

Managing Difficult Colleagues ... and Yourself!

A 3-day Course for 6-15 people.

Executive Summary:

This is a unique course in that it recognises that managers, while they may be highly skilled and resourceful, are not actually superhuman. It combines powerful skills for managing others with the equally important skill of managing oneself.

There is usually an implication that people at work fall neatly into two groups: the managers and the managed. This is curious because most managers start off as being managed, but as soon as they cross the boundary to become managers they are supposed to need only the skills for managing others - as if by magic they acquired the skills for managing themselves. This is curious because managers recount that the skills of managing others are only half the battle: the other half is dealing with a host of 'self-management' issues. Issues such as the frustration and irritability of seemingly intractable people, of managing competing 'top priorities', of just feeling 'tired by it all', of feeling unsupported and isolated, and just feeling they're not doing a good enough job.

This course takes the view that the skills of managing others and the skills of managing oneself are so closely intertwined that the most effective course of action is to address them in parallel. Hence, the mornings are spent in addressing powerful skills for managing others, and the afternoons are spent covering equally essential skills for managing yourself. By the end of the three days you have a package of mutually empowering skills to stand you in very good stead henceforth.

Who should attend?

This course is specifically for professionals who manage others, at whatever level. It is a course we bring to your organisation so is automatically 'tailored' to your situation, so is for a team – or group – of managers all working within the same organisation.

The Course Aims:

- To provide a clear, positive, philosophy and technique for working effectively with people at work, and especially to work effectively with people who are performing poorly in any way.
- To provide a clear system for bringing out the best in other people; to spot their potential, to generate motivation, and to maximise their performance.
- To provide managers with the information to manage themselves to the optimum, so that their work-life, their home life, and their work-life balance are all improved.

In 3-days you cover a great deal:

The programme for the mornings is as follows:

- Poor performance. What's wrong with simply telling people what they are doing wrong, and telling them to stop doing it? (Apart from the fact that it doesn't work?) Why doesn't it work? What should you do instead?
- The football manager whose team is performing badly, who says after the match "Right, we're going to get the video of the match, analyse all the mistakes we made, and eradicate every one of them." It sounds good, so how come his team always gets relegated? What should he do?
- What to do when poor performance or disruptive behaviour cannot be ignored. For example, bullying, malicious gossip, sexual harassment, continuous lateness, continuous under-performance. How to master 'the relentless pursuit of quality performance' ... without letting the other person's poor performance 'get to you' in the meantime!
- Why it is so important to have 'a positive philosophy'. Why (a) punitive approaches, such as warning systems, blaming, and (b) approaches that focus on rectifying 'weaknesses' usually don't work. What does work.
- Practise what you preach. What are the five key factors in looking after yourself? Which ones most apply to you? How can you act on them?
- When a manager says they have 'tried everything' with someone, what powerful category of influence have they usually failed to try?
- How some managers actually discourage productive behaviour when they think they are encouraging it.
- Thousands of people in the UK workplace are victims of 'the de-motivation spiral'. How does this come about and how can we reverse the spiral?
- How to have people behave to their strengths, without having to address their 'weaknesses' to get results!
- Some people "can't take constructive criticism". Why not ... what are WE doing wrong?
- What should we do when we come across team members who exhibit so little collaborative or helpful behaviour that they are virtually impossible to work with?

Continued Overleaf

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- We need to balance the team member's past, present and future. But – if you want to motivate people – which is most important? Why? How can you build on that?
- Occasionally, when people appear de-motivated or difficult it's because they're trying to tell us something. How can we tell what, and how should we respond then? Possibly more important, what should we not do?
- What your team can do to transform its impact literally overnight.

The programme for the afternoons is as follows:

Factor One: "If you don't like things the way they are, then do something different." The 'something' might be at home or it might be at work, it might be doing more or it might be doing less, either way it is doing something different. It might be something 'routine' like learning how to prioritise better, or it might be like Chris who would wake up early each morning and worry about the day ahead. He had "too much work to do" he said. So by the time his wife woke and they both got up to have breakfast together he had already been lying awake for one and a half hours worrying about the day. This led to a pretty morose breakfast and a pretty sluggish start to the day. He decided to get up when he woke up and start on the work that he had to do that day. In his own words this "transformed" the situation; by the time breakfast came round he had already got off to a "flying start" and done one and a half hours of "good productive work". He is more cheerful at breakfast and more upbeat right at the beginning of the working day. He didn't have to carry it on forever, but it enabled him to get through a difficult period in a way that made him feel good about himself rather than "stressed".

The **second factor** is "biology" – the one that everybody knows all about. There are five sub headings to it:

- Know how to relax on demand. Well, maybe not so many people know how to do this, even though they know it is important.
- Taking good and effective exercise. Again, everybody knows that this is important, it is just that 80% of people don't actually do it.
- Taking proper nutrition at regular times. This one is a bit like exercise: it is "old hat" so it is surprising that there is so much obesity – and indeed so many "eating disorders" – around just now.
- Not misusing endemic drugs such as alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and recreational drugs. Enough said.
- Getting a good night's sleep. Again, everybody knows that they feel "stressed out" if they don't get a good night's sleep, but most people regard it as purely random as whether they do or not. The course tells you how to do it.

The Biology section exemplifies the thrust of the whole course, namely that you can't separate out 'work' and 'home' life. If you get little exercise, don't eat properly, maybe drink a bit too much in the evening, go to bed a bit late and so on, it's not surprising that you feel 'stressed out', and that feeling isn't confined to work.

Factor Three: The Environment. At one time, consideration of the environment was the province of specifically far eastern disciplines such as Feng Shui but many of the

environmental factors are much more basic and far reaching than often supposed. The great thing about improving environmental factors is that they *automatically* influence those in the environment - they carry energising and stress-reducing messages subtly and in a way that people welcome. What is more they are not normally expensive to do and many individuals can influence their own personal environment and that of those around them.

Factor Four: Social Factors. The case of Ed who worked in a group of six people and was the most disagreeable, sullen and unwilling individual you could ever wish to find. He acquired a reputation for being like that and any person who wanted to ask him about work he should have done had to key themselves up – to grit their teeth – before doing so, such was his response. Others would give work to any of the other five if they could. Strange then, that he managed to find a job in a different setting and even stranger that he enjoyed a personality transformation when he moved. Indeed, when one of his new colleagues bumped into one of his old colleagues socially and started talking about Ed, they couldn't believe they were discussing the same man. And yet it wasn't that Ed had suddenly started doing things differently, or started sleeping better, or was drinking less, the explanation was that there had been a personality clash between Ed and one of the others, and this had contaminated him in every other interaction. The stress for all concerned was abominable, and he did well to leave and transform himself. We look at these and other such issues, and specifically, how to resolve them.

Factor Five: Thinking Style. Have you ever met anybody at work who, whilst not really having a particularly stressful job, *sees it that way* and, no matter what you do for them it simply isn't enough? Sometimes even, the more you do the worse things seem to get! This is the person who just seems unable to tolerate any form of "stress" and even if you did find them a zero-stress job – if one were ever to exist – you know full well that that person would then complain of being 'bored'. The problem lies not in the situation around the person, but within the person themselves. That is what this section is all about, giving us all a better way of looking at things regardless of whether things are going well or badly just now. We highlight the mistakes and pitfalls that people make (inside their heads normally) and show how to avoid those pitfalls. It is a very interesting session, probably the most 'psychological' of the five, and an important one too. But in truth no more or no less important than any other pieces of the jigsaw. All of the pieces fit together to make a powerful 'whole' to benefit the person at work – and at home too.

What this course will do for you:

- You will have a clear philosophy on how to manage performance in the workplace. A robust philosophy which allows you to intervene positively and effectively to maximize performance.

Continued Overleaf

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- You won't get antagonised by other people's underperformance; you will know how to tackle it systematically, in a controlled way, and in a way you're committed to and know is right and effective.
- You will know the five key areas of self-management, how they interact with each other, how 'marginal gains' multiply up to mean that you can work better, feel better, and manage more effectively.
- You will gain a clearer perspective on what you already do, seeing more clearly why some actions you take work, and others don't.
- You will be better at motivating others, you will be able to generate real enthusiasm in others to do things right.
- You will be able to ask positive, constructive questions, ones which have answers which develop people and performance rather than focusing on their 'problems'.
- You will know when an issue needs addressing, and be good at addressing it.
- You will be able to use specific techniques for resolving situations which are difficult by anyone's standards.
- Overall, you will be able to do what the course title says: to manage difficult people – including yourself.

Delegates' Feedback

Average presentation rating: **96%**



Average relevance rating: **92%**



Written Feedback from delegates:

"Brilliant course, would sincerely recommend to anyone in a managerial capacity. Really made me think and truly believe I will be able to use many of theories and techniques I have learnt on the course to benefit me in my own personal and professional life."

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