

Introduction

The Critical Role of Management Skills

No one doubts that the twenty-first century will continue to be characterized by chaotic, transformational, rapid-fire change. In fact, almost no sane person is willing to predict what the world will be like 50, 25, or even 15 years from now. Change is just too rapid and ubiquitous. The development of "nanobombs" have caused some people to predict that personal computers and desktop monitors will land on the scrap heap of obsolescence within 20 years. The new computers will be a product of etchings on molecules leading to personalized data processors injected into the bloodstream, implanted in eyeglasses, or included in wristwatches.

Predictions of the changes that will occur in the future are often notoriously wrong, of course, as illustrated by Charles Watson's (founder of IBM) prediction that only a few dozen computers would ever be needed in the entire world, Thomas Edison's prediction that the lightbulb would never catch on, or Irving Fisher's (preeminent Yale economist) prediction in 1929 that the stock market had reached "a permanently high plateau." When Neil Armstrong walked on the moon in 1969, most people predicted that we would soon be walking on Mars, establishing colonies in outer space, and launching probes from lunar pads. In 1973, with long lines at the gas pumps due to an OPEC-led fuel crisis, economists predicted that oil would sell for \$100 a barrel in the United States by 1980. Most notorious of all, of course, was the prediction by the United States patent office in 1896 that it would soon close its doors since "everything that can be invented has been invented."

Warren Bennis, a colleague of ours, half-jokingly predicted that the factory of the future would have only two employees, a person and a dog. The person would be there to feed the dog. The dog would be there to keep the person from touching the equipment! Tom Peters counseled managers that, due to the chaotic pace of change, "If you're not confused, you're not paying attention." And Peter Drucker characterized the current environment this way: "We are in one of those great historical periods that occur every 200 or 300 years when people don't understand the world anymore, and the past is not sufficient to explain the future." Almost no one would argue that "permanent white water" best characterizes our current environment. Almost everything is in flux, from our technology and methods of transacting business to the nature of education and the definition of the family.

Despite all this change in our environment, there is something that has remained, and continues to remain, relatively constant. With minor variations and stylistic differences, what has not changed in several thousand years are the basic skills that lie at the heart of effective, satisfying, growth-producing human relationships. Freedom, dignity, trust, love, and honesty in relationships have always been among the goals of human beings, and the same principles that brought about those outcomes in the eleventh century still bring them about in the twenty-first century. Despite our circumstances, in other words, and despite the technological resources we have available to us, the same basic human skills still lie at the heart of effective human interaction.

In fact, human relationships are becoming more important, not less, as the information age unfolds and technologies encroach even more upon our daily lives. Most of us are exposed to more information each day than we can possibly pay attention to. Moreover, no mechanism exists to organize, prioritize, or interpret that information, so it is often unclear what is crucial and what can be ignored. Consequently, the relationship we have with the sources of that information is the key sense-making mechanism. Building trusting relationships is a critical part of coping with information overload.

It is a fact that when everything is changing, change becomes unmanageable. No one can manage constant, unorganized change. Think of being a pilot on an airplane. Everything is changing—the entire plane is in constant motion—as the plane moves through the air. Unless you can fix on something that is not changing—for example, the ground or the stars—it is impossible to fly the plane. Tragically, investigators found that John F. Kennedy Jr. unknowingly flew his plane into the Atlantic Ocean killing himself, his wife, and his sister-in-law because he lost sight of land and, consequently, lost perspective. He became unable to manage change because he did not have an established, unwavering point that helped him maintain his bearings.

We make sense of change by being able to identify a fixed, stable, permanent point that provides us with perspective. In our current “white water” environment, the skills discussed in this book serve as fixed points. They have changed very little in their effectiveness and relevance over several thousand years. And their relationship to effective human and organizational performance has been well-documented. Later in this Introduction we share some of the scientific research that confirms the power of these management skills in accounting for effective personal, interpersonal, and organizational performance.

The problem, of course, is that what is known is not always the same as what is demonstrated. Although we have known about the principles of effective relationships for a very long time, the history of humankind illustrates that these principles have not always been practiced. Especially in our current day, what we know and what we demonstrate do not always match. Dr. Bob Moorehead of Seattle’s Overlake Christian Church, who resigned his own position under a cloud of accusations, described it this way:

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways but narrower viewpoints. We spend more but have less; we buy more but enjoy it less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences but less time. We have more degrees but less sense; more knowledge but less judgment; more experts but more problems; more medicine but less wellness. We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry too quickly, stay up too late, get too tired, read too seldom, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We have learned how to make a living but not a life; we’ve added years to life but not life to years. We’ve been all the way to the moon and back but have trouble crossing the

street to meet the new neighbor. We've conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things but not better things. We've cleaned up the air but polluted the soul. We've split the atom but not our prejudice. We write more but learn less. We plan more but accomplish less. We've learned to rush but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information to produce more copies than ever but have less communication. These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion; tall men and short character; steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the times of world peace but domestic warfare; more leisure but less fun; more kinds of food but less nutrition. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, of fancier houses but broken homes. These are the days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throw-away morality, one-night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer to quiet to kill. It is a time when there is much in the show window and nothing in the stockroom. (Moorehead, n.d.)

This book is built on the presumption that developing management skills—that is, the skills needed to manage one's own life as well as relationships with others—is a ceaseless endeavor. These skills were largely the same a century ago as they are today. The basic behavioral principles that lie at the foundation of these skills are timeless. That is one reason why the shelves of bookstores and on-line newsletters are filled with prescriptions of how one more executive or one more company struck it rich or beat out the competition. Thousands of books trumpet some special set of prescriptions for how to be successful in business, or in life. Many of these books have made it to the best-seller lists and have enjoyed lengthy stays.

Our intention in this book is not to try to duplicate the popular appeal of the best-selling books nor to utilize the common formula of recounting anecdotal incidents of successful organizations and well-known managers. We have produced a book that remains true to, and is based on, social science and business research. We want to share with you what is known and what is not known about how to develop management skills and how to foster productive, healthy, satisfying, and growth-producing relationships with others in your work setting. *Developing Management Skills* is designed to help you actually improve your personal management competencies—to change your behavior. This book, therefore, serves more as a practicum or a guide to effective managerial behavior than a description of what someone else has done to successfully manage an organization. It will surely help you think, and it will provide examples of success, but it will have failed if it also does not help you *behave* more competently in your own life.

Whereas the skills focused on in this book are called “management skills,” their relevance is not limited just to an organization or work setting. We focus mainly on work settings here because our primary goal is to help you prepare for and improve your own competency in a managerial role. You will discover, however, that these skills are applicable in most areas of your life—with families, friends, volunteer organizations, and your community.

In the next section we review some of the scientific evidence that demonstrates how management skills are associated with personal and organizational success, and we review several studies of the key management skills that seem to be the most important in our modern-day environment. It is those key skills that this book has targeted. We then describe a model and a methodology for helping you to develop management skills. A large number of management fads abound proclaiming a new way to be a leader, get rich, or both, but our intent is to rely on a proven methodology that has grounding in the scientific literature. We present what has been shown to be a superior process for improving management skills, and we base our claims on scholarly evidence. This Introduction concludes with a brief description of the organization of the rest of the book and the importance of keeping in mind individual differences among people.

The Importance of Competent Managers

In the last decade or so, an abundance of evidence has been produced that skillful management—especially those competent in the management of people in organizations—is *the* key determinant of organizational success. These studies have been conducted across numerous industry sectors, international settings, and organization types. The research findings now make it almost unquestionable that if organizations want to succeed, they must have competent, skillful managers.

For example, in one study of 968 firms, representing all major industries in the United States, organizations whose managers effectively managed their people—that is, they implemented effective people management strategies and demonstrated personal competency in management skills—had, on the average, a decrease in turnover of more than 7 percent, increased profits of \$3,814 per employee, \$27,044 more in sales per employee, and \$18,641 more in stock market value per employee, compared to firms that had less effective people management (Huselid, 1995; Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999). In a follow-up study of 702 firms, shareholder wealth was an amazing \$41,000 per employee higher in companies demonstrating strong people management skills than in firms that had a lower emphasis on people management (Huselid & Becker, 1997). A study of German firms in 10 industrial sectors produced similar results: “Companies that place workers at the core of their strategies produce higher long-term returns . . . than their industry peers” (Blimes, Wetzker, & Xhonneux, 1997). A study of five-year survivability in 136 nonfinancial companies that issued IPOs in the late 1980s found that the effective management of people was the most significant factor in predicting longevity, even when accounting for industry type, size, and profits. Firms that did a good job of managing people tended to survive; others did not (Welbourne & Andrews, 1996).

A study by Hanson (1986) investigated the factors that best accounted for financial success over a five-year span in 40 major manufacturing firms. The question being addressed was: “What explains the financial success of the firms that are highly effective?” The five most powerful predictors were identified and assessed. They included market share (assuming that the higher the market share of a firm, the higher its profitability); firm capital intensity (assuming that the more a firm is automated and up-to-date in technology and equipment, the more profitable it is); size of the firm in assets (assuming that economies of scale and efficiency can be used in large firms to increase profitability); industry average return on sales (assuming that firms would reflect the performance of a highly profitable industry); and the ability of managers to effectively manage their people (assuming that an emphasis on good people management helps produce profitability in firms). The results revealed that one factor—the ability to manage people effectively—was three times more powerful than all other factors combined in accounting for firm financial success over a five-year period! We repeat, good management was more important than all other factors taken together in predicting profitability.

Even research by the U.S. government confirms this management-effectiveness link. The U.S. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency studied the reasons for the failures of national banks in the United States during the 1980s. Two major factors were found to account for the record number of bank failures during that period: distressed economic conditions and poor management. The relative impact of those two factors, however, was somewhat surprising. Almost 90 percent of the failed banks were judged to have had poor management. Only 35 percent of the failures had experienced depressed economic conditions in the region in which they operated, and in only 7 percent of the cases was a depressed economic condition the sole cause of bank failure (U.S. Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, 1990).

Dramatic anecdotal evidence also abounds regarding the impact of effective management on workers and organizations. One of the most notable, for example, was the General Motors automobile assembly plant in Fremont, California. The plant was built in

the 1950s and, at the beginning of the 1980s, was assembling the Chevrolet Nova model. The plant had a history of labor and productivity problems, however, and by the end of 1982 the performance statistics were dismal. Absenteeism was running at 20 percent. The number of formal grievances filed by employees totaled almost 5,000 (an average of more than 20 grievances per day for every workday of the year), and more than 2,000 grievances were still unresolved at year's end. An average of three to four wildcat strikes per year had occurred during the previous few years, and morale, productivity, and quality of production by the 5,000 employees were the worst in the corporation. Costs of assembling the automobile were about 30 percent above the Asian competitors. In light of these data, corporate headquarters issued an order to close the plant and lay off the workers.

Three years later, General Motors signed a joint operating agreement with one of its major competitors: Toyota Motors. Much had been written about the Japanese method of managing, so General Motors asked Toyota to reopen and manage the Fremont plant. Most of the former U.S. autoworkers were rehired, and a new management team was put in place. Workers were exposed to training in high-involvement work practices, and a former Ford Motor Company employee actually became the plant manager. The primary difference between the plant before it closed and after it reopened was that a new management team was in place and employee training had occurred. The workforce, in other words, remained essentially unchanged. One year after reopening, the organization's performance data looked like this:

Absenteeism:	2 percent
Grievances:	2 outstanding
Strikes:	None
Employees:	2,500 (producing 20 percent more cars)
Productivity:	Highest in the corporation
Quality:	Highest in the corporation
Costs:	Equal to those of the competition
Product:	Toyota Corolla—rated AAA's best car in its price range

The remarkable thing about this turnaround is that it did not take five or ten years to produce major improvements in productivity, cohesion, and commitment. It occurred in just over a year simply by changing the way workers were managed.

These studies indicate overwhelmingly that good management fosters financial success, whereas less effective management fosters financial distress. Successful organizations have managers with well-developed people management skills. In surveys of CEOs, executives, and business owners, results consistently show that the factor most responsible for business failure is "bad management" and the best way to ensure business success is to "provide better management." Moreover, the data are clear, management skills are more important than industry, environment, competition, and economic factors combined.

Surprisingly, however, finding people who effectively manage people is not as easy as might be expected. Pfeffer & Veiga (1999) concluded that: "Even as these research results pile up, trends in actual management practice are, in many instances, moving in a direction exactly opposite to what this growing body of evidence prescribes." Common sense and common knowledge are not necessarily common practice. Knowing and doing are not the same things. Being able to analyze a case, identify a problem, or recite a correct answer to a question is not equivalent to being able to actually implement effective management skills.

The Skills of Effective Managers

What, then, differentiates effective managers from less effective managers? If developing management skills is so crucial for organizational success, what skills ought to be the focus of attention?

The management literature is filled with lists of attributes, behaviors, orientations, and strategies for enhancing successful performance. For example, Pfeffer (1998) identified seven key practices associated with managerial and organizational effectiveness: ensure employment security, selectively hire people, foster decentralization and self-managing teams, institute high levels of pay based on performance, train extensively, reduce status differences, and share information. Quinn (2000) identified eight "seeds" of effective management and leadership: "envision the productive community," "first look within," "embrace the hypocritical self," "transcend fear," "embody a vision of the common good," "disturb the system," "surrender to the emergent process," and "entice through moral power." An international study of 6,052 managers from 22 countries focused on differences in managerial attributes and identified attributes such as inspirational, self-sacrificial, integrity, diplomatic, malevolent, visionary, administrative, self-centered, status conscious, autocratic, modest, and autonomous (Brodbeck et al., 2000). Rigby (1998) focused on the 25 most popular management tools and techniques in an investigation of the association between management tools and techniques and organizational performance. According to 4,137 managers in North America, Europe, and Asia, the tools associated with organization success were: strategic planning, pay for performance, strategic alliances, customer satisfaction measurement, shareholder value analysis, mission and vision statements, benchmarking, cycle time reduction, agile strategies, self-directed teams, and groupware.

These kinds of lists are useful, but they do not identify management *skills* per se. Instead, they enumerate organizational strategies, personality orientations, or philosophical approaches to management, and their implementation is usually outside the explicit control of the individual manager. Either they are complex sets of activities in which many people must be involved—for example, "ensuring employment security," "selectively hiring," or "shareholder value analysis"—or they are cognitive activities that are not behavioral in character—for example, "envisioning the productive community," "first looking within," or "avoiding malevolence." Some of the lists enumerate personality characteristics or styles—for example, inspirational, or autocratic—or they enumerate organizational practices—for example, pay for performance, or strategic planning. The effectiveness of the attributes on these kinds of lists depends on the manager's skill in implementing them, and that means being competent in fundamental management skills. Management skills form the vehicle by which management strategy, management practice, tools and techniques, personality attributes, and style work to produce effective outcomes in organizations. Management skills, in other words, are the building blocks upon which effective management rests. That is why the focus of this book is on developing management skills rather than on strategy, tools and techniques, or styles. Management skills are the means by which managers translate their own style, strategy, and favorite tools or techniques into practice.

Essential Management Skills

A variety of investigators have sought to identify what specific skills are characteristic of the most effective managers. In our own investigation, for example, we wanted to identify the skills and competencies that separate extraordinarily effective performers from the rest of us. We identified 402 individuals who were rated as highly effective managers in their own organizations in the fields of business, health care, education, and state government by asking senior officers to name the most effective managers in their own organizations. We then interviewed those people to determine what attributes were associated with managerial effectiveness. We asked questions such as:

- How have you become so successful in this organization?
- Who fails and who succeeds in this organization and why?

- If you had to train someone to take your place, what knowledge and what skills would you make certain that person possessed in order to perform successfully as your successor?
- If you could design an ideal curriculum or training program to teach you to be a better manager, what would it contain?
- Think of other effective managers you know. What skills do they demonstrate that explain their success?

Our analysis of the interviews produced about 60 characteristics of effective managers. The 10 identified most often are listed in Table 1. Not surprisingly, these 10 characteristics are all behavioral skills. They are not personality attributes or styles, nor are they generalizations such as “luck” or “timing.” They also are common across industries, levels, and job responsibilities. The characteristics of effective managers are not a secret.

The management skills derived from our study are similar to those resulting from several other surveys published in the management literature. Table 2, for example, lists a representative sample of surveys that relied on a heterogeneous mix of respondents. Not surprisingly, the two lists are very similar. Regardless of whether respondents are CEOs or first-line supervisors, whether they work in the public sector or the private sector, their skills are quite easily identifiable and agreed upon by observers. It is not hard to recognize and describe the skills of effective managers.

What Are Management Skills?

There are several defining characteristics of management skills that differentiate them from other kinds of managerial characteristics and practices. First, management skills are *behavioral*. They are not personality attributes or stylistic tendencies. Management skills consist of identifiable sets of actions that individuals perform and that lead to certain outcomes. Skills can be observed by others, unlike attributes that are purely mental or are embedded in personality. Whereas people with different styles and personalities may apply the skills differently, there are, nevertheless, a core set of observable attributes in effective skill performance that are common across a range of individual differences.

Second, management skills are *controllable*. The performance of these behaviors is under the control of the individual. Unlike organizational practices such as “selectively

Table 1 Skills of Effective Managers—One Study

1. Verbal communication (including listening)
2. Managing time and stress
3. Managing individual decisions
4. Recognizing, defining, and solving problems
5. Motivating and influencing others
6. Delegating
7. Setting goals and articulating a vision
8. Self-awareness
9. Team building
10. Managing conflict

Table 2 Critical Management Skills—A Sample of Studies

STUDY □ RESPONDENTS • FOCUS	RESULTS																																																														
<p>□ Luthans, Rosenkrantz, and Hennessey (1985)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 52 managers in 3 organizations • Participant observation of skills demonstrated by most effective versus least effective managers 	<p>Building power and influence Communicating with outsiders Managing conflict Decision making</p>	<p>Communicating with insiders Developing subordinates Processing paperwork Planning and goal setting</p>																																																													
<p>□ Curtis, Winsor, and Stephens (1989)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 428 members of the American Society of Personnel Administrators in the United States • (1) Skills needed to obtain employment • (2) Skills important for successful job performance • (3) Skills needed to move up in the organization 	<p><i>Employment</i></p> <p>Verbal communication Listening Enthusiasm Written communication Technical competence Appearance</p> <p><i>To Move Up</i></p> <p>Ability to work well with others one-on-one Ability to gather information and make a decision Ability to work well in groups Ability to listen and give counsel Ability to give effective feedback Ability to write effective reports Knowledge of the job</p>	<p><i>Job Success</i></p> <p>Interpersonal skills Verbal communication Written communication Persistence/determination Enthusiasm Technical competence</p> <p>Ability to present a good image for the firm Ability to use computers Knowledge of management theory Knowledge of finance Knowledge of marketing Knowledge of accounting Ability to use business machines</p>																																																													
<p>□ Van Velsor & Britain (1995)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarizes 5 previous studies of "derailment" • 20 US managers and 42 European managers • Focus on skills causing "derailment" (the opposite of success) 	<p>Problems with interpersonal relationships Failure to meet business objectives Inability to build and lead a team Inability to manage self-development or to adapt</p>																																																														
<p>□ American Management Association (2000)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 921 managers in the United States 	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="412 1220 456 1245"><i>Skill</i></th> <th data-bbox="984 1192 1117 1245"><i>Importance to Organizations</i></th> <th data-bbox="1211 1192 1333 1245"><i>Managerial Competence</i></th> <th data-bbox="1430 1220 1468 1245"><i>Gap</i></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1262 565 1287">Customer Focus</td><td data-bbox="1016 1262 1089 1287">1 (4.74)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1262 1317 1287">1 (3.90)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1262 1468 1287">22</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1289 821 1314">Ability to use information to solve problems</td><td data-bbox="1016 1289 1089 1314">2 (4.64)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1289 1317 1314">2 (3.71)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1289 1468 1314">15</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1316 886 1341">Recognizing problems and implementing solutions</td><td data-bbox="1016 1316 1089 1341">3 (4.56)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1316 1317 1341">8 (3.52)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1316 1468 1341">7</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1344 886 1369">Credibility among peers, subordinates, colleagues</td><td data-bbox="1016 1344 1089 1369">4 (4.45)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1344 1317 1369">3 (3.69)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1344 1468 1369">18</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1371 773 1396">Ability to transform words into actions</td><td data-bbox="1016 1371 1089 1396">5 (4.44)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1371 1317 1396">5 (3.55)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1371 1468 1396">11</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1398 708 1423">Listening and asking questions</td><td data-bbox="1016 1398 1089 1423">6 (4.40)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1398 1317 1423">13 (3.36)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1398 1468 1423">3</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1425 773 1451">Contributing to firm mission/objectives</td><td data-bbox="1016 1425 1089 1451">7 (4.39)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1425 1317 1451">4 (3.57)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1425 1468 1451">16</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1453 837 1478">Working in teams (cooperation/commitment)</td><td data-bbox="1016 1453 1089 1478">8 (4.34)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1453 1317 1478">11 (3.40)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1453 1468 1478">8</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1480 781 1505">Identifying opportunities for innovation</td><td data-bbox="1016 1480 1089 1505">9 (4.33)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1480 1317 1505">14 (3.35)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1480 1468 1505">4</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1507 821 1533">Setting standards for self and subordinates</td><td data-bbox="1016 1507 1089 1533">10 (4.32)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1507 1317 1533">7 (3.53)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1507 1468 1533">9</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1535 699 1560">Coaching and mentoring skills</td><td data-bbox="1016 1535 1089 1560">15 (4.21)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1535 1317 1560">26 (2.99)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1535 1468 1560">1</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1562 586 1587">Time management</td><td data-bbox="1016 1562 1089 1587">12 (4.27)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1562 1317 1587">25 (3.19)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1562 1468 1587">2</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1589 683 1614">Implementing improvements</td><td data-bbox="1016 1589 1089 1614">11 (4.29)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1589 1317 1614">17 (3.33)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1589 1468 1614">5</td></tr> <tr><td data-bbox="412 1617 570 1642">Setting priorities</td><td data-bbox="1016 1617 1089 1642">14 (4.24)</td><td data-bbox="1243 1617 1317 1642">20 (3.32)</td><td data-bbox="1446 1617 1468 1642">6</td></tr> </tbody> </table>			<i>Skill</i>	<i>Importance to Organizations</i>	<i>Managerial Competence</i>	<i>Gap</i>	Customer Focus	1 (4.74)	1 (3.90)	22	Ability to use information to solve problems	2 (4.64)	2 (3.71)	15	Recognizing problems and implementing solutions	3 (4.56)	8 (3.52)	7	Credibility among peers, subordinates, colleagues	4 (4.45)	3 (3.69)	18	Ability to transform words into actions	5 (4.44)	5 (3.55)	11	Listening and asking questions	6 (4.40)	13 (3.36)	3	Contributing to firm mission/objectives	7 (4.39)	4 (3.57)	16	Working in teams (cooperation/commitment)	8 (4.34)	11 (3.40)	8	Identifying opportunities for innovation	9 (4.33)	14 (3.35)	4	Setting standards for self and subordinates	10 (4.32)	7 (3.53)	9	Coaching and mentoring skills	15 (4.21)	26 (2.99)	1	Time management	12 (4.27)	25 (3.19)	2	Implementing improvements	11 (4.29)	17 (3.33)	5	Setting priorities	14 (4.24)	20 (3.32)	6
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□ Andersen Consulting (2000) • Study of Andersen partners, consultants, and client leaders	<i>Employee skills</i> Creativity Team building Resilience/flexibility Technical competence Deal with ambiguity Speed Emotional intelligence Communication skills	<i>Leadership attributes</i> Less controlling Shares authority Culturally attuned Encourages challenge Clear vision Comfortable with risk Creates a motivated business Manages intellectual diversity Entrepreneurial

hiring,” or cognitive activities such as “transcending fear,” skills can be consciously demonstrated, practiced, improved, or restrained by individuals themselves. Skills may certainly engage other people and require cognitive work, but they are behaviors that people can control themselves.

Third, management skills are *developable*. Performance can improve. Unlike IQ or certain personality or temperament attributes that remain relatively constant throughout life, individuals can improve their competency in skill performance through practice and feedback. Individuals can progress from less competence to more competence in management skills, and that outcome is the primary objective of this book.

Fourth, management skills are *interrelated* and *overlapping*. It is difficult to demonstrate just one skill in isolation from others. Skills are not simplistic, repetitive behaviors, but they are integrated sets of complex responses. Effective managers, in particular, must rely on combinations of skills to achieve desired results. For example, in order to effectively motivate others, skills such as supportive communication, influence, empowerment, and self-awareness may be required. Effective managers, in other words, develop a constellation of skills that overlap and support one another and that allow flexibility in managing diverse situations.

Fifth, management skills are sometimes *contradictory* or *paradoxical*. For example, the core management skills are neither all soft and humanistic in orientation nor all hard-driving and directive. They are oriented neither toward teamwork and interpersonal relations exclusively nor toward individualism and technical entrepreneurship exclusively. A variety of skills are typical of the most effective managers, and some of them appear incompatible.

To illustrate, Cameron and Tschirhart (1988) assessed the skill performance of more than 500 midlevel and upper-middle managers in about 150 organizations. The most frequently mentioned 25 management skills taken from about a dozen studies in the academic literature (such as those in Table 2) were measured. Statistical analyses revealed that the skills fell into four main groups or clusters. One group of skills focused on participative and human relations skills (for example, supportive communication and team building), while another group focused on just the opposite, that is, competitiveness and control (for example, assertiveness, power, and influence skills). A third group focused on innovativeness and individual entrepreneurship (for example, creative problem solving), while a fourth group emphasized the opposite type of skills, namely, maintaining order and rationality (for example, managing time and rational decision making). One conclusion from that study was that effective managers are required to demonstrate paradoxical skills. That is, the most effective managers are both participative and hard-driving, both nurturing and competitive. They were able to be flexible and creative while also being controlled, stable, and rational (see Cameron, Quinn, DeGraff, & Thakor, 2006). Our

objective in this book is to help you develop that kind of behavioral competency and complexity.

Improving Management Skills

It is a bit unnerving that while average IQ scores have increased in the population over the last half-century, social and emotional intelligence scores have actually declined. In the population in general, people are less skilled at managing themselves and managing others than they were 50 years ago (Goleman, 1998). While average IQ scores have jumped approximately 25 points, emotional intelligence scores (EQ) among young people and adults has fallen. Moreover, whereas the "technological float" has shrunk dramatically—that is, the time between the introduction of a new technology and its being copied and revised is constantly decreasing and is now measured in weeks rather than years—the "human float" has changed very little. It still takes about the same amount of time to develop behavioral skills and human competencies as it always has. No shortcuts or quick fixes have emerged, and the effort and practice that are required to become more emotionally intelligent and interpersonally skilled is substantial. Progress regarding how to cope with and manage issues relating to other people has not kept pace with technological progress, and it remains the biggest challenge for managers.

The good news is that improvement in developing management skills has been found in both students and managers who have been exposed to a curriculum such as the one advocated in *Developing Management Skills*. For example, MBA students showed improvement of from 50 to 300 percent on social skills over the course of two years by enrolling in two courses based on the approach to developing management skills presented here. A greater amount of improvement occurred among students who applied these skills to multiple aspects of their lives outside the classroom, and people who were more competent to begin with made the most progress. In addition, a cohort of 45- to 55-year-old executives produced the same results as the MBA students. That is, they also improved dramatically in their management skills even though most were already experienced in senior managerial positions (Boyatzis, 1996, 2000, 2005; Boyatzis, Cowen, & Kolb, 1995; Boyatzis, Leonard, Rhee, & Wheeler, 1996; Leonard, 1996; Rhee, 1997; Wheeler, 1999).

On the other hand, exposure to a traditional cognitive-based curriculum without exposure to management skills development does not correlate with improvements in social competence, management skills, or career success. For example, Cohen (1984) summarized the results of 108 studies of the relationship between performance in college courses (as measured by grade-point average) and subsequent life success. Life success was measured by a variety of factors, including job performance, income, promotions, personal satisfaction, eminence, and graduate degrees. The mean correlation between performance in school and performance in life in these studies was .18, and in no case did the correlation exceed .20. These low correlations suggest that school performance and successful performance in subsequent life activities are related only marginally.

The data, in other words, appear quite compelling. Attending school merely to achieve high grades in cognitive courses—while important—is not sufficient for management, career, or life success. Going into debt for a formal education or achieving an additional set of letters behind your name without also developing and improving your management skills will be an unfortunate lost opportunity. That is why we feel so strongly that in the management curriculum of universities, students should be exposed to a learning model such as the one we describe here. Our strong feelings, of course, are not based on blind optimism. Scientific evidence exists that such exposure can make a difference both to individuals and to the bottom-line performance of companies.

An Approach to Skill Development

Successful management development, of course, is more than just following a cookbook list of sequential behaviors. Developing highly competent management skills is much more complicated than developing skills such as those associated with a trade (for example, welding) or a sport (for example, shooting baskets). Management skills are: (1) linked to a more complex knowledge base than other types of skills and (2) inherently connected to interaction with other (frequently unpredictable) individuals. A standardized approach to welding or shooting free throws may be feasible, but no standardized approach to managing human beings is possible.

On the other hand, what all skills do have in common is the potential for improvement through practice. Any approach to developing management skills, therefore, must involve a heavy dose of practical application. At the same time, practice without the necessary conceptual knowledge is sterile and ignores the need for flexibility and adaptation to different situations. Therefore, developing competencies in management skills is inherently tied to both conceptual learning and behavioral practice.

The method that has been found to be most successful in helping individuals develop management skills is based on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Boyatzis et al., 1995; Davis & Luthans, 1980). This approach marries rigorous conceptual knowledge with opportunities to practice and apply observable behaviors. It relies on cognitive work as well as behavioral work. Variations on this general approach have been used widely in on-the-job supervisory training programs, and they are common in executive education programs and corporate universities—less so in business schools.

This learning model, as originally formulated, consisted of four steps: (1) the presentation of behavioral principles or action guidelines, generally using traditional instruction methods; (2) demonstration of the principles by means of cases, films, scripts, or incidents; (3) opportunities to practice the principles through role plays or exercises; and (4) feedback on performance from peers, instructors, or experts.

Our own experience in teaching complex management skills, as well as recent research on management skills development among MBA students (e.g., Boyatzis, et al., 1995; Vance, 1993) has convinced us that three important modifications are necessary in order for this model to be most effective. First, the behavioral principles must be grounded in social science theory and in reliable research results. Common sense generalizations and panacea-like prescriptions appear regularly in the popular management literature. To ensure the validity of the behavioral guidelines being prescribed, the learning approach must include scientifically based knowledge about the effects of the management principles being presented.

Second, individuals must be aware of their current level of skill competency and be motivated to improve upon that level in order to benefit from the model. Most people receive very little feedback about their current level of skill competency. Most organizations provide some kind of annual or semiannual evaluation (for example, course grades in school or performance appraisal interviews in firms), but these evaluations are almost always infrequent and narrow in scope, and they fail to assess performance in most critical skill areas. To help a person understand what skills to improve and why, therefore, an assessment activity must be part of the model. In addition, most people find change uncomfortable and therefore avoid taking the risk to develop new behavior patterns. An assessment activity in the learning model helps encourage these people to change by illuminating their strengths and weaknesses. People then know where weaknesses lie and what things need to be improved. Assessment activities generally take the form of self-evaluation instruments, case studies, or problems that help highlight personal strengths and weaknesses in a particular skill area.

Third, an application component is needed in the learning model. Most management skill training takes place in a classroom setting where feedback is immediate, and it is relatively safe to try out new behaviors and make mistakes. Therefore, transferring learning to an actual job setting is often problematic. Application exercises help to apply classroom learning to examples from the real world of management. Application exercises often take the form of an outside-of-class intervention, a consulting assignment, self-analysis through journal writing, or a problem-centered intervention, which the student then analyzes to determine its degree of success or failure.

In summary, evidence suggests that a five-step learning model is most effective for helping individuals develop management skills (see Cameron & Whetten, 1984; Kolb, 1984; Vance, 1993; Whetten & Cameron, 1983). Table 3 outlines such a model. Step 1 involves the *assessment* of current levels of skill competency and knowledge of the behavioral principles. Step 2 consists of the presentation of validated, scientifically based *principles and guidelines* for effective skill performance. Step 3 is an *analysis* step in which models or cases are made available in order to analyze behavioral principles in real organizational settings. This step also helps demonstrate how the behavioral guidelines can be adapted to different personal styles and circumstances. Step 4 consists of *practice* exercises in which experimentation can occur and immediate feedback can be received in a relatively safe environment. Step 5, finally, is the *application* of the skill to a real-life setting outside the classroom with follow-up analysis of the relative success of that application.

Research on the effectiveness of training programs using this general learning model has shown that it produces results superior to those based on more traditional lecture-discussion-case method approaches (Boyatzis et al., 1995; Burnaska, 1976; Kolb, 1984; Latham & Saari, 1979; Moses & Ritchie, 1976; Porras & Anderson, 1981; Smith, 1976; Vance, 1993). In addition, evidence suggests that management skill training can have significant impact on the bottom-line performance of a firm. The U.S. Postal Service completed a study a few years ago in which 49 of the largest 100 post offices in America were evaluated. An important question in the study was, "How can we make post offices more effective?" Productivity and service quality were both monitored over a period of five years. The two major factors that had impact on these effectiveness measures were (1) degree of automation, and (2) investment in training. Two kinds of training were provided: technical training (operating and maintaining the equipment) and management training (developing management skills). The study found that management training was more important than technical training in accounting for improved productivity and service in the post offices, and both kinds of training were more important than having up-to-date equipment in the post office. Low-tech

Table 3 A Model for Developing Management Skills

Components	Contents	Objectives
1. Skill assessment	Survey instruments Role plays	Assess current level of skill competence and knowledge; create readiness to change.
2. Skill learning	Written text Behavioral guidelines	Teach correct principles and present a rationale for behavioral guidelines.
3. Skill analysis	Cases	Provide examples of appropriate and inappropriate skill performance. Analyze behavioral principles and reasons they work.
4. Skill practice	Exercises Simulations Role plays	Practice behavioral guidelines. Adapt principles to personal style. Receive feedback and assistance.
5. Skill application	Assignments (behavioral and written)	Transfer classroom learning to real-life situations. Foster ongoing personal development.

offices outperformed high-tech offices when managers were provided with management skill training. In short, its five-year study convinced the U.S. Postal Service that helping employees to develop management skills was the best way to improve organizational effectiveness (Cameron & Ulrich, 1986).

This is consistent with the conclusion drawn by Eric Greenberg, Director of Surveys for the American Management Association, upon summarizing the lessons learned from years of surveys of American managers:

Where companies increased their training activity, the chances were much, much better that they were going to increase their operating profits and that they were going to increase their shareholder value. Product quality, market share, and productivity all tend to rise as training budgets go up. Companies that don't make the investment are apt to see disappointing results. (Greenberg, 1999)

More than thirty years ago, Mintzberg (1975) made a similar point about the curriculum needed in business schools. Things have not changed.

Management schools will begin the serious training of managers when skill training takes its place next to cognitive learning. Cognitive learning is detached and informational, like reading a book or listening to a lecture. No doubt much important cognitive material must be assimilated by the manager-to-be. But cognitive learning no more makes a manager than it does a swimmer. The latter will drown the first time he jumps into the water if his coach never takes him out of the lecture hall, gets him wet, and gives him feedback on his performance. Our management schools need to identify the skills managers use, select students who show potential in these skills, put the students into situations where these skills can be practiced, and then give them systematic feedback on their performance. (p. 60)

A senior executive in a major consulting firm similarly observed:

The higher up the organization you go, the less relevant technical knowledge becomes. It is important for your first couple of promotions, but after that, people skills are what count.

A recent graduate from a Big Ten management school also reported:

I can't believe it. I went for my second interview with a company last week, and I spent the first half-day participating in simulation exercises with ten other job candidates. They videotaped me playing the role of a salesman handling an irate customer, a new director of personnel putting down a revolt by the "old guard," and a plant manager trying to convince people of the need to install a radically new production process. Boy, was I unprepared for that!

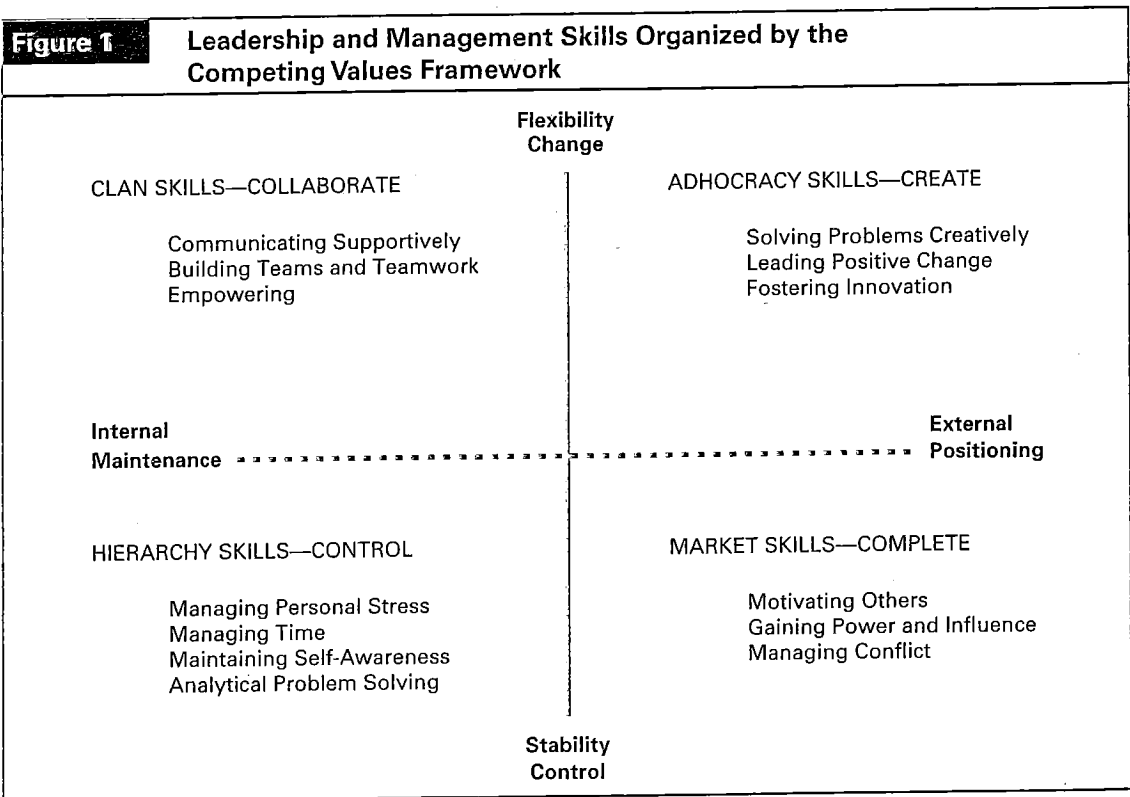
The message behind these personal observations is clear: from almost every perspective, competence in personal, interpersonal, and group skills is a critical prerequisite for success in management. Strong analytical and quantitative skills are important, but they are not sufficient. Successful managers must be able to work effectively with people. Unfortunately, interpersonal and management skills have not always been a high priority for business school students and aspiring executives. In a recent survey of 110 *Fortune* 500 CEOs, 87 percent were satisfied with the level of competence and analytic skills of business school graduates, 68 percent were satisfied with conceptual skills of graduates, but only 43 percent of the CEOs were satisfied with graduates' management skills, and only 28 percent were satisfied with their interpersonal skills and EQ!

To assist you in improving your own management skills, this book emphasizes practicing management skills, rather than just reading about them. We have organized the book with this specific approach in mind.

Leadership and Management

Before outlining the organization of this book, we want to discuss briefly the place of leadership in this volume. Some writers have differentiated between the concepts of “leadership” and “management” (Bass, 1990; Katzenbach, 1995; Nair, 1994; Quinn, 2000; Tichy, 1999). Some have wondered why we concentrate on “management” skills instead of “leadership” skills in this book. We have also been asked by professors, business executives, and students why we have not either changed the title of the book to *Developing Leadership Skills*, or at least included one chapter on leadership in this volume. These queries and suggestions are important and have motivated us to clarify at the outset of the book what we mean by management, and why we believe our focus on management skills lies at the heart of leadership as typically defined.

One of the most popular models of leadership is based on the “Competing Values Framework,” an organizing framework for leadership and managerial skills. It was developed by examining the criteria used to evaluate organizational and managerial performance (Cameron et al., 2006; Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Extensive research has been conducted on this framework over the past two decades, and a brief explanation will help clarify the relationship between management and leadership skills. You should be aware that this framework has been used on several continents to help managers and organizations improve their effectiveness, and a database of more than 80,000 managers has now been compiled (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). That research has shown that leadership and management skills fall into four clusters or categories as illustrated in Figure 1. In order to be an effective manager, in other words, individuals must be competent in: (1) clan skills, or a



focus on collaboration; (2) adhocracy skills, or a focus on creation; (3) market skills, or a focus on competition; and (4) hierarchy skills, or a focus on control.

Clan skills include those required to build effective interpersonal relationships and develop others (e.g., building teamwork, communicating supportively). Adhocracy skills include those required to manage the future, innovate, and promote change (e.g., solving problems creatively, articulating an energizing vision). Market skills include those required to compete effectively and manage external relationships (e.g., motivating others, using power and influence). Hierarchy skills include those required to maintain control and stability (e.g., managing personal stress and time, solving problems rationally) (see Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

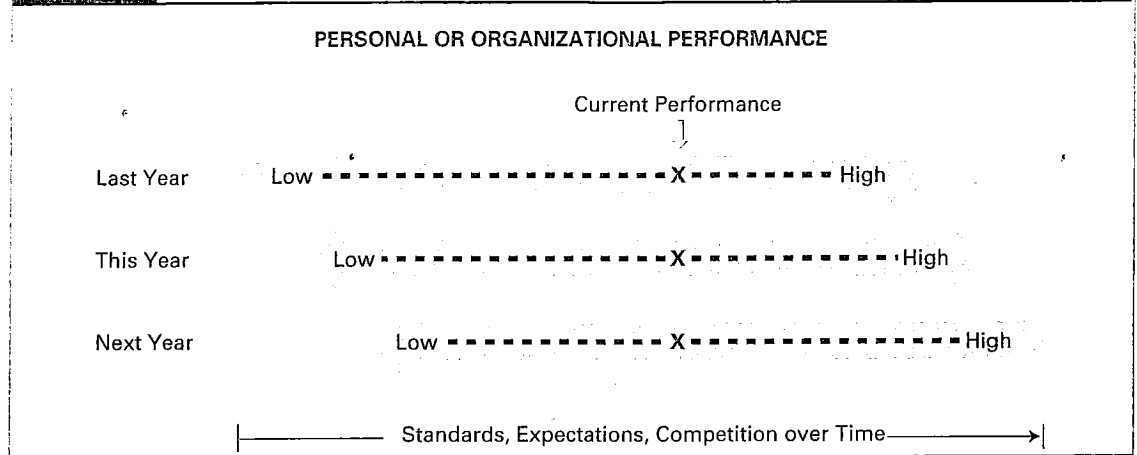
In Figure 1, the two top quadrants in the Competing Values Framework—clan and adhocracy—are usually associated with leadership. The two bottom quadrants—market and hierarchy—are usually associated with management. In other words, traditionally, leadership has been used to describe what individuals do under conditions of change. When organizations are dynamic and undergoing transformation, people at the top are expected to exhibit leadership (i.e., pay attention to clan and adhocracy issues). Management, on the other hand, has traditionally been used to describe what executives do under conditions of stability. Thus, management has been linked with the status quo (i.e., pay attention to market and hierarchy issues). In addition, leadership has sometimes been defined as “doing the right things,” whereas management has been defined as “doing things right.” Leaders have been said to focus on setting the direction, articulating a vision, transforming individuals and organizations, and creating something new. Managers have been said to focus on monitoring, directing, and refining current performance. Leadership has been equated with dynamism, vibrancy, and charisma; management with hierarchy, equilibrium, and control.

However, the recent research is clear that such distinctions between leadership and management, which may have been appropriate in previous decades, are no longer useful (Quinn, 2000; Tichy, 1993, 1999). Managers cannot be successful without being good leaders, and leaders cannot be successful without being good managers. No longer do organizations and individuals have the luxury of holding on to the status quo; worrying about doing things right but failing to do the right things; keeping the system stable instead of leading change and improvement; monitoring current performance instead of formulating a vision of the future; concentrating on equilibrium and control instead of vibrancy and charisma. Effective management and leadership are inseparable. The skills required to do one are also required of the other. No organization in a postindustrial, hyperturbulent, twenty-first-century environment will survive without executives capable of providing both management and leadership. Leading change and managing stability, establishing vision and accomplishing objectives, breaking the rules and monitoring conformance, although paradoxical, all are required to be successful.

Figure 2 illustrates one major reason for this assertion. By staying the same, we tend to get worse. Because our circumstances are constantly changing and expectations for performance are continually escalating, the traditional definition of management is outmoded and irrelevant today. Effective managers and leaders do much the same things in dealing effectively with constant change and constant stability.

All of us, in other words, need to develop competencies that will enhance our ability to be both leaders and managers. The specific skills in this book represent all four quadrants in the Competing Values Framework of leadership. They serve as the foundation for effective management and for effective leadership. The book could appropriately include the word “leadership” in the title, therefore, based on the skills being covered. *The skills contained in this book cover both the management and the leadership ground. We have chosen, appropriately or not, to use the label “management skills” to subsume the skills associated with leadership as well as with management.*

Figure 2 The Necessity of Developing Leadership and Management Skills



Contents of the Book

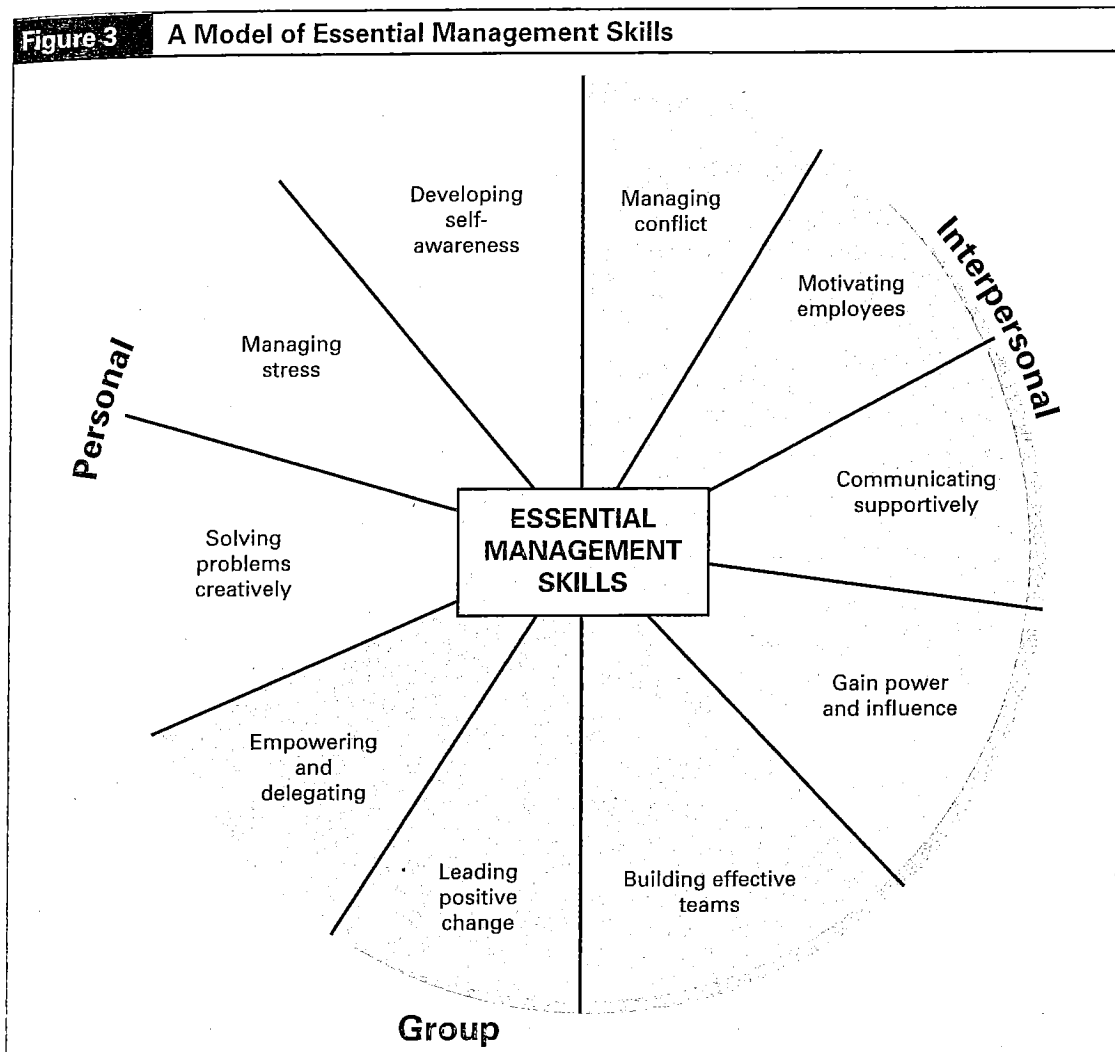
Again, this book focuses on the skills that research has identified as critically important for successful management and leadership. Part I contains three chapters on personal skills: Developing Self-Awareness, Managing Personal Stress, and Solving Problems Analytically and Creatively. These skills focus on issues that may not involve other people but instead relate to the management of the self—hence they are called personal skills. Each chapter, however, really includes a cluster of related behaviors, not just one single, simple skill. These clusters of interrelated behaviors comprise the overall management skill indicated in the chapter's title. Figure 3 also points out that each skill cluster is related to and overlaps with other personal management skills, so each relies at least partially on the others to be performed successfully.

Part II focuses on interpersonal skills: Building Relationships by Communicating Supportively, Gaining Power and Influence, Motivating Others, and Managing Conflict. These skills focus primarily on issues that arise in your interactions with other people. Overlap exists among these skills, of course, so that you must rely on parts of many skill areas in order to perform any one skill effectively.

Part III includes three chapters on group skills: Empowering and Delegating, Building Effective Teams and Teamwork, and Leading Positive Change. These skills focus on key issues that arise when you are involved with groups of people either as a leader or as a member of the group. As with all the skills in the book, overlap occurs among the group skills as well as with the personal and interpersonal skills. In other words, as you progress from personal to interpersonal to group skills, the core competencies developed in the previous skill area help support successful performance of the new skill area.

In addition to the ten core management skills in Parts I, II, and III, the supplemental Part IV chapters contain three additional communications skills: Making Oral and Written Presentations, Conducting Interviews, and Conducting Meetings. These supplements cover specialized communication skills that are especially relevant for students who have had little managerial experience or skill training. These supplements foster skill development needed to implement assignments typically included in a management skill-building course. Writing reports, giving class presentations, interviewing managers, and conducting group meetings are all prerequisites for building skills in the core management skill areas, so we have provided material on these three topics that students will find helpful.

Figure 3 A Model of Essential Management Skills



Appendix I contains a glossary of key terms in the text; and Appendix II lists references for excerpted material in the book.

Organization of the Book

Each chapter is organized on the basis of the learning model summarized in Table 4. Each chapter begins with *Skill Assessment* instruments. Their purpose is to highlight areas of personal competence as well as areas needing improvement in both knowledge and performance. As you complete the instruments in the Skill Assessment section, you will discover areas in which you will want to establish personal learning goals, and areas in which your competency is already well developed. As pointed out earlier, however, research has demonstrated that the most competent managers tend to progress the most when engaging in skill development exercises, so don't dismiss a skill just because you feel that it is an area of strength. We encourage you to take time to complete these assessment instruments. You will be surprised with what you learn if you complete them honestly and as accurately as you can.

Table 1 The Organization of Each Chapter

SECTION	CONTENTS
Skill Assessment	Instruments designed to identify your current level of skill competency, your styles, and/or key dimensions of the skill. These instruments can be used to identify individual differences, issues surrounding diversity, and areas for personal improvement plans.
Skill Learning	Behavioral guidelines and key principles associated with the skill are explained. Scientific research is used as the basis for prescribed skill performance. Clarifying how to successfully develop and perform the skill is the purpose of this section.
Skill Analysis	Cases and examples are presented in order to provide examples of successful and unsuccessful skill performance. Analytic problem solving is facilitated as recommendations are made for what the key issues are, how performance might be modified, and why success was achieved.
Skill Practice	Exercises and role plays make it possible for individuals to actually practice the skill. Feedback from peers and the instructor will facilitate improvement of the skill in a setting where failure is not costly.
Skill Application	Suggested assignments are provided so that the skill can be applied in a real-life setting. A feedback mechanism is also suggested so that individuals analyze their own success in applying the skill outside the classroom. Improvement plans should always be associated with the application exercises.

Second, an explanation of the key behavioral guidelines, as well as a rationale for why these guidelines work, is found in the *Skill Learning* section of each chapter. This section explains the core behavioral principles associated with each skill. We present a research-based model of each skill, along with evidence from research that the principles identified are effective in practice. Our objective is to provide a sound rationale for the action guidelines summarized at the end of the section. We have not relied on popular anecdotes or stories from the popular press in presenting these guidelines and principles. Instead, we rely on scientific research that identifies what behaviors must be performed in order to foster effective outcomes.

In the *Skill Analysis* section, you will find brief case histories that illustrate both effective and ineffective applications of the behavioral principles. The purpose of this section is to bridge the gap between intellectual understanding and behavioral application. Critiquing a manager's performance in a real-life case enhances your understanding of the skill learning material. Each case provides a model of effective or ineffective performance and helps identify ways that the skill can be adapted to your personal style. In analyzing these cases, focus less on trying to find a "right" answer and more on determining how you might behave in similar circumstances.

The *Skill Practice* section provides exercises, problems, and role-play assignments. The goal of this section is to provide opportunities to practice the behavioral guidelines in simulated managerial situations and to receive feedback from peers and instructors. Practicing these managerial skills in a classroom setting is not only safer and less costly than in a real-life management job, but others' observation and feedback can be more precise and more timely as well. Many of these types of exercises can seem "gamey" or superficial, of course, unless you take them seriously as ways to improve your skill performance. We encourage you to use the feedback of others to critique your performance and help you find ways to enhance your skill competencies.

The last section of each chapter is *Skill Application*. It contains a form to help you generate your own improvement agenda, as well as assignments and ideas for applying the

skill in an out-of-class situation. The purpose of these assignments is to help you transfer behavioral guidelines into everyday practice. You may be directed to teach the skill to someone else, consult with another manager to help resolve a relevant problem, or apply the skill in an organization or family.

Practice and Application

The philosophy of this book is that improvement in management skills is primarily the learner's responsibility. If the application of the principles covered in this book is not conscientiously applied outside the classroom, little or no progress can be achieved. Our intention, therefore, is to have the course carry over into the life activities of learners. Effectiveness in management is no different from effectiveness in most other human enterprises. It requires the same kinds of skills to live a productive and successful life as it does to manage people effectively. That is why, even though some users of this book may not presently be managers of other employees—and indeed may never become managers—they should neither dismiss these skills as irrelevant nor wait until they become managers before attempting to practice them.

Psychological research has confirmed that when we are forced to perform under stress, we rely on what is called a "dominant response pattern" (Staw, Sandelands, & Dutton, 1981; Weick, 1995). That is, we rely on the behavior patterns that are most deeply ingrained in our response repertoire. For example, if a person who has been accustomed to responding to conflict combatively—but who has recently begun practicing a more supportive response pattern—is faced with an intense, emotional confrontation, that person may begin by reacting supportively. But as pressure mounts, he or she is likely to revert to the more practiced, combative style. That is why, it is said, that people always curse in their native language. Stress causes us to revert to our fundamental, most reinforced behaviors.

Thus it is important that learners not make the mistake of thinking they can delay applying skill training until they become managers. When problems and conflicts occur then, it is too late to change behaviors to handle issues effectively. We encourage you, therefore, to practice and apply the skills discussed in this book to part-time jobs, friendships, student organizations, families, church groups, and so forth. If you are in a managerial role, you will want to use the guidelines provided here with your coworkers, managers, subordinates, and customers. With conscientious practice, following the behavioral guidelines will become second nature.

A second reason that nonmanagers should not delay the application of management skills is that we all learn faster and remember better that which we experience emotionally as well as intellectually. That is, people learn best the things that affect them personally, and they feel affected by something if they see an immediate effect on their lives. For example, we can more quickly acquire a working knowledge of a foreign language and retain it longer if we spend a summer living in a country where the language is spoken than if we merely take a language course in our own country. Simply stated, application is a crucial component of the skill improvement process, but it generally takes extra effort and ingenuity to make application exercises effective and worthwhile. We encourage you to put that extra effort into improving your management skills.

Diversity and Individual Differences

One reason developing management skills is difficult is because all of us possess our own unique styles, personalities, and inclinations. We all know that everyone doesn't react in the same way to similar circumstances. We can freely choose to behave differently than expected or than we did in the past. It is impossible, therefore, to manage each relationship

in exactly the same way, or even to behave the same way from one encounter to the next. Sensitivity to individual differences is an important part of an effective manager's repertoire.

A great deal of research has been conducted on cultural differences, gender differences, ethnic differences, and age differences in organizations (e.g., Cox, 1994; Cox & Beal, 1997). While we will not summarize that extensive research, we do want to highlight the importance of being sensitive to individuality. Two kinds of sensitivities are necessary: one to the uniqueness displayed by each person, and the other to distinctive but general patterns of behavior that characterize groups of people. For example, it is essential that effective managers not only become aware of, but also value and capitalize on the differences that characterize people with whom they work. In this book we will encourage you to develop sensitivity to the diversity that people display as they interact with you. In addition, you will also become skilled at diagnosing certain generalized patterns of behavior among people with different experiences, nationalities, genders, ethnic backgrounds, and ages. These generalized patterns can be used inappropriately to stereotype or categorize people, of course, and that may lead to deterioration in interpersonal sensitivity and emotional intelligence. On the other hand, being aware of national, cultural, ethnic, gender, or age differences can also be extremely useful to you as you engage in managerial roles.

We have included in each chapter a framework for diagnosing individual differences across cultures and summaries of some extensive crossnational research by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1998). We include this framework to assist you in diagnosing some key differences that affect behavior. Knowing that the general tendency of people is to fear or oppose those who are different from them, our main objective in providing this information is to help us all better understand and appreciate differences. We don't emphasize so much *managing diversity* as we do *diagnosing individual differences* so they can be valued, understood, and appreciated.

In Chapter 1, *Developing Self-Awareness*, we explain the Trompenaars model, which relies on seven dimensions found to differ across national and cultural boundaries. These dimensions have been found to be very helpful in assisting people to understand key differences in others. They are: universalism versus particularism, individualism versus communitarianism, specificity versus diffuseness, neutral versus affective, achievement versus ascription oriented, internal versus external, and past versus present versus future time emphasis. These dimensions will help you to remain sensitive to the personal variations that may require alternation of some of the ways in which you practice core management skills. Whereas the behavioral principles upon which the management skills are based are applicable across cultures, genders, ethnic groups, and age cohorts, important nuances may be required of you as you practice among people characterized by these differences. Women may not behave the same as men. Japanese colleagues may not respond the same as German colleagues. Individuals in their sixties may not see the world the same as someone in their twenties. Stereotyping based on these categories, of course, is also dangerous and damaging, so being sensitive to and valuing individual differences is the key.

This means that you may want to pay special attention to the results of colleagues' Skill Assessment responses. You can identify the different patterns that arise among your own colleagues as you work your way through the book. Do you detect any general differences among men and women, among old and young, among different nationalities, among ethnic groups, among those with managerial experience and those without? People with high degrees of emotional intelligence have developed the ability to sense and empathize with the differences that are typical of different groups of people. We hope you will improve in this ability as well. Each of the sections of the chapters—Assessment, Learning, Analysis, Practice, and Application—can be useful to you in gaining insight into individual differences.

Summary

In sum, *Developing Management Skills* is not intended just for individuals who plan to enter managerial positions or who currently manage organizations. It is meant to help you better manage many aspects of your life and relationships. It is intended to help you actually change your behavior, to improve your competence, and to be more savvy in your relationships with different kinds of people. It is intended to improve your social and emotional intelligence. John Holt (1964) succinctly summarized our intention by equating management skill to intelligence:

When we talk about intelligence, we do not mean the ability to get a good score on a certain kind of test or even the ability to do well in school; these are at best only indicators of something larger, deeper, and far more important. By intelligence we mean a style of life, a way of behaving in various situations. The true test of intelligence is not how much we know how to do, but how we behave when we don't know what to do. (p. 165)

Fostering the development of such intelligence is the goal of *Developing Management Skills*.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Diagnostic Survey and Exercises

Personal Assessment of Management Skills (PAMS)

Step 1: To get an overall profile of your level of skill competence, respond to the following statements using the rating scale below. Please rate your behavior as it is, not as you would like it to be. If you have not engaged in a specific activity, answer according to how you think you would behave based on your experience in similar activities. Be realistic; this instrument is designed to help you tailor your learning to your specific needs. After you have completed the survey, the scoring key at the end of the chapter will help you generate an overall profile of your management skill strengths and weaknesses.

Step 2: Get copies of the Associates' version of this instrument from your instructor. An alternate version has been provided in the Instructor's Manual that uses "he" or "she" instead of "I" in the questions. Give copies to at least three other people who know you well or who have observed you in a situation in which you have had to lead or manage others. Those people should complete the instrument by rating your behavior. Bring the completed surveys back to class and compare: (1) your own ratings to your associates' ratings, (2) your associates' ratings to the ratings received by others in the class, and (3) the ratings you received to those of a national norm group.

Subsections of this instrument appear in each chapter throughout the book.

Rating Scale

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Slightly disagree
- 4 Slightly agree
- 5 Agree
- 6 Strongly agree

In regard to my level of self-knowledge:

- _____ 1. I seek information about my strengths and weaknesses from others as a basis for self-improvement.
- _____ 2. In order to improve, I am willing to be self-disclosing to others (that is, to share my beliefs and feelings).
- _____ 3. I am very much aware of my preferred style in gathering information and making decisions.
- _____ 4. I have a good sense of how I cope with situations that are ambiguous and uncertain.
- _____ 5. I have a well-developed set of personal standards and principles that guide my behavior.

When faced with stressful or time-pressured situations:

- _____ 6. I use effective time-management methods such as keeping track of my time, making to-do lists, and prioritizing tasks.

- _____ 7. I frequently affirm my priorities so that less important things don't drive out more important things.
- _____ 8. I maintain a program of regular exercise for fitness.
- _____ 9. I maintain an open, trusting relationship with someone with whom I can share my frustrations.
- _____ 10. I know and practice several temporary relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and muscle relaxation.
- _____ 11. I maintain balance in my life by pursuing a variety of interests outside of work.

When I approach a typical, routine problem:

- _____ 12. I state clearly and explicitly what the problem is. I avoid trying to solve it until I have defined it.
- _____ 13. I always generate more than one alternative solution to the problem, instead of identifying only one obvious solution.
- _____ 14. I keep steps in the problem-solving process distinct; that is, I define the problem before proposing alternative solutions, and I generate alternatives before selecting a single solution.

When faced with a complex or difficult problem that does not have an easy solution:

- _____ 15. I try out several definitions of the problem. I don't limit myself to just one way to define it.
- _____ 16. I try to unfreeze my thinking by asking lots of questions about the nature of the problem before considering ways to solve it.
- _____ 17. I try to think about the problem from both the left (logical) side of my brain and the right (intuitive) side of my brain.
- _____ 18. I do not evaluate the merits of an alternative solution to the problem before I have generated a list of alternatives. That is, I avoid deciding on a solution until I have developed many possible solutions.
- _____ 19. I have some specific techniques that I use to help develop creative and innovative solutions to problems.

When trying to foster more creativity and innovation among those with whom I work:

- _____ 20. I make sure there are divergent points of view represented or expressed in every complex problem-solving situation.
- _____ 21. I try to acquire information from individuals outside the problem-solving group who will be affected by the decision, mainly to determine their preferences and expectations.
- _____ 22. I try to provide recognition not only to those who come up with creative ideas (the idea champions) but also to those who support others' ideas (supporters) and who provide resources to implement them (orchestrators).
- _____ 23. I encourage informed rule-breaking in pursuit of creative solutions.

In situations where I have to provide negative feedback or offer corrective advice:

- _____ 24. I am able to help others recognize and define their own problems when I counsel them.
- _____ 25. I am clear about when I should coach someone and when I should provide counseling instead.
- _____ 26. When I give feedback to others, I avoid referring to personal characteristics and focus on problems or solutions instead.

- _____ 27. When I try to correct someone's behavior, our relationship is almost always strengthened.
- _____ 28. I am descriptive in giving negative feedback to others. That is, I objectively describe events, their consequences, and my feelings about them.
- _____ 29. I take responsibility for my statements and point of view by using, for example, "I have decided" instead of "They have decided."
- _____ 30. I strive to identify some area of agreement in a discussion with someone who has a different point of view.
- _____ 31. I don't talk down to those who have less power or less information than I.
- _____ 32. When discussing someone's problem, I usually respond with a reply that indicates understanding rather than advice.

In a situation where it is important to obtain more power:

- _____ 33. I always put forth more effort and take more initiative than expected in my work.
- _____ 34. I am continually upgrading my skills and knowledge.
- _____ 35. I strongly support organizational ceremonial events and activities.
- _____ 36. I form a broad network of relationships with people throughout the organization at all levels.
- _____ 37. In my work I consistently strive to generate new ideas, initiate new activities, and minimize routine tasks.
- _____ 38. I consistently send personal notes to others when they accomplish something significant or when I pass along important information to them.
- _____ 39. I refuse to bargain with individuals who use high-pressure negotiation tactics.
- _____ 40. I always avoid using threats or demands to impose my will on others.

When another person needs to be motivated:

- _____ 41. I always determine if the person has the necessary resources and support to succeed in a task.
- _____ 42. I use a variety of rewards to reinforce exceptional performances.
- _____ 43. I design task assignments to make them interesting and challenging.
- _____ 44. I make sure the person gets timely feedback from those affected by task performance.
- _____ 45. I always help the person establish performance goals that are challenging, specific, and time bound.
- _____ 46. Only as a last resort do I attempt to reassign or release a poorly performing individual.
- _____ 47. I consistently discipline when effort is below expectations and capabilities.
- _____ 48. I make sure that people feel fairly and equitably treated.
- _____ 49. I provide immediate compliments and other forms of recognition for meaningful accomplishments.

When I see someone doing something that needs correcting:

- _____ 50. I avoid making personal accusations and attributing self-serving motives to the other person.
- _____ 51. I encourage two-way interaction by inviting the respondent to express his or her perspective and to ask questions.
- _____ 52. I make a specific request, detailing a more acceptable option.

When someone complains about something I've done:

- _____ 53. I show genuine concern and interest, even when I disagree.
- _____ 54. I seek additional information by asking questions that provide specific and descriptive information.
- _____ 55. I ask the other person to suggest more acceptable behaviors.

When two people are in conflict and I am the mediator:

- _____ 56. I do not take sides but remain neutral.
- _____ 57. I help the parties generate multiple alternatives.
- _____ 58. I help the parties find areas on which they agree.

In situations where I have an opportunity to engage people in accomplishing work:

- _____ 59. I help people feel competent in their work by recognizing and celebrating their small successes.
- _____ 60. I provide regular feedback and needed support.
- _____ 61. I try to provide all the information that people need to accomplish their tasks.
- _____ 62. I highlight the important impact that a person's work will have.

When delegating work to others:

- _____ 63. I specify clearly the results I desire.
- _____ 64. I specify clearly the level of initiative I want others to take (for example, wait for directions, do part of the task and then report, do the whole task and then report, and so forth).
- _____ 65. I allow participation by those accepting assignments regarding when and how work will be done.
- _____ 66. I avoid upward delegation by asking people to recommend solutions, rather than merely asking for advice or answers, when a problem is encountered.
- _____ 67. I follow up and maintain accountability for delegated tasks on a regular basis.

When I am in the role of leader in a team:

- _____ 68. I know how to establish credibility and influence among team members.
- _____ 69. I am clear and consistent about what I want to achieve.
- _____ 70. I build a common base of agreement in the team before moving forward with task accomplishment.
- _____ 71. I articulate a clear, motivating vision of what the team can achieve along with specific short-term goals.

When I am in the role of team member:

- _____ 72. I know a variety of ways to facilitate task accomplishment in the team.
- _____ 73. I know a variety of ways to help build strong relationships and cohesion among team members.

When I desire to make my team perform well, regardless of whether I am a leader or member:

- _____ 74. I am knowledgeable about the different stages of team development experienced by most teams.
- _____ 75. I help the team avoid groupthink by making sure that sufficient diversity of opinions is expressed in the team.
- _____ 76. I can diagnose and capitalize on my team's core competencies, or unique strengths.
- _____ 77. I encourage the team to achieve dramatic breakthrough innovations as well as small continuous improvements.

When I am in a position to lead change:

- _____ 78. I create positive energy in others when I interact with them.
- _____ 79. I emphasize a higher purpose or meaning associated with the change I am leading.
- _____ 80. I express gratitude frequently and conspicuously, even for small acts.
- _____ 81. I emphasize building on strengths, not just overcoming weaknesses.
- _____ 82. I use a lot more positive comments than negative comments.
- _____ 83. When I communicate a vision, I capture people's hearts as well as their heads.
- _____ 84. I know how to get people to commit to my vision of positive change.

What Does It Take to Be an Effective Manager?

The purpose of this exercise is to help you get a first-hand picture of the role of a manager and the skills required to perform that job successfully.

Your assignment is to interview at least three managers who are employed full-time. You should use the questions below in your interviews, plus use others that you think might help you identify effective management skills. The purpose of these interviews is to give you a chance to learn about critical managerial skills from those who have to use them.

Please treat the interviews as confidential. The names of the individuals do not matter—only their opinions, perceptions, and behaviors. Assure the managers that no one will be able to identify them from their responses. Keep written notes of your interviews. These notes should be as detailed as possible so you can reconstruct the interviews later. Be sure to keep a record of each person's job title and a brief description of his or her organization.

1. Please describe a typical day at work. What do you do all day?

2. What are the most critical problems you face as a manager?