A Book Report on

The Golden Rules for Managers

(119 Incredible Lessons for Leadership Success)

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(Book Report by Gary Tomlinson)

Preface:

Much has been made of the increasing complexity of executing business strategies in the twenty-first century. There is a phalanx of consultants out there eager to tell you how difficult it is to manage your business in the face of the increasing pace of change, and how complex are the challenges you confront.

And in some sense, this is true. But it is not all of the truth.

Management is now, as it always has been, the judicious application of human, financial and material resources against the challenges of producing and delivering a product or service in a way that the customers feel well served and the business makes a profit. It is as simple (and as difficult) as that.

Introduction:

As a young political science major in college, I was fascinated by this old saying: "Men and rivers get crooked in the same way – by following the path of least resistance." My limited knowledge of geology demonstrated the truth of this observation for the great rivers of the world, while my knowledge of theology and more complete understanding of history and politics confirmed the statement in the human dimension of life.

It was another aphorism, borne out in the experience of life. That's what this book is all about: aphorisms and sayings and pithy summing-ups that capture essential truths about life in the managerial world.

Each of the sayings in this book represent a thread woven together into the tapestry we call management. The tapestry – and the information – is *organic,* for we cannot separate the totality of management into individual components. In some ways, it's like asking, "Which organ system do you prefer? Your heart, or your lungs?" Without either, you'd die.

Likewise, the maxims about leadership cannot be separated from the maxims about motivation, and neither of them can be cut off from the maxims related to expectation setting. Each of these maxims is a single thread woven together into the total tapestry we call management.

There are, however, some cautions we must bear in mind, and they are articulated most clearly for us by Mark Twain. Twain once commented, in a statement that is absolutely apropos to the work that we are about to begin; "We should be careful to *get out of an experience only the wisdom that is in it* – and stop there, lest we be like the cat that sits down on a hot stove lid. She will not sit down on a hot stove lid again – and that is well; but also, she will never sit down on a cool one any more."

Our task – as Mark Twain has so aptly pointed out – is to learn what we can from the maxims before us and not apply them willy-nilly in situations where they have no relevance. Our further challenge – with these maxims and with all of life – is to bump the apparent wisdom contained in the maxim against our life experience and the circumstances we confront, and to exact from that confrontation the wisdom that most fully applies to the circumstances we confront.

With that as our task, let us begin!

Chapter 1: Vision and Planning*:*

An excited truck driver called to say that his truck had fallen through a bridge, and was now hanging precariously in the under-supports of that bridge, twenty feet above a scenic waterway. He asked what she should do.

The first response he heard was, "How in the world did your truck fall through a bridge?"

His reply? "Well, it turns out that the bridge had a load limit of 10 tons, and my truck weighs 55 tons."

"Didn't you know this?" they responded.

"Oh, no," he replied. "The first I knew of it was when I fell through the bridge."

With their curiosity piqued, they sent a management team member out to assess the situation. When he got to the county where the incident occurred he was surprised to a sign that said, "Caution: Scenic covered bridge ahead. Load limit: 10 tons." Several miles later he encountered another sign. "Caution: Scenic covered bridge ahead. Nine miles. Load limit: 10 tons." And yet another sign. "Caution: Scenic covered bridge ahead. Four miles. Load limit: 10 tons." Then another. "Caution: Scenic covered bridge ahead. One mile. Load limit: 10 tons."

When he approached the bridge – the now-bottomless bridge with the truck dangling dangerously above the scenic waterway – a large, orange sign affixed to the covered bridge said, "Caution. Proceed Slowly. Load limit: 10 tons."

From this, we derived our own internal maxim: "If you don't read the signs, you'll fall through the bridge."

If You Don't Read the Signs, You'll Fall Through the Bridge.

Reading the signs is all about *vision*; it's about climbing all the way up the mast to the crow's next of your business-ship to get a clear understanding of where you have been and what lies before you. It's about surveying the sea and the horizon a full 360 degrees – looking for both channels of opportunity and dangerous shoals of misdirection.

Vision exists before we chart the course. Vision is about understanding the climate and the currents, knowing the abilities and weaknesses of your crew and vessel and selecting an achievable destination that will yield profits to the ship's owner plus safe passage and fair wages to the crew.

Vision weighs the risks of one route versus another; vision considers the current atmosphere and the competitive ships. And vision ultimately decides: "For this ship, in this port, given these conditions, the best destination is X." Only then are the sailors ready to begin charting their own course, planning the safest and fastest route to this destination that accords with their vision.

It's easy to get it backwards; to begin planning before the vision is clear, to confuse tactics with objectives and to give in to the great American prejudice for action: "Do something wrong, but do something!" And it's a mistake that can kill a business.

If we begin to act without a close reading of the environment, clear objectives and a coherent strategy, we will fail ourselves, our company and our employees. We will launch products just as consumer demand for them has peaked and is beginning to fall. We will staff up and make tremendous capital expenditures to manufacture a product that is at the tail end of its life cycle, or we will incorrectly discern that there is tremendous market demand for a product that, while still healthy, is beginning to plateau.

Reading the signs gives us knowledge of market growth or stagnation, of technological change or elative stasis, of burgeoning consumer demand or slackening interest in our product.

So one of our key jobs as managers, is to read the signs. And it is from the sign reading that we derive our plans, using the signs (economic trends, market share data, consumer surveys industry analyses) to keep us from falling through the bridge. If we loose sight of the signs, we may wind up managing efficient business operations that are all pointed to a flawed strategy. And that can be disastrous.

Manage the Vision and the Strategy, Not Just the Business Operations.

Managers must not only manage their business operations, they must also understand the impact of changing market conditions on the strategy they have articulated. And they must continually ask themselves, "Is the plan we crafted last year consonant with the market conditions we face this year?"

If there was ever a call for continuous improvement processes, that call is found in the planning process for businesses in our era of fast-paced change and market evolution.

A Plan Is Not a Straitjacket – Build Flex into Your Plan.

Many businesspeople treat their business plan like a straitjacket. It's written, it's typed, it's published and it's bound. And it becomes sacrosanct. A plan should be a guide and only a guide.

A plan is a snapshot, taken at a moment in time, of the path forward that looks most attractive to a company at that moment in time. Circumstances change. Competitors grow or weaken. Markets open, fads fade and consumers are bewitched by the next "most attractive" thing. If we are so constrained by our plan that we cannot see the changes going on in the market, we are as condemned to fail as people who never planned at all.

So remember; a plan is not a straitjacket. Build flex into your plan. That being said, a countervailing point obtains as well.

A Business Is Not a Restaurant – Avoid "Strategy du Jour."

If it is fatal to get a death grip on a strategy and never let go, it can be equally deadly to operate a business on the "strategy du jour" model. This model will perplex the employees, confuse the customers and bewilder wall street.

Companies that do the strategy shuffle do so because they seek the lone, perfect, bulletproof strategy for their industry.

Give It Up! There Is No Lone, Perfect Strategy.

There is no one perfect, all purpose bulletproof strategy. So the search for a perfect strategy is pointless; it merely consumes time that could be better spent elsewhere. If your strategy is even close, and if your people buy that strategy and embrace it passionately, that's good enough.

Eighty percent strategy executed with 100 percent commitment always beats 100 percent strategy executed with 80 percent commitment.

"Whether you think you can – or whether you think you can't – either way you're right!"

Commitment and belief are two of the key drivers to any strategy's success.

So how do we get this level of commitment? Do we demand it? Or can we engender it? There is an old saying that is apropos here: *"You can force compliance, you have to earn commitment."* And we earn commitment by involving the employees – to the extent appropriate – in the creation of the goals.

Input raises buy-in.

If you truly and authentically seek 100 percent commitment to your strategy, the easiest way to engender that commitment is to involve the people who will execute the strategy in its creation. People like to give input. Input increases the likelihood of their commitment.

If You Don't Know Where You're Going, You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else.

Defining a cogent business vision and articulating the objectives, strategies and tactics to support this vision: this is the *foundational* task of managers. So our job is to help the organization develop a vision – an understanding of what it stands for and wants to become. From that vision we shake out the key objectives – the specific goals that will help flesh out the vision.

It is where we are going – our vision and goals – that drive everything else! So we must know where we're going as we begin to plan. And knowing where – at least conceptually – is not enough. We need details.

If You Fail to Plan, Then Plan to Fail – Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance.

Our final maxims present us with two sides of the same truth. Planning does not guarantee success. The absence of planning virtually guarantees failure.

Shape that vision. Develop those objectives. Plan to as fine a level of detail as will work in your business, remembering that your plan is a blueprint, not a straitjacket.

Planning – it's critical to you and your company. Remember if you don't know where you're going, you'll probably end up somewhere else.

Chapter Two: Motivation:

There has been more garbage written about motivation than about any other subject in the history of the world – except perhaps love and sex. This is because motivation is a lot like love and sex: it's all quicksilver, elusive and hard to pin down. Almost anything you say about motivation is true – some of the time – and very little of it is true all of the time. That's why there is so much garbage out there.

In truth, motivation is really pretty simple. It boils down to three things:

1. No one can motivate anyone to do anything.
2. We can create circumstances in which people motivate themselves.
3. You've got to walk the talk.

No One Can Motivate Anyone to Do Anything.

Motivation comes from people's heads and hearts. So we cannot motivate anyone to do anything – it has to come from inside them. But we can create an environment in which others motivate themselves. And that brings us to point two.

We Can Create Circumstances in Which People Motivate Themselves.

In the mid-1970s, I managed a branch bank for one of North Carolina's major financial institutions. One bright winter day, two robbers burst into the bank. One aimed a sawed-off, twelve-gauge shotgun directly at my face and screamed, "Give me all of your money!"

Did he get inside my head? No. Did he get inside my heart? No. Did he create a circumstance in which I was motivated myself? Yes indeed. Did he get the money? Absolutely!

An extreme illustration, perhaps. But let's look at it a little deeper to see what we can learn. Our robber succeeded by creating goal alignment. That is, he helped me see that I could get what I wanted (keeping my youthful countenance intact) by giving him what he wanted (all of the money). We struck a bargain, and both walked (actually he ran) away happy.

Our robber-motivator answered a fundamental question by the use of his shotgun as a visual aid. He answered the what's-in-it-for-me question and showed me the benefits if I complied with his request. And his reward for me (life) was worth his requirement ("Give me all of the money").

Let's look at the third of our introductory precepts.

You've Got to Walk the Talk.

Managers have to demonstrate to their followers that they believe, support and embrace everything that they ask their followers to do. For example if you ask your employees to come in early and leave late, but you don't do so, the absence of your personal commitment will quickly translate to a diminishment of their personal commitment as well.

By demonstrating no personal commitment to the goal, you, as manager, have created an environment in which employees de-motivate themselves. Performance plummets. The whole company loses. What's the antidote? WII-FM! The world's most powerful radio station.

Broadcast on Radio Station WII-FM.

WII-FM is the world's most powerful radio station. It broadcasts around the clock, around the world, twenty-four hours a day. WII-FM (our radio station call letters) stands for *What's In It For Me.*

Why did you buy your last car? Price? Style? Necessity? There's your WII-FM. How did you choose the dealer? Price? Friendship? Proximity? Service excellence? There's your WII-FM. Every day, all day long we make choices that answer this question and help us select from a bewildering array of options. And the model applies to motivation as well as to purchase choices.

Why do you work where you do? Compensation? Benefits? Opportunity? There's your WII-FM! Why did you turn down the last job you turned down? Too much risk? Too much work? Too much time away? There's your WII-Fm! We all have them, all the time, about everything. And so do our employees – which brings us to a key maxim for motivation.

If You Listen Long Enough, People Will Tell You What Motivates Them.

All day we are bombarded with messages. We wake up to a clock radio, eat breakfast in front of the television and drive to work listening to satellite radio or and iPod. We've got cell phones, iPhones and BlackBerries. Our laptops ping every time a new email hits the inbox. All day long, we are assaulted by a barrage of messages. But we never get *listened to,* which is too bad.

People are crying to be heard – dying to be – heard. And as managers, if we'll just stop and listen, they will tell us what matters to them. They will tell us what motivates them. And it is our job to respond in a way that is faithful to what they say they need, and to our role in the corporation. Listening – and responding out of what you hear – is one of the single greatest motivators at a manager's disposal.

People Come in Two Types: Carrot People and Stick People.

This adage refers to the fact that some people are motivated by the prospect of rewards (carrots), while others only work to avoid consequences (sticks). One reason we listen to people is to uncover whether they respond better to the prospect of eating carrots or avoiding the prospect of being whacked with a stick. We also need to observe people to see people to see if what they said is how they live, because this can be even more powerful.

If You Watch Long Enough, People Will Show You How to Motivate Them.

Watching is at least as effective as listening in ferreting out an employee's key motivators. Employees will communicate what most matters to them by where they put there time and resources. So we watch and we listen – always trying to identify the carrot that pulls high performance from out teammates. Sometimes it is money or time off or recognition or status. It's not our job to judge them or even to change them. It's just our job to uncover the motivators and make them available.

But what do we do when there is no apparent carrot – when watching and listening still yield no clues to what will motivate an individual? Sometimes we change tactics.

You Can Waste A Lot of Time Feeding Carrots to Stick People.

For people who are motivated by carrots, you dangle carrots in front of them, promise them good things and make good things happen to and for them. They will respond in ways that astound even themselves, assuming you have listened and are offering them carrots they really want.

However, some people don't like carrots. They also do not like to be hit. Some people work to embrace pleasure and other people work to avoid pain. Our job is to figure out who is who and offer them the thing that gets them off their butts the fastest. And sometimes a little fear is not a bad thing.

I believe that – as a matter of principle – we should offer carrots first and assume that all people are "carrot" people. It's the right thing to do.

So, our first job as motivators is to make sure we have properly matched the task to the person – that we have selected well, trained appropriately and equipped properly. We must also build confidence so the employees believe in their ability to actually do it.

The Managerial Golden Rule: Do Unto Others as They Would Like to Be Done Unto!

In motivating others, it is this Managerial Golden Rule (Do unto others as they would like to be done unto) that can inform our work. It pulls together all the threads we have talked about and weaves them into a coherent tapestry. Our job as managers is to listen and observe those we manage, so we know how "they would like to be done unto."

Motivational Charter
Employees Are Motivated When

They believe that if they try (Effort) they will succeed (Performance) and be rewarded (Payoff) and they believe that if they do not succeed (No Performance) they will feel consequences (Payoff) and the consequences will be severe enough to avoid.

Chapter Three: Expectations:

If motivation is the most over-taught subject in business management, setting precise expectations (painting a clear picture of the target) is the most under-taught.

Paint a Clear Picture of the Target.

One reason this topic is under-taught is that most people don't clearly understand it – they don't have a clear picture of the target themselves. Managers often don't paint a clear picture of the target because they don't know precisely what they want as an outcome. In the end, this causes them a great deal of pain and suffering. It also causes their employees a great deal of frustration and re-work.

I Can't Hit a Target I Can't See.

All businesses would operate better if managers knew that their employees were looking at them with this thought in their heads all the time: "I can't hit a target I can't see." That is, "What is it, precisely, that you want me to do?"

If our charge, as managers, is to satisfy employees by doing what they request – "Paint me a clear picture of the target" – how do we do that?

The first way is by remembering a fundamental maxim that is often overlooked. It makes eminent sense when you examine it.

Everyone Wasn't Raised at Your House.

Most performance management discussions have gone awry from not remembering this maxim than from any other in this book. We tend to fail in interactions because we assume that the people with whom we are talking have had the same experiences we've had, been trained by the same people, been formed by the same family and know the same things.

It's patently obvious that this is not so. We need to remember this as we give direction, backing, and filling around holes in our employee's knowledge. Never assume that, just because we know it or would do it, they would know the same things and behave in the same ways.

First, we have to paint a clear picture of the target. Until then, your expectations are neither common nor sensical.

Common Sense Ain't Near as Common as It Used to Be.

Painting a clear picture of the target is a fundamental obligation of all managers as they think about their contract with the people they manage. *People can't give you what you* *want unless they know what that is.* And because they are not clairvoyant, you have to tell them. Or – better yet – sometimes you have to show them.

My grandfather was a Gulf Oil distributor in the Triangle area of North Carolina. In the mid-twentieth century, I rode around with him as he went from service station to service station talking to dealers about how to attract more business.

My grandfather's theory, which was borne out in practice, was this: clean restrooms attract the wives and the wives tell the husbands were to stop. A big issue for him was that all his service stations have immaculate restrooms.

My grandfather was a solidly built man in his late fifties and he would inspect the bathrooms at every station where we stopped. If he found the bathrooms clean, he would thank the manager, tell him why clean restrooms were important, and move on. If the restrooms weren't clean, my grandfather didn't have a tantrum. He figured it was his job to show the station operator what he meant by clean. It was his job to "paint a clear picture of the target." Rather than having a fit, he had a demonstration.

He would take off his straw hat and hang it on the doorknob. He would take off his suit coat and hang it on the door. Then he would roll up his sleeves, tuck his tie in his shirt pocket, get the cleaning supplies out of the trunk of his car, and clean the bathroom, on his hands and knees, in his suit pants. When he was finished, he would look at the service station manager – who was generally aghast – and say to him, "Now do you see what I mean by a clean bathroom?"

"Yes sir, yes sir, I see what you mean."

"This is how I want it to look every time I come back from now on. Do you understand why this is important? Do you have any questions?"

Generally the person knew why it was important, and had no questions. And generally, when my grandfather came back next time, the bathrooms were clean.

Why did my grandfather get such good results? One, he believed in encouraging people, so his habit was to offer them carrots, not sticks. Two, he painted for them a clear picture of the target. And three, my grandfather didn't assume that they knew what he meant by "clean." "Clean" is different things to different people. To get the kind of clean you want, paint a clear picture of your target.

To Be Worth a Damn, a Goal Must be SMART.

The way you paint a clear picture of the target is by using SMART goals. SAMRT is an acronym and here is what it stands for:

> **S** is for **Specific.** You must know exactly what you want. Do you want lunch or do you want a Big Burgher, hold the sauce, double onions, no ketchup?

M is for **Measurable.** You need to talk to the employee about how you're going to measure performance – what the measurements methods are, how you are going to collect the data, who's going to collect the data and when will the data will be collected.

A is for **Attainable.** The goal needs to be difficult enough to make the employee work but not so impossible that they will never reach it.

R is for **Related.** Relate the goal to a personal goal of the employee, to a work group goal and to an overarching corporate goal – a goal that the employee's efforts will help the company attain.

T is for **Time-Based.** That is, set a time when the project is due, along with an intermediate date so you can see how the project is moving along.

Most Work Gets Done the Day Before It's Due.

There is no need to argue about this or get mad about it or wish that people would change. What you do is use this knowledge by setting intermediate dates and following up on those dates to see what progress has been made toward final completion of the project. This method works equally well whether you are managing your own performance or that of someone else.

What You Count Is What You're Going to Get.

Remember that it's okay to ask them to work. But when you ask them to work, you have to paint them a clear picture of the target. And – as you paint that clear picture – make sure that what you count is what you want. Because *what you count is what you're going to get.*

Chapter Four: Coaching: Them That Can, Does – Them That Teaches Are Priceless:

If painting a clear picture of the target is the starting point for pulling maximum performance out of those we manage and oversee, teaching and coaching are the next steps.

If you wish to develop teaching and coaching skills, you will soon realize that there is much to the seeming ease with which teachers and coaches impart information and draw superior performance from their teams. Fortunately, there are some maxims that can help inform our understanding of good teaching and coaching. These guidelines can help us to move from whatever level we now occupy to a level of increased competence and facility as business teachers and coaches.

Common Sense Ain't Near as Common as it Used to Be II.

As teachers, we often forget the baseline level at which we began acquiring information on the topic. We assume a level of understanding that is neither fair to our learners nor helpful to our teaching challenge. Remembering that everyone wasn't raised at our house, we acknowledge that what is common sense to us may be completely unknown to the learner with whom we're interacting.

To counteract this, we begin with the basics: definitions of key terms, explanations of fundamental processes, articulation of the reasons behind what we are doing and the ultimate business objective we seek as an outcome. Once we have done this, we are ready to reflect on differences in learning styles we may encounter among our learners.

People Learn in Different Ways. To Be Effective, Teach in the Learner's Most-Preferred Style.

People learn in different ways. To be an effective teacher, you must teach in the way most preferred by the learner. Some people are *oral learners*; they learn only as they speak. Many of them gravitate toward teaching so that they can fully master their topics. Others are *kinesthetic experiential learners;* they must learn by touching, by engaging manually the item with which they are learning. For these kinds of learners, no amount of reading will engender learning as fast as a very brief period of touching.

A third group of people are *aural learners*; they learn well by hearing. They can learn more in a fifteen-minute lecture than they can in three hours of painstakingly plodding through a book of instructions or directions. Finally, there are the *visual learners*. They learn by reading. These people are the instruction manuals' major friends and can master a topic thoroughly with two to three hours of careful review of a tightly written instruction packet or a well-produced training video.

If You Observe and Listen Long Enough, People Will Tell You How They Like to Learn.

Watching how people interact with a project, their everyday actions and reactions to events around them will tell you how they like to learn.

Discovered Learning Always Beats Revealed Learning.

Whatever the teaching style preferred by our learner and whatever way we teach the best, the outcome we seek is always the same: *discovered learning*. That is, we seek the moment when our learner has an "Aha!" experience and discovers the immediate relevance of – or a full understanding about – the topic we are examining. And discovered learning always beats revealed learning. It is discovered learning that moves knowledge to the hard drive of our brains, hits the "save" button and enables us years later to remember what it was we learned, and why.

Different from – but allied to – our maxim that discovered learning beats revealed learning are the next two maxims.

People Never Argue with Their Own Data.

This is related to *discovered learning* because when folks have an experience of *discovered learning*, they are developing their own data. As teachers and coaches, we help people develop their own data by facilitating and listening, not telling. This can be frustrating, because in the short term it is more time-consuming than telling. In the longer term, however, it is far more efficient. It's more efficient because, as people talk in a facilitated learning environment, the discussion feeds multiple learning styles.

It Is Easier to Listen People into Learning Than to Talk Them into Learning.

In many ways, teaching is a motivational situation. And a primary way to motivate people to learn is to listen to them: what their problems are, what matters to them, what specific things they need to know to grow. Then we can package our teaching in a way that meets learners' needs and builds off what we have heard them say.

To Be a Good Coach, Use the COACH Model.

Each of the five letters in the COACH model stands for one key concept related to teaching people how to do things:

<u>C</u>OACH: Content – Content includes the "what" of our teaching: what is it they need to know, what is it they need to learn, what are the steps in the process? And beyond the "what," content also includes the "why." Adult learners like to know "why" as well as "what." We also need to communicate to employees "what's in it for me" as we lay out the content of a teaching. Beyond any professional "why," there must also be a personal "why." A "why" that answers the query posed by WII-FM,

C<u>O</u>ACH: Organization – We should reflect on how to organize our points. In which sequence should these items be taught? As we think about organization in our coaching model, the key work for us is to be aware that we have choices. We do not have to teach in sequence. We can teach in sequence, or we can teach in priority. We can teach the easiest things first, or we can organize in some other way.

CO<u>A</u>CH: Approach – When we have moved beyond the ranking of our content and the organizing of it into the order that makes the most sense, we then begin to think about our approach to communicating the material. Often the best approach to teaching is one that teaches in multiple ways. The *Tell-Show-Do-Feedback* model is a good one to use.

The *Telling* part of this model can take several forms: reading, discussion or lecture. Some combination of these will meet the learning needs of visual, oral and aural learners.

Showing builds on the foundation laid in telling and speaks to the needs of visual learners again.

Doing is where kinesthetic learners get their needs meet. When accompanied by narrative, this is also a good way for aural and oral learners to acquire knowledge.

Feedback can meet the needs of various learners. Videotaped playback allows folks to see themselves (discovered learning) and understand where they need to improve. Discussion helps both oral and aural learners draw important learning from feedback.

The key in selecting our approach is to choose the approach that best suits our material and our learner.

COACH: Candidate – Who is this person before us? What is his experience level with this or similar work? What is his aptitude for this work? What is his motivation for learning the work? How does he best like to learn? All of these things come into play as we shape our teaching and coaching plan. A candidate is much more likely to "own" a positive outcome from the training if he helped to develop the plan and he is much more likely to remember the training if you can make it memorable with good headlines.

COACH: Headlines – The **H** is our coaching model begs us to reduce all of our teaching to an easy-to-remember headline. Headlines will help our learner remember what we've said and remember why it matters. Headlines come in a variety of forms.

Chapter Five: Feedback and Performance Management: What You Reward is What You Get:

Performance management is grounded upon painting a clear picture of the target/expectation at the beginning of the process. We cannot measure performance against standards that have not been articulated, codified and communicated to the workers.

People Will Respect What You Expect If You Inspect.

People will respect what we expect if we inspect. And it is the process of inspecting that generates the respect. It is in the measurement of performance that we often find managers failing their followers, their companies and themselves.

What You Count Is What You Get, So Count the Right Things.

Choosing what you will measure is just as important as the measurement itself. You can measure the wrong thing and get the wrong outcome. So choose carefully the things you will count.

Don't Confuse Motion with Progress.

What we measure is what gets done. We need to measure the right stuff. So don't confuse motion with progress – or activities with outcomes.

SMART Targets are Foundational for Feedback and Performance Management.

Performance management is always measured against a target, a standard. Our performance expectations must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based. It is only after we clearly articulate what we want – and after we coach our followers to deliver against our expectations – that we earn the right to give feedback. And to give useful feedback, we must be a SMART ONE.

To Give Useful Feedback, Be a SMART ONE.

If our targets must be SMART, our feedback on performance aimed at those targets must also be SMART. Beyond SMART feedback, we must be a SMART ONE when we give feedback. Let's dissect it point by point and you'll see how SMART targets are foundational to being a SMART ONE when giving feedback.

<u>S</u>MART ONE: Specific – Good feedback must be specific. What, specifically did the employee do well? The requirement for specific feedback dictates the need for specific targets – it's impossible to give specific feedback if your initial target wasn't precise.

S<u>M</u>ART ONE: Measurable – Our feedback must be measurable. We must establish what will be measured, who will do the measuring and what instrument will be authoritative. Failure to be clear on the front end in causes conflict on the back end.

SM<u>A</u>RT ONE: Actionable – The feedback we give our followers must be something they can do something about – something they can act upon. Else, why bother?

SMA<u>R</u>T ONE: Relevant – The feedback must relate the observed behavior to its impact on previously articulated personal, work group and corporate goals. The feedback must detail specifically how the employee helped – or blocked – the achievement of goals.

SMAR<u>T</u> ONE: Timely – Our feedback must be timely. It must happen immediately after the observed behavior so that the recipient associates the feedback (either positive or developmental) with the activity that produced it.

SMART ONE: Objective – Good feedback is objective – it talks about objectively observable behavior that any reasonable, well-informed onlooker would see. To accomplish this objectivity, our developmental feedback must address behaviors, not conclusions.

SMART ONE: Non-threatening – Threats are designed to scare, to make afraid. People who are afraid won't move. So, good feedback is non-threatening. Good feedback is always crystal-clear about payoffs: the carrot-rewards for on-target performance and the stick-consequences for missing the target.

SMART ONE: Encouraging – Managers should always be encouraging. We encourage those doing well to keep it up, relating continued good performance to corporate and personal payoffs. We encourage those missing the mark to get back on track by tell them why the goal is important and by revisiting the consequences for off-target performance. It is encouragement (to continue or to change) that bridges current performance to future performance.

Life is Mostly Packaging.

Life is mostly packaging and nowhere is that more true than in the performance-management and feedback business. It's how we say what we say that determines how our feedback is heard. Our challenge is to package the feedback we give in a way that it has the most positive impact on the behavior of the recipient.

The Feedback Flowchart.

The best way to encourage appropriate, on-target behavior (and extinguish behavior we dislike) is through targeted, specific feedback. Intuitively, we know that it makes sense to applaud and reward the behavior we like and to use developmental feedback to discourage undesirable behavior.

Positive Feedback Encourages Behavior – Developmental Feedback Extinguishes Behavior.

When specific, timely, positive feedback is attached to on-target behavior, the behavior is encouraged. Over time, the employee will repeat the on-target behavior more often, more completely and to higher standards.

Likewise, specific, targeted developmental feedback will gradually extinguish the off-purpose behavior with which it is associated. Over time, specific developmental feedback will first weaken, then extinguish, behavior that is undesirable.

Ignoring Good Behavior Extinguishes It – Ignoring Undesirable Behavior Encourages It.

These maxims represent one of the great paradoxes of human life. Our job – no matter who the employee is or what the circumstance – is to identify behavior we like and give specific, targeted feedback that encourages the behavior. Simultaneously, we must pinpoint behavior that is unacceptable and encourage the employee to change the behavior. And we must – in both cases – articulate why the behavior sought is important and how on-target behavior can yield payoffs (WII-FM) for the employee.

Feedback Is a Process, Not an Event.

The most difficult thing about our managerial role as feedback givers is that it is relentless. It never stops. We must give constant, ongoing feedback any time we see progression toward the target or regression away from the target. We use positive feedback to encourage the behavior we like and developmental feedback to extinguish the behavior that is unacceptable. This helps prevent surprises at review time.

If the Employee is Surprised at Review Time, It's Your Fault.

An annual review should contain no surprises. After all, it's a review of the ongoing feedback the employee has received in the process of performance management.

You Don't Have to Be Mad to Give Developmental Feedback.

Somehow we have picked up the notion that we must be angry to tell someone they are missing the target. This is not true. You not only don't have to be angry, it helps to not show anger when giving developmental feedback. If we appear angry, the feedback recipient may well respond to the emotion and not the message. This will cloud the effectiveness of our developmental feedback.

Developmental Feedback Is an Investment in the Employee.

Developmental feedback is hard for many managers. It helps us give developmental feedback if we can reframe our understanding of what we are doing with the feedback. Developmental feedback is a gift, an investment in the employee. The focus is not to punish but to get the employee back on track.

I'm Not Here to Prosecute the Guilty, I'm Here to Solve the Problem.

When we give developmental feedback we always want to solve a problem not prosecute the guilty. You have to earn the right to give feedback and manage performance. You earn that right by assessing your employee's key motivators, by defining and communicating SMART targets, and by COACHing well. But all the above is useless without specific, on-target feedback, both positive and developmental – pointed at eliciting bulls-eye performance from your employees.

Chapter Six: Rewards and Consequences:

All of our work thus far has been leading up to this point. We began with vision and reduced our vision to a cogent plan. We thought about our team and assessed how to motivate each team member. We painted a clear picture of our SMART target and coached our employees on how to hit it. And we gave feedback – both positive and developmental – as employees moved toward the target. Now it's payoff time – time for the employees to reap what they have sown, to gather the rewards of on-target, purposeful behavior or to fee the consequence of repeated behavior that has missed the mark.

The process of handing out reward and consequences is derived from combining tow of our previous chapters – Motivation (Chapter 2) and Feedback and Performance Management (Chapter 5). For, in shaping rewards and consequences, we are giving tangible feedback with which we hope to engender motivation. It's as simple – and as difficult – as that.

Different Things Have to Happen to Good Performers vs. Poor Performers.

It is astounding how often managers will manage to the lowest acceptable level of performance. People-management seems to be one of the few places where we are afraid to share different rewards for high, versus low, performers. The stock market, in contrast, assigns the highest price/earnings multiples to corporations (and business sectors) that either (1) have performed well in the past, or (2) are expected to perform well in the future.

The best way to get good performance is to recognize good performance. The best way to ensure mediocre performance is to pay attention only to the folks who are worse than mediocre.

Pay Attention to the Middle.

Remember when you were in elementary school? Which students did all the teachers know? They knew the students who were really bright, the students who needed more help and the students who behaved badly. And the vast middle remained a faceless crowd. Don't make the same mistake with those you manage. Always be on the lookout for any positive behavior you want to encourage – from even your most-average employee.

Bad News Ages Poorly.

We want to identify off-target behavior and intervene immediately because bad news ages poorly. As an employee continues to do something wrong over and over, he begins to "groove" the off-purpose behavior. And the longer he does it wrong, the harder it will be to right the behavior when you finally do intervene.

Pay Off in Currency That Matters to the Employee.

One of our major jobs as managers is to pay off in currency that matters to the employee we are trying to motivate. That is, for each employee, we have to offer rewards he or she wants to receive and dangle consequences she or he wants to avoid.

In many ways, the choice of motivators does depend on what the person did last. And our job as managers is to make sure that – having listened long enough – we select the motivators that will work with this employee, this time, in these circumstances. To do this well, we must suspend our tendency to judge and really listen to our employees as they articulate their motivators.

It's Not Our Job to Make Value Judgments about Our Employees' Motivators.

As managers, it shouldn't matter to us what matters to the employees. It's not our job to make value judgments about our employees' motivators. It's our job to ferret out, to understand and to respond to the understanding by offering employees the payoffs they seek as motivators. (Or the consequences they most don't want to experience!)

Match the Magnitude of the Payoffs – or the Consequences – to the Magnitude of the Performance.

What does this mean? It means that payoffs – or consequences – should be commensurate with performance.

Ignoring Improvement in Performance Will Extinguish It – Ignoring Slippage in Performance Will Encourage It.

Our job as managers is to recognize any changes in performance and respond to them quickly and appropriately. The changes (and the related rewards and consequences) do not have to be enormous to be important. Any time there is change we must recognize it and make sure our employees know that we know the difference. We recognize improved achievement to encourage continued improvement – to let them know we can tell the difference. And we call slipping performers into account so they will fix the problem.

Just Do It – Now!

The very best time to give people payoffs – whether rewards or consequences – is immediately upon observing the behavior you want to encourage or extinguish. There is not better time to provide appropriate payoffs than when a person has just accomplished something you want to reward or when a person has just missed a target that you want to call to their attention. Give the payoff immediately so that it will be associated with the behavior you just observed.

For Different Results, Change the Pattern.

We must monitor what we've been doing in terms of feedback and rewards and consequences. If it's working we continue it. It it's not, we must tweak it. If you keep doing what you've been doing you'll keep getting what you've been getting. For different results, change the pattern.

In General, People Change Behavior When the Pain of Changing Is Less Than the Pain of Staying the Same or When the Joy of Changing is Greater Than the Joy of Staying the Same.

Our task as managers is to make the rewards of change so great that our employees can't resist. And to make the consequences of not changing so severe that our employees want to change. Either payoff – rewards or consequences – will work.

Chapter Seven: Relationship Management:

This chapter presents several tools that will help you know what the score is with your employees. As you reflect on these tools remember that there is no universal "employee."

Everyone Is Keeping Score, and That's Okay.

Everybody is keeping score, and that's okay. But if everybody is keeping score, how do we know what the score is? How do we track the score in our relationships in a way that is useful and contributes to the health of the relationships? I have found it helpful to imagine each of my relationships like a piggybank: I envision each interaction with a person as either adding to, or subtracting from, the balance in the piggybank.

Piggybanks & Relationship

- It takes a long time to build a balance.
- We invest now for a payoff in the future.
- You have to make an investment before you can make a withdrawal.
- You only get out of it what you put in it.
- Sometimes you can't get out a much as you have put in.

- It's possible – with relationships and with piggybanks – to bust them wide open.
- Once busted open, both are difficult to repair.
- Investments (and withdrawals) can be different amounts – and even in different currencies.

Use the Relationship Ledger to Know the Score.

One disciplined way to think about your employee relationships is to visualize each employee as a separate account – with its own ledger sheet for recording transactions. Some transactions (a raise, recognition for a job well done) are almost universally considered investments in an employee's account. Other transactions (a public flogging for a minor mistake) are almost always withdrawals.

What Is an Investment to One Employee Can Be a Withdrawal to Another.

Our task is to manage our employee relationships in a way that the investments we give each employee are ones that matter to them. Further, we want to eliminate – or at least minimize – any withdrawals from our employee accounts.

Absent Any Other Information, Assume Your Employee Is a Carrot Person.

While each person has their own unique investment and motivational profile, some universal investments can be assumed. Few people respond negatively to recognition for a job well done, or to being authentically listened to, or to having a say in the tasks they do and the manner in which they do them. So, as an initial operating assumptions, you can assume each new employee with whom you work is a carrot person.

If You Listen Long Enough, People Will Tell You How to Invest in (Motivate) Them.

Set aside time to sit down with your employee and really hear them. This alone will be more investment than they have received from some previous managers. Listen as they tell you what matters to them, how they like to be motivated, what their aspirations and goals and hopes are. Then tailor your management-relationship style to incorporate what you have learned.

It's the Manager's Job to Make the First Investment in a Professional Relationship.

Our job as manager is to make the first investment in our accounts with our employees. We invest by listening, by painting clear pictures of the target and by doing unto them as they would like to be done unto. Then we ask them to repay our investment with high-quality productive output targeted at our SMART performance expectations.

When Expectations and Reality Are Not Equal, Stress is Created.

Stress is created whenever expectations and reality are out of congruence. That is, we become stressed whenever we want something and don't get it. Likewise, we are stressed when we get something we don't want. There are only three options available to us when our expectations and our reality are not congruent. They are:

1. We can change our expectations
2. We can change our realities
3. We can live in the tension of expectations unmet by reality.

My general experience is that, when we "live in the tension" about things that matter to us, sooner or later there will be an explosion. When we have expectations that go unmet, something has to happen to our stress. If we change neither the expectation nor the reality, we just bank the stress. Sooner or later, we get a tremendous return on our invested stress, which often pays off in a cataclysmic confrontation.

Our task – as people who value relationships and who want to manage the balance in our relationships – is to understand fully the balances we are carrying in these relationships and to make sure that (for both ourselves and our colleagues) the expectations and the reality are congruent.

Periodic Relationship Audits Can Identify the Stress Caused by Divergent Expectations.

The relationship audit can provide a powerful reality check for us in understanding the current balance in our managerial relationships. It can also provide a useful springboard for discussion when we audit relationships with those we manage. Relationships are most healthy and in best balance when three things occur:

1. The expectations of the employee equal the employee's perceived reality;
2. The manager's expectations and reality are in balance;
3. The employee and the manager have a full, mutual understanding of each other's expectations.

Chapter Eight: Self-Management: The Toughest Nut of All:

Self-management is the toughest nut of all. It's hard to manage yourself, because you are so intimately bound up with yourself. You are prone – on the one hand – to forgive yourself offenses you would never accept in other people. And you're prone – on the other hand – to hold yourself to impossibly high standards that no one could ever reach.

Both of these excesses – the excess of impossibly high standards and the excess of cheap forgiveness – make managing ourselves the most difficult task we will ever confront, in business or in life. Still, it must be done. And there are universal truths that can make the task easier. The first of our maxims is:

Know Yourself.

The plea here is to understand fully both the great gifts with which you have been graces and the inherent shortcomings that accompany those gifts. We must understand those things we do well and the blind spots that often accompany our gifts. When we understand both our gifts and our shortcomings, we can move beyond the shortcomings, leverage the gifts and motivate ourselves.

The Seeds of Our Destruction Are Sown in Soil Tilled by Our Gifts.

In politics, in the religious world, in athletics, and doubtless in the business where you live and work, you have seen people sew the seeds of their destruction in soil tilled with their great gifts.

Know Your Weaknesses: Grow and Staff around Them.

We must know our weaknesses and grow and staff around them. That is, we must fully understand the places we are most likely to fail and surround ourselves with people who will prevent us from failing in those areas. Simultaneously, we must continue to press ourselves to grow, so that our weak spot eventually becomes a place of competence and we are less likely to wander into a minefield of self-destruction, following the compass of our gifts.

Staffing around our weaknesses can, however, cause some interpersonal chaffing, because people whose strengths countervail against our weaknesses often see to us to be incompatible.

Nobody is Sane – You're Looking for Compatible Craziness.

We're not looking for sanity, perfection or normalcy. We're looking for compatible craziness. As you staff around your weaknesses, seek people with corresponding strengths, people with who you can work as collegial partners. Their personal compatibility with you is equally as important as their professional competence. (It's a rare person among us who can work continuously with someone we intensely dislike – irrespective of how well he does his job!)

So look for compatible craziness. Staff around your weaknesses, but don't abrogate your obligation to develop areas in which you are weak.

Take Yourself On.

Take yourself on. Reflect on your life. How are you likely to fail those around you? What do you do especially well? In what circumstances do you do your best work? What motivates you?

Observe yourself as you move through life to see what patterns you can discern and what lessons you can learn. Don't settle for the lame rationalization that "it's just the way I am." It may be the way you were born, but it doesn't have to be how you live!

Know yourself so you can take yourself on. It's a life-long task, one at which we will never become perfect. It requires enormous discipline, because we are calling ourselves to go against natural grain: to become people who have developed the shadow sides of our temperament and our gifts, to become people who are now fully rounded and whole.

This is a journey that many people do not have the courage to undertake; one whose rewards far outweigh the costs. It's a journey that requires action.

It's Easier to Act Yourself into a New Way of Thinking Than to Think Yourself into a New Way of Acting.

This is a foundational precept of cognitive therapy: the belief that if we begin to act in a certain way, the action will lead (and form) our thinking. So, as you face challenges that threaten to overwhelm you, a first step is to act. Act like someone who can solve the problem (even if you don't think that someone is you).

So, as you manage yourself, cultivate a predisposition to positive, on-purpose action. It will make all of life much easier.

Be Your Own Best Boss.

Our ultimate charge is to be our own best boss. To incorporate – in our self-management – all that we know to be true about good management. We must create an environment in which our payoffs for on-target and purposeful behavior are clear and appropriate and our consequences for off-target and off-purpose behavior are severe enough to avoid. Shaping appropriate motivators is critical work because the world seems to hold only two kings of workers.

There Are Two Types of People: Them That Won't Work and Then That Won't Quit.

It's often difficult to determine how hard we are working. And we are sometimes more forgiving of sloth in our own activities that in the activities of those we supervise.

You Always Pass Out Before You Die!

I don't know if it is a physiological truth that we always pass out before we die. I have never pushed myself, intellectually or physically, to the point of a coma. But I do know that it is an aphorism that has sustained me when I was fatigued and trying to slog through the last difficult steps of a project.

As you keep working, you will undoubtedly encounter situations that aren't always going the way you planned. You will meet problems that must be solved, difficult and vexing circumstances that must be faced and dealt with. Here are some maxims I have found useful in these circumstances – maxims that helped me stay focused on finding solutions rather than pointing fingers or getting "hooked" emotionally.

Problems Live in the Past; Solutions Live in the Future.

Problems live in the past. It is often easy, as we journey into the land of problem solving and conflict resolution, to get so wrapped up in talking about the problem that we never look to the future for the solution. This is a mistake. None of us is fortunate enough to have a rewind button on life. We can't simply reach up and press that button, undo the wrong and make it right. The wrong has been done.

Our only option is to makes changes so that the wrong is not repeated. So we look to the past only long enough to identify root causes for the problems we encounter. Then we become future-focused, realizing that the solution to the problem lies in the future, the only place we yet have a chance to go, live and act.

Be Solutions-Focused: Concentrate on Win-Win Outcomes.

For some reason, problems pull out the petulant four-year-old in each of us. A problem occurs and our first inclination is to point a finger. We must lay blame, bring the charges and hold the trial. And the problem just sits there, unsolved and smirking. As we move toward managing ourselves professionally, we need to let go of this model. We want a solution, not a trial. So we embrace the wisdom of "I'm not here to prosecute the guilty; I'm here to solve the problem."

We visit the problem long enough to uncover key facts. We probe possible solutions, looking for overlapping areas of interest. We find the solution that will do the most good for the most people, then we put that solution in place.

The Madder You Get, the Dumber You Are.

I have never met a person who could make better decisions when angry than when calm. Our challenge is to manage ourselves in a way that we can avoid anger – at least the trembling anger that leaves us sputtering rather than speaking. Anger creates situations that rupture relationships, ruptured relationships lead to enemies, and enemies accumulate.

Friends Come and Friends Go, but Enemies Accumulate.

Self management – actually anger management – is critical to slow the accumulation of enemies and help us to be effective in our business and professional relationships.

One factor that contributes to flash-point anger and hair-trigger responses is fatigue: exhaustion born of overwork and under-recreation. It's often bewitching for us to believe we are indispensable and to consequently dispense with our own vacation so that we can stay at our desk and slog away. Don't do it!

In Twenty Years, the Only Person Who Will Remember That You Didn't Take Your Vacation Is You (and Your Family)!

As you have doubtless heard, few people remark on their deathbeds, "I sure wish I'd spent more time at work." So take that vacation. Leave the cell phone and laptop at home and re-create with your family and yourself that sense of joy and peace that comes from leisure time well spent.

While time away is profoundly restorative, the return transition can be wrenching. So when you return, always remember our next aphorism.

Never Quit on the First Day Back!

I don't know how many times I have returned from a relaxing vacation, only to get sucked into the vortex of overflowing in-baskets, flashing red lights on my voice mail and email that scrolled for pages and pages. At this point I always want to quit. Don't. What you are experiencing is the inevitable reentry from the world of leisure and recreation to a world of production and commerce. The latter funds the former, so give them both their due and stay with it long enough to remember why you chose this vocation in the first place.

As we close our reflection on self-management, it's imperative to remind yourself of this last adage.

It's Okay to Fire Yourself.

I've certainly been there, I bet you have too. Dragging along in a job that is less and less satisfying – where you find yourself doing work that embarrasses you more and more. You stay in the job because inertia is a powerful force and you're comfortable.

This is the point where you should fire yourself. Either fire yourself up with enthusiasm for the job, get off your duff and start being the professional you once were when you loved the job, or fire yourself from the job. Find a job you like better. Either way, it's okay to fire yourself!

Self-management: it's the toughest nut of all, because you are the toughest nut you will ever have to manage. But it's imperative if you are to become the manager you want to be and take your company to places that it needs to go.

Chapter Nine: Leadership:

Leadership – like motivation – is quicksilver and ephemeral. It's hard to define precisely but easy to recognize when you encounter it. Like motivation, leadership has been plagued with a myriad of theories, dictates, models and often-conflicting directives. Leadership is a critical and difficult topic – one that has fascinated human beings for centuries.

Whatever your theory, there are some things about leadership that are fundamentally true. This chapter is devoted to those truths.

Any Follower's Experience of a Group is Most Directly Affected by the Leadership Style of the Leader.

Clearly, the leadership style at the apex of an organization pyramid is a critical characteristic in determining the experience of all those who find themselves within the organization. In fact, this is the impetus behind our next maxim.

You Can Best Read the Climate of an Organization by Surveying Those Who Actually Do the Work.

The people who do the work are the ones closest to the customer and to the end product. They have the best and most unbiased read on the true tenor of the organization. And their experience of the organization is most directly affected by the leadership style of their immediate leader.

Note the word "immediate" in the above sentence. It is possible that you have observed pockets of happiness and competence inside organizations that were overall a hopeless morass of disenchanted, de-motivated petulance. Likewise, even in the most motivated and high-energy organizations, there are always small pockets of discontent and grumbling. The one single thread running through these pockets – pockets that are discontinuous with the overall organization – is the leader.

Look at the leader and you can predict what his immediate organization will be like. The single greatest predictor of happiness and productivity in a work group is the level of conscious, intentional, competent service provided by the leader.

Those Lead Best Who Serve the Most.

This is one of the most telling aphorisms in this chapter. It is those leaders whose ultimate goal is to serve – to serve both the followers and the greater reason for the organization – who wind up generating esprit de corps, enthusiasm, highly motivated followers and successful achievement of difficult goals.

We must remember to make those decisions that best serve the long-term interests of our people, our organization, our customers and the other constituencies to which we are accountable. Remarkably, once we begin to serve, leadership will take care of itself. So service is a foundational precept for leadership. Another fundamental requirement of good leaders is that they remember to do what they already know how to do.

It's Not What We Don't Know That Gets Us in Trouble – It's What We Don't Do.

The problem is that people are not doing what they already know how to do. For example, in leadership, we know that input raises buy-in. Yet we repeatedly fall back into our old patterns of making decisions by executive fiat and imposing them on our followers. Then we are surprised when our followers do not embrace these decisions with open arms and give us accolades for being such visionary decision-makers.

Followers like input into decisions – any decisions they will have to implement. The more input they have, the more likely they are to embrace the decision that has been made and to move out with full commitment to ensure that it works. We serve our followers by involving them in the decisions where they have a reasonable chance of giving productive input and by incorporating their suggestions into the direction we take.

When we move out into our organizations to allow people to have input and when we articulate the "why" of corporate policies, we are filling two key roles. Our job as leaders is to interpret "down" and advocate "up." Let's reflect on these concepts in a little more detail.

As a Manager, You Are a "Linking Pin" – You Link Your Work Group to the Larger Company.

Managers are linking pins who connect their work or department to the overall organization. And effective work as a linking pin demands that we serve two roles.

We interpret the policies of the larger organization to those who are followers. That is, we tell them the "why." Why is it that our company has decided to change our product line? Or raise our prices? Or not pursue particular markets? These are questions our followers want to know answers to, questions that will plague them and raise doubts in their minds if they are not addressed fully. So one of our roles is to fully articulate and interpret the "why" of corporate decisions.

Our second role as leaders is to advocate for our followers. And we advocate for them by gathering their concerns and understanding their needs, then articulating those needs to the organizational hierarchy above us.

Interpretation and advocacy are two tasks we must take on if information is to pass up and down our organizational hierarchy efficiently and effectively. Beyond that, however, these dual roles of interpreter and advocate make relational sense too, as evidenced by our next maxim – one of the great truths of human relations.

People Don't Care How Much We Know Until They Know How Much We Care.

One way to demonstrate that you care is to let your followers fully into an understanding of why things are being done (interpret down). We also demonstrate we care when we advocate for them concerning issues, changes or ideas about how things can be done better or more productively (advocate up).

We demonstrate how much we care by taking seriously our employees' need to know and their need to have input into the decisions, choices and strategies embraced by our organization. We demonstrate to our teammates how much we care by engaging them as significant and meaningful contributors to the "why" as well as the "what" of our organization's goals. In doing all of this, we are modeling for them the behaviors we want them to display as they engage the team members who work directly for them.

Two additional aphorisms augment the learning proffered by "People don't care how much we know until they know how much we care."

Managers Don't Win if Their Employees Lose!

This learning comes late to many managers. They assume that they exist above and apart from their teams and that they can impose on or communicate to their teams policies that cause the team to lose while the manager is winning. It does a manager, a team leader or a coach no good to win at the expense of his team.

What Do You Want to Do: Win the Fight or Solve the Problem?

The key for managers in dealing with problem employees and problem situations is to ask ourselves – before we enter the fray – "What particular outcomes will lead us closest to the successful resolution of the problem?" Generally, one of those outcomes in not winning the fight. So the proper stance for us is to enter every interaction with an employee focused solely on solving the problem.

The choice is ours: solve the problem and move forward as professional managers ready to take on the next challenge that our organization deals us, or win the fight and stay stuck in the current problem, having exacerbated it by aggravating the employee and also by unnecessarily using up productive energy that could have gone against the resolution of the core problem.

Interestingly, the win-the-fight/solve-the-problem dilemma dovetails nicely with our next maxim.

Make Your Leadership Style a Choice, Not a Default.

For good or ill, most of us, at least as we begin, manage as we were managed by our first manager. Either that, or we manage as we were parented. For many of us, these are not good models.

As people who have been charged by an organization with the obligation of shepherding a business team to reach overarching business goals, we can't afford to lead by default. We lead by best serving most when we know multiple management and leadership styles and can adopt the one best suited to the group we now have before us. That's our obligation.

Beyond choosing an appropriate leadership style, we must be consistent. That is, our employees must be able to predict dependably how we will behave in any set of circumstances; we cannot afford to confuse them.

You Can Be a Hardass or You Can Be a Candyass, but You've Got to Be Consistent!

It is our job as managers to suspend our moods in interactions with our employees so that we are a predictable constant in an unpredictable and transitory world.

When Stressed, We Return to Our Most Familiar – and Most Comfortable – Behaviors.

We lead best and we serve most by insulation our employees from the vicissitudes of our personal emotional ups and downs. We lead best and serve most when we deal with our followers as professionals, when we act like managers who value employees and when we lead employees with a purposeful and intentional style that pulls the best performance out of them.

We close out our examination of the key maxims that inform professional leadership with four conceptual maxims that can overarch and undergird our work as leaders. I often have managers come to me and say, "I don't have time to manage my people, I've got too much work to do!" I always chuckle when I hear this – it's as if doing work and managing people were two separate tasks. And that is not the case at all.

Managing People Is Work!

Managing people is work. It's a hard transition for many of us to make, especially those of us who were first paid in our working lives for the output we generated from our own hands, minds and computer terminals and who are now called upon to generate consistently superior performance from other people's work. It is, however, a critical transition.

The next time you think you have too much work to manage your people, ask yourself: what is my real work? Realize that managing people is work. It takes time, but done well, it will yield far more productive outcomes than you could ever generate alone. Now for the second aphorism.

Where You Stand Depends on Where You Sit.

One of our jobs as we make decisions is to be conscious of the position in which we stand so that we will be fully aware of where we sit on an issue. We also need to understand where our followers stand on an issue depends on where they sit.

I Don't Care Who Drives as Long as I Get to Pick the Destination.

There's no need to get wrapped around the axle about who's controlling the interaction, especially if the interaction is moving logically toward an outcome that the manager seeks in the first place. If the employee is going where you want him to go, provide him with the resources and get out of the way!

Finally, it's important for each of us as leaders to remember that – though we have to get it all done – we don't have to do it all.

The Leader Doesn't Have to Do It All. The Leader Has to See That It All Gets Done!

We were all first promoted for our facility at doing a task. Now our task is to pull superior performance out of those who work for us. The sooner we realize that managing people is work and the sooner we free ourselves to lead rather than merely do, the better job we will do for our employees, our organization, ourselves and all the other constituencies we serve.

Chapter Ten: Shaping Your Management Philosophy:

Whatever your ultimate management philosophy, you might find this first maxim to be quite liberating.

A Hundred Percent of Nobody Don't Like Nothing.

You can't make them all happy – so don't try. A key to failure is trying to please everyone.

No Matter What Happens, Somebody Will Find a Way to Take It Far Too Seriously.

Work is not life. And it's important to remember this, both in times of great jubilation and in times of great despair. No matter what happens, someone will find a way to take it too seriously. Don't let that someone be you.

Our first two maxims dealt with overarching observations that can help us shape our management philosophy. We now move to more pointed aphorisms – those that can inform how we interact with the people in our organization.

It's Okay to Ask Them to Work.

Managers are afraid to ask their people to work. And that's a big problem. It's okay to ask them to work. In fact, it's imperative to ask them to work. Paint a clear picture of a SMART target. Coach well, with specific, targeted, positive and developmental feedback. Shape rewards and consequences that matter to the employee before you. Then ask them to do the work!

This is not arrogant. This is not bossy. This is not pushy or impolite or dictatorial. This is your job! And you must do it directly and openly – unencumbered by ambiguity. You must ask your employee to do the job. Then ask him if he is going to do it – get a commitment.

Get a Commitment.

When you ask someone to do a job, you've taken the first, but not the only, step you need to take. A most important step remains: get a commitment. Get the employee's commitment to complete the project, to the specifications, within the budget, by the time agreed upon.

You Can Help People Change, or You Can Change the People.

It is our job to help them change, when change is what is called for. We help them learn new skills and we help them develop strengths where they once had weaknesses. We help them grow – because it's our job.

But it's not our job to care more than they care. Help your people change, or change your people.

Don't Send Your Ducks to Eagle School.

As we ask our employees to change, we must bump the requested change up against the employees' skill set and knowledge set. There's not use asking people to do things at which they will inevitably fail. Don't send your ducks to eagle school. Good ducks make bad eagles. Let your employees be who (and what) they are. But demand that they be the best that they can be.

Once You Demand Excellence, Some People Will Move Up and Others Will Move On – Either Way, the Organization Wins.

The demand for excellence will have two disparate effects on your employees. Some will be energized. Others will be afraid. It's your job to maximize the first group and minimize the second. And your team will be better for this effort. You demanded excellence – and most of them moved up. Those that didn't, moved on – of their own accord or at your impetus. In the end, your team is stronger due to both set of occurrences.

"Dynamic Tension" Builds More Than Strong Muscles.

Many of our maxims capture an essential truth, yet can be countered with a directly opposite maxim. There are many truths that can be captured in diametrical opposed maxims. An example: "He who hesitates is lost," can be counterbalanced with, "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

"Out of sight, out of mind" contradicts, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." "Life is mostly packaging" is offset by, "You can't judge a book by its cover." Which is true? Both. Or neither. It's driven by the circumstances. The paired maxims that we just examined illuminate the law of dynamic tension.

Our Western minds want to drive all thought to one of two poles. It is black, or is it white? But the truth is often found somewhere in the great middle ground. We must chew over the anchor points, then work our way toward the decision that best fits our current circumstances.

As you begin to put these maxims into practice in your own managerial and personal life, a couple of cautions are in order.

To a Kid with a New Hammer, Everything Looks Like a Nail.

You are going to identify a maxim in this book that you really love. You will repeat this maxim all the time, even when it doesn't apply and that's too bad. Don't be like a kid with a new hammer. Don't hit every situation with the same maxim. The maxims are not a substitute for your own thinking, your own critical examination of the circumstances you confront. Instead, the maxims are a starting point for your thinking. The maxims convey the tribal wisdom from generations of managerial experience. Glean what you can from these offerings, apply it and leave the rest behind.

If You Keep Doing What You've Been Doing, You'll Keep Getting What You've Been Getting.

To get different results, we have to do different things. It's as simple (and as difficult) as that.

If You Don't Know What You Stand For, You'll Fall for Anything.

It is our job to fully understand our own motivational profile, to explore and examine the things that matter most to us and to make sure they are ours. What is it you really stand for? What matters most to you? How we live is who we become. Know what you stand for or you'll fall for anything.

All of our work together has been pointed primarily at management – at asking them to work. And now we're going to look at one final maxim – a maxim that points us to a reality far beyond the workplace.

Your Job Is Not Your Life.

Your job may well be your livelihood, but it's not your life. Your life is the summing-up of your hobbies, your family, your avocations, your outside interests and your work. Your livelihood is the income-producing work you do to underwrite your life.

It is a common mistake in America: people confuse *what they do* with *who they are,* and this is the genesis of the depression that's endemic to corporate layoffs and downsizing.

Love your work. Take it seriously. Grow as a professional. Become your own best self. But don't get confused: your job is not your life. You are more than your job description. You are more than what you do.

Identify your core values and live out of them for a life that is more than a livelihood.

And while you're at your office, don't forget ***The Golden Rules for Managers!***

Message from Gary Tomlinson:

I hope you enjoyed reading this book report. It's important to understand that this book report should not take the place of you reading; *"The Golden Rules for Managers – 119 Incredible Lessons for Leadership Success.* Frank McNair's book contains a lot of stories, models and examples that are not contained in my book report. You can order his book from Amazon or find it at your local bookstore.

Enjoy the education and wisdom contained within this book report and feel free to share it with other because the "illiterate of the 21st Century will not be those who cannot read or write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn."