

INTRODUCTION

Yes, I admit it. Just like the book's title suggests — I was once a control freak. I was an “old school” micro-manager! But the good news is I've seen the errors of my ways and I'm here to confess my sins. I've written this book with the hope first time team leaders, supervisors and managers might gain some valuable insight into what it will take to be an effective and efficient 21st Century Manager.

I also think there's a lesson here for those seasoned veterans who developed their management style in the 1960's embracing what social psychologist Douglas McGregor referred to as Theory X style of management. Theory X style of management suggested that people were inherently lazy and needed to be bullied or brow-beaten into performing their work.

There may also be some hold-outs who graduated from the “*Chainsaw Al Leadership Academy*”, named after legendary and somewhat ruthless corporate executive Al Dunlap who slashed and burned his way to profitability. He was known for turning companies around. And no one can deny that he got results. But, he did it by sacrificing thousands of employees. (I use to say that the most cost effective way to increase productivity was to walk out of your office and fire the first person you see and don't replace him or her. It's amazing how the work still gets done.)

Times have certainly changed. What you need to decide now is — will the management style that got you here — be the same style

that will sustain you or get you to where you want to go? Are you promotable? Would you work for you?

I think there's been a dramatic shift in people's attitudes. Their wants and needs are changing. For the first time in our lifetime there are four different generations working in the same work place that communicate differently, manage and want to be managed differently, and have different values and career aspirations. For the newest generation — The Millennials or Net Generation — life outside of work is just as important as life at work.

I believe we're not born knowing how to manage or lead people effectively. It's a learned behaviour. We all start out making certain assumptions based on our past experiences and perceptions as to the kind of role we think managers and leaders should play. But we also have come to know from experience that our perceptions may not always be correct, and that sometimes, we have to change our way of thinking if we are to become better at what we do. Today's managers need to change the way they manage to stay in step with a changing workforce.

Worth Remembering...

“The definition of insanity is doing the same thing — expecting a different result.”

— Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

Daniel Goleman, in his groundbreaking book *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, might have said it best: “We are being judged by a new yardstick: not just how smart we are, or by our training and expertise, but also by how well we handle ourselves and each other.”

Productivity is still the name of the game and that will never change. Your job as a manager has always been to minimize the input and maximize the output. But downsizing has put added pressure on managers to hold the line on the expense side of the ledger while still

growing the profit side. In order to accomplish both managers must change from being task-focused to being people-focused.

I've spent a lifetime working with and managing people as an award winning entrepreneur and a general manager for one of Canada's best run and most profitable companies and now as Founder/CEO of Brinley Consulting & Training Ltd. — a training and management consulting firm based in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

I have — and continue to have at the writing of this book — the good fortune of being a member of the faculty of Algonquin College's School of Business where I teach business ethics, management functions, entrepreneurship, and personal skills for success. I get a kick out of working with young people who want to be their own boss or manage a company some day. I get to bring the corporate world into the classroom. Textbook theory is great but, it's just that — theory. The challenge is learning how to apply it in the real world.

In my 40+ year career of managing and owning businesses I've committed my fair share of sins. Trust me — I've been there, done that, and have the t-shirt to prove it. I consider myself a card carrying graduate of the "School of Hard Knocks". To some extent, the writing of this book has been cathartic for me. There is no question that if I knew then what I know now, I would have managed differently.

"The Top Ten Sins Most Managers Make & How to Avoid Them" are woven into the ten chapters of this book. Each chapter is dedicated to one of those sins. And yes — I've committed each one of them at one time or another. So I know from my own experiences what works and what doesn't work when it comes to communicating and interacting with people at all levels throughout the organization. After all, think of a job that you could do in your lifetime that didn't involve dealing with people. (There isn't one.)

Our business schools are graduating students who are technically competent at what they do. They know what they know and they

know it very well. However, the one skill — and I believe the most valuable skill — which we aren't teaching our students — is how to communicate and interact effectively with people.

We are not teaching the one skill that all managers and leaders must have to be successful managing in the 21st Century — the ability to work with and accomplish goals through people. Manager's managing in the 21st Century need to understand that “One Management Style” does not fit all. Managers need to learn how to modify their management style to be more in “tune” with the person they are working with. We must not let hi-tech replace hi-touch.

Take Note: As you read through this book please keep in mind that I have a tendency to repeat over and over and over again — those things that I believe are important. Managers must be able to do three things very well. They must be able to communicate, educate and delegate. This book will teach you how.

I wish you nothing but success in all of your endeavours both personal and professional. Stay Focused.

– Brian Smith

Worth Remembering...

“One of the most important things about being a good manager is to rule with a heart. You have to know the business, but you also have to know what's at the heart of business and that's people.”

– Oprah Winfrey (b. 1954-)

Worth Remembering...

“In everyone’s life, at some point, our inner fire goes out. It is then burst into a flame by an encounter with another human being. We should all be thankful for those people who rekindle our inner spirit.”

– Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965)

Thank you, Annie, for rekindling my inner spirit.