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SECTION 1

HOW TO MANAGE PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

In this section you'll find three types of theories. The first comes from the very early days of management when writers tried to identify and describe the functions of management. They tell you what you should be doing. The second type tells you how to do it.

The one thing that none of these theories say is 'To thine own self be true' (Shakespeare, *Hamlet*). What this means in management terms is that if you try to copy someone else's approach you will fail. You have to become the unique manager that you were meant to be. That doesn't mean that you can't have role models. By all means examine the actions of managers you admire. Read the biographies of managers that make the best-seller list. But remember you are not them. You don't share their personality, life experiences, training or skills. Therefore never copy their actions. Instead, adopt only those ideas that you feel comfortable with and then adapt them to work in your organisation.

The section ends with a third type of theory taken from operational management. This has been included in this section to remind you that managers are not just responsible for managing people – they are also accountable for the economic, efficient and effective use of the organisation's inorganic resources including cash, stock and fixed assets.

Finally, while reading this section, and the next on Leadership, it is worth remembering that there is a huge literature written by academics and management gurus about the difference between managers and leaders. Many have made a very lucrative career out of differentiating the two functions and telling us that leaders are special and better than mere managers. They suggest that they possess different characteristics and are psychologically very different people. The reality is that anyone who holds a management role has to combine the roles of administrator, manager and leader if they are to do their job effectively.

THEORY 1

FAYOL'S 14 PRINCIPLES
OF MANAGEMENT

Use to remind you that as a manager you must use your authority to ensure that the organisation's structure and systems for managing staff and resources are working effectively.

Henri Fayol's 14 principles of management first appeared in *Administration industrielle et generale* (1916). The relationships between employers, managers and staff have changed since then, as has the terminology used. However, Fayol's insights remain relevant.

FAYOL BELIEVED THAT MANAGERS SHOULD:

Exercise authority.

Ensure that unity of command exists.

Ensure that there is a clear chain of command within the organisation.

Provide unity of direction for all staff.

Manage the supply of human and other resources.

Exercise staff discipline.

Coordinate key activities through centralisation.

Seek efficiency through the division of work.

Subordinate their needs and those of their team to the needs of the organisation.

Ensure that staff are fairly remunerated.

Ensure equity of treatment for all staff.

Provide job security as far as possible.

Encourage staff initiative.

Establish a sense of *esprit de corps* (team spirit).

HOW TO USE IT

- You have the right to exercise authority and to expect compliance. If someone fails to comply with your request, don't ignore it. Repeat your request and if they continue to ignore you look at what sanctions you can apply (see *Theory 15*).

- In any organisation there can only be one head, one plan and one vision. Ensure that staff understand the chain of command (authority), are familiar with the organisation's structure and where they fit into it and that they are committed to the organisation's aims.
- Organise your team on the basis that everyone reports to a single line manager. If someone has two managers, disputes over work priorities will arise.
- Your relationship with staff should be built on mutual respect, trust and frankness. However, this does not mean that discipline should be sacrificed. You must apply consistently the organisation's rules of behaviour to all staff, including yourself.
- Staff look to you to provide the resources they need to do their job and will judge you on how successful you are at obtaining these resources. Plan ahead and don't disappoint them.
- Always place the needs of the organisation above your own or those of your team. If the organisation fails, then you and all your staff are out of a job.
- The division of work into a series of repetitive tasks is no longer acceptable. Fortunately, more effective and efficient ways of working can nearly always be found. Review regularly the allocation of work and working practices within your team.
- Your pay and that of your staff should be comparable with others in the organisation doing a similar job. Wide differentials cause resentment and undermine teamwork. Monitor pay rates and take action when required.
- Staff want consistency and fairness from their manager. Avoid favouritism and treat all staff equitably.
- New staff need time to settle in. Suspend judgement on their performance until they have had sufficient time to show their true worth.
- Encourage all staff to exercise their initiative within clearly defined limits.
- There are many ways to forge team spirit. You don't have to indulge in a trek across the Brecon Beacons in February. A night bowling may work just as well.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do I have any favourites among the staff?
- Are my team's aims and objectives aligned with those of the organisation?

THEORY 2 TAYLOR AND SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

Use when staff resources are tight and you need to increase productivity.

Frederick Taylor rose from shop floor labourer to become a Director at Bethlehem Steel, the largest steel maker in the United States. He was a contemporary of Fayol but was more interested in efficiency than the social aspects of managing people. His book, *The Principles of Scientific Management* (1913), cemented his reputation as the father of scientific management.

TAYLOR:

Believed that the job of a manager was to plan and control work and that there was a single most efficient way to do any job.

Used time and motion techniques to break down each work process into its constituent parts and eliminate unnecessary actions. Using these principles, he reduced the number of actions a bricklayer took from 18 to 5 and in the process saved time and money. His work laid the foundation for the division of labour and mass production, which Henry Ford applied so successfully in car manufacturing.

Argued that the best way to ensure maximum efficiency was to carefully select and train staff and provide additional opportunities for those that showed potential. This was revolutionary at a time when most workers were given no formal training. Outstanding workers were identified by placing a chalk mark on their work bench (*Benchmarking see Theory 83*).

HOW TO USE IT

- Review how each job is done in your team and ask the following questions: Do we need to do this job? Can it be done more efficiently? Does the work allocated to each member of staff match their abilities/strengths? Do staff need additional training to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.
- Decide how work can be reallocated and reorganised to improve efficiency, increase throughput and play to the individual strengths of staff.
- Following reorganisation, evaluate how effective the changes have been and tweak as required. It's very unlikely that you will get it right first time (see *Theory 61*).
- Regularly review (at least annually) the work that staff do and look for efficiency gains. If you think that a report you issue is no longer used, don't ask the recipients if they need it. They'll almost certainly say 'yes'. Instead, produce the report but don't send it out and see if anyone shouts. If after three months no one has screamed, ditch it.
- Additional training can improve your team's productivity greatly. For example, how sure are you that every member of the team can use all of the facilities available on your computer systems?
- Remember Taylor's ideas don't just apply to the shop floor. Inefficient working practices are rife in most offices.
- When undertaking the review of work, canvass ideas from the wider team on how the task could be done more efficiently.

QUESTION TO ASK

- Does the team struggle to meet deadlines and/or have periods when they have very little work? If yes, can the timetabling of work be improved?

THEORY 3

MAYO AND THE HAWTHORNE EXPERIMENTS

Use in conjunction with Theory 26 to identify the factors that actually motivate staff.

In the late 1920s, Elton Mayo and his team from Massachusetts Institute of Technology carried out a series of experiments with manual workers at General Electric's Hawthorne Plant. The results seemed to defy the received wisdom of the time and continue to be of interest today.

THE HAWTHORNE RESEARCHERS FOUND THAT:

There was no correlation between productivity and working conditions. Productivity went neither up nor down significantly when conditions were either degraded or improved.

Belonging to a group was the single most important motivational factor. Staff found status and a sense of belonging within the group. They feared being excluded from the group or letting their mates down with shoddy work and did everything they could to be seen as a 'good un'. Often these groups were informal in nature and yet they exercised enormous influence over the behaviour of members.

Productivity increased as a result of the researchers and management talking to the staff, asking for their views and treating them as individuals and not just hired hands. Effectively, treating staff with respect and as intelligent individuals paid dividends.

HOW TO USE IT

- Recognise that working conditions by themselves have very little effect on motivation or productivity. Only when they fall below an acceptable level do they demotivate staff (see *Theory 26*).
- Knowing that staff are more motivated when they belong to a group is a key piece of information. Yes, you want your staff to work as one team, but also encourage them to form separate mini groups, because smaller groups exercise greater influence over their members. It's not by chance that the basic operating unit of the SAS is four troopers.
- Whenever possible encourage good-natured competition between the mini groups. To avoid things getting too serious offer a trophy of no particular value to the 'best team' each month.
- Now that you know that productivity increases when managers talk to staff, get out of your office and indulge in a bit of Management by Walking About (see *Theory 7*). If possible, get senior managers to talk to your staff. This is easily done. Instead of having a private briefing from your boss or director on the organisation's latest strategy, ask them to brief you and your team together (always assuming that nothing confidential is involved). When they have left, you can answer any questions that your team have.
- Everyone wants to feel valued. We spend most of our waking life at work and we need to believe that it has a purpose. So treat people with respect, as intelligent individuals, and watch productivity grow.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How much do I know about the people who work for me?
- Do I encourage staff to talk to me about their ambitions and problems?

THEORY 4 DRUCKER ON THE FUNCTIONS OF MANAGEMENT (CROWN AS KING)

Use as your foundational management beliefs. Everything you do should flow from these fundamental statements. All else is embroidery.

Many people believe that Peter Drucker was the first true genius that the study of management produced. He helped establish the discipline of management and foresaw numerous trends in management many years in advance of anyone else. For example, he wrote about decentralisation in the 1940s, coined the term 'the knowledge economy' in 1969 and was talking about the social responsibilities of managers in the 1970s.

It was Drucker who in plain English suggested that the purpose of every business organisation was to create and maintain a customer. He didn't talk about maximising profits. He knew that only by building and maintaining customers can a business hope to make a profit, because it's customers that create profits.

DRUCKER ALSO ARGUED THAT MANAGERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR:

Setting the organisation's/team's objectives.

Providing and organising the resources required to achieve the objectives.

Motivating staff to achieve the objectives.

Monitoring staff performance against the objectives.

Improving performance by continually developing themselves and their staff.

Drucker's insights into the purpose of a business and the responsibilities of managers encapsulate the essence of both business and management theory.

HOW TO USE IT

- Identify who your customers are. Ask yourself: Who buys my goods or services? If you deal with the public this may be obvious, but if you provide a service to other parts of your organisation it may be more difficult.
- Once you have identified your customers ask: Am I meeting their needs? What can I do to enhance the service or product I provide? (see *Section 10*). Based upon your answers, develop a plan to provide customers with the best possible service.
- Provide targets and objectives for all staff. Set 80% of the targets at a level that is relatively easy for staff to achieve. This will turn people on to success and motivate them to meet the more challenging targets (see *Theory 97*).
- Monitor performance. Establish a reporting system that shows performance against target, explains the reason for any discrepancies and is produced in time for you to take corrective action quickly.
- Constantly monitor the physical and staffing resources that you need to achieve your targets and take action to remedy any shortfalls before they become a problem.
- Motivate and communicate with your staff by sharing information and listening to what they have to say (see *Section 3*).
- You are your own greatest asset. Invest time and energy in developing both your technical and managerial skills. Keep yourself marketable. Attend interviews regularly and, if asked to define management or the role of managers, trot out Drucker's list of management responsibilities as if they were your own. Your staff are your second greatest asset so develop, train and support them.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Do I really think of myself as a manager and act accordingly?
- Do I see my job in terms of the work I do or helping others do their job?

THEORY 5 MCGREGOR'S X AND Y THEORY

Use to identify which stereotypical type of manager you are closest to and consider how this impacts on your actions and how you are perceived by staff.

Douglas McGregor identified two different sets of assumptions made by managers about their staff. Each set of assumptions represents an extreme view of people and can be summarised as follows:

Theory X managers believe that most people ...		Theory Y managers believe that most people ...
Are driven by monetary concerns	↔	Are driven by job satisfaction
Will avoid work when possible	↔	Actively seek work
Lack ambition and dislike responsibility	↔	Show ambition and seek responsibility
Are indifferent to organisational needs	↔	Are committed to organisational objectives
Lack creativity and resist change	↔	Are creative and welcome change

McGregor believes that every manager's actions are governed by how they view human nature. A Theory X manager will attempt to exercise tight control by close supervision, demands for strict adherence to rules and threats of punishment. A Theory Y manager will create an environment where effort is recognised and rewarded and praise is given regularly.

HOW TO USE IT

- Don't assume that modern managers should embrace Theory Y and disregard Theory X. In the real world, you may have to deal with people whose only motivation is to earn as much money as possible for the least amount of effort.
- Recognise that if you choose Theory X your style will be about command, control and fear and that you will rely on coercion (see *Theory 15*), implicit threats and tight supervision to manage your staff. Do you want this?
- If you choose Theory Y you will promote cooperation, rewards and good working relationships. But how are you going to deal with those members of staff who see such an approach as weakness?
- Adopt an approach that lies somewhere between the two extremes of X and Y, but recognise that there is a danger in switching between them. Staff expect managers to be consistent (see *Theory 12*). Switching approaches may cause confusion.
- To avoid confusion, set clear limits for staff actions. Identify those rules, procedures and deadlines where you expect total compliance. Make it clear what failure to comply will mean and enforce your rules consistently.
- Manage your team's remaining activities using a Theory Y inspired approach. Make yourself available to staff, listen to what they have to say and recognise that sometimes staff need you to believe in them before they can do their best work.
- Always maintain basic ground rules. They keep you and the organisation safe from ne'er-do-wells who just want to take you for a ride.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- On a continuum, where Theory X is 1 and Theory Y is 100, where would you place yourself? On the same continuum, where would your staff place you?
- Given your organisation's culture (see *Section 6*) how acceptable is your approach?

THEORY 6

COVEY'S SEVEN HABITS™ OF
HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE

Use to identify a strategy for reaching your own aims and objectives and a philosophy for how you treat people along the way.

Stephen Covey's Seven Habits™ model can be split into personal and interpersonal habits.

PERSONAL HABITS – WORKING ON YOURSELF – ARE:

Be proactive: Managers should aim to shape the events and environment in which they work and not just sit back and wait for things to happen.

Start with the end in mind: Managers should identify what they want to achieve. Once identified, they must avoid distractions and constantly work on activities that take them towards their goals.

Put first things first: Managers should prioritise those activities that will help them achieve their aims.

Sharpen the saw: Managers are human. They need time to rest and renew themselves and update their skills.

INTERPERSONAL HABITS – WORKING WITH OTHERS – ARE:

Think win-win: When dealing with staff, customers, suppliers and even competitors wise managers look for common ground and a solution that suits all parties.

Seek first to understand then try to be understood: Like doctors, managers should diagnose what the problem is before they prescribe the cure.

Synergise: Synergy occurs when the outcome is greater than the sum of the parts. A case of $2 + 2 = 5$. Great teamwork can achieve this (see Section 5).

HOW TO USE IT

- To be proactive get off your backside and work towards the achievement of your aims. Don't sit about waiting for things to happen. Look for opportunities to shape events and the environment you work in.
- Start with the end in mind by identifying your aims. What do you really want from life? Think about your earliest ambitions. What did you want to do when you were at school or just starting work? Now is the time to make your dreams concrete. Record them on paper as short (1 year), medium (2 to 3 years) and long-term (over 3 years) aims and tick them off as you achieve them.
- Put first things first and identify which work activities move you closer to achieving your aims. Sometimes you may have to do other work. That's OK. But get back to the important stuff asap.
- Sharpen the saw reminds you to look after yourself. Find time to relax, enjoy some R and R and update your professional skills.
- When you deal with staff, customers and even competitors seek first to understand what they are saying. By listening you will gain an insight into what they really want.
- Once you understand their wants you can identify a win-win solution that satisfies all parties. This will build trust which leads to better outcomes when you deal with the same people in the future.
- The relationships that you have established on a basis of mutual respect and fairness will release synergy rather than competition and improve future results beyond expectation.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- What do I want from life? What are my aims and ambitions?
- How am I going to achieve my aims and ambitions? What's my plan?

THEORY 7

MANAGEMENT BY WALKING ABOUT (MBWA)

Use MBWA to avoid becoming detached from staff and what is going on in your organisation.

Like a lot of theories, MBWA is something that good managers have been doing since Adam and Eve first expressed an interest in apples and it's impossible to identify where the idea originated. But it's probably fair to say that both Mark McCormack and Tom Peters helped to popularise it.

The theory is simple. To avoid becoming isolated and losing touch with staff and the day-to-day operations of the organisation, managers must get out of their office and walk around the factory, shop, site or office, listen to staff and observe what is going on at first hand.

USE THE WALKS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO:

Build trust and understanding with staff.

Listen to what staff have to say and take on board their work problems and ideas.

Look for examples of good practice that can be implemented elsewhere in the organisation.

Look for examples of bad practice and eliminate them.

Observe how other managers and supervisors interact with staff.

Improve your knowledge of the business, its staff and products.

Answer staff questions.

Get to know people personally and what motivates/demotivates them.

HOW TO USE IT

- Identify an aim for every walk you take. This may be to find out what staff think of new working procedures, identify a problem or good practice in a specific section, get a feel for staff morale generally and on rare occasions to promote a new initiative.
- Don't talk at staff. Listen more than you speak and ask staff for their ideas and views on work issues. Don't be afraid to spend a few minutes talking about football or what was on telly last night if that helps the person to relax and open up.
- Always deliver on any promises that you make and never commit to anything you can't deliver.
- Once back in the office jot down a few notes on what you found and analyse your data into three categories, i.e.
 - 1 Matters that require immediate action.
 - 2 Information that will inform your future actions.
 - 3 Factual information about the organisation and its processes that you were unaware of.
- Use the data collected to improve the organisation's behaviours, practices and processes and to inform your decisions.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

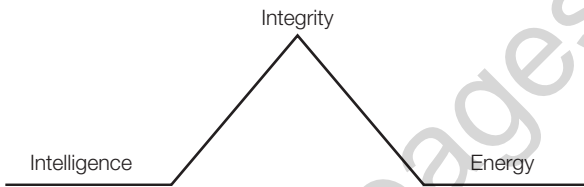
- When was the last time I 'walked the job'?
- Where does my information about the business come from? How many filters has it gone through before it reaches me?

THEORY 8 WARREN BUFFET ON SELECTING THE RIGHT STAFF

Use to remind you of the key characteristics you should be looking for when you appoint or promote staff.

It's become something of a truism that a manager is only as good as their staff. If you have good staff, your job as a manager becomes infinitely easier. But if you have poor and/or disruptive staff your life can be hell.

Warren Buffet (1930–), the world's most successful investment manager, likes to keep things simple; for example, his investment strategy is to buy good stocks and hold them for a long time. He has applied the same simplicity to the appointment of staff and suggests that there are just three things you should look for when recruiting people i.e.:



However, he also sounds a note of caution. Yes, you should employ people who have intelligence and energy but:

If they don't have integrity the other two will kill you. You think about it; it's true. If you hire somebody without integrity, you really (do) want them to be dumb and lazy.

Warren Buffet

Integrity is the key factor for Buffet. If a person lacks integrity they are a danger to you and the organisation. Indeed, much of the 2008 financial meltdown can be blamed on a lack of integrity among highly intelligent and well-motivated bankers.

WHAT TO DO

- Whenever possible promote from within. Such a policy creates staff loyalty and you are less likely to appoint a dud because you (should) know the person's strengths and weaknesses. Only if you need new blood or a skills set not found in your organisation should you consider going outside.
- At the interview concentrate on identifying which applicant/s demonstrate integrity, intelligence and energy. If you can spot those, then any shortfalls in skills can be taught.
- Integrity/character is the hardest trait to confirm. Look at how the person presents themselves. Are they confident without being arrogant? Do they recognise that they don't have all the answers? Do they take pride in their work and achievements? If they do, they won't want to let themselves, and by implication you. Do they talk about what they and their team have achieved or is it all about them? Ask them about any ethical dilemma that they faced in the past and how they dealt with it. The problem doesn't have to be work related. If they can't think of an example it's very likely that they have few if any guiding principles.
- Intelligence is fairly easy to identify. Obviously, start by looking at the person's educational attainments. However, their interaction with you or the interview panel will tell you more than any certificate. Do their answers show a level of analysis? Do they try to contextualise their responses in terms of your organisation? Can they see the bigger picture and how their work will fit into the whole? Are they inquisitive and interested in your operation? Do they possess common sense or are their ideas unworkable in the real world?
- Energy and enthusiasm are easy to spot. Simply ask yourself, 'Do I feel energised speaking to this person?' If the answer is 'yes' than other people are likely to be similarly enthused by the applicant.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- What's the first thing I look for when appointing or promoting people?
- How successful has my current approach to recruitment and promotion been?

THEORY 9

MICHAEL HAMMER ON BUSINESS PROCESS RE-ENGINEERING (BPR)

Use to remind you of the value of undertaking a root and branch evaluation of the organisation's working practices.

Business process re-engineering (BPR) is an approach that seeks to redesign processes and practices in order to support the organisation's mission, reduce costs and improve efficiency. It is a complex and organisation-wide process and only two crucial elements of it can be explored in this short entry: the importance of selecting the right people for the implementation team and an overview of the process to be followed.

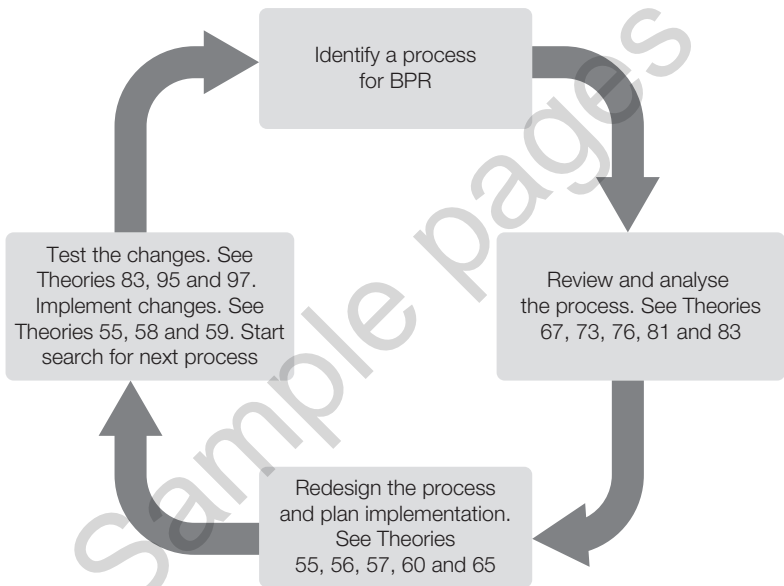
In his seminal article *Re-engineering Work: Don't Automate Obliterate*, Michael Hammer, a professor of computer science at the Massachusetts Institute of technology (MIT), argued that most work undertaken in an organisation adds nothing in terms of value to the service or product that the customer receives and should be eliminated. Unfortunately, Hammer noted that very often such unproductive practices were the first to be automated and so became entrenched in the organisation's work procedures. To challenge and undo them requires BPR.

WHAT TO DO

- Stage one in any BPR project requires you/senior managers to recognise that BPR is about fundamentally changing how your organisation works. Such a change can only be successful if it has organisation-wide support. Managers, leaders and supervisors at all levels must constantly demonstrate their commitment to the project. It is they who have to sell the vision and allay the fears of staff. They can only do this by communicating with all employees and stakeholders affected in a language they can understand (see *Theories 55 and 60*).
- Stage two requires senior management to form an implementation team that commands widespread respect in the organisation. Members of the team should be drawn from a cross-section of the organisation and include senior, middle and junior managers plus staff from the departments affected by the review, and representatives from the IT department, finance and customer/user groups. Remember, the best people may not always be the most senior. Team supervisors or junior managers who staff trust and look to for advice and guidance are often the most valuable people to have on board.
- Although you must include people who are familiar with the processes under review, always find room for at least one person who knows nothing

about them: someone who isn't afraid to challenge received wisdom and to 'ask the dumb question' that provokes new ways of thinking.

- It's essential that the people selected are able to consider issues in the round and like Handy's helicopter (see *Theory 11*) be able to rise above their own parochial priorities and see problems and solutions in organisation-wide terms.
- Keep the size of team below 12. More than that and the management of the project becomes problematic. The purpose of the team and the project manager is to deliver change in the form of competitive advantage and economic and efficiency gains. You don't want it to become bogged down with internal management issues.
- Once the team has been formed and its terms of reference and lines of reporting clearly established, work on the project can start. Use the four-stage process to identify and bring about the changes required.



- If the results achieved are disappointing, repeat the process until real improvements are achieved. Only then move on to the next process.
- Review Section 5 on team management to gain insights into how you can manage, motivate and support small teams.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Has your organisation ever undertaken a BPR exercise? Does it need to?
- What skills could you bring to a BPR exercise?

THEORY 10

JUST-IN-TIME MANUFACTURING

Use to remind you that having resources waiting to be used wastes money and space.

It's often assumed that Just-in-Time (JIT) Manufacturing was devised by the Japanese in the 1970s. It wasn't. The Empire State Building, built in 1931–32, is a great example of JIT building. New York City refused the builders permission to store materials on site in case it disrupted traffic on Fifth Avenue. To overcome the problem, the architects, working without a computer, scheduled the delivery of all materials so that they could be unloaded from a truck and immediately fitted into place on the building. At the height of the construction, trucks were drawing up outside the building site every ten minutes!

Originally JIT referred to the production of goods or services to meet the customers' requirements, on time and to the standard required (see *Section 10*). Over the years, it has come to mean continuous improvement and the elimination of waste. It is this latter meaning of JIT that this entry considers.

WHAT TO DO

- Recognise that there are seven types of waste that you should seek to reduce/eliminate. They are:
 - storage costs: these may be real e.g. the expense of having a stock control and security system in place or an opportunity cost;
 - inventory waste arising from damage, theft and deterioration during storage;
 - overproduction, leading to unsold goods and more profitable activities not being taken up;
 - processing waste arising from inefficient use of materials and/or waste resulting from product defects;
 - waste of motion during the production of the goods: this includes performing unnecessary tasks such as form filling or having to move around unnecessarily during the process;
 - transportation waste/costs arising from frequent small deliveries and/or the need to obtain materials urgently or face production hold-ups;
 - production delays arising from late or non-delivery of essential materials.

As a manager, you need to review each source of waste and devise ways to eliminate or reduce the number of times such problems can arise.

- Some of the ideas that you might consider adopting include the following:
 - introducing a policy of Good Housekeeping: this includes ensuring that within the workplace tidiness, orderliness, cleanness, standardisation and discipline are maintained (see *Theory 82*);
 - benchmarking your operation against similar functions both within and outside your industry and applying best practice to your operation (see *Theory 83*);
 - regularly using Ishikawa's Fishbone Model (see *Theory 81*) to analyse your production processes and identify weaknesses and defects; don't wait for a problem to become obvious, use Ishikawa's approach to spot and correct problems before they become an issue;
 - exploring what is the ideal batch size for optimal production runs and consider using a multi-skilled approach to production; research indicates that a multi-skilled workforce has higher levels of job satisfaction, motivation, productivity and flexibility than mono-skilled workers (see *Theory 26*);
 - using machines that have some level of autonomous capability; this will free up the worker to do something more productive than just 'watch the machine' during the production process;
 - when designing any system/process, ensure that each stage acts as a check on the work of the previous stage; in this way, errors can be identified during the production process and not just at the end—when it is too late to take effective corrective action.

QUESTIONS TO ASK

- How often do you review your team's production processes?
- Which organisations could you benchmark your production processes against?

A FINAL WORD ON MANAGEMENT THEORIES

WHY DRUCKER'S THEORY WAS CROWNED KING

When Einstein submitted his six-page PhD thesis, his examiners were impressed with his ideas but asked him to 'write a little more'. He took it away, thought about it for a week, added one sentence and resubmitted his thesis. It passed.

A theory doesn't have to be long and complicated to be profound. Drucker summarises the purpose of a business and the role of managers in under 75 words. Yet these few words have been the basis for much of the management thinking and writing for the past 60 years. And he didn't even have to add an extra sentence.

The most consistent message that comes across in this section is that management theories are often contradictory: writers can't even decide if it's better to batter staff into submission with a blunt instrument or wrap them in cotton wool. But that's OK because people and situations are infinitely variable and you can't expect one approach to be successful in every situation or with every person.

Always remember that you're a manager not an administrator. Your job is to organise and coordinate the work of your staff, not fill in forms. If you're new to management, you must act, think and talk like a manager. Look again at what Drucker has said is the role of the manager. That's your job description and it describes the nature of your work whether you are a junior manager or a managing director. Whenever you find yourself spending too much time on non-management tasks you need to reassess your priorities.

Finally, some managers are in love with their own voice. Remember: you have two ears and one mouth; clever managers use them in that proportion.