

Business is People

C Northcote Parkinson • M K Rustomji

Illustrated by VB Halber



24.243
MANAGEMENT FOR EVERYONE

Business is People

C Northcote Parkinson • M K Rustomji

Illustrated by VB Halbe



FEDERAL PUBLICATIONS

Singapore • Kuala Lumpur • Hong Kong

© 1987 C Northcote Parkinson & M K Rustomji

This edition first published 1987 by

Federal Publications (S) Pte Ltd

Times Jurong, 2 Jurong Port Road, Singapore 2261

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a data base or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

ISBN 9971 4 0466 4

Printed by Hoong Fatt Press.

Preface

Over the last hundred years or so there has been a change in the fabric of society. Society, from being individuals working mainly for themselves, now consists of large numbers of people working in organizations of many different types: factories, government departments, hospitals, universities, hotels, armed forces, airlines, multinational banks, communication and data processing units, and so on. If these organizations are well managed, it follows that the individuals that make up our society will prosper. Conversely, if these organizations and the people working in them are not well managed, the individual will suffer. Therefore good management is the key to the well-being of our present-day society and this book is all about various aspects of effective management and human relations.

Business Is People is designed for the manager at all levels and also for the one who is aiming to reach the top. For the ambitious reader who sees himself as a future Chief Executive, the first question is whether he wants the responsibility or whether he merely wants the salary and prestige. There is no more miserable situation than that of having the position but not the qualities of a Chief Executive. To be happy at the top you need courage, stamina and a strong sense of

dedication. There is a price to be paid for success – and you need to be clear in your mind that the price is one you are willing to pay. Let us suppose that you know the price and are still resolved to reach the summit. You are confident of success and could not endure to see someone else fumbling over a task for which you feel especially well-qualified. You know the trade and have a gift for organization. You mean to reach the top.

One essential quality you will need, in that case, is a sense of dedication – but to what? There are people in the world who devote their lives to religion or public administration. There are folk who sacrifice all for the sake of exploration or science. Some give their lives for the Marxist cause or in defence of the downtrodden and oppressed. What, in business, is our comparable aim? Our aim is to supply the world with good, well-made, comfortable and sturdy shoes or overcoats or vests at a fair price and in sufficient quantity. Assuming office as the Chief Executive, you have undertaken to do just that, not for your own profit, not in the name of any ideology, but simply as a matter of trade. There are, as we shall see, a number of other purposes you must serve, but the one purpose is paramount: the aim of every honest manufacturer or merchant, and which only a fool can despise. Looking at the people in a city street, the missionary may say, 'I shall convert them to the true faith,' the politician will say, 'I shall persuade them to vote for the right party,' and the revolutionary will say, 'I shall show them how to overthrow tyranny.' The executive's claim: 'I provided them with their underwear,' may seem humble, by comparison, mundane and almost laughable. But there are two points to note about the manufacturer's quiet remark. First of all, his claim is a matter of fact, not of opinion. He has done what he sets out to do. The idealists tell us that they mean to save the world, a promise for the future and one which they may or may not fulfil. While they merely promise, the executive has performed. In the second place, the maker of underwear has done people a good service and one which only a fool would

question. No one has been compelled to purchase his products; nobody is forced to wear them. All he has done is to make them available, and we should clearly be the worst off had he failed in his task. There is no such certainty about the Idealist's claims to our gratitude. How do we know that the doctrine preached is the true faith? How do we know that one political party is wiser than any other? How do we know that a revolution will not make things worse? At the end of his career, the manufacturer of underwear can claim to have worked effectively in the cause of cleanliness, hygiene and comfort. Can the idealists claim as much? Can they, in some instances, claim anything at all?

There are people in the world who will plunge society into bloodshed so as to bring about some future and doubtful Utopia. There are people who throw bombs and commit air piracy in the name of this cause and that. The executive, by comparison, has been a general benefactor and has little reason to be ashamed of himself. Promising a great deal less, he has done a great deal more. Nor has his task been a simple one. He has to transact business so as to satisfy his supplier, his shareholders, his employees, his retailers and the public at large. All are to benefit from his enterprise; and his work is incomplete until he has also satisfied the national government, the tax collector, the local government and rate-collector, the trade associations and trade unions, the health inspector and the chamber of commerce. In the world of free enterprise the executive is expected to perform a daily miracle. Under a socialist government he would enjoy a monopoly, no other product being placed on the market. Under a communist government his employees would not be allowed to go on strike. Placed as he is, by contrast, he has to satisfy everybody, offering a good price for his raw materials, announcing a fair dividend, paying good wages and marketing an attractive product at a price which people can afford to pay. If he can do all that, he has no reason to feel ashamed of himself. And that is the task to which the executive is committed.

Among political theorists we have seen disagreement over the basic question: Does the State exist to serve the individual or does the individual exist to serve the State? Should the State provide for the citizen or should the subject lay down his life for the Emperor? We have also heard the same sort of argument applied to the factory. Does it exist to provide a dividend to the shareholders? Does it exist to provide employment for the workers? Or should it rather exist as a branch of the government? Each of these ideas must be discussed at the outset. Not only are all the theorists mistaken but they all make the same mistake - that of ignoring the craftsman's real loyalty, which is or should be to his craft. The purpose of the craftsman must be to make good shoes and boots. Replace him by a factory and the purpose is still the same: to do honest work at a fair price. The executive has many people to satisfy, as we have seen, but his main responsibility is to the product he places on the market. Neither he nor his employees must ever think that the factory exists to provide the shareholders with a dividend. Least of all does it exist for the glory of the State. Its loyalty should be above all to its products, and its reputation for good workmanship and value. Once people turn aside from that central purpose all is lost. With all sense of pride in the work gone, there go, incidentally, the wages, dividends, taxes and rates. Left without the right aim and object the factory will soon be no more than a heap of ruins.

As a manager in the enterprise you must always keep the end in view. It cannot be a selfish aim. If your object is to gain a more important position, using your present appointment as a mere rung on the ladder, your intention will become obvious and you will never have an effective team. Why should other people seek to advance your career? That is not a purpose they will accept. Give them a higher aim than that - the goal of the honest craftsman - and you can all work together. In that cause you can gather, train and inspire a team which will response to your leadership.

The object of this book is to show how you can best set

about it. It points out the secrets of management, the mistakes to avoid in human relations, the points to remember, and the tricks of the trade. Your art must be in working through other men and women, not in doing the work yourself. Your task will be to think and foresee, or organize and plan. In this book are collected together the basic principles and the detailed practice, with emphasis on handling matters and human beings so as to achieve the best results. One of the most useful conclusions is that you will not be working to make your employees happy. If you do that, you will probably ruin the business, employees and all. Happiness is seldom to be achieved by those who go in search of it. For most of us, happiness is a by-product, achieved when we are aiming at something else; for example, trying to market a good product at a fair price. When our organization is efficient enough to do that we shall find, perhaps to our astonishment, that we have achieved much else besides; with happiness somehow included.

Contents

	Preface	iv
1	You Just Can't Get Away from Human Relations	1
2	The Spirit of the Organization	9
3	Consulting Others	20
4	The Power of Praise	31
5	Leadership	40
6	How to Organize	51
7	What to Avoid	61
8	Something We Must Know	71
9	Thoughtful Management	78
10	Management – The Simple Way	87
11	Getting up in the Organization	96
12	Further Useful Tips	104

You Just Can't Get Away from Human Relations

Ten thousand people . . . or two . . .

. . . we still have to know how to get along with people, if we want our organization to run properly.



Hawaii or New York

Whether you are among the palm trees and shimmering white sands of the Hawaii islands or among the skyscrapers of New York, you just can't get away from people. Because in the final analysis, no matter how glittering the promise of technological innovations, all industry and commerce depends on people and it is all for the benefit of people.



Handling people...

... that's the quality most required of any supervisor. It's far more important than any other single factor. Most bosses realize that a supervisor who can handle people is the one they want to push up. And the supervisor who handles people well is the one who realizes the importance of fair and sympathetic leadership

Woman Friday

Even Robinson Crusoe, on his lonely island, had to meet people except that all he met was Man Friday, poor chap! There is no question about it. Nowadays, whether we like it or not, we just have to deal with people; so if we learn to understand people and know how they tick, we will do our job much better.

Smarter...

...Don't imagine that they will be taken in. An average employee is much smarter than you think. He may be a little dull and not very quick off the mark but he sees through insincerity in no time. Don't try to be clever with him. He'll spot it quickly enough. The only way to handle people is to be sincere and honest with them.

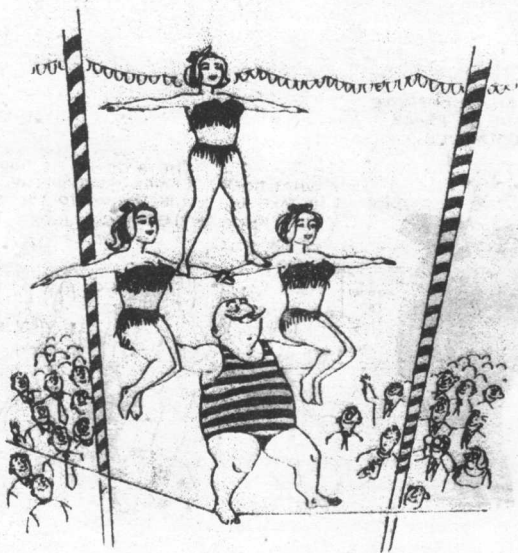


'We missed you'

Just these three words make such a difference. 'It's good to have you back,' may be only a few words, but they make a tremendous difference. Bill was only away for a fortnight but his boss made him feel that he mattered, that he was not just another number on the payroll. These are the things that really count in supervision.

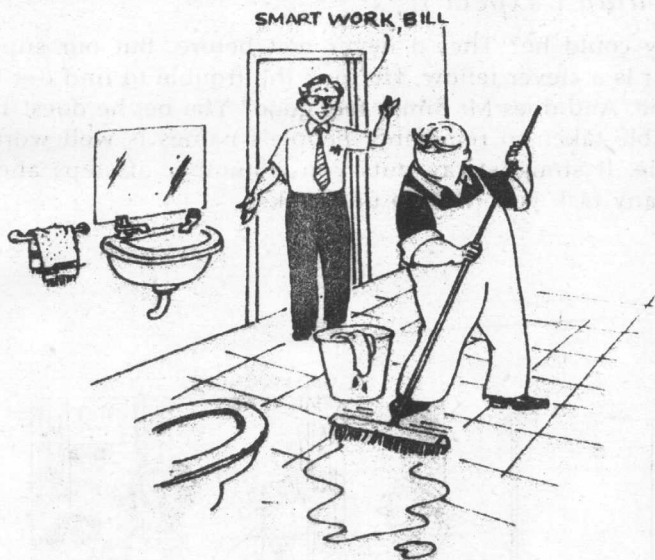
Of course he matters . . .

. . . and it gives Bill a terrific kick. Thousands of people are watching him. But look at his poise, his pride, his bearing. And so it should be in a factory. Let everyone feel that he means something to the organization. Never brush off anyone, no matter how busy you might be. Let each and every one of your men feel that he matters: that he is important.



This is fundamental . . .

It doesn't matter what job you're doing – cleaning lavatories, collecting garbage or walking on a tightrope in a circus – every job is important. Where would we be if our lavatories were not cleaned – or if there was garbage everywhere? Let every man feel that his job matters, whatever it is. Don't brush anyone aside, no matter how busy you might be. The ego in all of us – even the humblest – likes to feel that we are somebody.



Did you know?

You can buy a man's time, you can buy a man's physical presence at a given time, you can even buy a measured number of skilled muscular motions per hour. But you cannot buy enthusiasm; you cannot buy initiative; you cannot buy loyalty; you cannot buy the devotion of hearts, minds and souls; you have to earn these.

There's no real substitute . . .

... Thrashing's no good. It's no good offering a bribe. You are not going to get the donkey to move. And human beings also are not very different. There are other far more effective methods. Understanding, appreciation, making them feel that they count. It's this that will get people to move in the direction you want them to go - and nothing else.

He didn't expect it

How could he? They'd never met before. But our supervisor is a clever fellow. He took the trouble to find out his name. And does Mr Smith feel good? You bet he does! The trouble taken to remember people's names is well worthwhile. It straightaway puts you a number of steps ahead for any task you wish to undertake.



It's mine . . .

. . . our company, our factory, our workshop - this is the sort of talk which we want from our men. Let them feel that the company they work in is theirs. Let them have pride in their organization. Very often, there's a feeling that they work for a few very remote and grand individuals who get all the profits. You can't get people to work really hard under these circumstances. Tell them the real facts - that the company belongs to thousands upon thousands of shareholders: ordinary working people just like themselves.

Not even a bloody nod . . .

. . . that's what Bill is thinking. And he had slogged for the big boss for years when he was just the foreman of the electric shop. Then, they often used to get together, and share thoughts, and play gin rummy. But day-to-day pressures have made the big boss lose touch. He can't even remember Bill. He has obviously got the wrong priorities - because nothing is more important than to be completely aware of how the people under you think and feel.



It's your job

Human relations is one thing that you cannot delegate. Don't for a moment imagine that it's the job of the Personnel Department: human relations is *your* job, because without it you will do nothing effectively.

The trouble with big organizations . . .

. . . is that often no one pays any attention to you. You just don't matter. You are literally a cog in a vast machine. People are people and they crave attention. And if they don't get it in one way, they will get it in another: through absenteeism, slackening, grumbling, or just being out-and-out trouble-makers. Talk to them periodically. About anything. Give them a little attention. Ask them for suggestions. And you'll notice the difference in no time.

