

May 2007

Dear Manager,

## **Ever thought that there must be an easier way to manage your team?**

Does management seem like an enigma to you, where things are going wrong despite everybody knowing what needs to be done, and your giving clear instructions? If you are not the type to shrug your shoulders, but want to **actually FIND that easier way**, I invite you to have a look at the case studies attached.

*All cases illustrate one point: management skills – contrary to what is said in most books, or trainings – are NOT just a set of “how-to recipes”, but require pretty advanced cooking skills. **The good news** is that all of these skills can be **learned and mastered to produce business results** you had all but given up on. Anytime in your career is the right time: good management means different things at different levels!*

**But sometimes, it is high time** – for example, if you recognize more than 4 of these thoughts:

1. You don't mind positive stress and challenge, but the last months have been a bit much.
2. You feel sandwiched between unrealistic expectations of your bosses, and downright ridiculous expectations of your team. Of course you expect yourself to handle them all.
3. Now that you are in charge, you are painfully aware of all the restraints of your position. Sometimes you think “win-win” is a cruel joke.
4. Your department is thriving, but you know that things would collapse without you having your eyes everywhere to make things work. Everyone else seems to be on autopilot.
5. Intense is how you would describe yourself at present. Sometimes, you are downright aggressive towards members of your team. Until, of course, remorse kicks in...
6. You sometimes catch yourself thinking that this can't be the best way to manage people – if only you knew where to start looking for practical inspiration for your situation.
7. You live in a constant state of energy drain. You have no idea what to do differently – and no time to really think. So you wonder how much longer you will want to go on like this: you earn good money, but you are beginning to ask yourself if it is really worth it.
8. Your sleep is suffering, and your family/partner is complaining – not just about your long hours, but that even when you are physically there, they hardly notice...
9. Take time out – but how? There are always a million things you need to take care of first, high-priority projects to be finished on time, and you can't really relax before you have taken care of them anyway...
10. You sometimes ask yourself if you are the only person in your department who thinks ahead, and is motivated to find solutions, and produce results...

More than a few months of this will start affecting your physical well-being as well as your creativity, energy, and impact on the organisation. Taking better care of yourself, while at the same time moving your game up, helps everyone win: you, your boss, your team.

Just imagine for a moment how differently you would feel in your position if you could

- Remove all resistance when giving instructions;
- Delegate to people who will do a better job than you;
- See and then embrace the specific opportunities of your position;
- Stop feeling awkward when giving feedback and demanding result-oriented actions;
- Complete more high-priority projects on time;
- Remove whatever other stumbling block you feel is in your way?

These are the typical outcomes of a 4-6 month coaching programme – if you are ready. If you believe your company wants to see you succeed at the next level, they may be willing to support you by a focused coaching programme. After all, they have already made an investment in you. And your success should make a bottom-line difference for everybody!

Learn once and for all what it takes to successfully manage the transition you are going through now, and all those transitions that will come up in your future. Management coaching is a lifetime investment – and your company may be more willing than you think to help you succeed at the next level. Give me a call if you would like some practical tips on how others have successfully received a budget for coaching!

I have helped professionals and managers successfully manage transition to the next level in their companies. As a consultant, coach, ex-manager and entrepreneur, I know what it means to manage yourself, your team, your boss – and what it takes to succeed at different levels of management. I also know how to pick a challenge you can win. But most importantly: I know how to listen to understand where you are now, and where you would like to go. My hands-on, pragmatic approach brings complex and lasting results to clients. Find out more about me and what my clients have to say about working with me at [www.an-edge-for-you.com](http://www.an-edge-for-you.com).

My clients are at all levels of middle and top management. I work in three languages, including Czech, and have many Czech clients. If you think I can help you move on in your career path, let's meet for an informal coffee, and see if it makes sense to work together. Just call me on my Czech mobile at 603 151 550.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.  
Till then, all the best,



Annette

PS- Even if this is not the right moment for asking your company to invest in you, I invite you to subscribe to my free quarterly "An Edge For You" newsletter with many practical tips, food for thought, and occasional bonuses like free coaching in exchange for participating in a study, reduced-fee workshops, or self-coaching inventories. Just ask for a few sample issues to be sent to your inbox directly.

## Case Studies

### **Sandra**

Overwhelmed and not enjoying her new position – that was how Sandra felt after trading her expert role for a first managerial role. At the same time, she did want to move on in her company: bright, loyal, committed to results, it was a bit of a shock to her how much she resented managing others.

In fact she didn't really manage them. They did what they wanted (her view) – or what they felt was appropriate, which is probably a more balanced view. She kept her feedback – and resentment – more or less to herself. Unless of course she exploded, which could happen from time to time – earning her a reputation of “to be treated with care”. At this point, she got a message from her boss that he would not second her to be promoted to headquarters as a next step of her professional growth. She felt disappointed and bitter. However, she had a mentor at HR who appreciated her diligence and wanted to help her grow.

In a five-month programme, she gained an understanding of the fundamental principles of good management, how she herself contributed to her present problems, and what she could do in order to turn the situation around. When she started to apply these new principles with her usual diligence, she found not only that they worked, but also that they were in no contradiction to her beliefs. Actually, after only 3 months she confessed to enjoying managing people, and started reaping the benefits of her reputation as a reliable, capable and effective manager.

When she started not just seeing results, but feeling the difference, we started working on getting that headquarters posting that she wanted – and six months into our programme, she had convinced her boss, her HR, and her new boss at HQ to hire her. Her last e-mail to me included: “After the last round of interviews, they offered me the job - which is in no small degree also to your credit.”

### **Michael**

Lost in transition would be a good description of how Michael felt: Everybody in the organisation recognized his talents – he was an extremely capable engineer, and quick to think up solutions when everybody else had given up. He was also one of the founding partners of the company that was now some 80+ people, managed by his old chum Paul. Both still got along well, but had stopped meeting in their spare time. No more skiing weekends together, and even at work, if Michael thought about it, they were getting more and more formal.

Michael felt surrounded by people who were not his intellectual equals, which is why he enjoyed Paul's company. In his own team, it was always difficult to get the right people. That was precisely why Michael ended up spending long hours and weekends at work. After his last relationship had collapsed, he didn't really mind, because working was in a way more stimulating than spending his evenings at home in front of the television with a bottle of beer. The way he worked was by delegating only tiny bits of the operation, and making sure he stayed in control of the whole complex process. What was extremely irritating given his workload was that people would always misunderstand his instructions and as a consequence, spend hours working ultimately for nothing. If only he knew an easy way out of this. He could see the vicious circle between getting a life – and getting real help, someone to rely on, someone to really trust in his department.

At this point, a well-meaning HR manager, assisted by his friend Paul, called me in. We took a few hours in the first meeting to “test” each other, but in the end he decided to give this his best shot. Within a few months, he had turned around his hiring strategy, and was chairing the meetings he used to hate and just passively (or passive-aggressively) sit in on. He had found a way to use everybody's input and tie the bits together – for renewed motivation and creativity of the whole staff, not just his own department.

He admitted that people at first were a little reserved about this changed behaviour (and some thought, he said laughingly, that he had a new relationship). But soon he got unambiguous feedback from many sides on how much people appreciated his contribution. After our six-month project, he spent another year training two successors. His job today is more of a high-level consultant and emergency creativity booster. He comes in two days a week, and uses the rest of his time out to get training in a new profession, and enjoy his position as a co-owner.