

## How would your people rate you as a Manager?

This month our intention is to get you thinking about how others might perceive your management style. We argue that the way we behave towards our people has a massive impact on them psychologically which in turn impacts their performance at work and their commitment to the organisation. Surely finding a way to do things slightly differently that has big impact on people is worth investigating?

## Are you an Alan Sugar?

Imagine being Sir Alan Sugar - the money, the success, the fame...the looks (?!). As the self-styled "most beligerant boss" you'd probably feel quite chuffed with what you've achieved and not many would argue.

Now imagine working for Alan Sugar. Some of us might find it positively challenging and undoubtedly rewarding (you can imagine that he pays his most valued people very well!).

We don't know Sir Alan and our only intention is to make a point not to insult him (if you know him then please pass on the e-mail!), but for some of us we would suggest it could be an absolute nightmare. Imagine working for someone who expects perfection from the start, who appears to make decisions wholly based on gut feel or whether or not he likes you, who gives very few second chances and who focusses on piling 'em high and selling 'em cheap etc. etc.

Now bring it close to home and remember your best boss and your worst boss. Remember how they affected you and made you feel. Remember going home at night all wound up and ranting to your partner, remember hating going to work and wanting to find a way out. Now for the challenge - what would your people say about you?!

## What are we advocating?

Psychologically, we all grow up forming a mental "map" of the how the world works. This includes our place in it, how we view others, how we think they view us and how we view us. We continually look for evidence that supports the positive aspects of our map and we rationalise, refute or disregard the stuff that might not support our view. It is this potential "blind spot" than can impact our performance as leader-managers - the things that other people know about us, but we are not aware of.

As individuals this situation is generally ok as we gel with people who value us in the same way as we value ourselves and vice versa. The difficulty as a manager is that even if we get to choose the people who work for us they don't always get to choose us!

So, as part of our training and coaching work we use a lot of 360 degree feedback to raise self-awareness and encourage managers to take stock of how others see them and how their behaviour is impacting others.

## How does it work?

360 degree feedback simply means getting feedback from a number of different sources around you - your direct reports, your colleagues and your boss. Of course you have a say too.

The power of the process is that you gather some well structured data which allows you to objectively see how different people view your behaviour. It's important to note at this point that good 360 feedback is about **what you do** not **who you are** so even though it is likely to be challenging it is not designed to destroy your self-esteem. In fact 360 feedback should always be facilitated by someone who understands the tool being used and who is skilled in giving feedback.

There are many models of leadership and management and other aspects of interpersonal style that can be used as the basis for feedback. If your organisation has its own competency model (i.e. definitions of the kinds of behaviours that are important to the success of your organisation) you can use this to create a 360 questionnaire specific to your business. Whatever the basis 360 begins with a standard questionnaire, ideally online, that is completed by a number of different people. The data is then collated and presented back to you .

The overall "score" will indicate strengths and potential development needs as it is more than likely that you will recognise some of your own development needs. The real power is in comparing how you see yourself with how others see you and then drawing conclusions on what you could do differently in order to have a more positive impact on others.

## What can be measured?

Getting feedback from other people is invaluable however it is collected. Asking two key questions would be a fantastic start - "what do I do that you really value?" and "what do I do that doesn't help?".

However, there are many structured 360 tools available. Three examples we are accredited to use are:

1. Assessing **Leadership Style** using the *Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)* developed by Kouzes and Posner. This measures leadership style across five dimensions - Encouraging the Heart, Enabling Others to Act, Challenging the Process, Modelling the Way and Inspiring a Shared Vision.
2. Assessing **Emotional Intelligence** using the *EQ-i* developed by Reuven BarOn. This measures emotional intelligence across 15 dimensions.
3. Assessing **behavioural competencies** using *Lominger Voices* developed by Mike Lombardo and Robert Eichinger. This measures how effective people are over 67 different competencies.

There are many other tools available and it is even a fairly simple process to construct a questionnaire tailored to your specific needs from scratch.

## How can we help?

As already mentioned we are accredited to use a variety of different tools. This means we can help you define which approach or tool would be best for you, administer the data collection process for you and facilitate feedback of the data for you.

Most of these tools cost from between £50 and £85 per person so they represent a small investment with a potentially high payback.

For a freebie click here to access a dti sponsored questionnaire which assesses "Inspirational Leadership". It can be done individually so you can see the results of how you rate yourself, but there is also the option to do it on a 360 basis. It's free so what have you got to lose. The only thing we ask is that you get in touch to talk through the results so we can help you make sense of them and help you think through how to develop your leadership style....unless of course your aim is to become the "most beligerant boss you will ever meet"!!!

## Contact us

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