TWELVE MANAGERIAL PITFALLS

by

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This article is about managerial pitfalls—common traps that can befall managers in dealing with their subordinates, in dealing with their peers and others, and in dealing with themselves.* Although management is concerned with a number of inanimate topics such as record keeping, scheduling, cost control, marketing, equipment utilization and quality, managers must also deal with the people who must carry out the decisions that pertain to these topics. Thus, while management requires a lot of technical knowledge, management also requires competency in managing the human side of enterprise.**(16) As has been said, "management is the art of getting things done through people."*** Here is where the pitfalls lie.

It is my experience, as a manager and as a professor, that dealing with people is an important and difficult job. Most managers seem to recognize this, at least intellectually. If you ask them if dealing with people is important they will say, "yes." Unfortunately, the belief we state and the belief reflected in our actions are often inconsistent.(2) What we do as managers, often differs from what we say we believe is good management. One reason for this is that we fall victim, as I have, to certain temptations, that I've labelled as managerial pitfalls in dealing with ourselves and with others.

The purpose of this paper is to describe specific actions and attitudes that constitute the pitfalls, identify the reasons we easily fall victim to them, and point out their negative consequences. In discussing them, I wish to empasize that the actions and attitudes have their proper place in the practice of management. It is my fundamental view of management that there is no one best way to manage. A manager's approach should be varied to fit each situation. Sometimes the actions and attitudes discussed in the following pages can be appropriate. The problem lies in their being used inappropriately and habitually. Being aware of them can help a manager to avoid their inappropriate use and to utilize them only with discretion, after considering potential cause and effect relationships.

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**Refer to numbered bibliography for relevant reference.

***Mary Parker Follett (17).

PITFALLS IN DEALING WITH SUBORDINATES

1. *Not delegating significant responsibility.* The idea of a hierarchy of authority (chain of command) in an organization implies the existence of a vertical division of labour. Under this concept the higher manager concentrates on broader, longer range matters and subordinates carry out more day-to-day operating responsibilities, within the general guidelines (policies) established by the higher manager.(19) The pitfall that managers can fall into, lies in keeping all significant responsibility and delegating to subordinates only tasks that require little thought and initiative. One form of this pattern occurs when a manager, having established *objectives*, also spells out in detail the *means* to be used to reach those objectives. Another form occurs when a manager countermands the decisions made by the subordinates, constantly "second guessing" what the subordinate has decided. When a manager fails to delegate significant responsibility and authority, subordinates become merely "errand boys" with no opportunity to be managers in their own right and no opportunity to make decisions of any importance.

There are several reasons why managers fall into such a pattern. It often is, or at least seems, to be easier to do something oneself than take the time to explain a project in detail. Futhermore, if the manager has greater technical ability or the subordinate has limited experience, it is natural for managers to have more confidence in their own judgement than in the subordinate's. At times, it may even be clear that the manager can do the job better. Also doing a job oneself or keeping a tight rein on the work (second guessing the subordinate's decisions), gives one a greater sense of being in control. Delegation requires taking some risk that the subordinate will make a mistake, one for which you, the manager, will be held ultimately responsible. For all of these reasons, it can be very tempting to do the job yourself and delegate little actual authority and tasks.

Yet the consequences of not delegating significant authority and tasks are appreciable. First, it usually leads to a manager becoming overloaded through doing both jobs, or having no time to plan ahead and deal with broader issues. Second, failing to delegate usually leaves subordinates feeling under-utilized, less interested in their job and even frustrated. Their motivation is likely to be low and their performance little more than the minimum necessary to get by. Finally, subordinates who are relegated to a routine role with little significant responsibility and therefore no challenge are not going to develop into effective managers. To not delegate is both to under-utilize the human resources of an organization and do nothing to develop and enlarge those resources. While there are times when one should not delegate, to fall into the trap of making it a habit is to run the risk of incurring negative consequences.

532

2. *By-passing the chain of command.* An organization usually has an established chain of command with defined areas of responsibility and individuals arranged in a hierarchy of authority relationships. An important principle of management, historically, was that one should always honour the chain of command and communicate with those higher or lower in the chain only through those in intermediary positions.(21) Bypassing is a violation of this principle. A typical example would be a boss giving orders directly to a subordinate's subordinate. In a strict use of the term, even discussing some issue with a subordinate's subordinate so as to gather information first hand, would also be considered to be by-passing. Another example would be going to someone's boss about a problem that was their responsibility without first having tried to deal with them directly and without informing them that you are going to "go over their head." This kind of by-passing is most common among people at the same level in an organization, but can also involve subordinates going to their boss's boss!

There are situations where by-passing can be appropriate. If time is short and immediate action is critical, by-passing may be essential. On some occasions where complex information is needed, it can be appropriate to seek information direct from the source to minimize distortion and gain greater richness of understanding. (However, this reason can also become an excuse that tempts one to by-pass when it really isn't necessary). As organizations have grown in size and have begun to operate in dynamic, changing environments where quick action is necessary, a strict adherence to the chain of command can be terribly cumbersome. Consequently, a practice of direct communication among individuals in different departments even at different hierarchical levels has become more commonplace. In that most complex of organizational forms, the matrix structure(8), where an individual may have two bosses, direct contact and by-passing is almost a way of life. However, even in these situations, bosses will make it a point to keep by-passed individuals informed about their actions.

Thus, even where by-passing to gather and communicate information and to give orders occurs there is still some effort to honour the chain of command because the consequences of unnecessary by-passing can be great. Frequent by-passing can leave the individual uniformed and therefore less able to perform effectively. It can also undercut the individual's status in the eyes of his or her subordinates, and thereby further reduce the individual's effectiveness. It can be demeaning to one's self-esteem to be by-passed. Bosses who by-pass easily communicate the impression that they consider their subordinates to be unimportant and even incompetent. All of these consequences reduce morale and often create a relationship of dislike and disrespect.

533

3. *Cutting off questions and suggestions.* Whenever any action is proposed or announced those affected by the decision or responsible for its implementation frequently have questions or suggestions that never get expressed or discussed; questions about the reasons behind the action, questions of clarification about the decision-maker's full intent, and suggestions for potentially beneficial modifications.

There are reasons why potential questions and suggestions never get expressed. Managers often act in a manner that cuts off questions and suggestions. This can take the form of an overt, direct refusal to accept questions or suggestions. It can also be quite subtle and indirect, such as reacting to a question with a tone of irritation or even one of surprise, thereby communicating displeasure. In some situations, the problem may lie in the failure to *invite* suggestions and to ask questions to be sure that the directions have been clearly understood.(12)

The inadvertent cutting off of questions and suggestions can occur unintentionally. If we are preoccupied with something we can be inattentive or even seem brusque and irritated. If we are busy, it may be difficult to invite questions and suggestions that may require a long response. Furthermore, some suggestions and questions can be naive and even impertinent. In such situations it may be appropriate to cut off further discussion rather than waste time, just as it can be appropriate to cut off pointless complaining and griping.

On the orther hand, these reasons can simply be rationalizations to allow us to avoid having to deal with a difficult question. Yet, the consequences are many. To cut off suggestions is to reduce the possibility of building on the ideas and creativity of your staff. Cutting off questions and suggestions may cause you to miss an opportunity to teach and develop your staff. Given that misunderstanding so easily occurs among people, cutting off questions can allow subordinates to go away with less clarity and understanding of what is truly wanted. This in turn can reduce their effectiveness in carrying out the decision. Finally, one way people develop commitment to a course of action is by examining the idea in depth and examining any doubt they may have through questions. Thus, cutting off questions can reduce commitment and enthusiasm to help make the decision work.

4. *Reliance on threat to motivate and control.* Managers must be able to exert influence, and in doing so they have several bases of power on which they can rely. The promise of reward and the threat of punishment are two common bases of power and influence. We are all familiar with both, and most managers have some of each by virtue of their formal position. But there are other, less obvious bases. First, there is what has been called legiti-

mate power. People follow directions, in part, because they believe that it is right and proper (e.g. legitimate) for the individual to be giving directions. For example, if an automobile accident occurs and, in the absence of the police, someone steps into the road and begins to direct traffic, most drivers will "obey" that person's signals. They may do this partly because they realize that it may be to their individual self interest to do so (e.g. rewarding) but also, in part, because recognizing the need for traffic to be directed around the accident, they see it as legitimate that someone step into the role and direct traffic. People also obey a person with expertise, and someone they admire and like (with whom they can identify).

Thus, managers have five bases of power : reward, coercive, legitimate, expert, and referent power. (6, 7) The pitfall is overreliance on coercive power (threat of punishment) particularly by frequently emphasizing the negative consequences of failing to follow directions. Even the giving of directions in an especially stern and authoritative tone of voice can communicate a threat, and be overdone.

The display of power is common in nature and this is probably one reason we overuse threat as managers. Also reward and punishment power are more concrete than are the other three bases of power, consequently, their use can be more self-confirming. Their very tangibleness can generate a sense of confidence for the person seeking to exert influence; and, let's be realistic, threat can be an effective way to influence other people. Furthermore, there are times people need to be reminded of the consequences of not living up to their commitments. Finally, managers overuse threat because they believe that fear is the best means of motivating people. That is to say, they hold a theory that people are primarily motivated by fear, and forget or fail to recognize other sources of motivation; such as, a desire to do a good job, an underlying sense of responsibility, and loyalty to their supervisor.

The consequences of threat can include obedience, but also resentment and other negative attitudes. If repeated, a general level of hostility and even anger can develop; and hostile/angry employees are seldom productive employees. Although seeking to be popular can also be a pitfall for management, a group of surly, rebellious employees is equally bad; and such employees are unlikely to exhibit any loyalty to the manager or the organization if the occasion arises when their loyalty is needed.

5. *Not devoting time to developing people.* One fundamental responsibility of a manager is the training and development of people, all people from hourly employees to subordinate managers (4, 20). This may be accomplished through day-to-day coaching; through delegation and careful job assignments designed to expand the subordinate's experience; through

535

including subordinates in on one's own deliberations and decision making; through encouraging subordinates to raise questions and offer suggestions; through arranging for and encouraging subordinates to participate in formal training programmes; and finally, through encouraging and supporting subordinates to try new things and take risks (including the risk of failing on a particular project). These all usually require conscious thought and the expenditure of time on the part of the manager. It is not altogether surprising if they are given a low priority by managers or even ignored altogether. They require time and thoughtful deliberation.

Another reason managers fall victims to this pitfall is their concept of the role of a manager. One conception of a manager's role views that role as including three aspects: (a) manager as technical leader, (b) manager as boss and (c) manager as coach.(2) The first two reflect heroic assumptions of the manager as the expert and superior; as the source of technical expertise and as the person in charge who determines what people should do. The third views the manager as a cultivator of the organization's human resources; as a mentor and coach who helps people to be productive and move toward their potential as contributing employees. Of course, all three aspects are part of the manager's role, but historically management thought has emphasized the first two. Consequently, it is not surprising if managers have a conception of their role that gives little weight to their responsibility for the development of people.

Sometimes managers who recognize their responsibility for developing people hesitate to do so lest they lose them through promotion or fear that their own position may be given to a lower paid subordinate who exhibits the capacity to handle their job. In other words, developing subordinates can appear to work against one's own self-interest. While this fear is often overstated, there can be some reality to these fears depending on the attitudes and policies of higher management. Another reason managers fail to devote time to developing people lies in the fact that the benefits are seldom immediate; and short range costs frequently intrude on long range considerations. This can be a particularly powerful factor if the organization's reward system not only fails to reward the manager for developing people but actually creates a disincentive for developing people (e.g. a budget that disallows any expenditure for training).

So there are reasons why a manager might decide to give little emphasis to developing people, but the pitfall lies in overestimating the risks and also in not viewing it as a basic responsibility. The consequences of ignoring this responsibility can be appreciable for both the manager and the organization. One reason managers are not promoted is because there is no one to take their place. Managers who have developed a replacement are more promotable.

An organization in which management treats development as the individual employee's responsibility and not as a part of each manager's role often faces confusion and loss of momentum when key people retire or leave for other reasons. Furthermore, as an organization grows and it needs to fill additional positions it is often more effective to promote from within. Promotion from within is often less disruptive and provides reward and incentive to existing personnel.

PITFALLS IN DEALING WITH OTHERS (boss, peers, members of other departments)

6. *Ignoring functional interdependencies (not keeping others informed).* The activities of many individuals and many departments of an organization are interdependent. What a manager does affects what another can do and vice versa. One of management's important responsibilities is the co-ordination of the various interdependent activities that must fit together to allow the organization to reach its objectives. While responsibility for co-ordination has been seen as belonging to the next higher levels of management, in fact every manager has some responsibility for co-ordination. Yet managers sometimes act as if their function exists in isolation from other functions and, consequently, they fail to keep others informed about actions they plan to take that may affect the work of other departments. For example, if the Water Department of a city fails to inform the Highway Department of its plans to lay a new pipe line under the street, or the Highway Department fails to inform the Water Department of its plans to widen the road and resurface the pavement, we can have the ridiculous situation of the city tearing up a newly resurfaced road. Even less important examples exist, but all can lead to confusion, inefficiency and irritation.

While it is usually desirable to keep others informed there are reasons why managers sometimes tend not to. For one thing, the interdependencies are not always clear. Managers may not realize that their plans might affect someone else. Secondly, lack of co-ordination sometimes occurs because managers interpret job descriptions too literally and assume that it is someone else's responsibility. In our example, both the Water Department and the Highway Department might assume that co-ordination was the municipal clerk's responsibility, not theirs. Job descriptions help clarify responsibilities, but they also can create "cracks" between jobs for which no one takes responsibility. While managers need not do someone else's work, neither should they ignore possible cracks and fail to make sure that someone is going to take on the responsibility. Thirdly, informing others can allow potential opposition a chance to get organized. There may be competitive reasons to not reveal your plans too early. Finally, coordination can take time away from other work. So it is understandable if managers sometimes fall into the habit of acting unilaterally and not co-ordinating properly.

One consequence, however, is confusion, duplication of effort and lost efficiency so that organizational effectiveness suffers significantly. Another consequence is interdepartmental and interpersonal tension and friction. No one likes to be caught by surprise, no one likes to undertake extra work if it could be avoided, and no one likes to be treated inconsiderately. These cause irritation and resentment which in turn can cause a deterioration in relationships. While the interaction between individual departments may always generate a certain amount of tension and even friction, causing people extra work or treating them as if their responsibilities were unimportant, will usually create illwill and tend to create less co-operativeness and possibly generate retaliation in the future.

7. *Not listening.* It is possible to listen to someone without listening effectively. We can actually not hear what is said due to inattention. We can hear the words but make little effort to consider their importance or what the speaker is feeling. We can pay attention but go no further than the literal words, and consequently, not consider what the person really means (i.e. is trying to say but may be saying unclearly). Finally, we can overlook the fact that people interpret words differently and not make certain that the speaker's meaning is the same as our interpretation. Effective listening requires one to take steps actively to help insure full and accurate communication (12).

People do not listen well because they are pre-occupied with something else and have not shifted their attention or because they are busy thinking up a response to the first few points they've heard (this latter is especially likely to happen when the two people are in disagreement). People also do not listen well because they just don't bother, since listening is hard work, or they haven't developed the habit and skill of listening to the "words behind the words being spoken."

The consequences of not listening are misunderstanding and incomplete communication. These, in turn, can lead to less effective problem solving and poor co-ordination of interdependent functions. Furthermore, interpersonal relations can be strongly affected by not listening. Have you ever had the experience of your boss continuing to sign letters when you are trying to make a report or ask a question? It is not a pleasant experience. The apparent inattention communicates a sense that your report is of little importance. The author knows of one manager who made sure he gave every visitor his full attention. He always left his desk and sat with the visitor in chairs located on the other side of his large office. The action communicated to the visitor that one had his full attention and interest. He built good interpersonal relations with that practice and avoided the paitfall of not listening.

8. *Underestimating one's own capacity to exert influence.* During a working career, most managers at some time find themselves facing a difficult situation with little apparent power to change it. Such situations might include the following: a superior who appears to not be open to suggestions, a boss who by-passes and countermands your instructions or falls into any of the pitfalls already discussed, peers who are un-cooperative, and organizational policies that seem counterproductive. While lack of authority (power) and a limited capacity to exert influence can be a reality, underestimating one's actual capacity and therefore not really trying to change the situation is a debilitating pitfall. It is easy to fall into the habit of looking at a situation, judging it as unchangeable, and then never *testing* that assessment; taking no action, not even a small step.

This habit comes, in part, from thinking in extremes. Certainly, a superior who is very status conscious is likely to react negatively to someone who bluntly criticizes the superior's key project as absolutely worthless. But that is an extreme case. Yet as a consultant, I've met managers who offer such an example when asked for evidence that their boss is as close minded as they perceive. It is true that asking questions and making suggestions often involves some risk, but quite often we humans seem to overestimate the risks (misjudge the other's power and reaction) because we can think of an extreme case.

Another cause lies in having limited skills in managing a boss (or someone else you don't control). Some ideas that have been proposed for managing your boss are : making it a point to understand his objectives, his preferences, his managerial style and the pressures he is experiencing; working to make his life easier by taking initiative to do tasks that need doing; doing your job dependably; keeping him informed and not catching him by surprise; complimenting your boss when you can sincerely; and connecting your requests and suggestions to organizational goals (9, 14, 18).

While there may be some risk involved, the consequences of not offering even a small suggestion or making an initial effort to change an unsatisfactory situation are lost opportunities to make improvements and loss of self-respect. An organization where no one is willing to speak up is usually an organization where problems remain unsolved and employees feel under-utilised and discouraged. Superiors have a responsibility to encourage questions and suggestions, but subordinates have a parallel responsibility to offer them.

9. *Avoiding unpleasantness and potential conflict.* In any organization, misunderstandings and interpersonal tensions develop from time to time. Furthermore, managers often face such difficult issues as disciplining individuals who are violating rules or not performing. They also face situations

where the proper solution means some unpleasantness for one or more employees. It can be unpleasant as well as difficult to deal with such situations. The temptation is to ignore them without making any effort to change or make improvements.

The temptation to avoid conflict or unpleasantness can be quite powerful. It is human to avoid unpleasantness, and certainly efforts to change some of the situations just mentioned can engender hostility and dislike. It often requires a lot of time and hard work to deal with such issues. Where the outcome is uncertain, and the possibility may exist of merely making matters worse, the temptation to delay action and avoid confronting issues is understandable.

However, the consequences of inaction, both personal and organizational, are usually great. (15) Problems that are ignored seldom get better, and often get worse. A series of such issues, allowed to continue, tend to foster an overall climate of laxness and the development of an attitude throughout the organization that standards of performance are unimportant. Finally, the measure of an effective manager often is that the manager faced-up to the tough decisions. In the long run, the manager who ignores difficult situations will have little reason to feel a sense of professional pride and competency.

10. *Judging an idea more on the basis of its source than on its inherent merit.* Managers must constantly gather and evaluate information, information : about what is going on in the environment (economic, technological, political/legal, and social/cultural) ; information about conditions in various parts of one's department and organization; and information about individuals with whom one must work. In seeking to evaluate the information gathered, a manager can fall victim to the human tendency to judge an idea or suggestion largely on the basis of its source rather than on the basis of its inherent logic. It is all too easy to be blind to the worth of an idea suggested by someone of low status or someone who lacks an established reputation.

Reliance on established authorities and recognized experts can be appropriate. No one can be knowledgeable in all fields. One properly expects to draw on the expertise of those who devote themselves to a particular field or speciality; and public reputation is one measure of a specialist's capability. So consideration of the source of an idea is appropriate, but the pitfall lies in allowing oneself to forget to question the statements of high status, recognized sources; and to automatically ignore the possible merit of a suggestion made by a person of little formal training, or of limited experience.

However, even experts can be wrong, and those who are new to a field or inexperienced often ask questions the experts have forgotten to ask. Certainly

history is replete with cases where established authorities rejected the innovative ideas of less established scholars. Consequently, over-attention to the source of an idea can have a detrimental impact on problem solving and decision-making. Questioning an expert helps to keep the expert from becoming careless and sharpens one's own thinking. Similarly, responding to the ideas of the inexperienced questioner can stimulate one's thinking. One learns much from instructing others.

PITFALLS IN DEALING WITH SELF

11. *Being reactive, not pro-active.* A manager's functions include dealing with immediate problems as well as planning for the future and developing improved ways of operating. The pitfall manager's face is spending most if not all of their time dealing with immediate issues, usually those that resolve day-to-day problems but don't build for the future. Have you ever found yourself complaining, "I never have time to do anything important. My days are spent dealing with crises and problems that can't wait. I never have time to carry out the ideas I have for making improvements." This is the cry of managers who have fallen into the pitfall of largely reacting to events and seldom acting pro-actively to anticipate and control events.

Time pressures and work load are two reasons this happens. Crises do occur, and when they do they must be given first priority. But, it also is common for managers to overlook opportunities to plan ahead and to work on projects that build a better organization. They do this, partly because they don't set time aside to do the tasks that have a longer range objective; partly because the tasks with a longer range objective have a less certain benefit; and partly because working on immediate problems gives one an immediate sense of accomplishment. The writer knows one manager who schedules "thinking time" in his appointment book and then honours that commitment just as he would a scheduled interview. He shuts his office door and asks his secretary to withold interruptions while he "meets with himself" to plan for the future.

Unfortunately, being only reactive usually means that problems are bigger before they come to our attention. It is usually more efficient if we can anticipate problems and take steps to prevent them or at least deal with them when they are small. As already implied, being only reactive usually means missing opportunities to improve on the status quo. Such "management by crisis" leaves one with little peace of mind that some new crisis will not occur and little sense that one is being an effective manager.

12. *Falling Victim to One's Status.* The greater one's status, the higher one's position, and the more power one has. the more likely one is to receive deference and solicitous behaviour from those of lesser status.(5) Also, the

communication of information to those higher in an organization is often consciously or unconsciously censored by those lower in the hierarchy. Favourable news is overstated and negative and unpleasant information is understated or omitted. Furthermore, privileges and perquisites often come with position. Reserved parking spaces, a limousine, a well furnished, even a noticeably large office and other evidence of power serve as visual reminders of one's position. The receipt of such manifestations of rank can be rather heady for managers at all levels in an organization, and can lead to individuals overestimating their importance, wisdom and contribution.(13) This is one reason behind the statement that "Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely."(1) It sometimes requires a person of underlying humility and awareness of the interdependence and contribution of all segments of the organization to avoid some loss of perspective.

Yet a clear perspective on oneself is essential if one is not to cut oneself off from different and stimulating points of view. Managers who overestimate their own importance can become isolated from what is really going on in their department or organization. Both of these effects can have a direct effect on one's effectiveness. They can also lead to an unspoken loss of respect and loyalty from subordinates and diminished co-operativeness from peers.

Conclusion

The pitfalls as summarized in the diagram that follows are all practices that are exhibited by managers probably throughout the world, in both the public and private sectors, often for good reasons. But, it can also be tempting to use them inappropriately or habitually. Readers of this article probably could add to the list from personal experience.

My purpose in writing this article is to assist readers to avoid such pitfalls through greater awareness. My hope is that seeing them discussed in print will stimulate readers to examine their own situations, to reflect on ones to which they are most likely to fall victim, and to question when each behaviour is and is not appropriate. Certainly, self-awareness is an important first step in self-management.

I believe that these pitfalls exist in every culture to one degree or another, although the consequences may differ in magnitude. For example, I suggested that it is useful to question experts. This may be less difficult in my culture, where there is a tradition of egalitarianism and an assumption that authority figures must earn respect. It may be less appropriate in Sri Lanka where it has been my experience, while a Fulbright Lecturer, that people of status are dealt with with a high level of courtesy and evidence of respect for their position.

Nonetheless, it seems important for those of us who teach management, as well as those who practice management, to be aware of these pitfalls. Generally, a manager should : delegate, honour the chain of command, invite questions and suggestions, rely on other bases of power than threat, spend time coaching people, keep others informed, listen intently and at length, test the extent of one's ability to exert influence, confront disagreement and unpleasantness, question experts intently, don't put off long range planning, and accept one's status but avoid overestimating one's importance.

SUMMARY OF MANAGERIAL PITFALLS

Actions and Attitudes (Pitfalls)	*Causes/Reasons*	*Undesirable Consequences*
DEALING WITH SUBORDINATES		
(1) NOT DELEGATING SIGNIFICANT RESPONSIBILITY (Using subordinates as peons, specifying means as well as ends.)	–Seems easier –Greater ability/experience –Desire to retain control	–An overloaded manager –Long range Planning left undone –Under-utilized, unmotivated subordinates –Little growth and development of staff
(2) BYPASSING THE CHAIN OF COMMAND	–Faster, more efficient –Personal impatience –Information direct from source	–Uninformed and undercut subordinate –Reduced subordinate effectiveness –Demeaning to subordinate self-esteem –Dislike and disrespect of you
(3) CUTTING-OFF QUESTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS	–Done Unintentionally –Avoid wasting time on naive/impertinent suggestions –Prevent pointless griping/complaining	–Loss of staff's ideas and creativity –Missed opportunities to teach and develop staff –Less effective and uncommitted implementation of your decisions
(4) RELIANCE ON THREAT (to motivate and control)	–Instinctive –Self confirming –Can be effective –Belief in fear as a motivator	–Resentment, hostility and anger –Disloyalty –Low productivity
(5) NOT DEVOTING TIME TO DEVELOPING PEOPLE	–Not part of concept of manager's responsibility –Potential loss of good subordinate —Competition from good subordinate	–Manager less promotable –Disruption of departmental effectiveness when individuals retire/leave –Reduced incentive for subordinates
DEALING WITH OTHERS		
(6) IGNORING FUNCTIONAL INTERDEPENDENCIES (not keeping others informed)	–Interdependencies unclear –Taking job descriptions literally –Competitiveness (there is power from unannounced action) –Coordination can be time consuming	–Confusion and duplication of effort –Poor coordination and inefficency –Interdepartment and interpersonal friction

(7) NOT LISTENING	–Being precoccupied –Being unskilled (listening is a skill) –Being lazy (listening is hardwork)	–Misunderstanding and incomplete communication –Less effective problem-solving –Missed opportunities to build good interpersonal relations
(8) UNDERESTIMATING OWN CAPACITY TO EXERT INFLUENCE	–Thinking in extremes –Overestimating others' power –Misjudging others' reaction –Fear of risks involved	–Problems remaining unsolved –Lost opportunities to initiate improvements –Loss of self-respect
(9) AVOIDING UNPLEASANTNESS AND POTENTIAL CONFLICT	–Human to avoid unpleasantness –Wanting to be liked (hostility avoidance) –Sometimes is wise (can stir up trouble) –Involves additional work	–Problems getting worse –Overall climate of laxness –Attitude among staff that performance is unimportant –Loss of professional pride and competency (own and others')
(10) JUDGING IDEAS ON BASIS OF SOURCE MORE THAN MERIT	–One can't know everything –Reliance on experts and recognized authorities can be appropriate –Reputation is one measure of capability	–Less effective problem-solving and decision-making –Carelessness by the experts –Misses opportunity to sharpen own thinking

DEALING WITH SELF

(11) BEING REACTIVE NOT PRO-ACTIVE (Always "fighting fires," seldom planning ahead)	–Time pressures and work-load –Crises must come first –Planning is uncertain and hard work –Doing yields a sense of accomplishment	–Discovery of problems only when big –Little prevention of problems –Little time to make improvements –"Management by Crisis" –Little sense of being an effective manager
(12) FALLING VICTIM TO ONE'S STATUS	–Position and power elicit deference –Rank does have its privileges	–Isolation from what is really going on throughout the organization –Reduced effectiveness –Loss of subordinates respect and loyalty

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545