

✓ THE CHECKLIST SERIES

# MANAGING YOURSELF



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## About the checklist series

Management can be a daunting task. Managers are expected to provide direction, foster commitment, facilitate change and achieve results through the efficient, creative and responsible deployment of people and other resources. On top of that, managers have to manage themselves and develop their own personal skills. Just keeping up is a challenge – and we cannot be experts in everything.

The checklists in this series have been developed over many years by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) to meet this challenge by addressing the main issues that managers can expect to face during their career. Each checklist distils good practice from industry to provide a clear and straightforward overview of a specific topic or activity, and has been reviewed by CMI's Subject Matter Experts Panel to reflect new research and changes in working life.

The series is designed both for managers who need an introduction to unfamiliar topics, and for those who want to refresh their understanding of the salient points. In more specialised areas – for example, financial management – checklists can also enable the generalist manager to work more effectively with experts, or to delegate more effectively to a subordinate.

Why is the checklist format useful? Checklists provide a logical, structured framework to help professional managers deal with an increasingly complex workplace – they help shape our thoughts and save us from being confused by too much information. At the same time, checklists help us to make good use of what we already know. They help us to remember things and prevent us from forgetting something important. Thus, no matter how expert we may already be, using checklists can improve outcomes and give us the confidence to manage more effectively, and to get the job done.

## About this book

*Managing Yourself* is aimed at anyone who wants to further their career as a manager. Using a combination of action-oriented checklists and handy short summaries of the ideas of seminal management thinkers, it will guide you past the pitfalls that beset even experienced managers. With checklists on how to develop your career and how to deal with crises, such as redundancy and choosing a second career, right through to planning your retirement, this concise and indispensable handbook will also help you master crucial skills such as problem-solving, networking and time management.

# Contents

Introduction by Dame Mary Marsh ix

## New job/new joiner

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Starting a new job	1
New joiner: fitting in and getting on	9
New joiner: handling workplace relationships	16
<b>Edgar Schein:</b> careers, culture and organisational learning	23
New joiner: developing your network	29
New joiner: making an impact	34
Succeeding as a new manager	38
<b>Kenneth Blanchard:</b> the one-minute manager	44
Newly promoted into a managerial post	51
Handling the politics	60

## Career development

---

Testing for personal effectiveness	67
<b>Stephen R. Covey:</b> the seven habits of highly effective people	74
Personal development planning	81
Working out a career plan	87
Writing your CV	92
How to succeed at job interviews	100
Redundancy: the next day	106
Dealing with redundancy	113
Choosing a second career	121
Starting a small business	126

Setting up as a consultant	135
Planning your retirement	142

## Developing yourself

---

Managing your time effectively	148
Handling information: avoiding overload	153
Solving problems	159
Making rational decisions	166
Stress management: self first	172
Emotional intelligence	177
<b>Daniel Goleman:</b> emotional intelligence	184
Marketing yourself	191
Leading from the middle	199
Managing (your relationship with) your boss	204
Preparing for a performance appraisal	211
Participating in projects	218
Networking	224

Acknowledgements	231
Index	233

# Introduction

About one in five managers in the UK have no formal training in management: perhaps you are one of them. You may have reached a managerial position because you performed well in a specialist role, but *the skills that got you here are not the skills you can rely upon to take your career forward*. Knowing that few managers are trained for the role, it may not surprise you that in a recent survey by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI), 43% of employees in the UK considered their line managers to be ineffective or highly ineffective. If you are to deliver the desired outcomes, you owe it to those who report to you to learn new skills – and you will gain more respect from your team if you can focus, motivate and enable their best possible performance.

You also owe it to your employer to continuously develop yourself as a manager. In fact CMI evidence shows that investing in management and leadership development can lead to a 32% increase in people performance and a 23% increase in organisational performance.

Most of all, you owe it to yourself. Investing in your skills as a manager will give you greater confidence to deal with difficult or unfamiliar situations, and by overcoming problems you will achieve greater capability and satisfaction in your work.

The many opportunities and challenges you will face over time at work are compounded by the fact that 'careers' are no longer linear and predictable. Preparing for this is an important and individual matter. Of course employers have a contribution to

**x** **Managing Yourself**

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make, and will benefit from your personal development and capability, but increasingly you can and must take responsibility for yourself.

You need to know yourself well and constantly review what you are learning. You can stretch yourself by seeking wider experience and skills at every stage, and being ready to learn from the situations you are in and the people you are with. And you need to learn how to sustain physical and emotional resilience so that you can handle stressful situations for yourself and for others. Looking after yourself is a continuing priority.

By seeing your development as a life-long undertaking, you will be able to give continuous commitment to it. In the process your own values will become clear, helping you to make the right decisions in the right way. You will be confident about what you know and humble about what you don't, and therefore able to be yourself. All this will support you as you manage your own career.

Improving all these skills will not always lead naturally to career advancement. You will also need to know how to 'manage upwards' – in other words, how to manage your boss. In a rapidly changing work environment you need to market yourself to take advantage of the opportunities, using your networks and presenting yourself effectively.

The message is clear – if you wish to lead and manage others, you need to know how to manage yourself.

Dame Mary Marsh  
*Founding Director, Clore Social Leadership Programme*



# Starting a new job

Starting a new job may imply that:

- an existing employee has been appointed to fill a vacancy in an existing or newly created job
- an individual has joined an organisation to fill a vacancy in an existing job or to assume the responsibilities of a newly created position.

This checklist focuses on the latter.

Starting a new job is an exciting but testing time when you will face many new challenges. While you may be justifiably proud of yourself for having completed the application process successfully and secured the position you wanted, this is not a time to rest on your laurels. Thinking about how you will approach the first few days and weeks in your new job and planning ahead for any potential issues you will face will help you to:

- reduce your stress levels
- become productive more quickly
- be accepted by new colleagues more quickly
- prepare for the cultural differences in your new organisation
- significantly reduce the potential for embarrassment which can arise in a new situation.

This checklist outlines practical steps which can be taken before you take up your new position and during the first few days in the

## **2 Managing Yourself**

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job. Success depends not just on how you handle the first day with your new employer but on how you prepare in advance, even before you leave your current job. This checklist should also be helpful to organisations employing new starters.

### **Action checklist**

#### **1 Act positively before you leave your present job**

Make sure that you sort out issues such as pension arrangements, private health insurance and your P45 with your HR or personnel department before you leave. Return any company property you have – badges and passes, computer equipment and mobile phones, for example. If you have received funding for qualifications or training, check whether you will be required to repay some or all of this. Does your contract of employment include any clauses restricting your movements or actions in the future?

#### **2 Consider the implications of the new job for your work–life balance**

Recognise that, whatever the level of the job, there will be a ‘settling in’ period during which extra focus and concentration will be required. The balance between your private and working lives may change, if only for a certain length of time, and your partners and family members will be affected. It is preferable to discuss this in advance to avoid or minimise any potential problems. Think too about any additional commitments you have outside work – leisure activities or voluntary work, for example – and decide whether any adjustments or temporary changes will be needed.

#### **3 Research the background of your new employer**

You will no doubt have carried out research into your new employer before your interview. Recognise that the more you know about the organisation you will be working for, the easier it will be for you to fit in during the initial period in your new job. Digest any documentation you have been given and find out what