

Case sources

Shampoo Giants Wash Out Dirty Tricks

Carl Mortished, *The Times*, Saturday 1 September 2001, p 3.

This article describes how (at least according to Procter and Gamble) rogue elements within the company engaged in espionage activities against their major competitor Unilever. This involved the recruitment of ex-Vietnam military veterans to search through the rubbish thrown out by Unilever. From this, information was obtained about the marketing plans and other aspects of operations that were helpful to P&G in developing its own strategies. When senior management within P&G found out about the spying they stopped it immediately, dismissed the people responsible and went to the senior managers in Unilever to apologise and offer reparations.

Questions

1. What are the ethical issues surrounding the process of competitor monitoring?
 2. What defines the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable attempts to find out what competitors are doing?
 3. How would you react if one of your subordinates offered you a way of finding out information about a competitor that could be useful to your organization and your career but which involved engaging in dirty tricks?
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Boardroom is Playground for 'Mummy's Boys'

Alexandra Frean, *The Times*, Saturday 8 September 2001, p 11 and p 25.

This article is based upon research carried out by Cyril Levicki from Reading University. His findings suggest that Britain's boardrooms are full of people who are essentially "mummy's boys, brimming with repressed anger and driven by an unconscious craving for affection".

The predominant pattern that emerged from Levicki's research was of a mother figure who lavished the child with tenderness when the child was good, but who withdrew their love at the first sign of failure. According to Dr Levicki, this produces a set of leaders who, "have high levels of resentment and anxiety, low levels of self-esteem and an inability to motivate subordinates".

Consequently, many talented and original thinkers opt out of the promotion ladder. Only rarely does a true lateral thinker and natural leader rise to the top of an organization.

Question

How can organizations ensure that the right people become leaders, particularly if many current leaders are of the wrong type?

Bullying Claims put Greater Manchester Police in the Frame

Paul Donovan, *People Management*, 26 July 2001, p 14-15.

This article tells the story of two police constables in the Greater Manchester Police service who claim that they were exposed to severe bullying by an inspector and two sergeants over a prolonged period of time.

On one occasion one of the constables was physically prevented from leaving the police station. The other officer was not told of death threats made against them before they went out on patrol. The person making the threats already had a record of actually shooting at police officers.

The use of the internal grievance procedures available to the two police officers failed to deal with the problems identified by them and the bullying continued. Eventually both officers went off on sick leave

due to stress and finally retired on health grounds. However even then their illness was said to have resulted from out of work activities, eg as a result of sports injuries.
The officers are seeking to take legal action against their employer and have also engaged the support of local politicians in seeking redress.

Question

How can bullying be tackled within any organization as it often requires an employee to report the actions of their boss, and senior managers to take action against other managers?

Sense of Direction

Jane Pickard, *People Management*, 9 August 2001, pp 20-25.

This article reviews aspects of leadership as proposed by Professor Andrew Kakabadse from Cranfield School of Management. He proposes that three phases of understanding with regard to management have existed over the years. They are:

- The 'born to lead' school. Followed by:
- The 'self development' school. Followed by:
- Discretionary leadership

Discretionary leadership reflects a situation in which a leader has available to them a wide repertoire of leadership behaviours on which to call. They vary the approach adopted to leadership depending upon the circumstances. He also suggests that modern organizations are typified by diversity, dissention and difference. In short, complexity as compared to organizations in bygone times. Consequently, modern organizations need leaders who can set a vision and engage people in a dialogue within a teamwork context.

In the same article Professor Nigel Nicholson suggests that the extreme competition for job promotion leads to the wrong people getting to the top. They have the skills of self promotion and politics, rather than the ability to manage in modern organizations.

Questions

1. How do the views of leadership indicated in this article compare with the material included in the textbook?
2. How does the material included in this article match the material indicated above based on Levicki's work on 'mummy's boys' at the top?

How to Resolve Conflict in Teams

Mark Brooks, *People Management*, 9 August 2001, pp 34-35.

This article seeks to help managers to deal with conflict in teams by offering them an eight point plan. It is as follows:

- Assess the symptoms
- Choose expert facilitators
- Involve the people at the top
- Set the scene for impartiality
- Explore individual issues
- Clear the air
- Declare an amnesty
- Approach the problems

Question

To what extent does this approach support the material provided in the textbook and how likely is it to be effective in resolving conflict?

Willing Slaves! Employment in Britain in the 21st Century *Management Services*, August 2001, p 3.

Quoting ESRC funded research this summary suggests that:

- British workers are growing more dissatisfied with their long working hours and growing work pressure.
- In 1992, 51% of respondents were satisfied with their work, but this percentage had dropped to 29% by 2000.
- 58% of people working long hours claimed to have little choice but to do so. 14% said that they would lose their jobs if they did not work long hours.
- Professionals and highly qualified employees are now the most likely groups to be working long hours.
- Research shows that employees who are dissatisfied are twice as likely to be seeking job changes and also their willingness to perform at their best at work also reduces.

Questions

1. What are the implications of this type of research for the design of organizations and work?
2. What are the other organizational behaviour implications of this type of research? Consider the chapters in the text such as those on perception, groups, motivation, leadership, job design, technology, stress, power, control, conflict etc.

The Joy of Work

Richard Reeves, *Management Today*, May 2001, pp 60-63.

This article puts forward the view that work has had a bad press over recent years and that it is not bad. It has become in effect a self-fulfilling prophesy in which we complain about work and then find that we actually create the type of work that we deserve (and complain about). It is argued that many people enjoy the work that they do and find it satisfying. However they are often held up for ridicule by the common view that work is bad and to be avoided as much as possible.

It is argued that it is up to job holders to 'shape' the jobs that they do in a way that creates a fulfilling activity to engage in.

Questions

1. How realistic is it for people to seek to 'shape' the jobs that they undertake?
2. What are the organizational and managerial implications of encouraging employees to try and 'shape' the jobs that they undertake?
3. How would you go about increasing the satisfaction gained from the job that you currently undertake (or one that you have done in the past)?

How do you make a tough decision?

Management Today, September 2001, p 55.

This was the question put to four very different business leaders. Emerging from their answers is a more human approach to decision making in tough areas incorporating experience and instinct as well as logic. It was also stressed that individuals should be prepared to face the consequences of having to take tough decisions as well as the rewards.

Questions

1. What defines a 'tough decision'?
2. How would you make a tough decision?
3. Are 'tough decisions' equally tough for all decision makers?
4. To what extent does the material presented in the textbook recognise 'tough decisions' as a distinct activity? Why or why not?

Ethical Cleansing

Stephen Overell, *Personnel Today*, 4 September 2001, pp 25-31.

This article reflects on many aspects of ethics in business and also corporate social responsibility (CSR). It also includes a small number of actual company experiences to support and illustrate the discussion.

Question

Having read the article, consider the degree to which CSR can be built into an organization's processes and operational activity compared to the need to have it incorporated into an organization as a specific and distinct management responsibility.

Change at the UK hydrographic office

People Management, 11 January 2001, pp 32-36.

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has been charting the seas around the world since 1795. It continually updates around 3500 marine charts and employs 900 people, many of them skilled cartographers. It is technically part of the Ministry of Defence and has traditionally been run as part of the Royal Navy. The article in *People Management* describes how the organization went about a change process in order to be able to carry out its duties more effectively. Among the pressures on the organization were the increasing use of technology in navigation (leading to a reduced demand for paper charts) and a requirement placed on it by the British government to function in a more commercial way.

Question

Having read the article you should consider that you have been retained by the Ministry of Defence to offer advice on a second phase of change. You should identify issues and topics from your study of organizational behaviour that would be likely to further improve the functioning of the UKHO. Your ideas should be presented as options for consideration along with the possible benefits (along with any possible dangers) that might be expected. Your proposals should also be couched within an appropriate change management framework.

Home working at OFSTED

People Management, 11 January 2001, page 6.

OFSTED is the body responsible in Britain for school inspections. It is taking over responsibility this year for early years childcare inspection from local authorities. This will involve absorbing in excess of 1000 additional people into OFSTED from the local authorities who were previously responsible for this monitoring. Clearly this carries many implications associated with transferring so many staff from one organization to another, particularly when they are geographically spread around the country. Administrative staff are based at the 8 OFSTED regional centres, with in addition some 150 local offices serving the needs of inspection staff. OFSTED has proposed that inspection staff should be able to work from home and this has produced a major negative reaction from the staff and their trade union. Clearly from a management point of view there are major office accommodation implications that arise from absorbing so many additional staff, most of whom will be out of the office for

considerable periods during the year. Also working from home is frequently identified as a useful benefit by many workers as it allows them greater flexibility and reduces the costs associated with having to go to the office. However many inspectors have argued that their job is a team activity and that there is an overriding need to have communal work facilities. Equally many do not have the facilities to work at home. Management have been accused of informing staff of the decision rather than consulting over it.

Question

Based on your study of organizational behaviour how would you have managed the merger of activity into OFSTED to seek to minimise the risk of problems arising and how would you deal with the current situation as it has unfolded?

I'm a Miss says Charterhouse Maths Master

The Times, Wednesday January 10 2001, p 3.

Organizations have a legal and moral obligation to support people undergoing and following gender change treatments. The article indicated reviews one such situation in an educational environment.

Question

Using your study of OB discuss how you as a manager might make provision (including preparing the other employees) for one of your subordinates (male or female) who tells you that they are officially about to change their gender?

Employers still failing to close gender pay gap

Financial Times, Tuesday January 9 2001, p 5. Also *The Independent* Wednesday 17 January 2001, p 10 and the *Wednesday Review*, p 5
Women need 'fire in their bellies' for equal pay and Equality? We still have a long way to go.

Official statistics show that after some 25 years of equality legislation women are still paid considerably less than men.

Question

Identify some of the reasons why this might be so and using your knowledge of OB suggest how these issues might be addressed.

The skill of thriving under pressure and Workload piles on the agony for stress sufferers *Financial Times*, Tuesday January 9 2001, p 18 and *Personnel Today* Tuesday 5 December 2000, p 8.

Question

How can you manage the balance between negative effects of excessive stress with the view that some pressure is necessary to achieve maximum performance from the individual?

Tighten security and take on e-business

Personnel Today, Tuesday 5 December 2000, p 15.

The article suggests that many of the problems with computer security come down to a failure in basic human routines (for example staff leaving passwords etc on notes attached to their terminals).

Question

How could knowledge of OB assist in finding ways around these difficulties?

Special Report - The future of work

Personnel Today 28 November 2000, pp 25-29.

Question

Discuss the predictions made in this article for the role of OB in the training of managers capable of meeting the challenges of the future.

How to learn the art of lateral thinking

Financial Times, Monday 15 January 2001, p 16.

Question

How can the study of OB contribute to the development of lateral thinking and entrepreneurial skills?

The People's Republic opens its doors to people management

People Management, October 26 2000, pp 16-17.

It could be argued that the underlying principles behind the process described in the above article are based on the belief that Western theory and models of society etc, should predominate and be applied everywhere.

Question

Explore the ethical, cultural and practical issues implied by the article.

Based on: Nigel Hawkes, Would You Believe It?

The Times Weekend, Saturday September 19 1998, p 12.

A major focus of events in the public eye not so many years ago was the situation facing President Clinton from the USA in relation to his relationship with Monika Lewinsky. As a consequence it was hardly surprising that lying should have become a popular topic for consideration in management circles. Hawkes brings together a number of views associated with lying. Quoting Dr Richard Wiseman from the University of Hertfordshire a number of interesting points emerged, including:

- Strangers are better equipped to detect lies than individuals with close associations.
- Politicians are skilled at lying, being classified as "self monitors" they are always conscious of the impressions that they make on other people.

- Liars tend to use shorter sentences and provide less detail. They also use a longer delay than normal before replying to questions. Their speech is faster in pace and higher in pitch.

Dr Wiseman and Dr Aldert Vrij from Portsmouth University have both researched video material of parents and others in public appeals for the return of lost children or for information on assaults etc. From that material they have identified a number of verbal and behavioural cues that suggest lying in cases where subsequent convictions for murder etc, have been achieved from these same people. Perhaps evolution has encouraged the ability to lie in small ways and not be detected. Consider the chaos surrounding Jim Carrey as the star of the film Liar Liar. Perhaps lies facilitate smoother patterns to interpersonal relationships up to a certain level or magnitude of lies. Clearly the article contains much more detail than can be summarized here and should be read in full for greater insight. It does not specifically address the organizational or managerial context but there are clear associations.

Questions

Some of the issues that you might like to research and discuss in tutorial situations include:

1. Based on the research indicated in the article should lies be easier to detect in an organizational setting rather than other situations? Why or why not?
2. If lies do facilitate smoother interpersonal relationships, is there a case for arguing that lies in business are acceptable?
3. How would the ethical perspectives reconcile this view?
4. If lies are endemic to human life and experience what does this imply for the practice of management and issues such as employee relations, power and control within the organization?
5. When might (if ever) lies between managers and employees be acceptable?
6. What does the existence of lies imply for the processes of communications, decision making and negotiation within an organization?

Based on: Eluned Price, He was a People Person

Weekend Telegraph, Saturday September 12 1998, p 11.

This article describes how American executives are using the polar explorer Ernest Shackleton as a model of good management. The difficulties and rigours of crossing the polar wastes in the most hostile of conditions are claimed to demonstrate the leadership and managerial qualities of Shackleton. Jim MacGregor, managing partner of a firm of consultants in New York has been using Shackleton as a role model for a number of years. Major organizational crises are the area of specialism for MacGregor's firm and the communication and leadership aspects of Shackleton's approach to his task are claimed to be particularly valuable in this context.

His failed attempt to get to the South Pole with only 97 miles to go when he turned back in order to protect the lives of his men as they were running out of supplies and time are taken as a clear demonstration of his approach. In today's terminology the organizational objective was not paramount, the interests of his people were. This might seem strange to many managers today brought up in the culture that to succeed is everything. However, Shackleton put the interests of his team first and so was able to count on their loyalty and support for future endeavours. Leadership by example and being able to ask for advice from subordinates also appear to be among his stronger qualities and from which modern managers can learn.

Task

As a piece of research you might like to seek out library material on famous people and attempt to tease out their leadership qualities and then attempt to place these in the context of leadership theory as introduced in the Organizational Behaviour text.

Based on: Nicola Horlick, Memo to the Boss Man - Take a Break
The Sunday Times News Review, 9 August 1998, p 8.

Horlick quotes research carried out by Hyatt Regency Hotels suggesting that 20% of top managers regularly cut short their holidays through work pressure and 58% of men and 43% of women did not take their full holiday entitlement in any year. Mobile phones and pagers going off is now a common disturbance of any leisure activity, to the extent that some theatres have installed equipment to "jam" signals during performances. Horlick describes executives as "communication junkies" and "adrenaline junkies". In other words they "need" the daily fix of contact with the office to "keep a finger on the pulse" and also they need the constant buzz of (and from) work to feel indispensable. This view suggests that the phenomenon is a function of the individual rather than a requirement of the job or organization. However it is difficult to behave otherwise if the boss is a "junkie" themselves, which brings in the power, political and control aspects of organisational life.

Questions

1. What are the organizational implications associated with this situation? Should it be allowed to continue, or should it be prevented and if so how?
2. Horlick suggests that in her view women are better at building support networks and therefore enable themselves to take a holiday more effectively. She also suggests that in her opinion women are better at delegation and less inclined to regard themselves as indispensable and so do not regard holiday as a threat to their position. What is your opinion in relation to these matters and on what evidence is it based? How might you design a research programme to test these ideas?

Developing Managers: A European Perspective (2004)

Mabey, C and Ramirez, M. A report of the research is carried in
Management Services, August 2004, pp 16-20.

The report reviews the management development practices from seven major European nations. Overall five different approaches were identified to the ways that managers were developed. Among the other interesting findings were that there was a strong belief across all of the countries taking part in the survey that it was the innate ability/personality factors that made an effective manager rather than any form of training or development. However, in countries such as Denmark and the UK there was a high use of qualification based development, whereas in Spain and France there was a heavy reliance on internal approaches to such development. The amount of management development has shown an increase over the last 10 years with an average of 9.3 days per manager per year, up from 5.4 days per manager per year in the early 1990s. The report concludes with the view that managers can either work towards a virtuous cycle leading to the creation of a high performing company; or find themselves trapped in a vicious cycle of failure and underperformance.

Question

How would you persuade the senior management of a company to adopt positive measures in relation to management development?

The Economics of Culture Change

Atkinson, P (2004), *Management Services*, pp 8-14.

This article looks at a particular aspect of culture within an organization, that of service delivery. The author reviews what he describes as the factors that create unhealthy, negative cultures. They display the following characteristics:

- Short-term tactical focus rather than strategic focus
- Too much time spent 'thinking' rather than taking action or 'doing' among the leadership, leading to procrastination and prevarication.
- The silo mentality resulting from a functional approach to hierarchy as compared to the need to work in cross functional teams.
- Fire fighting; some businesses prefer the fire-fighting approach to operational activity compared to the level of planning and prevention.

The author suggests that organizations that display the unhealthy negative culture characteristics have costs that are some 20% higher than necessary.

Task

Compare this view of culture with that presented in the text. Is the author of the above article actually discussing culture or are they describing other aspects of organizational functioning? Justify your views.

Majority of employers contributing to 'Burn-out Britain'

Management Services, November 2005, p 3.

Research by Croner (one of the UK's leading providers of business information and advice) has found that 8 out of 10 employers fail to effectively manage the factors that (according to the Health and Safety Executive) are known to cause work-related stress. More than 50% of employees aged between 25 and 35 are described as having a 'quarter-life crisis'. The main causes of stress at work are said to be:

- Demands of the job
- Control over how to work
- Support from colleagues and management
- Working relationships
- Clarity of role
- Organizational change.

Task

Use the material presented in the text and material collected from web-sites such as: www.healthandsafety-centre.net to identify how stress could be managed more effectively.

Beyond the Water Cooler

Law, S, *Professional Manager*, January 2005, pp 26-28.

This article reviews the informal social interactions that take place in any organization and the importance of such contact in creating team spirit and social support networks in the workplace. The author then reviews the difficulties in finding and creating similar opportunities for the increasing number of remote teams and groups that exist in organizations these days. Remote working can take many forms including the increasing use of home-working to teams formed from people working in many different geographic locations across the world. The difficulty faced by the managers of such teams is how to create a team when it is likely that the individual members will never, or very infrequently, meet and might not even 'know' each other in the conventional sense of the term.

Task

Assume that you have just been appointed to be the manager of a virtual team consisting of seven members based in four different countries. The team is tasked with designing a new computer based order tracking system for your company, which is in the international parcel delivery business. How would you go about building and maintaining a team in that situation?

Secrets of the Networkers

Rigby, R. *Management Today*, December 2004, pp 66-71.

Networking is the making and use of connections and exists in various forms in most cultures of the world. It is often regarded as a major feature in the chance of being promoted to more senior management positions. This article reflects on some of the techniques that can be used as part of the desire to network effectively.

Task

Imagine that you have left college and are in your first trainee management position with a major supermarket chain. How might you go about networking in that context?

Forever Changing

Stern, S. *Management Today*, February 2005, pp 40-45.

This article looks at the pressure for change in modern organizations, which for some specialist consultancies has become so much part of the everyday experience for organizations that it is regarded as a tactical rather than strategic issue. Major change is now described by these consultancies as transformation. The article contains a panel based on the work of Professor Michael Jarret from London Business School in which the seven myths of change management are identified. They are:

- Organizational change management creates value. The truth is that many times this does not happen, some 70% of change management programmes fail.
- Resistance can be overcome. The roots of resistance are in fear and survival and can become part of the 'shadow' organization. They cannot be ignored or easily overcome.
- Change is constant. This reflects the difference between transformational and incremental change. Large scale change is rare and change is more likely to be experienced as a short period of radical change followed by a period of stability.
- Change can be managed. Change contains uncertainty and unpredictability therefore it cannot be managed closely and predicted outcomes do not always result.

- The change agent knows best. They can stimulate change but they cannot totally direct the process, an organization must find its own way of responding to change based on the views and responses of all stakeholders.
- Accepted wisdom is to follow the steps. Pre-planned steps and processes do not always take into account the need for flexibility and adjustment needed during rapid change, greater resilience will be necessary in order to deal with the twists and turns of a change process.
- Big challenges require big changes. Not always; sometimes small changes are enough to tilt the organization in the right direction and the cumulative effects of a number of small changes can add up to more than a single large change.

Task

Compare and contrast the views expressed above and in the article with the ideas in change management discussed in the text. Identify the major differences and similarities in the treatment of change between the two.

Serve the Servants

Arkin, A. *People Management*, 23 December 2004, pp 30-33.

According to Robert K Greenleaf great leaders are driven by a desire to serve rather than by a lust for power. These ideas might seem strange at first, but they are taking root in the UK and supermarket chain ASDA have introduced the term into its management vocabulary. According to David Smith, the HR director of ASDA, leadership is something that is done with rather than to people and so it is important for the leader to know how to take people with them, rather than simply give orders. The distinguishing feature of servant leadership compared to leadership based on power, status and wealth is the care taken by the servant leader to firstly ensure that people's highest priority needs are being met. It is argued that servant leadership functions when everyone grows as a person. If they become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous and more likely to become servants to other people in the organization then servant leadership is operating.

Task

After reading the article indicated, consider the notion of servant leadership in relation to the chapters on management and leadership in the text. Is servant leadership a style, contingency or a totally different approach to leadership? In the article it is compared to more authoritarian styles of leadership, is this valid, or is it being compared with management rather than leadership? The article concludes with the view that servant leadership is not the answer to every situation. In what situations might it be most and least appropriate?