have too much input on staffing, as this might be handled by an authority above them. However, a seam that does run through all levels of management is that managers are engaged in getting things done through other people.

This concept, in which all managers perform the same functions of planning, organizing, staffing, leading, and controlling at each of their particular levels, is sometimes called the universality of management. It is the practices, methods, activities, and tasks within each of these functions that will alter according to the type and purpose of the organization or enterprise.

In the commercial sector, the primary function of management is to satisfy the stakeholders of the company or enterprise. This usually involves making a profit, creating quality products at a reasonable cost, and providing good employment opportunities. In most management models, shareholders vote for the board of directors, the board then hires the senior management team, which then has the responsibility of putting in place lower levels of management.

Planning

Planning involves the selection of the organization's goals and ambitions, and formulating the specific actions that will be necessary to achieve them. This involves a significant degree of decision-making, so that the correct choices can be made once all possibilities have been identified and assessed.

Planning takes in the whole gamut, from the most obvious decisions such as the location of business premises, and employing the right people for the available jobs, right down to the exact details of each component of any manufactured product. Plans do not become plans until such decisions have been made. Prior to these decisions, managers are analyzing, studying, and making proposals.

Organizing

The management function of organizing has at its heart the concept of "role". That is, which employees are to be tasked with carrying out what jobs, and how they are to be put to work.

People working together in teams must know their exact purpose if the organization's objectives are to be realized most efficiently and in the shortest period of time.

That involves all employees understanding where they fit into the overall picture, and how their job objective contributes to the overall aims. Management of this function further requires that everyone involved has the appropriate equipment, authority, and information to accomplish the task.

In short, organizing establishes a structure to help create an environment in which human performance can excel. The structure must define the tasks necessary, and the roles must be geared to the abilities of the workers.

Leading

Leading is the managerial function that deals with influencing employees. This requires that the manager possesses interpersonal skills so that their team feels motivated and inspired. Without this influential leadership, employees may feel out of touch with the importance of fulfilling the organization's goals.

Management problems mostly arise from issues with employees. These may be employee conflicts with the manager, employees failing to work together, or individuals suffering behavioral or attitudinal problems. Wherever the problem derives from, it is the manager's job to lead the way out of the mire for all concerned, which means leading from the front. This will require skills in communication, listening, problem-solving, conflict-resolution, and a chameleon-like quality of adapting to the various personalities that populate the workplace.

Controlling

The first part of controlling is monitoring. Effective management involves paying attention to the organization's ongoing plans, and how closely they are being adhered to and their objectives fulfilled.

This will necessitate measuring and perhaps correcting the activities of employees. Without peak human performance, even the best-laid plans are prone to failure. Plans are only the starting point. It is humans who enact them, and humans can become easily distracted or lose motivation.

Although controlling sounds like quite a manipulative process, it is not always the case. It may take as little as a few words of praise or encouragement to keep an employee on track, or it may take formal sanctions and threats of job termination. Good management means being able to gauge the exact level of control that needs to be exerted to realign performance with objectives.

As effective controlling means monitoring achievement against objectives, the previous issue of organizing becomes important in terms of job roles. Managers need to know exactly who to look at if a certain area is falling behind schedule or missing the mark in any way.

Clearly-defined job roles should enable quick identification of the problem source. This not only means it can be easily rectified, but it also avoids the problem of targeting the wrong people as culprits. Criticisms mistakenly levelled at people who are performing well can instantly create new problems in previously model employees.

How to Build Trust and Confidence

As in any personal relationship, lack of trust and confidence in a commercial enterprise can lead to a lack of commitment to the cause, and this can lead to underperforming and failed objectives.

There are two issues to deal with concerning trust and confidence:

1. Trust in the organization

Trust in the higher objectives of the organization is crucial; that these objectives are honorable for one, and that they have been planned with foresight and competence. This harks back to the importance of sound planning right at the outset.

The worst outcome of poor managerial planning is that the survival of the organization itself can be jeopardized, which could have clear and dire consequences for all employees. The moment such doubt exists in an organization, the situation can quickly deteriorate; the saying about "rats leaving a sinking ship" comes to mind.

Trust in the organization at large means building trust in team leadership and vision. Managers and leaders need to be seen to be committed. This allows employees to more readily accept difficult times when they arrive because they feel the correct decisions have been made and the right people are at the helm to weather the storm.

Creating trust and confidence in the organization's objectives necessitates covering all the bases. This means that any new venture must be assessed not just for its merits, but crucially also for its possible pitfalls. Only if these are known can people be confident that the management team has planned for every eventuality.

If there are unknowns in the equation, copious research should be carried out to find as much information as possible, and the worst-case scenario that could result. Ultimately, there are no foregone conclusions in business, and,

by its very nature, trust is not based on cast-iron assurances, rather on the probability that everything will progress in the most pleasing manner.

It is at this point that management must commit itself, reveal its intentions, and ask for the trust of the employees.

2. Trust amongst individuals

This is the second area where trust and confidence must be built. Although this is the basis of trust in the organization as a whole, in this respect we are dealing with the day-to-day interactions of the management with its team members, and amongst team members.

This is a crucial issue. Managers must be trusted for their management functions to be realized most effectively, and for their team to gel and become a commercial force to be reckoned with.

The issue of trust in others is an easy one to define. Trusting someone we work with is about having faith in them; believing that they are as good as their word. For managers, it is a matter of having faith in an employee to carry out a task without undue monitoring – knowing that they will not only complete the task when asked, but that they will complete it in line with the stated objectives.

It is also a matter of believing that people will behave acceptably in more general terms. A worker who is excellent at their job but who constantly undermines other members of the team must still be defined as untrustworthy. To be trusted, employees at any level should abide by both company codes of practice and the moral and legal mores that society commonly expects.

Trust makes the working environment easier for everyone, and creates the correct atmosphere for the best work to take place. However, if trust is so easily defined and so important, why is it that many managers report that they do not believe they enjoy the trust of the people working under them?

The problem seems to be that trust can be based on outcomes, and when situations are not running smoothly, managers can lose the trust they have created. In reality, this suggests that trust was not evident in the first place, because trust is something that should bridge the difficult times.

Trust that disappears when times are hard is extremely fickle, and may suggest a larger problem within the organization where overall objectives are not perceived as credible, achievable, or worthwhile. In this case, managers are targeted because they are perceived as being the figurehead of the organization who is easiest to blame, simply because they are most visible.

Talking through issues of trust with employees is a vital part of managerial skills. The effective manager must show they are fully aware that trust is important, and they must seek to identify exactly how trust between themselves and their team, and within their team, can be quantified. This is the only way any problems or shortfalls can be identified.

Managers must nurture trust in their team to ease the flow of communication. Communication is the lifeblood of a healthy organization because it allows the swift identification of problems. It also allows for an atmosphere of honesty to underpin that communication. Communication of itself is not the goal; the fact that people are talking to each other does not say anything about the quality of that communication. It is open and honest communication that is required, and trust must be the precursor for this to happen.

Employees who trust their managers are more likely to tell them what they need to hear, not what they believe they want to hear. Receiving false information from team members, or receiving the truth too late, could seriously jeopardize the goals of the organization.

A trusting atmosphere also makes for a happy atmosphere. Tensions are reduced when people feel they can trust each other. The overall objectives of a team are achieved by the individual successes of each member, and success is therefore a cumulative and collaborative affair.

One person who cannot be trusted to perform at their best can produce a poisoned workplace because those team members who *are* fully contributing will feel their efforts are being hampered. The less trusting a team of employees is, the harder their manager will have to work. This alone should be reason enough for any manager to strive to create trust and confidence: for an easier working life.

Identifying Trust

Instant trust is certainly possible, but it would be a very gullible individual who adopted such an attitude towards a complete stranger. The opposite end of the spectrum is a relationship where both parties have known each other for decades. This is far more common in personal relationships than professional, but such longstanding professional relationships certainly do exist.

However, even in this latter scenario, it is not uncommon for one or both parties to spring some unpleasant surprises after so many years.

The longer you know someone, the easier it is to trust them, provided they offer no reasons to make you feel otherwise. When trust is violated in some way, it can disappear for ever.

In a professional environment, managers cannot wait decades to establish trust, thus there needs to be monitoring, such as spot checks and behavioral analysis. Although this may give the impression that employees are not to be trusted, there is no other way to effectively monitor for correct behavior.

The types of behavior a manager might seek to assess are:

➢ Does the employee distort the truth?

➢ Does the employee possess the requisite skills for the job?

➢ Can the employee be left to get on with their job?

➢ Is the employee reliable?

➢ Is the employee prone to gossip and spread rumors?

➢ Will the employee speak up if there is a problem?

➢ Will the employee support fellow colleagues?

How do managers create distrust?

Mangers need to remember that they may themselves be responsible for creating distrust in the workplace. These are the most obvious ways in which managers can produce distrust between themselves and their team:

➢ Inconsistency in communication; saying one thing and doing the opposite.

➢ Inconsistency in how they treat different team members.

➢ Failure to offer clear or honest feedback.

➢ Failure to pass on information pertinent to the team.

➢ Hidden agendas and ulterior motives.

➢ Reluctant to trust other people.

Managers lead by example. Negative traits in a manager make it easier for similar traits to appear in their team. An atmosphere of distrust has a hugely negative effect on any workplace, and every effort must be made to employ the tactics that nurture trust.

A Manager's Pitfalls

Managing other people has ample rewards when you are able to see how your team is benefiting and growing under your expert governance, but it is just as easy to get it wrong if you do not pay attention to the following managerial pitfalls:

Failure to lead by example – As a manager, you are also a leader, and your team looks to you for guidance. Therefore, you must be careful how you behave in the workplace. You cannot expect other people to behave impeccably when you are not leading by example.

Areas to watch out for are: listening respectfully; communicating clearly; accepting ideas from other people; answering questions honestly and willingly.

Delegating clumsily – Try not to give employees the impression that you are pushing unpalatable work their way by failing to explain exactly why you have chosen a particular individual. Team members have specific roles and like to know that their tasks are theirs because they are best-suited to achieving the best outcome. You must allow them to ask questions so they can understand exactly what their goals are. You should also seek their response to the task, which conveys the message that they have the necessary skill set and you value their input.

They may have ideas that can seriously improve their performance of the task at hand. This is all about motivation. If you can link the task to a specific skill they have, and explain this to them, they will be far more amenable. Everyone loves praise.

Ignoring the young blood – This is not only negative for the younger members of the office, it could also be detrimental to the success of your objectives.

You never know where the next big idea may come from, and it may just be lurking in the freshest minds, precisely because they have not had a chance to be weighed down by the pressure (and possibly tedium) of work.

Don't let personal pride or an ageist attitude blind you to young talent. Spend some time getting to know where the young blood is coming from – how they perceive their strengths and whether they have any great ideas they'd like to share, or tasks they would like to tackle.

Ignoring older workers – By the same token, do not ignore your more seasoned workers. They are the ones who have the most experience. They may also have some fresh ideas to offer, but may not have the youthful buzz to speak up unless asked. Make sure you appreciate their skills, which will have been earned over many years.

The fact that you are able to pretty much leave them alone to get on with things does not mean you should ignore their efforts. Be grateful that they are not a burden to you, and are producing the goods.

Older workers who feel taken for granted may "come off the boil" to a certain extent, and thus you risk losing some of your greatest assets in the workplace. As much as their skills may appear set, try to enliven things by offering alternative tasks that may prompt a renewed enthusiasm.

Ordering people about – It may be within your remit to do this, but this should be reserved for those times when employees leave you no choice but to issue orders, if not ultimatums. Try making suggestions and requests rather than issuing orders. It's all semantics, really. Your team knows that your requests are actually orders phrased politely, but such subtleties can make a big difference. Remember that your team knows full-well that you have your directives from your own superiors, so will hardly refuse your requests.

If there is a certain latitude in the tasks you are handing out, seek suggestions and encourage employees to share their own ideas on how to best approach matters.

Stifling creativity – Managers cannot let their workplace or their team stagnate. To keep the situation fresh, you should be asking for ideas from your team at regular intervals. This not only spawns new approaches but also shows them that you value their input.

This does not mean abandoning tried and trusted routines that have served the organization for many years; it just means seeing of there are any ways to add a little spice, either with a few new tasks, or with new approaches to old tasks. Businesses thrive on new ideas, and they may even prove to be the impetus to take a business to a whole new level.

Maintaining the status quo – The above need for fresh ideas is also important for managers whose new job it is to head up an established team. The temptation may be to avoid rocking the boat and to keep a low profile, but dynamic leadership may be part of the reason you have been called in. Although you will not want to change routines that the organization depends upon, you should not be afraid of trying a few new working practices to see how they pan out and how they may benefit your team's productivity.

Storing up problems – This relates specifically to the practice of noting personnel problems in a log to be delivered *en masse* during staff appraisals. This is detrimental for several reasons. Problems that are allowed to carry on may damage productivity; the team members at fault will resent the fact that they were allowed to continue in error for so long; they may be confronted with a long list of problems that could damage their confidence; and your ability to create trust will have been tarnished, because you failed to communicate the truth when it was necessary.

Far better to deal with issues as they arise to minimize damage, and show the team that you are a sharp manager who will not any situation drift. Staff appraisals are not designed as a delivery system for months of problems; rather they are used to monitor staff behavior and performance over that time, which should include the ability to take on board advice and direction as and when.

Taking high fliers for granted – This is a similar problem to ignoring the young blood and workplace veterans. The danger here is more pronounced, however, because a failure to properly praise and reward your stars may lead to them seeking better and more remunerative employment elsewhere, and these high achievers may be contributing a disproportionate amount of success to your overall figures.

Losing them would therefore be a serious blow not just to your team, but to the entire organization. You do not want to be the one who is blamed for losing your team's biggest asset. Make sure these people know you value them, and if that means increasing their income, then that will be a small price to pay for keeping them on your side.

Focusing on the negative rather than the positive – Everyone makes mistakes, but concentrating solely on mistakes whilst ignoring the positives is guaranteed to alienate employees. Although you may believe that a job well done is only to be expected, it is always a good idea to praise team members who perform well.

This is the way to encourage more behavior of the same sort. It doesn't take much effort to congratulate someone, but it can have a huge impact on their attitude. A team member who consistently excels and is not praised may end up losing interest. Where praise is neglected *and* criticisms leveled, this can be the cause of serious resentment. This does not mean that you cannot point out mistakes, but it is policy to surround the criticism with points that you do admire about that person's work.

This serves to cushion the negative comment, and also subtly suggests that they should exchange their mistake for further success.

Failing to build a strong team – Managers should remember to nurture a team ethos. Individuals within a team work better together when they are more aware of belonging to a team. A sense of team creates a more powerful force than the idea that a workplace is just a gathering of individuals. This can be encouraged by holding regular team meetings where everyone has a chance to express their views and share exactly what they are doing to contribute to the whole team effort.

How to Build Team Spirit

Without a team spirit, organizations can suffer. No matter how well-organized and planned a venture may be, without the commitment of the team behind it, the objectives will not be as effectively or as quickly met.

Building team spirit is about engaging the *emotions* of the team members. It is more than a cerebral idea that a team is more than the sum of its parts; it is truly feeling that you are a part of something worthwhile, and that everyone is working together to make a success of things. There should be a sense of enjoyment at being amongst your colleagues, and so much the better if that happy relationship extends beyond the workplace to recreational activities.

Having a team spirit means that problems do not escalate due to the impact of conflicting personalities. Even if there are personality clashes, a team spirit will serve to reduce their negative effects because the individuals concerned should have as their overriding concern the wellbeing and emotional health of the team. Differences can be put to one side for the greater good.

These are some of the areas managers may want to look to when considering how they can build their team spirit:

1. Co-operation amongst team members should be encouraged, and forming smaller groups that work together on tasks and projects can help to promote closer working relationships. In this way, team members are directly involved with each other's work, and fully aware of how all the parts contribute to the whole.

2. Clear the decks of unnecessary clutter. This means identifying all the extra bureaucracy and paperwork and tasks that detract from the job at hand and thus reduce motivation.

A team spirit cannot be engendered in individuals whose focus is on petty matters. This may not be easy in this age of double and triple checking, but if such matters are unavoidable, try and find ways for employees outside the team to cover them, or attend to them yourself.

3. Build a strong relationship between the organization and its customers, and encourage customer feedback so that your team can appreciate the positive effects they are having. Try to involve customers in company events for face-to-face feedback opportunities. Make sure that upper management does not remain aloof, but make sure they are also involved in passing on positive feedback wherever possible.

4. Allow your team some autonomy. As much as you are the manager of the team, your team may not regard you as being a part of their operation. Just as in sports, there is a separation between the team and their manager; the team is primed by the manager and then allowed to work their magic. This is a useful lesson for the business world.

This should clearly not reach the point where your word lacks authority, but your team should certainly be allowed to carry on with minimal interference if they are on target for their given objectives. In the same way, do not impose too many rules and regulations just for the sake of having them in place to prove your authority. The confident manager can easily step back and know their influence remains intact.

5. Make the workplace an enjoyable place to be. Managers should not be reluctant to inject humor into the situation for fear of creating a flippant atmosphere. Trust that your team is mature enough to know when enough is enough. A sure fire way to damage team spirits is by trying to enforce a dour mood, thinking that this is the only way to keep your team focused on important matters. This is insulting to your team. It is quite possible to have a sense of humor *and* a serious attitude towards work.

In fact, the former positively encourages the latter, as it provides an essential counterbalance. It is unreasonable to expect that your team should be deadpan the whole day. Humor helps to release the tensions that can build from hard work, and it can help free a little creativity into the bargain. Just make sure that the humor is healthy, and does not, in certain cases, shift into personal put-downs.

6. Open up about yourself. This does not mean wheeling in a couch and recounting your whole life story, but your team will be encouraged to know that you understand their feelings because you were perhaps once in their shoes, and they will also appreciate the trust you have placed in them by not keeping a professional distance. Showing your human side can encourage your team members to lower their own barriers, and the more affinity they feel for each other on a human level, the better they will work with each other.

7. Strive to avoid disagreements. This can be dealt with by maintaining and encouraging communication. There will always be times when even the best of teams suffers a little internal misunderstanding, but this should not be a problem if all parties are able to freely talk about how they perceive the problem arose and offer suggestions on how it may be resolved. Managers must be realistic in this respect, and not think that there should be perfect peace and harmony within their team. If this appears to be the case, team members may feel reluctant to speak out and any grievances will continue to simmer.

8. Recognize and celebrate when objectives are achieved. Team spirits can be lifted when their work results in the attainment of their objectives. Managers should not let these moments pass unannounced. It may be possible to organize from the budget some team rewards that mark such achievements. However, even daily triumphs should be congratulated. Remember that a little praise goes along way.

Dealing with Problem Employees

The problems caused by one employee can easily undermine the achievements and positive attitude of the team as a whole. Although the ultimate sanction is terminating the individual's employment, there are steps to take before reaching that stage.

Hire the right people – Problem employees should not be a big issue if sufficient resources and time have been spent in the candidate selection process. This means that references should always be taken up with previous employers, and the candidate's job history scrutinized.

Frequent changes in employment can indicate either a restless individual who does not easily settle, or someone who is "encouraged" to move on from jobs. Problem employees are not always fired; in fact, the conditions for getting rid of a troublesome soul may include giving them an unreasonably creditable reference.

Confront the problem ASAP – Managers must deal with problems as they arise, and not wait for the official evaluation process to address issues. It may be that the individual does not realize the problems they are causing, and it only takes a moment to point it out and effectively remedy the situation. However, before this moment happens, there are preparations and investigations that a manager must make.

Investigate the problem – Although some problems will be glaringly obvious, others may not even be apparent to the manager until another team member speaks up. Bear in mind that the word of one person should not damn another's reputation. If only one person perceives there to be a problem, you may be dealing with a personality clash where both parties are to blame. It is essential that you do your homework to establish the facts.

Gossip and hearsay are not a good basis for taking disciplinary action, even on the most informal level. Make sure you have exhausted all sources of information before you confront an employee. Managers need to be sure of their ground.

Plan your approach – The smart manager will ensure that they have planned how they will deal with the problem employee. This involves making enough time, choosing the right time, selecting a place where you won't be interrupted, and considering whether you need an HR representative present. You should also avoid calling employees out of the workplace in full sight of the rest of the team. This is embarrassing, and is a terrible start to any discussion.

Assess if you may be part of the problem – It may be that the problem has been partly caused by the manager who is about to confront the situation. This will only exacerbate the problem. Few employees will feel able to openly criticize their manager for fear of reprisals, but unless such resentments are brought out into the open, the situation cannot improve.

Managers must be humble enough to realize when they are contributing to the problem, and must request that the employee is perfectly honest about how they feel. Managers need to ask themselves: do they want to be right, or do they want peace?

Use the evaluation process – As mentioned, you should not wait for this official overview of performance to take action, but this does provide a useful hiatus in which you can assess the direction in which an employee is heading. It is here that expectations can be officially set for the following period, which means the employee is left in no doubt regarding what is now required of them.

Do not tolerate negativity – It may be that an employee is producing good work because this reflects in their paycheck, but is a negative influence on the rest of the team due to their general attitude.

Great results do not mitigate a lousy attitude. Attitudes can be infectious, and any negativity should be stamped on the moment it appears lest it spreads throughout the team.

See the bigger picture – You must try to recognize when problems are being caused wilfully or accidentally. Everyone experiences unhappy times in their lives that are down to situations outside the workplace.

Managers must be sensitive to the possibility that the problem employee may be in the midst of some personal crisis, and is not just behaving badly for the hell of it. As you talk with the employee, listen carefully to what they have to say, don't be judgmental, and don't interrupt. If you can find out what the real source of the problem behavior is, you have a much better chance of finding a solution.

Deal with the behavior, not the person – This follows on from the previous point, in that a negative attitude does not equate to a negative person. Behaviors and attitudes are often short-lived and almost always correctable. Never damn the individual by attacking them personally. Understand that the behavior is not the person.

Pay attention to your language – The way in which a manager addresses a problem individual can dictate how the situation plays out. The initial approach should be diplomatically made with positive language and expression. An attacking demeanour will generally lead to an escalation of negative feelings in the employee.

Find a solution – The end result of your discussion should be to find a way forward to resolve the problem. This should not always be imposed by the manager; rather the employee should be asked to suggest ways in which the situation can improve, thus being given the chance to "own" the solution.

Monitor the situation – Remain attentive to the situation and make sure the problem is getting better, and that it has not simply dipped beneath the radar for a while.

In the worst case – Where official disciplinary action or dismissal is called for, make certain that everything is done by the book. Be mindful of relevant statutes, and seek legal advice if necessary.

Using Your Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to perceive, control, and evaluate emotions – your own and those of other people. This is a relatively new area of study that is giving long overdue importance to the idea that the emotional part of our brains can have a significant impact on how successfully we live our lives and how well we interact with other people.

Any manager worth his salt should therefore be an expert on emotional intelligence. If you are not able to keep a reign on your own emotions, and find that they are pulling you every which way on a daily basis, how can you possibly expect to exert the slightest positive influence on other people?

The main areas of emotional intelligence to focus on are:

Emotional awareness – This is the ability to correctly identify our core emotions when they appear. These will include anger, sadness, fear, joy, frustration, etc. It is also crucial that you are able to spot these in other people, especially as there may be attempts to disguise them.

Emotional self-management – This is the ability to control our emotions and express them in an appropriate manner. This is something that every effective manager should be able to master if they hope to maintain a professional workplace demeanor. Having a temper tantrum in the middle of the office because targets have been missed will destroy your credibility as a leader and cause a certain amount of amusement.

Emotional flexibility – This is the ability to recover from stress, loss, and shocking events that have damaged your emotional equilibrium. This is crucial if you are to be viewed as an effective leader.

Sitting in your office weeping for days when something goes wrong is hardly likely to inspire confidence in your team. This is about learning from the past, but not carrying it around with you so it colors how you live life in the present.

Decision-making – Managers have to make decisions on a daily basis. Using emotional intelligence to inform your decisions involves striking a balance between your thinking brain and your emotional brain. Mostly in business, your thinking brain will inform your decisions because they will need to be made based on pure facts. However, there may be times when there are two equally balanced options, and it is then that your emotional intelligence may sway the decision on the power of your gut reaction.

Leading people using emotional intelligence is all about leading by example. Your team will be looking to you for guidance and inspiration. We are all subject to the emotional rollercoaster that is life, and there may be nothing we can do to forestall unpleasant events from occurring that disrupt our equilibrium, but where we cannot determine certain outcomes we can certainly try to control how we react to them.

Emotional intelligence is not about stifling your emotions and becoming an automaton, but rather about using your emotions to create more positive outcomes. Emotions are vital in business because they are the passions that motivate us to achieve more. Positive emotions provide the furnace that powers the business you are involved in. If you can control your emotions and channel positivity into your managerial role, it will be a struggle for any of your team to respond in the opposite way.

Conclusion

Lee Iacocca, former CEO of Chrysler, said: "Management is nothing more than motivating other people."

Although management is clearly far more than motivation, this encapsulates the emotional essence of the skill. We can talk all we like about the management functions of planning, organizing, leading and controlling, but these say little about the human aspect of managing, which is dealing with people on a day-to-day basis.

Motivation is crucial in the workplace because our working lives take up such a massive chunk of our lives in general, and truth be told, most of us would give up our regular jobs if we won the lottery jackpot.

In some ways, however, Iacocca's statement is rather glib, as it simplistically deals with the perfect scenario. Creating the right conditions for motivation to be possible is far more challenging. Effective management involves building a powerful skill set that cannot be learned by rote from a book.

Management is about dealing with people in the most effective manner. Such abilities may come more naturally to some than others, but the dynamics of the average workplace require that managers are able to instinctively respond correctly, whatever the situation.