Chapter-12

Mananagerial Skills: Concept, Omponents and Methods

THE CONCEPTS OF SELF-MANAGEMENT

If you are effective as a manager then you and your organization will benefit. On the other hand if you are ineffective as a manager, any deficiencies that you have can potentially translate into inefficiencies within your organisation. It is therefore important for you to take control of your own development as a manager to ensure that you are able to address your weaknesses in your management skills and build further on your strengths. Self management is an essential skill for an effective manager. It will help you in your work role and therefore, it will help you develop and benefit the organization you work for. It is important to remember that as a manager you have a critical role to play, which underpins the work of the organization, so if you have weaknesses, these may translate into weaknesses for the organization as a whole, creating a barrier to efficiency. As a manager you have a range of different skills and attributes that are critical to your role. You will need to be able to manage time, communicate effectively with colleagues and staff, make decisions, delegate, maintain effective relationships with customers and manage all the technical requirements associated with your job. These are all aspects of your job role that will need to be managed as part of a self development programme. So to initiate the process of self-development it is important that you are aware of some of the self

development techniques that have been developed to help managers manage the process. We will now look at a range of self-assessment techniques before giving you the opportunity to start to apply those most relevant to yourself and your work role.

PERSONAL CONSTRUCT

SELF-ASSESSMENT PERSONAL CONSTRUCT

Self-assessment is all about identifying and understanding who we are and what makes us function. The Personal Construct Psychology was developed in 1955 by George Kelly. He recognised that we all see the world differently. He felt that personal identity is developed by the way we 'anticipate' his world, by trying to make sense of it using our past experience. We therefore use what we know to 'construct' theories, to explain things that happen. If something unexpected happens, we then 'reconstruct' our views in the light of this, and therefore learn through our experience. Kelly suggests that we have 'core constructs'; those which are more personal to us. 'Peripheral constructs' may be about others and our environment, and even about our self, but the 'core constructs' are those that define our identity. He felt that when these constructs are challenged, then we begin to feel anxiety. Change can often bring anxiety. As you reflect on who you are, and how you function, some of these constructs may be challenged. As you begin to receive feedback from others, you may find that things

THE JOHARI WINDOW

To be able to self manage we need to be able to assess ourselves, who we are and how we think. The Johari Window is a tool that can be used to support this process. This model represents a matrix of our personal awareness. It also looks at how interaction with those around us can change our self awareness. American Psychologists,

Joseph Luft and Harry Ingram (1950's) developed the Johari Window. The name was an amalgam of their names; Jo and Hari. This window model can be used as a self assessment technique, and helps us to understand the elements that there are that make up our own knowledge of ourselves, and the possibility of the development of that self-awareness.

Known to Self	Unknown to Self
Open/Free Area (1)	Blind Area (2)
Hidden Area (3)	Unknown Area (4)

Known to Others

Un-known to others

o and Hari. Window Model

Open/Free Area (1)

This area has the information that both you and others knows about yourself. In a new team, this area will be small, but the aim is that as you get to know each other better, this area will increase. This can be increased by sharing with others, and listening to feedback about you. This area can be increased both by developing area 1 into area 3, where others will find out more about you.

Blind Area (2)

This area has the information that is known by others, but is unknown by yourself. We may find it hard to recognise to begin with, that there might be things that only others know about us. Think about this area as the issues that we haven't recognised yet. These may be in our subconscious. We can often recognise things that are the truth about us when they are shown to us. We may have been giving the team good ideas for a while before recognising that we are an 'ideas person'. We all have hidden potentials and weaknesses, and with more knowledge we may come up with strategies to develop these areas/

Hidden Area (3)

This area has the information that is known to ourselves but is hidden to others. These will include hidden agendas, undeveloped potentials, emotions, fears etc. This area is a natural area to have. No one should share everything with everyone, but there may be information that is work related that could be moved to the known areas.

Unknown Area (4)

This area includes information that is unknown both to ourselves and others. This area has hidden potentials, feelings etc that we are completely unaware of. Do you recognize that in an emergency (or in a new situation), we will sometimes surprise ourselves by the way we react. An example would be a person who has lived a quiet normal life, but has been heroic in a situation where others were threatened. As we become more self-aware, this area will decrease. We may begin to recognize why we act in the way that we do. Has a childhood event effected how we live now? Perhaps bullying has left us with a legacy of lack of confidence, or an inability to trust others. The ability to understand ourselves gives us the tools to develop strategies to challenge ourselves and achieve our own personal goals.

The Johari window, and the theory behind it, suggests that we have different areas of our lives; some which are open to others and others which are hidden to others, or even to ourselves. It seems to romote self-disclosure, however it is important to be wise in how much we disclose to others. We need to be open enough to others to promote good relationships, but also not cross the bounds of appropriateness. It could be said that extending the blind area, i.e. getting to know more about ourselves, both through the insight of

others; and the hidden area, i.e. being more aware of our own motivations, is more useful to us.

SWOT ANALYSIS

It is not always easy to look at our own effectiveness with a clear and unbiased attitude. SWOT is tool that can be used to analyse ourselves. (It can also be used to analyse an organisation). S looks at

Strengths

- W looks at Weaknesses
- looks at Opportunities and
- T looks at Threats.

This tool can be used to provide a general analysis. You should consider:

Strengths

What are your strengths in terms of?

- The specific skills you have
- The resources you possess (knowledge, expertise etc)

Weaknesses

What are your weaknesses in terms of:

- Any deficiencies you have
- The specific skills you lack
- Any particular resources you lack (knowledge, resources etc.)
- The constraints you **face (rules, procedures, timing, conflicting roles)**

Opportunities

What opportunities you have in terms of:
- Resources to support you in your role

- Environmental factors that will be helpful to you (media, people's perceptions)
- New openings in the development opportunities
- New technologies
- New staff and staff motivation
- New ways to diversify

Threats

What threats do you face in terms of:

- Legislative changes that are in the pipe-line

- New competitors

- Skills and competence shortages (self and staff)   Staffing changes

- Negative staff attitudes

- Job uncertainty

HOW WE LEARN

LEARNING CYCLE:

Everyone learns in his or her own way. If you talk to a colleague, the chances are they have their own individual method for absorbing, retaining and then using information. And it's probably very different to your method. Much has been done in the way of theory to analyse how we learn and there are some principles that trainers can use to improve the quality of their training. One of the best-known learning theories is the Learning Cycle. Consider the Kolb Cycle which identifies:

**Source: Kolb (1986: 271), Cited in Forster N, (2005: 316)**

Experience: Exposure to stimuli, learning content or situation

Processing: Analysis and Interpretation

Generalization: Extrapolation to external references

Application;   Apply it to diverse / unique situation

Kolb's ELC Process

EXPERIENCING ───────▶	PROCESSING
APPLICATION ◀───────	GENERALISATION
THEORIZATION ───────▶	REINVENTION
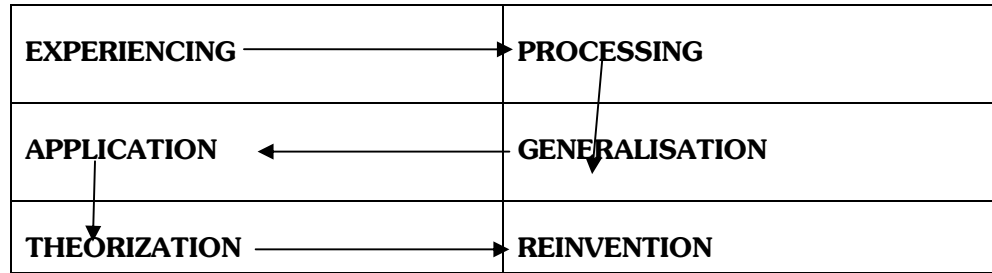
MAINTAINING WORK-LIFE BALANCE:

Work-life balances do the role of a fulcrum in putting the work processes perfectly blended with lifestyle and life process as well. The climate setting for any worker in ay work situation involves motivational skills and motor functioning. All workers have an existing work-life balance. This is the balance between the time and effort that we put into our work lives, and the time we have for our home life. This is not always easy to define, as you may have taken work home, or perhaps you check and answer work emails from home also.

There was a time when the majority of jobs were 5 days a week and you were expected to work from 9am – 5pm each day. This is not always the case now. You may be required to work on the odd Saturday and on occasions; meetings may last way beyond 5pm. In the current climate, the speed of change is encouraging workers to take a new look at different models of working. Technology is allowing thousands of staff to work from home. Other new ways of working include part-time positions and job sharing which work alongside the traditional full time positions. It is said that staff that have a good work-life balance will bring financial benefits to the company. These included lower rates of absenteeism. The London Borough of Camden had a 2.5% reduction in sickness absenteeism in the first year of introducing new procedures of work,

The awareness of the importance of a satisfactory work-life balance has been growing over the past few years. Legislation has been implemented in order to support these new initiatives. This legislation has included the 'Fairness at Work Bill' which includes working time regulations and parental leave. Maternity leave was extended to both parents including three months unpaid parental leave for either parent up to the age of five. Adoptive parents can also claim this leave. These rights are being updated and extended.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

In 2003, a new right to request flexible working was given to parents of children under the age of 6, if it does not have a detrimental effect on the company. The Working Time Directive sets a maximum number of working hours that a worker is allowed to work per week. Think about your own work-life balance. Recent research has shown us how our work and home-life cannot be separated. Often our work gives us our identity. We say, 'I am an engineer'. This is why redundancy and retirement can be devastating to many. We take our stresses from work home and our concerns over our family into the workplace. Think about your own personal balance. On a night out, do you find yourself talking about nothing but work. On holiday, do you have to take mobile phone calls from work? Have you ever cancelled a holiday because of work?

INTEGRITY AND ETHICS

Another influence on you and how you are as a manager is your integrity and ethics. As a manager you will be expected to make decisions every day. These decisions will be made using your skills and experience and will be influenced by your own priorities. Each decision will have an effect on the organisation and your colleagues, so take time as you work through this section to try to analyse your

own priorities and values. As a manager you will be responsible for the welfare of staff, and some decision making. This is a huge responsibility, so it is important to look at the ethics of the work place. We know that we can influence our colleagues, but we must look at how we do this, and what values guide our behaviour.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

We may:

- Be guided by specific rules
- Have our own sense of justice/fairness
- Follow the orders of others
- Follow our individual conscience
- Act out of self-interest
- Choose the way which is most beneficial to the needs of others
- Follow what we feel to be most financially beneficial
- Be put under pressure from our managers
- Pass this pressure on to those who work for us

IPC Skill and Management Performance

The verbal skills

a) The technicality writing skills helps create better impression and proper understanding about the text intended to be transacted to the desire stake holder.
b) Constant dialogues helps resolve most of the Problems
c) Simplicity and clarity in communication enhances the speed of dispersal and socialization.

The Non-verbal skills

a) **Haptic** communication: A gentle touch on the shoulder of a subordinate offer by the boss energizes the employ and improves the Work Climate.

b) **Oculesics**: A uniformity of *eye* contact by the speaker with the audience create an opportunity for equal involvement of both the speaker and audience into the entire interaction process.

c) **Proxemics:** To improve the communication skill, one needs to maintain a comfortable distance between the speaker and the audience.

d) **Chronemics:** Offering a pause between two sentences helps better understanding on the text, especially when the concept is complex.

e) **Gesture:** It is the kinesics when the speaker in on movement. A good gesture improves the efficacy of communication many fold and makes the speaker earn higher fidelity from amongst the audience.

f) **Posture:** This is a kind of non-verbal communication being generated by a speaker when he is on a stationary position. A good posture creates a healthy environment, while a bad posture distorts the entire communication possibility and efficacy as well.

CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) looks at the nature of management development. This should be a continuous process, as well as an attitude of mind. This can effectively build on our self analysis which you will have undertaken in the first section. If we are willing to look for new ways to learn, we will be flexible and will embrace positive change. We also need to recognise that it is not always easy to face new challenges, but if we see ourselves as 'lifelong learners' we will be more able to deal with an ever-changing workplace environment and the challenges that this brings. If we are to move with the tides of change, and not to become stagnant, we need to look at how we can continue to grow and develop, not just in our professional role, but in our personal outlook. Some

professional bodies will require members to undertake regular training to update their qualifications and to ensure competence. We need to look for opportunities to update our competencies in the workplace.

Can you find a mentor in the work place? They can encourage and support the professional development of their colleagues. Hopefully, mentors will be more experienced members of staff who will listen and encourage independent learning. Also, make sure that the mentor you choose not only has experience, but has the skills needed to share that knowledge. Don't forget that they need spare time to take on this role! It could be your line manager, but this may not always be appropriate. Find someone with the time and honesty that you will need for this process to be effective. Above all, you need to respect their judgments, or have the strength of relationship to challenge and discuss their advice. Personal development will come not only from the learning process, but from the reflection on the process undertaken.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (PDP)

Personal development planning is a tool that you can use to achieve your ambitions and overcome your weaknesses. You can look at those ambitions that you have, and look at the steps that you need to take to achieve these ambitions. The diagram below looks at the process we are embarked upon. In section (1) one we looked at tools that can be useful in identifying our skills, and understanding our own values. In other words, we collected information. In this section, we will be taking this information and then planning and undertaking a personal development plan. In this section we are going to look at 'Identifying Objectives' and 'Taking Action'.

Often we can launch into development without enough reflection, but these sections will help us understand the importance of setting

achievable goals. We can think about what we want to achieve, but we must analyse, plan and then take action. When we start to look at what we want to achieve, we need to keep an objective view of our own skills and weaknesses. This is difficult, and we may need help from others. We may already know what our goals are. They may be personal hopes, or something that is connected to our work role or our career. For others, we may not have thought about where we want to be in five years time. We have reacted to opportunities and changes. Think about being proactive; this means looking at what we want to do next, and taking the steps to get there. As you have worked through some of the self-analysis techniques in section one, there will be areas that you recognise that need development. Prioritise these areas. It may be that you have recently been given an increased workload, and therefore Time Management is a priority, or a new computer system has been installed in your office, and you have training needs in this area. If your needs are prioritised, you will be able to make more effective use of your development time.

FORCE FIELD ANALYSIS

Force Field Analysis is a simple but highly effective technique that you can used to identify the forces that will support your planned development and those that will resist it. It consists of two columns, one listing the driving forces and the other the restraining forces. It may be useful to you as part of your planning process. Research mind mapping and how it can be used to support the creation of personal development programmes.

MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT

Kurt Lewin, the social psychologist, theorized that human behaviour – whether individual or in a social group - is driven by forces, such

as expectations and beliefs and cultures. These can be positive, urging us to behave in a certain way; or negative, pushing us away from that same behaviour. The Force Field diagram simply represents these driving forces and restraining forces that relate to a central question or issue. The key point of Force Field analysis is that your planned development cannot occur if the restraining forces are greater than the driving forces. For that matter, if drivers and restrainers are balanced, change will not happen either. The simplest way to deal with this, to enable change to occur, is to make the driving forces outnumber the restraining forces. To achieve this the most effective route is to tackle the restraining forces head on, and to ensure that by removing some of them, the driving forces are in the majority. This will be even more effective if you overcome the strongest or toughest objections.

CONCLUSION

As already stated, we should consider ourselves to be 'lifelong learners'. As you have followed through these three sections you will hopefully have gained new understanding of who you are, how you are perceived in the workplace, the skills that you use at work and the area that you need to develop to become more effective. This is not just an activity to be carried out as you go through this course. Try to build time into your schedule to carry out this type of reflection, and carry this on even after you have finished this particular course. This hopefully then will become a lifelong habit, which will enable you to continue your development as a flexible and responsive manager.