

Following is the complete list of management tips prepared by John Coxon & Associates and emailed to those on our subscriber list. We hope you enjoy them and find the information useful. To subscribe please email [admin@johncoxon.com.au](mailto:admin@johncoxon.com.au) with the word subscribe in the subject field.

### **Bad Behaviour #1 - An obsessive need to win**

Are you that person who attends a meeting and then fights tooth and nail for your perspective on every issue?

There is nothing wrong with being on the winning team or with winning. It is about deciding which battles are worth winning. Win the battles that matter. This implies it is not necessary to win every battle. How often do you go into a meeting and even when you don't have anything to gain you continue to argue a case or push for a particular perspective? That is a need to win at all costs. It is destructive behaviour. It pisses everyone off. Stop doing it. Today.

At the next meeting you attend, and the one after and the one after - stop talking and listen. If you must speak, ask a question and then listen to the answer. Soon you will begin to understand which battles are worth fighting and when winning is really important.

There are many ways we seek to win - from arguing, to speaking disparagingly, to ignoring people. These actions are all designed to help us win, to gain power over others, to stay on top. These behaviours are all destructive. It isn't necessary to criticise someone you disagree with. If you haven't anything positive to say, then say nothing.

There are some that suggest the obsessive need to win is grounded in anxiety, fear of failure and fear of looking bad. This may be true. Maybe the key is not to lose at being a good leader. When you win for the sake of winning you lose mana and followers. You walk alone, unwanted and unsupported, especially in your time of need. Good leaders help others to win first, in that way others help the leader to be a winner.

### **Bad Behaviour #2 - Adding our 2-cents worth to every discussion**

Essentially offering an unsolicited opinion. If someone wants to know what you think, they will likely ask you a question. This implies that if they have not asked you a question they don't need to know your opinion.

The problem with opinions is that they are rarely, if ever, based on fact. They are often based upon your perception of what might have taken place. When you give an opinion you invite dissension or argument, usually with another opinion. Argument never moves a discussion towards a conclusion. When you give an opinion you shut down conversation.

Much better to ask a question than give an opinion. In doing so you move the conversation forward and everyone learns something. If, of course, you are presenting information that is demonstrably true, then you are not offering an opinion. If you do have an opinion on something and you just have to offer it, try asking if others wish to hear it (don't be surprised if they say no) or state clearly from the beginning that it is just an opinion.

Should someone state their opinion about you or your behaviour try to avoid responding. Just say thank you. Nothing more. If you do wish to explore what they are saying ask them a question designed to open up dialogue on how they formed their opinion.

Remember your opinion is your own thoughts. It is usually of no interest or relevance to others unless they seek it.

### **Bad Behaviour #3 - Passing judgments, rating others, imposing our standards**

In theory, a judgment is at least one rung higher than having an opinion. A judgment is an informed decision, presumably based upon the evidence. A judgment can also be viewed as the last say in a matter. The final decision. It can stop further conversation on the spot. Effective leadership is about facilitating dialogue and encouraging conversations. When we pass judgment it may be perceived by others that we are assuming a superior position. We operate as part of a team or group, we are all equal.

Likewise when we attempt to rate others by our own standards we are assuming the moral high ground. The danger here is that it is easy to be seen as being unable to maintain such standards ourselves and accused of hypocrisy. In that instance your credibility becomes damaged. It is better for standards to evolve through group norms and values, created by people working together in a respectful manner. The desire to help, because someone helped you is stronger than the desire to do as someone else believes you should do.

Bringing information to someone's attention. Asking, are they aware . . .? Seeking discussion on the impacts and consequences. This all takes time, it requires patience and diligence yet the process develops respect and credibility. When you coach someone to the point of discovery, they will own that information and move quickly to implement the decisions they have been a part of making.

### **Bad Behaviour #4 - Making destructive comments**

The key word here is 'destructive'. This is the opposite of constructive. The issue with destructive comments is that we often don't intend them to be destructive. We sincerely believe we are being constructive. Destructive comments can take many forms, from outright sarcasm, to implied criticism to disguised self-deprecation. Often it is better to simply thank someone for their input, regardless of how you regard the content or the person, and give yourself time to reflect before you make a comment. You can always come back at a later time and ask questions. In that way you both learn something. It is not necessary to 'put someone down' in front of others. It achieves nothing. It simply demonstrates you are not listening, or even thinking. Saying one thing and meaning another is destructive. Making unsubstantiated statements or conclusions is destructive. Making negative comments is destructive. How do you avoid doing this? The first step is to stop and think. Ask yourself, is a response even warranted? If you must say something, then ask a question. Follow Grandma's advice. If you ain't got nothing positive to say then you better say nothing at all.

### **Bad Behaviour #5 - Responding with 'no', 'but', or 'however'.**

When you commence a sentence with 'No' you are saying to someone, *you are wrong*. As a result you will either create a conflict or shut down the conversation. Instead try responding with "I would like to explore your ideas more. What do you believe might occur if . . . ". In this manner you guide the other person on a journey of discovery while raising awareness of all involved in the conversation.

Similarly when you place a 'but' or 'however' into the middle of a response you are saying to the other person, *disregard everything I have said to this point*. If what you have just said was that unimportant then why say it in the first instance?

Try this exercise. Over the next few days count the number of times you respond with 'no' or the number of times you insert 'but' or 'however' into your responses. You might even consider putting a dollar coin in a jar for each use of those words. In a couple of days time make a conscious effort to eliminate these three responses from your conversations. Doing so will force you to think about how you respond and what you might say. You will feel more positive, others will respond to you in a positive manner and you will facilitate more productive conversations.

## **Bad Behaviour #6 - Showing We Are Smarter Than Others**

We all like to display our knowledge of a topic. And where applicable we should share our knowledge and understanding with others, just not always and in every conversation. There is an appropriate time and place for everything. Why not show off our knowledge at every opportunity? Firstly, not everyone wants to hear from you all the time. Secondly, if you jump in with a 'I have the answer' approach you will discourage those without formal qualifications or your level of understanding from participating. Thirdly, in jumping in you are presuming the remainder of the group is incapable of solving the issues collectively. No one likes a show off. What we do like is someone who is comfortable with their level of knowledge and uses it only when all other options have been exhausted. How you pass on your knowledge is more important than ensuring people know you have the knowledge. You earn trust and respect by being seen to be collaborative and facilitative, by sharing as a part of the team and then you will be viewed by others as an authority and they will seek out your knowledge.

## **Bad Behaviour #7 - Speaking When Angry**

Coach your staff, provide continuous positive feedback for achievements. Do not mix positive feedback with suggestions for improvement. It creates confusion and devalues the feedback. Talk through issues and concerns early and often. Help your positive employees develop skills in working with negative co-workers.

Try bringing your team together for a group discussion of issues. Facilitate the discussion to enable both positive and negative perspectives to surface. Allow those in the group with a negative perspective to see that others do not share their viewpoint, while also providing them with positive role models and raising awareness amongst the entire team.

When we are angry we are out of control. We are being reactive. We are being ruled by our emotions. Your anger causes pain to yourself and to others. When speaking in anger we may lose sight of reason. When speaking in anger others may perceive they are being attacked and respond with anger. A solution. Create some space for yourself. Take yourself out of the conversation. Return when your anger has subsided. When someone speaks in anger to you, do not respond in kind. Instead, ask them a question. In doing so you momentarily deflect their anger and allow them an opportunity to regain control.

## **Bad Behaviour #8 - Negativity**

Some people appear to be naturally negative. Others become negative as a result of an event that triggers off a response. Negativity created by a one off event is much easier to resolve. Working with a perpetually negative person requires patience and effective communication by the manager. When working with the person that is occasionally negative, create time to listen to their concerns. Determine if the concern is legitimate. Ask how you might help. Provide them with the resources to move forward. These people normally have a healthy, positive approach and will appreciate your positive response to their concern.

Persistent negative behaviour can be contagious. Your first strategy is to ensure you, as the manager, are modelling a positive approach to issues. Be aware of your own actions and language. Provide a balanced perspective to all issues. Focus on demonstrable evidence and facts.

Don't ignore negative behaviour. The world isn't perfect. It isn't always rosy for everyone. Acknowledge to that person the negative aspects and then move onto positive explanations. If you ignore the existence of someone's negative perspective you are on a collision course. Philosophically you will both be approaching the issue from opposing ends of the continuum.

### **Bad Behaviour #9 – Withholding Information**

Here is a scenario. At an executive meeting it is agreed certain information will be released for general use. In contrast to other executives, one member of the executive team takes it upon themselves to withhold, or filter, a part of that information. What is the impact of this behaviour? Firstly, direct reports of the manager withholding information will feel they have been neglected, even distrusted. They will soon learn their counterparts are better informed. Cross functional information sharing and decision making will suffer. Worse still, those staff of the manager withholding information will learn from the role model provided and, in turn, cease to fully inform their own manager(s). This will lead to faulty decision making and poor performance in that department. All this due one executive manager failing to understand a key role and responsibility – that being to facilitate conversation in ALL directions, without filtering. Creating silo's or playing politics will always reflect back upon the executive manager at the end of the day.

As a frontline manager the impact of withholding information can be equally as disastrous. Executive managers do not know everything. They rely upon feedback from frontline managers to enable them to make effective decisions. When frontline managers fail to pass information back up the line to an executive manager they directly impact upon judgment and decision making. Poor feedback leads to poor decisions.

Do you want to be part of an effective management team? Share all the information you can with all the people possible all of the time. When people have a high level of awareness and understanding they are less likely to make assumptions, become part of the rumour machine, engage in conflicts and more likely to view issues from multiple perspectives.

### **Bad Behaviour #10 – Failure to provide recognition and praise**

Failure to provide appropriate recognition and praise amounts to management theft. Others should be valued and appreciated for their input; they do not deserve to be stolen from or made to feel worthless. When someone comes up with a good idea, even if it is an idea you feel you should have come up with, give them all the credit and public recognition. Make them feel special, in doing so you show yourself to be a good leader of people. Remember, as a leader and manager, you are not expected to come up with all the ideas yourself. You are expected to build and develop a team of people able to think creatively and contribute to the discussion. Your role is to facilitate this process. A key part of that facilitation is giving people recognition for their input. Giving recognition sends appropriate messages to others in the team. It tells them their ideas will be appreciated and that they will not be stolen and claimed as your own. It's about trust. Why should others contribute if they do not trust you to recognise their input?

### **Bad Behaviour #11 – Making Excuses**

There are two levels of excuse making. The first is where we make excuses for the behaviour of others. The second level is where we make excuses for our own behaviour. When we make excuses for the behaviour of others we are sending a message that their errant behaviour is acceptable. We are also degrading those impacted upon by the behaviour. How often do we hear something like this, 'Jim is a great manager, we just need to be tolerant of some of his bad habits.' Rubbish. If Jim's behaviour is such that staff are concerned or complaining, then Jim is not a great manager. Full stop. Don't pander to bad managers at the expense of your employees.

Now let's look at our own behaviour. You either make the right decision or you make the wrong one. We don't have to make excuses for our good behaviour. If we find ourselves making excuses for our Do not spend time making excuses for your behaviour. If you have made a mistake, admit, say sorry and move on. When you make excuses for your behaviour you are being arrogant. Telling others you believe you are right when you are wrong simply confirms you are not open to advice, not ready to learn and not ready to change. When you are late arriving at work and you enter the room saying, "Sorry I'm late, the traffic was heavy." Stop speaking at the word sorry. It was not the traffic that made you late. It was that you failed to leave for work with sufficient time. Learn from the experience rather than make excuses for your behaviour.

Often we try to excuse our own behaviour. We say things like, 'it's just the way I am'. These are deeply held self beliefs, often not based upon fact. They simply reflect how you perceive reality. Telling others how you want them to view your behaviour is arrogance. Instead change your behaviour to avoid inconveniencing others and avoid the need to make excuses.

The thing with making excuses is that others simply don't believe you. They know you are covering for inexcusable behaviour. In making excuses you destroy their trust and respect for you.

### **Bad Behaviour #12 – Clinging to the past**

Often when things go pear shaped we look to blame something or someone. Just as often we blame someone or some event from our past. You've heard it before, maybe even said it yourself. *I behave the way I do because of how I was treated in the past*, or something similar. It may be there were events in your past that a good therapist can help you work through, all well and good. Those events are not the reason you behave the way you do. You behave in this way because you choose to. Every day we face choices in our lives and in our workplace. We have a choice as to how we behave.

Your power rests in your ability to accept responsibility for your behaviour, to learn from your mistakes and to move on free from the past. When you blame someone else for your errors you create resentment. If that person is to learn that you are blaming them they will react negatively. Would you want to be blamed for someone else's behaviour? When you feel the urge to blame others, take a breath and reflect. What did they do? How did that make you feel? How did you react? What might you do in a similar situation in future? Now you are in control. You are learning from your mistakes. That is all it is, a mistake. We all make them. Apologise to those affected by your behaviour, provide assurances you have strategies in place to ensure it will not occur again and move on.

### **Bad Behaviour #13 – Playing Favourites**

"Unfairness leads to all sorts of problems" according to Professor Jennifer Mueller, co-author of a paper on perceived unfairness in the workplace. When people perceived workplace benefits to be unfair they become envious. Envy is an emotion that leads to negative behaviour, including gossip and back-stabbing. The behaviour becomes a means for attacking the organisation and can lead to interpersonal conflict, reduced effectiveness and high staff turnover.

A key strategy towards ensuring transparency of decisions and helping to avoid favouritism is to have key decisions made or reviewed by multiple people. This helps to introduce balanced perspectives.

It has always been that information is king. Individuals have learned that those with key information have power. Be wary of playing favourites by only sharing information with certain individuals, where appropriate aim to ensure a wide spread of information, help grow the bigger picture amongst all employees.

### **Bad Behaviour #14 – Refusing to Express Regret**

The simplest word in the English language is 'sorry'. It is also, for most of us, the most difficult word to use. The reality is this. When we express regret, when we say sorry for our mistakes, we move on. We feel a huge sense of relief and those we work with shift from confrontation to collaboration. Being wrong is normal. We all make mistakes. Instead of defending our position at all costs, instead of appearing stubborn and unwilling to learn from our experiences. We need to admit we are not perfect.

The people you work with to move forward, they want to work with you. They are not interested in why you did what you did. They just want to know you have learned from the experience and that they can trust you to take that experience with you into the future.

The solution. Say I am sorry. Don't defend your position. Don't make excuses. Just say sorry. Then ask how we can work together on this issue? This is professionalism and maturity.

### **Bad Behaviour #15 – Not Listening**

A key competency for effective leadership and management is the ability to communicate well. At the heart of effective communication is the ability to listen. Listening is a sign of respect. When you choose not to listen to someone you are telling them you have no respect, no time for them and are not interested in their input. When you fail to listen you fail to understand. You cannot manage effectively unless you fully understand the core issue. When you fail to listen you discourage people from providing you with feedback. This means you will be ill-informed and your decision making will be flawed.

It is much better to make a set time to discuss an issue, when you can give it your full attention, than to only give part attention or not listen attentively. Shift from telling someone what you think to asking them what they think; then listen to their response. When the other person pauses, don't rush to speak. Let the silence linger and you will find they will speak some more. All you need do is listen.

### **Bad Behaviour #16 – Failing to express gratitude**

The inability to say thank you when something is given to you is inexcusable, yet so often we fail to do so. It's a simple two-word sentence. Thank you. Failure to express gratitude to people for their sacrifice or their contribution is a weakness. It is a sign of poor leadership. People appreciate being thanked for their contribution. When someone does their job to expectations, it costs nothing to say thank you. Even though they are doing what they are paid for, there are some things more important in life than money. When someone does something over and above expectations they should be thanked.

When we seek advice from someone, our response should be to simply say thank you. Even if you disagree with their advice. You sought it, don't argue with them. Even if the advice was unsolicited just say thank you and take the opportunity to reflect upon what has been said. In showing gratitude you show that you care about others, that you understand what it took for them to be there that day, that you empathise with them. Try this exercise. Whenever a team member leaves for the day, when they say good bye to you, return the favour and add these words – thanks for your help today.

### **Bad Behaviour #17 – Shooting the Messenger**

This is where we lash out at the person bringing bad news. It is a pointless act. The problem is not the person that delivers the message; the problem is the message itself. Even if you get rid of person that delivers the message, the problem still exists. Shooting the messenger does not solve the problem, at best it buries it till another day; at which point the issue will come back to bite you with a vengeance. Worse still, in shooting the messenger, you discourage others from providing you with balanced feedback, they will only provide you with good news. In shooting the messenger you compromise your own judgement and as a result will make increasing bad decisions. In shooting the messenger you are putting your management career in jeopardy.

Instead of shooting the messenger. Simply thank them for their feedback. Say you will take time to think it through and establish a timeframe for providing the messenger with feedback as to the progress in resolving the issue. In this way you shift from being reactive to proactive. You create space for yourself to reflect and think through the process. You regain control. It is important that when you make a commitment to get back to someone with a progress report, you do so, even if you haven't achieved the outcome you had intended. If you fail to provide feedback as promised others will believe you are ignoring the issue.

### **Bad Behaviour #18 – Passing the Buck**

Essentially this refers to someone unable to take personal responsibility for their actions or outcomes. Often used by managers seeking to transfer bad news onto someone else in an effort to make themselves look better than they really are. Passing the buck in neither leadership or management; it is cowardice. When you are responsible for achieving an outcome you should take responsibility to making sure the outcome is achieved. If you are unable to achieve the desired outcome, don't blame others or external circumstances. Accept the situation and come up with an alternative strategy, then find the people able to help you be successful. Why should others should the blame for your failures? Afterall, you would be happy to accept the praise for a job well done.

Passing the buck is also about avoiding conflict. Many times we fail to achieve our desired outcomes because we have overcommitted ourselves, we are working to our weaknesses rather than our strengths. It is time to do something different. Gather round you a team of people, able to help you, advise you, bring on board experience and skills you do not have. Most importantly do not hesitate to ask for help. Do these things and you will learn more, achieve more and have less need to duck for cover by passing the buck to someone else.

### **Bad Behaviour #19 – An Excessive Need to Be Me**

How often have you passed of your behaviour as being 'just the way I am'? Everyone reading this email should raise their hand. Everyone does this at some point, some more than others. It's a cop-out. It's arrogance. It's a desire to detract attention away from your need to change some undesirable aspect of your behaviour. You would only make such a statement when someone has raised your awareness of your behaviour. They would only do that if your behaviour was having a negative impact upon them. When you hear yourself saying it's 'just the way I am' it is a sign you need to examine how you are behaving and how you might do things differently.

Our faults are not our virtues. Our faults hold us back. They prevent us from achieving our fullest potential. They prevent us from achieving absolute happiness in life, they leave us dissatisfied. When you hear yourself saying 'it's just the way I am', stop, take a breath and reflect upon your behaviour. Ask yourself, better still, ask others, how they see your behaviour and the impact it has upon them. Don't argue with them when you don't like what they say. Instead just say thank you and take some more time to reflect. When you do this you are on your way towards being a better person.

*We have completed our series of management behaviour tips based upon the research of Dr Marshall Goldsmith. Over the next three months we plan to email a regular tip on how to work through common management issues. These will be shown below. Each tip will contain a link to a free tip sheet you may download for your own use.*

### **Management issue #1 – They don't listen to me!**

Being nominated as a manager provides you with a title and nothing else. Your title does not mean you can change anything. What it does entitle you to do is facilitate conversations amongst those on your teams. It also means you get to take responsibility to ensuring effective communication.

We would suggest your people do not listen to you because you are busy telling them something rather than asking for their perspective. Furthermore we would suggest most people do not listen to you because they know more about how to do their job than you do! Even if you have made a decision and need to communicate that decision, how well others listen will depend upon how well you consulted and involved them in the decision making process.

Before you can expect others to listen to you; firstly you must demonstrate your ability to listen to them. As a manager the number one tool in your toolkit is your ability to ask questions, listen to the responses and to learn.

### **Management issue #2 – Working with Stress**

Notice our headline - working with stress - we have not suggested you can manage stress or control stress. In every workplace there are stress triggers. Things that cause you to 'lose it' in one way or another. Know yourself. Know what your stressors are, be able to identify them and develop strategies to minimise the impact. Develop the means to manage both your time and tasks. Procrastination and the inability to say no to the requests of others are two of the greatest workplace stressors. Develop your own form of assertiveness. Create space where you can relax. Walk outside in the fresh air during your break. Always take time for lunch. Go somewhere quiet and reflective. Build a positive workplace environment. Understand what creates stress for others, for example, appraisals, and create an environment designed to minimise that stress. Go to [www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html](http://www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html) to download your **free Tips For Working With Stress**.

### **Management issue #3 – Conducting Effective Performance Appraisals**

If there is one management function certain to elicit a range of negative impressions and feelings it is performance appraisals. The reason for this is the way many managers go about conducting appraisals. They see it as a potential source of conflict – and few managers, if any, relish a potential conflict; therefore in their effort to avoid conflict they try to rush the process, they tell rather than ask and they fail to engage the team member in their own development, thus exacerbating the situation.

Next time you are conducting performance appraisals, try this. Invite your employee to participate. Offer to conduct the appraisal away from the office. Present your employee with the results of any feedback or your observations – without comment or judgment. Suggest to the employee you would like to hear their ideas on how they might improve and then offer the employee time to read through the feedback and time to reflect. Invite the employee to a further meeting in a couple of days – and be prepared to listen to their ideas.

The majority of managers fail to offer their employee an opportunity to reflect, space to think and then they fail to solicit or even listen to any ideas the employee may have. To learn more on how to conduct effective performance appraisals you may download our free management tip from [www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html](http://www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html)

#### **Management issue #4 – Driving Fear From The Workplace**

Fear in the workplace is created by poor management. When employees are fearful they will not speak up, they will not contribute in a positive manner, they will not extend themselves beyond normal expectations, absenteeism is high and they engage in destructive behaviour, such as rumour-mongering.

Managers have a tendency to look only at the symptoms, the level of negative rumours, the lack of productivity, poor teamwork and then try to remedy those. Doing so is pointless and expensive as it may not address the root cause of the issue. As a manager, firstly look at your own behaviour. Do you encourage people to speak up and contribute? Do you view an issue as an opportunity to develop or a time to allocate blame? Do you follow up on the commitments you make to your team? Do you attribute credit to those that come up with the good ideas or do you claim them as your own? If you answered in the negative to any of those behaviours then it is likely your own management behaviour is the issue. If so it is recommended you engage a [management coach](#) to help you develop your management behaviours. To learn more on how to develop a workplace free of fear you may download our free management tip from [www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html](http://www.johncoxon.com.au/links.html)

#### **Management issue #5 – Motivating Staff**

Over the years countless research has shown two key findings. The first finding is that 75% of people change employer because they have suffered at the hands of a poor manager. The second finding is that money is low on a list of prime motivators. What do these findings suggest? If you want to retain your best people you need to be a leader and you need to know how to motivate your staff. What is motivation? It is a desire to do a job to the best of one's ability. How do you motivate people? Firstly, understand that 'the little things are the big things'. The little things are critical. Take notice of your people, pay attention to how they work. Praise them when they do a good job and say thank you. Being treated with respect and courtesy and feeling valued for their contribution are the biggest motivators.

People involved in helping establish their own outcomes will be more motivated to achieve them than someone instructed to achieve a certain outcome. This is employee engagement. Helping employees understand the 'big picture' and the value of their contribution to the entire organisation helps them be aware of why they do the work they do. To download a free management tip on How To Motivate Staff go to [www.johncoxon.com.au/mantip.html](http://www.johncoxon.com.au/mantip.html)

#### **Management issue #6 – Improving Operational Effectiveness**

Managers succeed when all the activities conducted by themselves and their staff directly contribute towards achieving the desired outcomes. This suggests the reason managers fail is because some activities are not directly contributing towards outcomes. The single most important activity undertaken by those in your team is communication. Everyone on your team communicates. The question to be asked is this. How well do those on your team communicate? I am not referring to the level of conflict or disagreement or how well people listen. Conflict is a symptom of poor communication, the cause of conflict is when communication fails to contribute directly towards outcomes.

Think of it as circular process. One person communicates with a second person. For that communication to be effective, the second person needs to communicate back to the first person. This is closed loop. Now to increase the effectiveness of that communication, one or the other of those two people need to communicate with a third person. When the third person communicates back we have another closed loop. More importantly we have the two loops interacting with each other and sharing information. In this way all three people are contributing directly towards achieving the desired outcome.

### **Management issue #7 – Developing Potential**

A prime function of leadership is to develop the potential of those in your work group. Failure to do so is mismanagement. There are three distinct groups of people in our workplace; those self-starters that get things done, those that lack high personal motivation but will achieve more if asked and those that simply want to come to work, do their job and get paid. The 80/20 rule suggests we, as leaders and managers, should focus the majority of our time on those that are highly motivated – after all that small group is likely to have the greatest impact.

The 80/20 rule does not suggest you should neglect the two much larger groups of people that lack self motivation. The top group don't need motivating. They need recognition. They also need you to remove barriers that impede their activities. Many of those barriers exist in the larger, middle group, of capable, semi motivated staff members. These barriers exist in the way work is structured and the way communication flows. Look at how this middle group interacts with the highly motivated group. Try to identify ways to increase positive and productive interaction. Last, but not least, do not neglect the small group of unmotivated people. They perform a role and they have potential.

### **Management issue #8 – Having Those Difficult Conversations**

You know those conversations. You are a manager or a team leader. You have someone in your work group that is displaying some form of inappropriate behaviour. You need this behaviour to change and you need to have a conversation with this person. There are two options available to you. You can choose to call the other person into your office, tell them what you want them to hear and wait for the proverbial to hit the fan or you can invite them to discuss their ideas on how to solve the problem.

One approach creates conflict; the other creates agreement and commitment. One approach is managerial; the other is leadership. Which of these two approaches would you take? The key to achieving a successful outcome to these conversations is to take away the fear from the beginning. Where there is fear there are barriers. Where there is fear both parties are coming to the conversation from a negative perspective.

### **Management issue #9 – Emotional Intelligence**

In the mid-90's Daniel Goleman popularised the work of earlier researchers into Emotional Intelligence (EI). What is EI? Essentially it is being aware of how your emotions impact upon your behaviour and being able to detect the emotions of others. Add to that social skills, personal

motivation and self management – there you have it – emotional intelligence. Is EI the same as IQ? The answer is no. IQ is a measurement of your ability to apply cognitive processes. To a degree IQ remains unchanged throughout your life. EI on the other hand is how you behave and behaviours can be learned.

That's the good news, because that means you are able to take responsibility for how you behave and how your behaviours impact upon others; you can choose to improve, to be better. To read more about emotional intelligence and it applies in your workplace download our FREE management tip sheet.

*We have now completed our series of Management Issues. For the next ten weeks we will present a series of fictional case studies. We hope you will find these useful in your role as a leader and manager.*

### **Management Case Study #1 – Countering Negative Behaviour**

Mary manages a team of professionals. In general all those on the team work together in a positive and collaborative manner, except for one long-standing employee. This person never has anything positive to contribute to the meeting and often publicly criticise the actions of others in the organisation. This had been going on for some time. Mary decided it was time to take assertive action. Mary decided to put in place a process whereby she would encourage positive input while discouraging negative input through raising awareness of the consequences. It was important to Mary that everyone on her team was treated with respect and dignity.

### **Case Study #2 - Developing Your Human Capital**

Mary, our fictional manager, has a big problem. Her manager has pointed out some disturbing facts. In the past eighteen months, Mary's team has experienced a dramatic surge in turnover. The impact being that many of the programs Mary is responsible for are failing to achieve the desired outcomes. Staff appear negative and appear to be experiencing low moral. The level of personal conflicts appears to have increased.

Mary's manager has arrived at these conclusions simply by checking available records and making his own observations. He decides it is time to involve Mary and to work together in a collaborative manner to achieve a solution. What would you do if you were Mary's manager? What would you do if you were Mary? [Download](#) our free management case study to read more.

### **Case Study #3 - Working Through Change**

Mary, our fictional manager, has a challenge on her hands. The executive team want to dismantle a long standing operation. This will impact upon a large number of people. Mary has been asked to identify future options.

Mary elects to embrace open and transparent communication and invites those with an interest in creating positive outcomes to participate in a forum designed to put all thoughts and ideas, both

positive and negative, on the 'wall' and to enable people to move forward towards creating a positive solution. [Download](#) our free management case study.

### **Case Study #4 - Make Yourself a MVP**

It's time for those managers now aged 40-plus to reclaim their role in the workplace. For a long time now the media has been full of stories about how Gen Y and Gen X are thundering their way through to the corridors of power, sweeping Baby Boomers aside in their pathway. It's a media beat up designed to be controversial yet where there is smoke there is fire and for too long now those managers aged 40+ and in particular those in their 50's having been living a life of fear. No more, it's time to stand up and make yourself an MVP – Most Valuable Person.

Those of us in the workplace with a smattering of grey hair have strengths the young guns are yet to attain. You need to understand your strengths and work to them. You need to let go off the past and be a part of the future. This does require some form of reinvention. If you are in your late 40's to mid-50's you still have ten or more years of work ahead of you. [Download](#) our free management tipsheet and read up on ideas on how you can work to your strengths and enjoy the later years of work.

### **Case Study # 5 - Deep Design**

Many managers fail to build awareness, amongst their own staff and amongst those they serve, of the value of the contribution made by their department or program. It is assumed others understand exactly what it is you do for them. You assume you know exactly what it is those you serve need you to provide. When your team has a high awareness of the need for their service and how their service contributes to the organisation they will work together more collaboratively, more productively and enjoy their work more. Download our management case study [here](#).