

THE PEOPLE MANAGER'S POCKETBOOK

3rd Edition

By Ian Fleming

Drawings by Phil Hailstone

“Ian Fleming once again expertly navigates the maze of managing people, getting to the essence of issues with his usual clarity. This is a treasure trove of ideas on how to handle commonplace people management situations, and is an invaluable resource for managers to have to hand when they encounter (as they inevitably will) these very 'real world' scenarios.”

Ian George, Learning Manager, Lloyds Banking Group

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MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

NEW & FINDING IT HARD

WELCOME TO MANAGEMENT



If this is your first experience of management the job may involve you in making changes:

FROM

Doing a familiar job
Using well-developed skills

Having jobs delegated to you
Being judged on your performance

TO

An unknown one
Mastering the skills of managing people and organising

Delegating to and learning to trust others
Being responsible for the output of others

It's important that you recognise and understand these differences and approach the job with an open mind – it may be different from what you had imagined or how it was sold to you. Have the confidence to ask for help if and when you find situations difficult and try to enjoy it, though that may not always be possible!

MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

NEW & FINDING IT HARD

SITUATION

- In your enthusiasm you find yourself trying to do everything and at times feeling overwhelmed
- Your days are full of activity but perhaps not a great deal of achievement
- There's a lot to take in, much of it new. You start to realise what you don't know
- Self-doubt is creeping in; you question your capabilities and suitability for the job
- When you look to delegate, people say they are far too busy to take on more work, so you do it yourself
- You are taking work and its problems home, finding it difficult to switch off
- You're having problems sleeping, relaxing and seem to have lost your appetite (signs of stress?)



MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?



NEW & FINDING IT HARD

POSSIBLE REASONS

Any major change takes time to assimilate. Research into what is known as the transition curve* explains the stages you may pass through when moving into a management position, namely:

Shock	<i>I didn't expect it to be like this</i>
Denial	<i>It's not as bad as I initially thought</i>
Depression	<i>I feel as if I can't cope and am really not enjoying it</i>
Accepting reality	<i>Something has to change, me or the job</i>
Testing new ways	<i>What if I try?</i>
Understanding what works	<i>Why did that work when other methods didn't?</i>
Integration	<i>I approach the job and situations differently</i>

Progressing through each stage involves developing an awareness of what's happening, an understanding of why, plus the ability to try different approaches.

* Parker & Lewis, *Beyond the Peter Principle – Making successful transitions.*

MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

NEW & FINDING IT HARD

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS



- Be clear about the job that you have taken on: your role, responsibilities, standards, what you have to deliver and by when. (Job descriptions can be vague and often out of date)
- Start thinking about areas where you might need support to develop your skills and abilities. Be honest with yourself
- Work at developing a good relationship with your manager; you may need to draw on their skill and experience
- Don't approach the job heavy-handedly, determined to show people who's the boss. Changes are better made with other people's support and co-operation rather than by force
- Look, ask questions and listen to people's views and ideas
- Get to know people individually but don't be over-friendly; some time in the future you may have to deliver bad news (see page 53)
- Pay attention to your own health, try to leave on time and not take work home
- Above all be yourself; don't try to be somebody that you are not

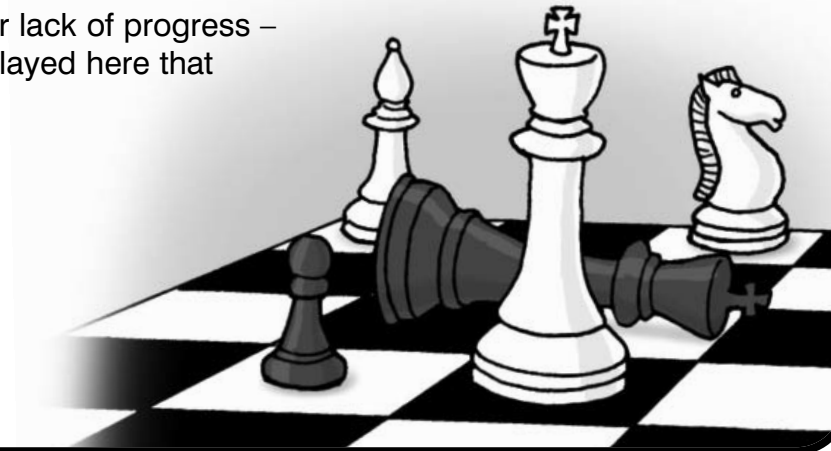
MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?



NEED TO BE MORE POLITICAL SITUATION

- You are finding it difficult to get support for your ideas and suggestions
- Some people seem much better than you at getting what they want and being noticed
- Despite being part of a management team, you have observed that some of your colleagues seem particularly good at protecting their own interests
- You don't enjoy having to explain to your team why you have not been successful in influencing others and getting what the team needs
- You are getting frustrated at your lack of progress – perhaps there's a game being played here that you are not aware of?

That game could be politics.



MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

NEED TO BE MORE POLITICAL

POSSIBLE REASONS



Politics is about influencing others to your point of view. Although some people view politics as taking up time, promoting selfish behaviour and harming the well-being of the organisation, it's not all negative and undesirable and can help you promote yourself and your team and gain support.

However much you may hope to avoid it, politics is part of organisational life. Wherever there are two or more people, politics will be involved as they work out the best way to work together productively.

If you choose not to get involved, then don't be surprised if:

- You continue to struggle to be heard and have influence
- Your team fails to reach its potential through lack of resources or support
- Other people – often less able than yourself – advance their careers simply by being better connected and more visible (who you know – not what you know)

Accept the reality of it, look to develop effective strategies and learn how to play the game.

MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?



NEED TO BE MORE POLITICAL

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

Learn to tune in, listen and be aware of what is happening around you.

- Who has the real power? (They may not be obvious at first.) See how they behave, what they value, what attitudes and behaviours they accept and tolerate
- Who are the people you may want or need to influence?

With that knowledge, you can work at creating a good impression, one that:

- Builds trust and confidence
- Shows you are intelligent with a worthwhile contribution to make
- Promotes team spirit
- Gains acceptance from others
- Demonstrates a positive attitude
- Does not present you as a 'yes-person'



MANAGING: WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

NEED TO BE MORE POLITICAL

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS



Don't do anything that upsets people while you are attempting to gain their trust and confidence. Put your energy into getting their acceptance. Be visible.

Use every opportunity to promote yourself and your team positively. Always see the bigger picture and the contribution you can make.

Build up your network of contacts, even with people with whom you don't get on.

Work on the relationships:

- Give more of yourself by offering your own ideas and experiences
- Exchange favours – don't make it all one-way
- Make others feel important – ask for advice

Hold your confidences. Don't spread rumours, gossip, or be openly disloyal to leader, team or organisation. Work hard at fitting in and building a reputation as someone worth knowing. It won't happen overnight, so be patient. (See the *Workplace Politics Pocketbook*.)

About the Author

Ian Fleming, MA, DMS, DipEd

Ian worked as a coach with individuals and teams helping them achieve results by raising their level of performance and confidence. This book is one of six written by Ian in the series. The others are:

*Coaching Pocketbook; Developing People Pocketbook;
Teamworking Pocketbook; Time Management Pocketbook and
Virtual Teams Pocketbook*



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