Harjeet K. Virdee

FLOURISH

Unleash Potential, Inspire Excellence

How Emotionally Talented Managers Elevate People, Boost Performance and Drive Exceptional Results

BEYOND BOUNDS

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For My Father.
With Love, Admiration and Gratitude.

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Praise for Flourish: Unleash Potential, Inspire Excellence.

"Harjeet's book is a transformative guide for managers and leaders. Drawing from my own experience as a senior leader responsible for thousands of front-line staff and my own extensive research in Servant Leadership, I affirm the significance of relationship-based leadership. Harjeet captures this essence as 'Emotional Talent', emphasising individual growth and empathetic service. With real life accounts and essential solutions, this much needed book equips leaders to evolve into emotionally adept leaders who get results and enable their people to truly flourish."

Dr Cecilia Leung, Servant leadership advocate and former General Manager, Cathay Pacific Airways and Hong Kong Dragon Airlines.

"This book underscores a critical yet often overlooked aspect of organisational success—the profound impact of human values on motivation and performance. Drawing from personal experience as the former Head of Sales and Marketing at Autoglass, UK, I witnessed first-hand the transformative power of treating individuals with respect and dignity. The Voice of The People programme, which I implemented, demonstrated that when leaders prioritise these fundamental human values, they have the potential to catapult performance to unprecedented heights. The principles outlined in this book provide a roadmap for organisations keen on gaining the substantial advantages that come from creating an environment where people not only work but truly thrive. A must-read for leaders and managers seeking to unlock the full potential of their teams and gain a significant edge in today's dynamic and competitive landscape."

Bill Kalyan, UK Head of Sales and Service

The Seeker and the Gold

The wanderer journeys across realms, seeking himself, only to return and discover that the treasure was nestled within all along. Similarly, within the vast expanse of the professional landscape, the untapped brilliance of individuals gleams as the internal gold. All that awaits is the guiding touch of evolved leaders capable of unlocking this radiant potential.

Harjeet K Virdee

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Introduction

"Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself"

Jelaluddin Rumi

The biggest blind spot in workplace success is the wealth of potential sitting unused in people.

Equally blind is how this potential can be untapped.

This matters because reaching potential can generate extraordinary results. Never has this been more important than in an era of rapid transformation, disruption and unpredictability which requires an urgent need for expanded skills.

Human potential is more than working toward peak performance. At its ultimate, it captures the best of a person, so what you get is talent and heart—the joy of giving one's best, willingly and proactively. This is flourishing!

The problem is that human potential and emotional fulfilment are goals most workplaces rarely aspire to; instead, compliance is what they seek. This oversight may be costing organisations much more than they realise because not only are people not maximising their highest potential, the majority aren't even engaged with their work. According to Gallup's 2022 survey[1] only 23% of the global workforce is engaged. Despite allocating millions of dollars into benefits and reward programmes, employee engagement and motivation remain low, and alarmingly so in Europe where the engagement rate is the lowest of all regions at 13%—despite generous benefits such as long vacation allowances. Let's put this in perspective. The only people successfully moving your company forward are engaged people. This reality is easy to ignore when times are good, but not when times are bad.

It is important that this concern be taken seriously by decision makers in organisations. Engaged people are more productive, incur

lower costs, stay longer, help faster recovery in difficult times, and produce better customer satisfaction scores. Additionally, they are more emotionally fulfilled—an ethically important fact that has long gone unaddressed in most workplaces, even though the debate is not new. When people flourish, all these benefits are magnified, as is the possibility of work becoming a profoundly enriching place for people, both professionally and personally.

We are living in an age so technically progressive that we struggle to keep up with new advances. The most brilliant minds on earth have decoded the human genome, invented 3D printing, and continue to advance artificial intelligence to unfathomable heights. Yet workplaces still haven't figured out what makes people thrive and love their work.

We are intellectually rich but emotionally poor.

The working world still holds on tenaciously to the old-fashioned notion that extrinsic factors such as remuneration, bonuses and wellness perks are the most effective drivers for motivation and retention. However, this notion misses the mark entirely. This is because the drive to channel one's best into work is most powerfully ignited by emotional factors—loving what you do and feeling really good about yourself when you achieve great results.

Now here's the crucial thing—it is the direct manager that enables this to happen. Organisations have been mindbogglingly oblivious to this significant criterion. Managers and not the senior executives nor the organisation create the immediate environment in which people work. This doesn't only refer to the managers' competencies or working style, but more significantly, to their personal behaviour and emotional make up. This has a far greater impact on the quality of people's work lives and their motivation to do great work. I have seen talented people leave a company—no matter how highly ranked it was as a great employer—rather than work for notoriously bad managers even if it means they're leaving their dream jobs. Most of us have probably endured at least one manager whose temperament has made our working lives unfulfilling or even emotionally challenging, so we know this to be true.

When on the other hand, the emotional make up of a manager is positive and generates care and support it impacts people on a whole different level. They willingly bring their best selves to work—their talents and joy. The emotional makeup of a manager that makes this happen is emotional talent. This is a state of high personal evolvement encapsuling emotional security and the ability to make a difference to others. It impacts people because it enables a manager to stand back and let people shine without any fear of threat or personal diminishment.

Can you imagine a workplace where every manager with responsibilities for people was developed to this level? People would thrive and so would the organisation! Instead, this critically important piece of psychology on human thriving and potential in the workplace is conspicuously absent. Most managers remain woefully unskilled and unaware of how to generate great performance from their people.

The need to reassess this issue is way overdue, however the resolution must come from a shift in thinking on what *really* drives people to want to give their best —and free lunches it is not.

When managers are emotionally talented people managers, they are a strategic asset driving the organisation forward. These skills are not 'soft' skills that are merely nice to have when training budgets allow; nor should they languish behind more tantalising subjects such as Marketing or the kudos of getting an MBA. They are critical skills that can affect your bottom line because people give their best to emotionally talented managers and withdraw all goodwill and extra effort in the face of uncaring or self-serving managers.

This book has been written to assist managers in developing their emotional talent so that they can turn their people into high performers, help them reach their potential and love their work. This is good for the people, good for the manager and good for the organisation—it's a triple win.

I know this is possible because this book is based on my experience of leading teams of people to flourish beyond anything I could have predicted. In fact, many transformed beyond what even *they* thought possible. Most of my career has been in the airline industry, covering

various commercial roles, first with British Airways in my home city of London, UK, and then Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong. For fourteen years, I managed teams of people, and like most managers, my style started off reflecting that of the company culture or my direct managers. What changed me was undertaking years of intensive self-development in my own time; exploring who I was and what limitations stood in the way of my fulfilment in life. I did workshops, seminars, meditation retreats, spiritual quests and worked with coaches, and thanks to my discounted staff travel, travelled the world in pursuit of these self-expanding experiences. It led to a fascination with exploring the human ability to reach potential on all levels and the boldness to explore possibilities beyond conventional thinking. This continues to this day many years later, with me now leading workshops on human potential themes.

As a manager these experiences awakened in me an ability for self-awareness, greater self-fulfilment, and the love of inspiring people to be their best. By this time, I was working in Cathay Pacific Airways to manage business transformation throughout the organisation via online systems and process change. I managed teams of people and over time I gradually changed from being a typical self-focused manager conscious of being seen in a good light to being one who was comfortable with championing people and allowing them to have the limelight. This change in me had a profound impact on people and their performance, something I had not anticipated. The quality of work output excelled as no detail was left unturned. Projects were successfully delivered one after the other—on time, within budget and with a return that often exceeded expected benefits. This was extremely impressive as online adoption was still not fully established in Asia at that time and designing solutions didn't always come with clear, tried, and tested formulas. Project successes and people's performance excelled despite being in an industry that experienced regular volatility, especially in economic downturns, for example when the SARS virus affected Hong Kong in 2002 which devastated the airline industry for months.

Furthermore, I had no budgets for training, lavish thank you dinners or meaningful pay rises.

Over a period of about eight years, I had consistently achieved high performing teams of people. Among the significant successes were: implementing major business change in customer and internal processes (for the first time in decades), designing and launching an award winning website for all global markets that saved millions of US dollars in servicing world-wide travel agents (and was copied by other major airlines) and one of the most advanced web analytics systems in Asia at that time that revealed significant revenue and customer insights for the first time. We became known as a high achieving team and in my annual performance appraisals I was consistently given the rare top mark number 5 for 'exceeding all expectations' for Team Management.

Besides achieving these impressive outcomes there was something else I hadn't expected at all — the radical transformation in the characters of people. Self-confidence flourished and showed up as greater self-belief, authenticity and initiative. People were at ease being their real selves. Ideas for improvement were being proactively suggested and those who had rarely spoken up in front of senior managers were now presenting to large groups without fear. They relished taking on more responsibility and having ownership of projects and their outcomes. Self-esteem grew and along with this, a high-spirited team camaraderie as well as more trusting relationships with people in other departments, something which made the flow of work so much more swift. Sick days were reduced and when sickness did occur people often checked emails from home. People were profoundly fulfilled both professionally and personally. As a manager it was a joy to have self-managing, high performing people who were utterly dependable and furthermore, extremely loyal to me.

It's important to note that these were not people who were recruited as having high potential for future senior management roles. In fact, my teams usually consisted of a mix of those acquired as 'surplus staff' from other departments as well as those actively recruited for expert roles. They included different levels such as administrators, analysts

and junior managers. Over the years many of them did go on to management roles, senior management positions and heads of departments with other international corporations — an outcome I had honestly not seen as a possibility at the outset.

Nowhere in any part of my career, business education or management training had I been shown that this is what people were capable of when they're led by a manager with the right people skills—those of emotional talent. At no time did I ever encounter the notion that positive emotions were the foundation of great performance and extraordinary results. I realised this was a significant omission in management development and the impetus to share my experience came when Ada, one of my top performing people, unabashedly declared to me how much she absolutely loved her work and how much she loved working for me! It struck me how rare this state was in working life.

I believe emotional talent development should be an important requisite for anyone who is responsible for leading people. This has never been more urgent in a world which is constantly evolving and uncertain. Not only do organisations need people to be their biggest advantage in navigating this environment, but they also need highly skilled people managers to make this happen.

This book shows you how this can be achieved. It is targeted directly at managers as a compelling case for change, and also as a personal development tool for working through independently. It doesn't require permission from the Training and Development department because emotional talent is about developing the personal self. Every individual owns their inner emotional landscape and it is their sovereign choice to cultivate its qualities.

To assist learning, I have given many real-life practical examples and proven solutions – not theories. These are from my own experiences of what worked and are backed up by published research.

I encourage you to read the book, not as a detached observer but by assessing and reflecting on your personal self and role of manager as you read it.

The format of the book is designed to appeal to both the rational manager mind (through data and research) and the emotional self – the level at which behavioural shift happens (through real-life examples, case studies and reflective points). You don't only need to intellectually know about emotional talent – you have to *be* emotionally talented and the book aims to achieve this.

Although I write mainly from the experience of my corporate background this book is relevant for managers in any industry and level; it can apply to new, middle and senior managers as well as supervisors who lead people. During my interviews I spoke to people in situations as diverse as charities, school management and PhD research and realised how that no matter what the context, engagement and emotional wellbeing — and therefore results — are significantly impacted by the immediate manager.

Much of the credibility of this book comes from my experience as a manager with real life practical experience of achieving high performing people while also managing functional responsibilities. I am not an academic, PhD doctor, CEO, Human Resource manager or management consultant. I am not dismissing these worthy roles, but I write directly from the realities of management experience. Perspectives at this level are rarely presented as evidenced by the burgeoning weight of leadership books by CEOs and PhD researchers. I hope this also makes my book more relatable to managers and the realities of working life.

My intention is that this book will have global appeal and relevance to managers across countries as diverse as London, USA, Hong Kong, India and more. With this in mind I include my international experience and accounts of managing and interacting with people of diverse cultures across many major cities in every continent in the world. Personally, I am culturally hybrid—a British born Indian, which gives me multiple reference points with which to translate the world. This, I hope, avoids the pitfall of many Western writers, who I feel, prescribe solutions from the perception of their one-dimensional world. My personal development experiences have also been shared with people from different nationalities, in many different parts of the world, and while

I am aware of cultural sensitivities, I also know that some fundamentals such as the human need for emotional fulfilment and the joy of being your best self are universal.

Author's Notes on Terminology and Naming

I use the word 'people' in preference to terms such as 'staff', 'employees' or 'subordinates'. This is because I've always recoiled at terms such as 'management and staff' as it puts people into the category of 'other' and is more reminiscent of an age-old stuffy British era of upper classes and their maids and butlers! If I have departed from this, it is for ensuring clarity.

The word 'manager' refers to any level of role including supervisors and team leaders with responsibility for managing people.

I use the term 'organisation' as a catch all for all workplaces. This can apply to large corporates, medium to large businesses, non-business, governmental, educational, charities and others.

Names used in case studies have been changed to protect the people interviewed. Exceptions to this are where the full name has been shown in which case they are genuine.

PART 1

People Who Flourish & Why Managers are the Key

The impact of people who flourish and why managers are the key to making this happen

I

Flourishing

Unleashing an Extraordinary Level of Human Potential

"The highest possibilities of human nature have practically always been underrated"

Abraham Maslow

What Does it Mean to Flourish?

When people work to their greatest potential, it is a distinctly different state from being motivated or even engaged[2]. Although these are desirable goals, they are not the ultimate in what I have seen possible. Motivation and engagement are the bar organisations set for their people, and they can certainly generate good performance. However, when people work to their best potential, they go beyond expectations with a giving that comes not from obligation but from proactive willingness.

The level at which people reach their greatest potential—and can even continue to surpass it to create new levels of potential—is what I call flourishing. It is an apt way to describe a state that is thriving, breaking through ceilings and growing into new levels of ultimate best. Imagine a workplace where this happens. Where people enthusiastically offer their best selves, put their talents into full play and are deeply fulfilled; that the place in which they spend the majority of their waking hours and able years is a source of profound personal and professional

2. Definitions of engagement vary across the board, often as a result of which questions asked in employee surveys are deemed to be pertinent to being engaged.

enrichment. As a manager, imagine having self-managing people who work to their best regardless of whether you're present or not. For the organisation, this is a big win too as people who flourish are high performers and strive for ultimate—not adequate—outcomes.

However, there is more to this than achieving results that excel. Implicit in this way of managing are the ethical angles: that enjoying one's work should be a natural goal in life's priorities, and for employers, treating people with respect and dignity should be an inalienable, human right. These are values that many organisations merely pay lip service to despite proud declarations in their value statements, but in reality, they are powerful attractors for potential employees and consumers looking for an ethical, human centric brand.

The Oxford English dictionary defines 'flourish' as: *"Grow or develop in a healthy or vigorous way, especially as the result of a particularly congenial environment."*

This is a good definition, but I define flourishing in the workplace as this:

> *A state in which a person reaches known or unknown potential as a result of favourable conditions and in doing so gives rise to high levels of performance and emotional fulfilment.*

This definition includes three critical ingredients of extraordinary performance that are almost always overlooked in most engagement or motivational theories: Unknown potential, favourable conditions, and emotional fulfilment.

Let's look at *favourable conditions* first. These are determined by the manager because he or she controls the immediate environment in which people work. The conditions, such as freedom to be autonomous, freely expressed or valued, set by the manager are more impacting than the company culture or the senior leaders. This assertion challenges conventional beliefs that culture and leaders set the tone and quality of working environments. However, ask anyone who works in a so-called progressive organisation with a free gym, shops and multiple

staff restaurants but works for a toxic boss about what impacts the quality of their working life and emotional health more. The great perks are totally nullified in the face of the challenging manager. The role of managers as the single most impacting force in creating the conditions for people to flourish is central to this book and is explored in more detail in the next chapter.

The second component in the definition of flourishing is *emotional fulfilment*. This is when work becomes a source of personal enhancement and deep upliftment. This includes qualities such as self-esteem, resilience and joy of work. This component is seldom considered for peak performance and human thriving. It is not discounted entirely as an element of workplace motivation, but it gets eclipsed by priorities such as talent development and monetary incentives. Emotional fulfilment, when it is considered, often exists at superficial levels and often as a disposable nice-to-have for most workplaces. This is a significant oversight, as it is the driving force that shifts people from working at minimal levels of just enough to going over and beyond expectations—the level at which people give the best of themselves enthusiastically and proactively.

When emotional fulfilment is strong, it forms an inner resource and foundation so solid and powerful that it becomes a launch pad for unleashing other behaviours such as drive, positivity and commitment. These behaviours cannot be coaxed out of people because they are discretionary and come from inner volition. They have a tremendous impact on performance as they supercharge talents and expertise with unstoppable momentum. A key ingredient of flourishing is self-esteem. This is a powerful psychological force for emotional and mental wellbeing, and when work becomes a source of this, it becomes a place you love.

The third component of flourishing is that it generates both *known and unknown potential*. Known potential is being, doing and growing into all you know you can be or aspire to achieve, such as learning a new language, progressing to the next promotion or getting an MBA. They are identified goals that are pursued by known capabilities and

strengthened by determination and self-belief—inner states that give you the knowing that you can achieve something.

Unknown potential is another less-known secret of high performance and growth and is largely unrecognised as a concept or aspiration by organisational theorists. I created this definition after witnessing big changes in the high performers in my team. Unknown potential is growing into a space that has not been previously recognised or thought possible. It is like creating a new version of yourself, one you never knew was possible for you. It also includes acquiring new skills and knowledge, but these are gained through the strength of emotional competencies such as confidence, self-belief and courage—qualities that pave the way for exploration into unfamiliar territories and new possibilities. The manager is the person who creates the opportunity for unknown potential to be initiated.

In my experience in managing people, it was when people reached levels of unknown potential that they unleashed their greatest growth and even deeply profound transformations, much more than achieving goals pertaining to known potential. This is because it can powerfully transform our inner emotional states and how we see ourselves. Personal qualities such as confidence, self-belief and self-acceptance can be catapulted from mediocrity to strength. These are the qualities that transform self-identity and capability—who you think you are and what you think you can do—and once they are generated, they drive energy into new areas of success and emotional wellbeing.

As a manager, I witnessed totally unexpected transformations in many of the people I managed. They became new selves that went beyond anything they ever thought possible. The difference in them from the time they joined my team to the end was often extraordinary. Many of them were recruited as analysts, data administrators and junior managers and left as competent project managers, great product innovators and experts in their field. A few of them eventually went on to senior management roles in well-known international firms such as Estée Lauder and Marriot Hotels. They *all* attributed their success

to the development and opportunities they received under my management although I can honestly say that from the outset their future rise to senior leadership roles was unforeseen. Changes of this magnitude take more than gaining expertise or qualifications such as an MBA—they require inner emotional strengths such as self-confidence, courage and self-belief.

Such huge leaps in growth are seldom self-generated because we often lock ourselves into self-images and capabilities based on our definitions and limitations and what we think we can or cannot be or do. We also cannot achieve that which we haven't identified or aspired to achieve, so it takes an external person, such as a manager, to present opportunities outside of your known realm and take you into new experiences that you would dare not tread if left alone. As a manager, I felt very strongly about people being publicly credited with their own work. So I would often ask them—including more junior people—to present their work to large audiences and senior managers, including department heads. For some, this was nerve-racking and something they themselves would not have initiated, but it moved them forward in giant leaps ahead, not baby steps.

This highlights the question of untapped potential. How much brilliance lies in people that remains unseen and unrealised? When I asked this question to people-focused managers in interviews for this book, their estimates ranged from 20% to 30%. In my experience, it's around 30% for most people and even above that for those individuals whose motivation is strongly unleashed. Realising this level of untapped potential is not insignificant and can translate into many different organisational benefits, including higher productivity, more innovation and better quality outputs.

Although the manager creates the conditions for people to flourish, people must also be willing and receptive to develop and grow. However, I also experienced increased performance from those who didn't explicitly express any ambition to progress. Their changes arose in response to how they were treated. Changes such as greater attention to detail,

unwavering commitment to work and extreme loyalty to me were some of the great positives I experienced from them.

What Happens When People Flourish?

When people flourish, they contribute the best of themselves from a place of inner volition and not from the need to comply or obey. They give because they absolutely want to, and they do so freely, proactively and enthusiastically. It is a state that unleashes boundless levels of discretionary effort, so nothing is held back.

Achieving This State through People Is Gold.

It is more powerful than money because once a level of remuneration is reached and deemed fair, any additional increments won't have corresponding lifts in motivation. This is especially true for creative, intelligent or complex work typical of the twenty-first century.

When people flourish, they do not need to be closely supervised to ensure they are being productive. They become self-managing and accountable for their work—ideals that most workplaces still fail to embrace in the widespread thinking that people need to be controlled lest they turn rogue if left unchecked. However, these self-managing behaviours are even more necessary for remote working, a practise that became more widespread after the Corona virus pandemic of 2020.

When it comes to people, the workplace traditionally puts the focus on skills, competencies and knowledge, however when people flourish, they transcend these dimensions. Flourishing is a state that engages multiple resources—mental skills, work talents, positive behaviours, personal senses and emotional wellbeing—all meshed together synergistically to produce high-calibre outputs. This is shown in Figure 1. It is only when skills, competencies and knowledge are charged by other qualities such as emotional upliftment and positive behaviours, do they become fully optimised and expanded to their ultimate potential. When this happens, you get more than just meeting expectations. You get new possibilities, often unexpected or previously unforeseen, and even enhanced cooperation and goodwill with others borne out of uplifted moods.

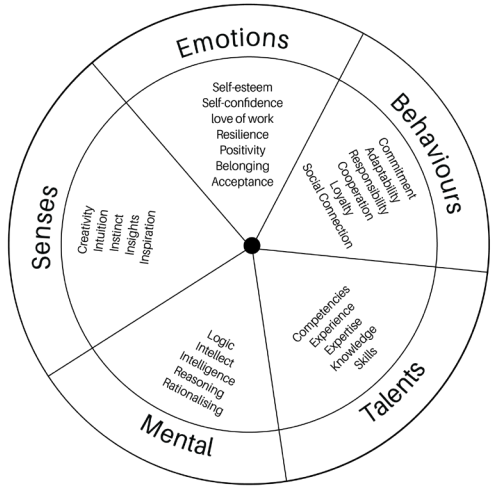

Figure 1
Flourishing – An Engagement of Multiple Resources

These resources and their components work in interplay and are generated by an outside stimulus, in this case the manager. For example, Carly works hard putting her skills and experience to work. Her manager appreciates her good work and often affirms how it has contributed toward successful results. This makes Carly feel valued especially as her work has been instrumental in creating meaningful outcomes. Seeing that she is capable, her manager widens her scope of responsibility and allows her more autonomy in decision making. This enhances her accountability and ownership for the work which drives her motivation further. Her initial success and the respect she gets from her manager also make her feel really good about herself and her ability. It uplifts her spirit and encourages her to give more focus and greater commitment towards ensuring a successful outcome, furthermore, she doesn't want to let her manager down. Her creativity is enhanced as her brain senses psychological safety—that it is safe to take personal risks which then enables access to the higher thinking parts of the prefrontal cortex (the CEO of the brain). This enhances her ability to come up with insights and options for different solutions, and knowing she has her

manager's support, she also gains the courage to suggest novel and untried paths of action. Her efforts pay off and the project produces more benefits than expected. Carly is asked to present the work alongside her manager to all the senior stakeholders. The public credit and visibility she has earned makes her feel validated on many levels and she is driven even further to tackle her next task with zeal and excellence.

Contrast the example with Carly with this one. Vineet is a brilliantly talented software engineer who has the potential to deliver the ambitious and innovative product visions of his senior directors. Because there is no proven concept, the work requires investigation, iteration, hunches, original thinking and dispelling any notion of impossibility. However, his boss often fails to credit Vineet with his flashes of brilliance. Keen for himself to be seen as a star in front of a demanding executive team, his boss often presents the work alone and therefore gets all the credit while Vineet remains mostly anonymous. After a while, good-natured Vineet starts to become disgruntled. In company updates, the directors pour praise on his manager for successful project outcomes with no mention of Vineet. Vineet's enthusiasm wanes, and he doesn't push himself to find solutions with the same drive as before. He always looks forward to leaving the office on time every day. He withdraws his good will and his discretionary effort and downgrades his performance to 'adequate', the level at which satisfactory results are produced but nothing over and above to surpass targets, create breakthroughs or gain a competitive advantage. This is a loss to him, his manager and the organisation.

These examples clearly show there is a lot more to performance than skills and competencies. They also show how the manager's personal behaviour can impact their people's performance. An important point to note is that qualities such as commitment and creative problem solving are discretionary. They are happily and enthusiastically offered in the presence of supportive actions but withdrawn when support is missing. And here's the incredible thing: when lesser skills and talents are charged with drive and zeal, the outputs can be superior than those produced by greater talents alone. People try harder and are determined

to make things work. When a person flourishes talents get much more bang for the buck.

The examples of Carly and Vineet illustrate some key factors that drive people to flourish. These are the top motivating factors which give rise to this extraordinary level of potential and include the following:

- Contribution
- Respect
- Recognition
- Autonomy and trust
- Growth
- Psychological and emotional safety

These motivating factors are all backed up with much published research proving how powerful they are in driving great performance. I cover this in detail in Part Two of this book. An important note to emphasise is that *all* these motivating factors are enabled by the manager. This reinforces my assertion that the manager is the single most critical factor in driving high performance and people potential.

One of the things I noticed with the people I managed was that when they flourished, it generated staying power. This was like being captivated by the activity, so behaviours such as focus, commitment and working through to resolution emerged. One reason for this is the high degree of responsibility claimed when people are trusted to own their work. An example comes from a time when the company I worked for in Hong Kong held a conference and lavish evening banquet at Disneyland for the whole of the Sales and Marketing department. That day, a technical problem occurred by the external supplier that managed the database marketing for us, and this threatened the timely release of time-sensitive special offer emails. Without my asking, the person in my team responsible for the emails brought her laptop to the conference and worked in an adjoining room until 11 p.m. with the supplier on the phone until the issue was solved. She missed out on most of the night's events and enjoying time with her colleagues but

of her own volition and without a hint of disgruntlement she was determined to get the problem fixed.

The drive behind this kind of commitment and focus is less about 'having to do it because it's my job' but more about 'it's my responsibility, I own it and want to see it completed successfully'. The driving force behind a flourishing state comes from a higher place of personal conviction.

Flourishing states have parallels with positive psychology and mindfulness philosophy. One is 'flow', a term created by the psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi,[3] and it describes an intense absorption in a task or activity where focus and learning takes place. Flourishing is also akin to being in Maslow's[4] self-actualisation state, a 'peak experience,' characterized by feelings of joy, wholeness, and fulfilment. There are also parallels with being in a state of presence, a mindfulness concept that describes the undistracted and conscious focus brought to a task or activity where clarity and attention are present and distracting thoughts are absent.

Many of us can reach these states when we're doing something we love. It's a place I can get to when painting, designing or writing, when time ceases to exist and the only relationship present is between the activity and me. However, flourishing isn't fleeting, temporary or only present when absorbed in the activity. Being in a flourishing state can extend into ever-evolving new levels of expansion. It enhances the whole person, so that even their personal lives benefit as they bring a greater version of themselves to life.

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3. Hungarian-American psychologist and professor who popularised the term in his 1990 book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience.* Through research he began to understand that people were their most creative, productive, and happy when they are in a state of flow. He aimed to discover what piques creativity, especially in the workplace, and how creativity can lead to productivity. He determined that flow is not only essential to a productive employee, but it is imperative for a contented one as well.

4. Abraham Maslow, American psychologist popularised the concept of self-actualisation in the 1960s– a state of achieving 'full humanness' – a blend of psychological health and devotion to their work that made people highly effective. In this state human beings became people again – creative, free-willed and wanting to fulfill their potential.

Case Study

Flourishing Under the Right Manager

Holly had joined the head office of a major international hotel group based in London to manage Customer Relations Management (CRM), a major new initiative for the company. She had left her previous company, a larger and more prestigious international hotel brand after feeling she was going nowhere despite putting in lots of effort and often exceeding the competencies of her manager. Working life had ceased to offer any fulfilment and the last few years had felt like drudgery so she finally left despite the major benefits and perks she had enjoyed.

Her new manager, Michael was a Canadian in his early 40s. He instantly appreciated the experience and knowledge Holly bought from her previous company and often put her in the position of advisor. Michael frequently asked her to accompany him to meetings with senior executives where she could offer her expertise in a subject area that was still new to the company. He often praised her in emails, acknowledged her work in large forums, and gave her freedom to strategise new tactics and opportunities. Gradually Holly was leading on major decisions and taking over some of Michael's key responsibilities. The effect this had on her was, as she said, "like waking up a sleeping giant". She felt valued, appreciated and useful for the first time in years. Holly had always felt she had lots to offer but it had never been encouraged from previous managers. She finally felt good about herself and her professional achievements. Her sense of fulfilment was also attributable to being acknowledged as a person – her views, opinions and personality mattered. As a result she put more of her best self in work and became instrumental in progressing the company's customer goals forward. She also wanted Michael to succeed as she felt so grateful to him. Despite having had bigger budgets, better perks and access to top

management consultants in her previous company Holly made a much bigger contribution in her new company and that was purely because of how her manger made her feel and enabled her to thrive.

The Manager is the Source of People Flourishing

As shown earlier, the direct manager enables all the people motivating factors required for generating a state of flourishing. The ripple effect starts with the manager, and this dynamic is shown in Figure 2.

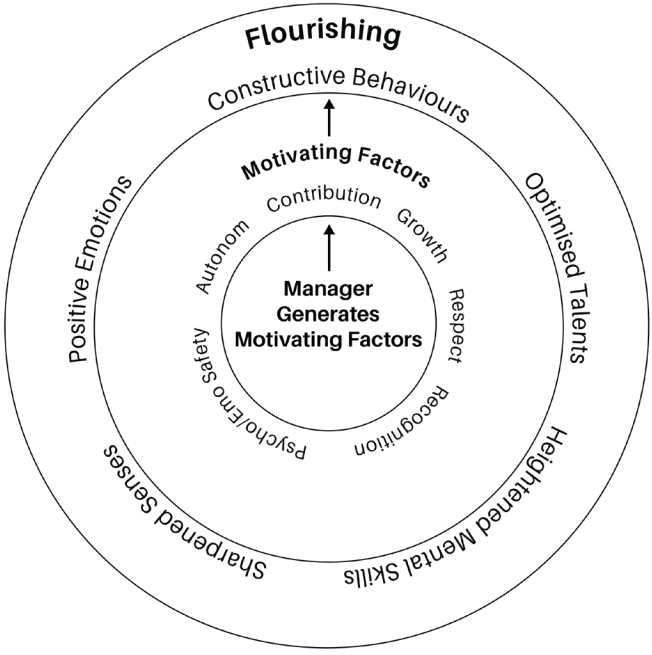

Figure 2
The Manager Enables All the Motivating Factors Necessary for People to Flourish

One of the major reasons for why managers are so impacting on people is because people work within what I call managers' microcultures.

This is the realm of influence created by the manager and is determined by their management style and ways of working, but equally, if not more, by their personal character made up of behaviour, personality and emotional drivers.

Management microcultures have more influence on the people who work within them than the organisational culture or the senior leadership has. This is contrary to conventional thinking that asserts that these two factors have the greatest influence on the working lives of people as evidenced by the plethora of leadership books and efforts to determine working environments and culture. The reality is that people spend most of their working time with the manager or at least within the manager's sphere of influence and he or she is the one who sets the boundaries and opportunities for each person. You may work for a company with an enlightened culture that has onsite fitness facilities and subsidised staff restaurants, but if you work for a toxic or uninspiring manager, it degrades your work life more than any culture or leadership sentiment can compensate for.

Therefore, managers are the ones who can lift people to their highest selves through the opportunities and support they provide but more importantly it is their personal character that will influence the quality of their working lives. For example, a manager could be ruthless and self-serving or neutral and uninspiring or caring and supportive, and each state will impact people differently. Not only in their motivation but also in their overall fulfilment with work and their emotional and mental wellbeing. This is a well-known truism in the hushed conversations that take place in workplace corridors but unfortunately one that is seldom acknowledged by Human Resources, management consultants or employee surveys. Senior leaders may know managers for what they deliver but their people know them for who they are. I have known work colleagues refuse the opportunity of their dream job because of who they would have to report to.

The personal character of the manager is a component that has been hugely underestimated, even ignored when it comes to effective people management and engagement strategies. It is certainly totally

overlooked as a key driver of high people performance, potential and what makes people want to give their all. Personal character is rarely considered a critical element for developing talented people managers and is therefore seldom assessed or appraised. This creates a lack of self-awareness and managers remain oblivious to how they show up and how they impact people. It becomes an unpredictable part of the whole management package, and a lottery for those on the receiving end.

However, when these personal characteristics are developed and trained for effective people management, they emerge as strong emotional talent. When managers have this, they emanate a being and doing—in other words, who they are and what they do—that motivates people and creates states of flourishing. Who would a manager need to be and what would they need to do for people to be respected, recognised, contribute, grow and feel psychologically safe? To stand back and let their people grow into successful empowered people? This is covered in Part 2 of this book.

Managers should rest assured that their influence and authority doesn't diminish in the presence of empowered, successful people. This is a subconscious fear that stops many managers from encouraging people potential. The truth is that their reputation is enhanced through the eyes of their senior leaders as they successfully deliver results. They also gain unwavering loyalty and support from their people in return for everything they're receiving and achieving, and this can pay back significant dividends for the manager in many ways.

The impact and influence of the manager as the biggest single force in people's motivation and performance is covered in further detail in chapter 2.

Roles in Which People Flourish

Are certain roles particularly responsive to achieving flourishing states? The answer is any role occupied by a human being where discretionary input can impact outcomes and where the role is not smaller than the individual's competency levels.

Although many of the examples in this book allude to my experience of managing mostly graduate and post-graduate knowledge workers in large businesses, my case study research revealed that people can flourish or be diminished in any role where they are subject to the influence of their direct manager. For example, a PhD student I interviewed told me, "I absolutely love my supervising professor because of her unwavering support, her commitment to my success and the faith she has in my research subject of women and body image". It propelled her forward with confidence and helped her develop a deep belief in the worthiness of her research.

People who flourish in roles such as customer contact will also give more of their authentic selves to create warm and helpful interactions with customers, because when they are made to feel good about themselves, a wonderful contagion happens where that good feeling is transferred onto others.

In creative roles where outcomes are not only dependent on expertise but also on inspiration, a person who flourishes can access states such as intuitive insights, breakthrough ideas and unlimited thinking. This is backed up by neuroscience, which shows that higher states of thinking and creativity are accessed when people feel safe.

These roles are not industry specific. When collecting data for this book, I was struck by the number of stories that emerged from workplaces across the whole spectrum—business, including retail, airline, banks, marketing agencies and tobacco, as well as voluntary organisations, schools and universities. In fact, in any situation where people are managed, the manager or supervisor has the potential to enliven or dampen the human spirit and thus influence whether people flourish or grudgingly produce the bare minimum.

People who flourish in roles that require sophisticated use of intelligent and mental skills can greatly enhance outcomes, such as when designing complex artificial intelligence or new disruptive business models where solutions for ambitious goals must be painstakingly worked out with little or no previously proven concepts. As well as intelligence and technical expertise, these jobs require qualities such

as original thinking, tenacity, creative thinking, working on hunches and deep focus. They also require psychological safety to know that it's ok to venture into wild thinking and bypassing convention. These and many other qualities are examples of what will be needed to work out complex solutions, move beyond failures and even give rise to possibilities that are initially unforeseen or deemed infeasible.

Considering that the world, including the workplace, is changing at a rapid pace, developing people to flourish becomes a critical requirement for organisations that aim to survive as well as thrive well into the future. Never has this been more urgent than in a post-COVID-19 era where solutions to new business practices continue to be created, where growth and agility are needed to fill new roles as old ones disappear and where self-managing remote workers have the trust of their bosses as the practice becomes more widespread.

It is also not unusual to have managers who are less technically knowledgeable than their employees, a situation which is increasingly common in an age where younger generations can master rapidly progressing technology or when a generalist manager heads up a team or department.

People who feel psychologically safe—that is they feel it is safe to take interpersonal risks[5], and express themselves freely—will also contribute more and this is particularly important in an era where there are so many variants for consumer businesses to consider, such as changing demographics, political correctness and diverse populations. It is impossible for managers to understand every customer sensitivity, nuance and sentiment among such heterogeneous markets, so they must create environments at work where their people feel safe to freely express and contribute their thoughts, especially when decision-makers are not representative of these diverse markets. For example, the blindly missed sensitivities by fashion chain H&M in 2019 caused much protest when they featured a black child in their ad campaign wearing a jumper with a monkey design and the slogan 'Cheeky Monkey'. Such decisions

5. Defined by Professor Amy Edmondson, Harvard University

are rarely made by a single individual, but they are made by a group with a single mindset encouraged by groupthink.

Senior leaders are also not exempt from the influence of their leaders. In one company I worked in, I was friendly with a senior colleague who would occasionally attend the executive board meetings to present updates on a major project he was involved in. Taking me in his confidence, he would describe the frequent scenes where the CEO would ask his directors for input but would then ignore them and implement his own decision. It left the directors feeling dejected, undervalued and irate.

Flourishing and Wellbeing

When people flourish, it also enhances their mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.

And a happy state increases immunity. A 2013 study conducted between the University of California (UCLA) and the University of Carolina found that happiness had an effect on the human genome. However, it was the eudemonic wellbeing that showed favourable gene expressions in immune cells. This kind of happiness is one that comes from having a deep sense of purpose and meaning in life as opposed to temporary peaks of happiness received from, for example, buying a new car or bonus pay. Eudemonic happiness is exactly the kind of fulfilment reaped when you flourish in your work.

Work makes up a major part of our overall satisfaction and happiness in life. When it becomes an enriching source of your life and makes you feel good about yourself and what you are accomplishing, it makes a huge impact on your emotional and mental wellbeing. When work becomes a source of self-esteem, it becomes a part of your life you value highly.

Engagement and loyalty also increase when self-esteem is enhanced because you will always be magnetised to something that makes you feel worthy and valued.

Healthy emotional and mental levels will also give rise to resilience, positivity, purpose and social connection. There is greater cooperation

between people in and across departments, which helps sharing and flow of work. This is all good news for the organisation too, which stands to benefit from increased productivity and lower sick days.

The sad truth for many, however, is that when people are disengaged with work, they compartmentalise their work as a separate entity and look forward to home time or weekends to move into their authentic selves and start their real life. Even when work is tolerable and presents little stress, it can be uninspiring for many and not only because the work may fail to stimulate, it could also be because there is nothing at work, including the manager who reinforces their sense of value, significance or potential. This was conveyed to me during my case study research by people in operational roles such as airport check-in staff where management had prioritised efficiency and staff cost reductions above everything else, leaving people to feel like nothing more than processing units. In one case from a UK based airline employee, the person told me that although she fulfilled the needs of her job, she had no inclination to give anything extra such as positivity or warmth for passengers, including those who looked nervous ahead of flying. She felt she was treated as a dehumanised component by her company, and this rubbed off on her interaction with customers.

In recent years, the notion of purpose in work has become popular. This is about people finding meaning in their work at a level that nourishes them emotionally or fulfils their cherished beliefs. It could arise when motivating factors, as mentioned earlier, are fulfilled, such being causal, that is when an individual's contribution has been instrumental in creating successful outcomes or, when the work enables you to personally grow and learn.

Reaching a state of flourishing reinforces a sense of purpose because it validates the person on so many levels. It also emphasises that people seek more than monetary rewards in work. They seek emotional enhancement and what matters to them personally.

Another often talked about subject is finding your passion and turning that into your work. This would be wonderful however the

reality is that it is infeasible or too risky for the vast majority of people despite many books and inspirational speakers urging you to do so.

An angle that is missed by many passion advocates is that for many, work can become what you love doing if the conditions are right. More than finding the subject of your passion, an environment that enables your best self and potential to emerge can give you a much higher return emotionally. This is good news for most organisations that quite frankly don't have many thrilling positions but could create a highly emotionally rewarding culture through managers who have the emotional talent to motivate their people to levels of flourishing. A personal example illustrates this well. When I first joined Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong in 2000 in the newly formed e-business department, it was in the IT division. I was a commercially experienced airline manager who had no interest in anything technical, only what new technology could enable commercially for maximising revenue and efficiency. However, it proved to be one of the most rewarding phases in my career because of one factor: my manager, Tom Nunan an American from San Francisco. He always stood by me, respected my experience, gave me ample decision-making authority, sent me on lavish supplier conferences abroad, took action on my suggestions and praised me publicly in front of aasenior executives. I loved my work even though I was working in a department that held no interest for me.

Why Don't Workplaces Encourage People to Flourish and Reach Their Potential?

If flourishing can produce such extraordinary benefits for the manager, the organisation and the employee, it is perplexing why this concept hasn't achieved recognition and become standard practise in workplaces. The truth is that the notion of people potential and allowing them to flourish into their best parts is rarely an organisational aspiration or goal. Managers aren't selected or assessed for their ability to achieve high performers and nor has the notion of emotional factors (for the manager or peoples' motivation) been identified as the key driver of superior performance. Dr Cecilia Leung who did her PhD research

in Servant Leadership and herself a former General Manager in Cathay Pacific Airways, Hong Kong, told me in her interview that the priority for fast results and the belief that change and development take a long time also inhibited any efforts to develop people potential.

Human potential at work isn't even explored or understood for its benefits despite the enlightened, human centric research by psychologists such as Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Abraham Maslow as well as more recent popular proponents of motivation such as Daniel Goleman, Simon Sinek and Daniel Pink. The research company Gallup's definition of 'employee engagement' while not the same as my definition of flourishing, includes some of the same criteria and offers deep insights. Their research on employee engagement in the report 'Employee Engagement Strategies: Fixing the World's $8.8 Trillion Problem by Ryan Pendell[2] echoes the points made above:

> *"Engagement is not the default position. Every organisation engages some employees, but most organisations fail to engage the majority of them. It's the exception, not the rule".*

There is still a deeply embedded workplace psyche that dictates that people must deliver to the requirements of the job as specified by their managers and be overseen to ensure they deliver the results. This old-fashioned command and control approach has its roots in the 19th century industrial revolution era where people were closely monitored to ensure they produced exact targeted outputs. However, this management style is limiting for today's working practices especially where intelligent people in knowledge industries bring their brainpower and not their labour to work, and the discretion to determine how much of it they will release. These workers don't need to be controlled or overseen—they need to have the best of them unleashed and people management practices need to be built around this goal.

Workplaces are still designed and operated around rationalised thinking and whilst many have great feel-good perks such as free gyms, and in my case greatly subsidised air travel, the structure of workplaces

fails to optimise the human and emotional needs that give rise to states of great human potential. Professor Dan Ariely in his 2017 TED talk, 'What Makes Us Feel Good About Our Work'[3], made the intriguing statement that Karl Marx's theory of alienation is more relevant today than Adam Smith's[6] theory of efficiency. This was Marx's assertion that market systems of nineteenth century Europe eliminated the concept of human beings as creative independent thinkers. He believed that human beings lost their self-realised status when they became economic assets within the capitalist system. This turned a person into a robotic, mechanistic part of an industrialised system of production and therefore alienated their true, creative, expressive self from the work they did. This serves as a useful prompt to consider what work means to many people. They bring selective parts of themselves to work—their physical bodies and mental parts of their brain. They shut down their spirit and switch into doing mode in response to the demands of their job.

When it comes to training and development, modern day workplaces and decision makers have not progressed discussions around what it means to develop a high potential and high performing workforce - this privilege is retained for select high potential managers and future leaders, not the people they lead. As Jim Clifton and Jim Harter write in their book, *It's The Manager*[4]: "When employees at all levels aren't developing, neither are their organisations. No spirit, no ideas, no customer growth".

This could be a reason for why employee engagement scores as measured by Gallup's 2022 State of The Global Workplace survey[5] are low: 23% globally and by region, USA/Canada 31%, Australia/NZ 23%, Europe 13%, and East Asia 17%. Let's see this another way: 77% of the global workforce are not into their work.

When the baseline for many organisations is a largely disengaged workforce—a problem which many are not tackling—then the discussion around maximising people potential and performance becomes too

6. Economist, Philosopher and author of The Wealth of Nations (1776) considered to be the father of modern economics and free market theory.

big a leap to make and a non-starter for the majority of people in an organisation.

Organisations also greatly underestimate the talent needed for great people management and most are devoid of it unless they are fortunate enough to have great managers 'accidently'.

This is echoed in Gallup's 2015 findings that only one in ten people possess the talent to manage. Their report[6] states:

> *Great managers are scarce because the talent required to be one is rare. Gallup's research shows that about one in ten people possess high talent to manage. Few have the unique combination of talent needed to help a team achieve the kind of excellence that significantly improves a company's performance. When these 10% are put in manager roles they naturally engage team members and customers retain top performers and sustain a culture of high productivity.*

Unfortunately, people management training isn't considered a high priority for most organisations. It's wrongly cast as a soft skill when, in fact, it's a critical skill that ultimately impacts productivity, costs and revenue, as I show in Chapter 2. If organisations understood the power and impact of highly skilled people managers, it would be part of their top strategy and up there with financial, customer and marketing goals.

When conventional people training is given, much of it fails to deliver any significant change, which is probably why it's difficult to build significance and urgency around it. This echoes my experience, which, in 14 years of being a manager with people responsibilities, I've had one day of people management training during a four-day management training workshop. None of the managers changed their management style once they were back in the office.

The reason for the failure of many of these training endeavours is that they don't address the root of change. People management talent is an 'inside-out job' which starts with inner personal change first followed by behavioural shifts. Who you're *being* is the impacting force of a powerful manager or leader and this is what generates high emotional

talent. Rather than implement actions first as a strategy for change, emotionally talented managers change their inner and behavioural states first and actions follow from these changes. They become, for example, trusting or caring as a natural expression of who they are so it shows up in their behaviour as a normal practice rather than something to action when reminded. Given that much training, including behavioural change in the workplace, focuses on techniques, tools and processes, even for managing human relationships, it's easy to understand why the majority of it fails to create any change for organisations. For example, what's the point of being treated to 'motivating' team lunches or evening dinners if, in the office, your manager's self-serving priority doesn't show care for you and your needs? To borrow a popular phrase from Einstein, this approach comes from the same level of thinking that created the problem in the first place. Part Two of this book covers this in detail.

Another reason for overlooking potential is that managers often fail to see the whole of the person and what they are capable of doing. The people who come to work are parents, grandparents, mortgage holders, graduates and more. They manage household budgets, organise complex family arrangements, mediate family conflicts and have nurtured and shaped the lives of their children. Some will juggle work with caring for their elderly and young whilst managing households at the same time. Others may be meditation instructors, community leaders, musicians, amateur dramatists, volunteers or network marketers out of work time. These are responsible life skills and enriching experiences. Yet many managers remain oblivious to the all-round abilities of the people they lead. It's as if they become stripped of them once they pass the barrier, slap their ID onto the scanner and enter the workplace. In the world on the other side of the barrier, they cannot order stationary, approve their own leave or flexibly manage their time around urgent family commitments. The greatest tragedy is that many people reduce themselves to the image seen in their manager's eyes.

Points for Reflection

1. Who has been the best manager or leader you've ever worked for? Why were they the best? What did they make you feel about yourself? What did you achieve under their management?
2. As a manager, what microculture have you created?
3. Can you think of an undertaking, such as a project, hobby or piece of work, where you flourished? Can you recall which resources, as shown in Figure 1, arose?

2

Why Managers Matter

How Managers Make the Biggest Impact on People, Performance and Productivity

"The single biggest decision you make in your job -- bigger than all of the rest -- is who you name manager. When you name the right people to manage your company's workplace, everything goes well. People love their jobs, your customers are engaged, and life is great"

Jim Clifton, CEO Gallup

Managers make the single greatest impact on people and their performance, which in turn affects productivity and other outcomes such as profit, innovation and customer satisfaction. When it comes to people, it's the manager, not the culture, strategy nor the senior executives that is the single most important factor.

You would think that an organisation's senior leaders are the most important people judging from the heaving weight of leadership books, the kudos of MBAs and the devlopmental budgets lavished on this elite group. No doubt they do have an important role in developing and steering direction, and in as much as you need astute minds to formulate the most advantageous plans for the organisation, you also need people to ensure these plans are delivered in their most optimum outcomes. Managers are the ones who enable this part of the equation to be manifested. The two parts should be viewed less as a hierarchy and more as a partnership, and when seen this way the contribution of managers and their people is elevated to a higher level of significance in the entire organisation.

In this chapter I've used research from USA based Gallup research company extensively. This is largely because of three factors: Firstly, their definition of 'engagement' approximates closely (but not exactly) to my definition of flourishing. Their Q12 survey includes 12 questions (see appendix) that predict high team performance using many of the requisite factors I use for flourishing states. Secondly, their global employee engagement surveys are the world's largest ongoing study of the employee experience and offer one of the best and most reliable sources of highly relevant, current data on the subject. Thirdly, my independently derived conclusion on the impact of the manager on the employee's will to perform and engage with work is supported by Gallup's research which comes to the same conclusion.

Let's now look at why the manager is the most significant factor on people.

Managers Determine Employee Engagement

The topic of employee engagement has gained more attention in the last few years as organisations have realised that when people aren't enjoying or feeling committed to their work it affects their performance and productivity. Engagement is when people feel involved and enthusiastic about their work, are psychologically committed to it, look for better ways to achieve outcomes and are productive. Being engaged is an integral part of flourishing and the data available supports why people who flourish can make such an impact to an organisation's outcomes.

Gallup's data shows that managers account for at least 70% of variance in employee engagement scores across business units and this wide variance comes from the lack of consistency in how people are managed[7]. The reasons for this aren't only because of the lack of people training but also because Gallup believes that the wrong person is made a manager 82% of the time[8]. This is an extremely significant finding as managers' behaviours are strongly connected to employee engagement. According to Gallup's surveys[9], only 23% of the world's

workforce is engaged. That means only a small fraction of employees are performing well and driving productivity and the organisation forward. As stated in the book by Gallup's Jim Clifton and Jim Harter, *It's the Manager*: 'These global few drive the world's economy. They provide extraordinary value to organizations and societies'.

The engagement scores from Gallup's latest State of The Global Workplace [10]published in 2023 from surveys done in 2022 vary across global regions; however, no country has achieved over 50% engagement of its workforce as can be seen by the table below.

Country	Engaged Employees
South Asia	33%
USA and Canada	31%
Latin America & Caribbean	31%
Post-Soviet Eurasia	27%
South-East Asia	26%
Australia & New Zealand	23%
Sub-Saharan Africa	20%
East Asia	17%
Middle East & N.Africa	15%
Europe	13%

It's important to note that this low rate of engagement does not owe itself to a post COVID-19 era of high stress and uncertainty after 2020. On the contrary the scores are higher than in the 2017 survey where global workforce engagement was only 15%! Although there's been an improvement, scores still remain alarmingly low. To add to this concern the same report showed that 51% of global employees expressed an intent to leave their jobs.

It's important to note that bad managers are not the only reason people leave their work, but they are a significant factor. According to a Gallup study of 7,272 USA adults, 1 in 2 had left their job to get away from their manager[11].

My personal experience as a former corporate manager is that the majority of managers aren't good or bad but mediocre, and have never been trained in managing people, nor have they developed the emotional talent to lead people from an understanding of what evolved human interactions look like. Mediocrity begets mediocrity. As a result, people come into work with their minds and not their hearts and do what's just adequate enough to fulfil the needs of the job—no more. They don't give more of themselves—that is discretionary effort, which, when given freely and enthusiastically, is a significant contributor in driving outcomes forward in leaps and bounds.

The subsequent sections in this chapter show why employee engagement is determined to a large extent by the manager. However, let's first look at how managers and employee engagement affects productivity.

Managers Impact Productivity and Outcomes

Managers determine employee engagement, which determines performance, which in turn determines outcomes such as productivity, revenue, customer satisfaction, quality and innovation. In short, managers significantly impact productivity and outcomes. Top level company strategies such as new market opportunities, cost reductions, new technologies, product development and company acquisitions do increase financial outcomes but organisations have ignored one of the most valuable resources they already have—their people. This is to their peril, as according to Gallup's State of the Global Workplace report published in 2023[12] employees who are not engaged or who are actively disengaged cost the world $8.8 trillion in lost productivity. That's equal to 9% of global GDP. As they write in the report[13], that's '*Enough to make the difference between success and failure for humanity*'.

It's worth highlighting the definition of 'not engaged' given by Gallup to dispel any assumption that people who do the bare minimum of work are contributing to productivity in any meaningful way. They define it those employees who put in the minimum effort required and are psychologically disconnected from their workplace. What should

be of concern is that this group makes up the majority of the global workforce at 59%. The other category measured, actively disengaged people, make up 18% of the global workforce and this category is defined as those who take actions that actively harm the organisation, undercutting its goals and opposing its leaders. Trust between employee and employer is broken or the employee is completely mismatched for the role. A 2013 report[14] stated that actively disengaged employees, making up 19% of the USA workforce were costing USA companies between $450 and $550 billion in lost productivity per year. This loss is unlikely to have improved much in recent years as the latest survey in 2022 showed that actively disengaged employees made up 18% of the USA workforce[15].

In their book, *It's the Manager*[16,] Jim Harter and Jim Clifton from Gallup show that with the exception of about 20 companies, U.S. big businesses adopt growth strategies through acquisitions of other companies, especially when they're experiencing growth stagnation. This shows up in the number of publicly listed companies on U.S. exchanges which has been nearly cut in half in the past 20 years (from about 7,300 to 3,700). In contrast, the authors recommend implementing an organic growth strategy from within as their analytics show that most companies could double their revenue by simply selling more to their existing customer base. This organic growth strategy would come from highly motivated and performing employees led by managers who can get them there. As they write:

> *"Bet your leadership job on this. When team inspiration grows, client build-outs, revenue and quality earnings grow".*

The problem is that most organisations don't view their people as a strategic source of growth and advantage to be invested in and developed. In fact, 'staff' are usually highlighted as one of the highest cost factors in the budget and tackling this cost becomes a priority for many organisations which they undertake through headcount reduction, capping pay increases or more recently, employing people on zero contract hours—that is working according to need only, such as seasonal

peaks in airports. This view is not only costly; it also encourages the under-utilisation of people's potential and ensures the return on people investment remains dormant. However, the value of people in the workplace maybe surprising. Korn Ferry, an organisational consultancy, did an economic analysis on the value of human capital in 2016.[17] They found that human capital had a potential global value of US$1,215 trillion, which was 2.33 times the value of physical capital such as technology, real estate and inventory. For every $1 invested in human capital, $11.39 is added to GDP. It's important to note that this is the potential value of what *can* be achieved through development of people. It's only when human potential is developed does it appreciate in value, unlike physical assets which have a fixed upper limit.

To look at the key areas that benefit from engaged people, analysis by Gallup in 2020[18] found that teams scoring in the top quartile on employee engagement saw the following benefits compared with bottom-quartile teams:

- 23% higher profitability
- 18% higher productivity (sales)
- 10% higher customer loyalty/engagement
- 81% lower absenteeism
- 18% lower turnover (for higher turnover organisations)
- 43% lower turnover (for low turnover organisations)
- 28% lower shrinkage (theft)
- 64% fewer safety accidents
- 58% few patient safety accidents
- 41% fewer quality defects

These are significant findings. Furthermore, Gallup's research also shows that organisations with engaged workforces have higher earnings per share (EPS). These organisations achieve EPS growth that is more than four times that of their competitors.

Gallup's research[19] on American companies from 2010 to 2011 showed that the ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees had a significant effect on EPS. Companies with an average of 9.3 engaged employees

for every actively disengaged employee experienced 147% higher EPS versus their competitors. However, companies with an average of 2.6 engaged employees for every actively disengaged employee had 2% lower EPS compared with their competitors over the same period.

Another significant finding was that companies with engaged employees seem to have recovered from the 2008 recession at a faster rate than industry equivalents. In the post-recession rebound in 2009, having an engaged workforce became a strong differentiator in EPS. Conversely companies with average engagement scores saw no increased advantage over their competitors during this recovery period.

Productivity can also be improved by practices such as improved process changes, better quality outputs, minimising defects, getting it right first time and delivering on time and within budget. These were the benefits I witnessed as an e-business manager when the internet was still in its infancy. Despite the fact that tried and tested models were few, all the projects my teams and I managed were delivered successfully on time and within budget.

The Cost of Disengaged Employees

It should not come as any surprise that disengaged employees who hate their jobs and probably their bosses and organisations too, are unproductive and incur avoidable, additional costs. What is surprising is how much and how far reaching these costs can be.
Disengaged employees cost the organisation in the following ways:

- Lost productivity through underperformance and a lack of commitment
- Exceeding due dates for completion of tasks and projects
- Increased accidents through a lack of care and attention
- Increased quality defects through a lack of attention
- Higher sick days with an estimate of 12% being fraudulent in the UK[20]
- Low loyalty to company and higher attrition rates (leaving the company)

- Replacements costs of recruitment and training new comers
- Turning away customers through apathy and a lack of positive, helpful and personable qualities.
- Shrinkage, meaning employee theft, damage, administrative errors.
- Cost of ineffective engagement strategies and perks such as wellness benefits.
- Influencing other employees with their negativity
- Profits impacted as a result of all of the above.

To see how this translates into actual costs, research from different sources has identified the following findings:

The Cost of Lost Productivity

Gallup found that 18% of an organisation's workforce is actively disengaged (globally). Each disengaged person costs their organisation 34% of their annual salary[21] in lost productivity. Applying this to the USA where actively disengaged employees also made up 18% of the workforce in 2022 an organisation with 5,000 employees on an average salary of US$60,000 would cost the company US$17.3 million a year.

On an aggregate basis, a Gallup study[22] published in 2017 showed that disengaged employees (including both not engaged and actively disengaged) who made up 69% of the USA workforce, cost USA companies between US$450 billion and US$550 billion a year. In the absence of up to date figures it can be estimated that current cost figures are likely to be consistent as the total disengaged percentage remained at 69% for USA in 2022. The situation in Europe is likely to be just as dire if not more so with a huge 87% of employees not engaged or actively disengaged in 2022[23].

Globally the latest analysis from Gallup[24] published in 2023, showed a staggering loss of US$8.8 trillion in lost productivity from the 77% of global employees who are not engaged or who are actively disengaged.

Replacement Costs

The cost to replace an employee who leaves is made up of two components: Recruitment costs including agency fees and advertising costs and the cost of lower productivity or 'onboarding' during the new recruit's learning phase. Furthermore, there may be additional costs including training and the hiring of temporary or contract staff to cover periods before the new recruit comes on board.

The cost of replacing a mid-range employee is at least one-fifth of their annual salary[25] but can be as much as 200% for high earning executives or very specialist skilled employees.

Research from USA based Work Institute[26] states that that losing an employee typically costs approximately 33% of their base pay. For the average US employee, the cost of turnover is approximately $15,000. Their report states that in 2021 the costs of turnover to US employers exceeded $700 billion[7] and the costs of turnover to employers have more than doubled since 2009.

In the UK 15% of the workforce[27] leave their organisation voluntarily. According to Gallup 50% of people leave because of their bosses[28] hence, the avoidable costs are significant and could be reduced significantly with appropriately trained people managers.

Voluntary resignation numbers shot up in 2021[29] where in USA a record forty-seven million people quit their jobs representing 23% of the total U.S. workforce, in what became known as the Great Resignation. This trend (to a lesser amount) was also seen in UK and Australia. This was due to a number of factors including the post COVID-19 effect and people assessing their work-life balance, stress, pent up demand of 'would have quit' leavers who had to stay put during the pandemic and the greater number of jobs opening up. However, a significant number of resignations were directly associated with management. A report by Management Consultancy McKinsey[30] stated that many who left during 2021 cited uncaring managers especially during periods of under staffing. According to a survey by US based Pew Research Centre[31]

7. This figure was a post COVID-19 peak and numbers have come down since then.

the third biggest reason for quitting in 2021 was feeling disrespected at work, expressed by 57% of people surveyed. These figures show the readiness with which people will leave work, if they can, when managers are the reason.

Management Microcultures

When I worked in British Airways, the company had a great career development ethos where people could apply for internal jobs not just within departments but also across departments. Not only did the company retain employees and their airline expertise for many years, it also allowed able people to develop brand new career directions, such as a colleague of mine who moved directly from her accountancy role in finance to writing internal briefs in the communications department. The company culture was strong and was marked by a determined ambition to be the best in global airline travel. During most of my years working there, the company experienced record revenues and it was branded 'The world's favourite airline'. British Airways became part of your identity and it generated a strong sense of belonging. Even today, if I come across a current or ex BA employee I've never even met, we embrace each other like meeting a member of an extended family.

Despite this dominating culture, the quality and experience of everyday working life differed significantly depending on the manager you worked for. I had eight different managers in my eleven years at British Airways made up of management changes and my moves to new roles. Not only was each department or team a different working experience but even the same role under different managers also made working life very different. For example, in a sales analysis role I worked in, my young first time manager was more focused on proving himself than the success and happiness of his team members. He was not interested in us as people, but only what we could contribute toward his goals. Then he was replaced by an older, experienced manager of many years who was kind, caring and devoid of any self-serving egoic

traits. The energy and mood in the office was so much more uplifted and we all felt more significant and relevant and consequently tackled the work with greater commitment and enthusiasm. The team also bonded wonderfully and the work relationships extended into social bonds that remain to this day more than 20 years later.

These realms of influence created by managers are what I call management microcultures. They are marked by the manager's working style and expertise. But they are also defined by the manager's personal character such as their ethics, their self versus people focus and their personal disposition such as positivity, integrity, sternness or critical nature. These elements of a manager's personal character can impact people greatly and influence the quality of their working life significantly. However, as seen in chapter one, the personal character usually comes raw and undeveloped unlike the well-trained expertise or the educational and professional qualifications required for management skills. This is a huge misfortune as managers lead people with their character and not with their expertise.

A manager's microculture overrides the company wide culture because as an employee you spend your working life within the manager's realm of influence. While it's great if your work provides great benefits such as health and wellness facilities or as in my last workplace, a choice of six different food stations in the subsidised cafeteria as well as a choice of three different restaurants, plus furthermore, onsite drinks bar, sports facilities, a hairdresser and supermarket, these great benefits don't override your experience of working in a manager's microculture. Even when the lure of health benefits, bonuses and career opportunities tie you to the company, they can't beat the highs of thriving and flourishing under a great people manager and they can't compensate for a bad one.

Marcus Buckingham writes in his book, *First Break All The Rules: What The World's Greatest Managers Do Differently*[32], about a study that publishes the best companies to work for. The criteria include measures such as vacation allowance, profit sharing and employee training. However, he writes that these criteria miss the mark entirely:

*It's not that these employee focused initiatives are unimportant. It's just that your immediate manager is **more** important. If she knows you, trusts you and invests in you then you can forgive the company its lack of profit-sharing program. But if your relationship with your manager is fractured then no amount of in-chair massaging or company sponsored dog walking will persuade you to stay and perform. It is better to work for a great manager in an old fashioned company rather than for a terrible manager in a company offering an enlightened, employee focused culture*

It would be much more cost effective for organisations to train their managers in how to lead people so that they love their work rather than spending millions in perks and benefits which don't make up for uninspiring or unsupportive bosses and consequently won't ensure retention. The often quoted phrase that people leave managers and not companies is accurate for up to 50% of leavers according to Gallup[33].

Managers and their microcultures can also be overpowering enough to diminish the allure of desirable roles under their wing. In one company I worked for, the marketing department was a big budget and strategic concern working with one of the top global advertising and creative agencies. The roles in this department were highly desirable; however, the senior manager in charge ruled with an iron fist, had no people focused talent and demanded obedience from her people—not creative input or alternative opinions. Not only did high potential people leave her team but others, including myself, also refused applying for a role when approached because of this person. The position was filled by an external candidate who thought he had landed his dream job but even he eventually left the company.

A great manager can do the opposite and create a microculture that is pulsating with joy, personal enrichment and high productivity even for roles that may seem dull and lacklustre. It is often the case that it's not what the role is but how you are allowed to perform it that matters. If the key motivating factors introduced in chapter one are present—such as being given autonomy, seeing that your contribution

makes a difference and being recognised for good work—then most roles can be elevated to a level that spark joy and personal reward, especially if they enable you to keep growing. This has even more significance when many of the roles people are in are not what they were originally recruited for, such as when there are re-organisations, downturns and placing 'surplus' people into new roles.

Managers Own the Relationship with Their People

Managers are the first level of authority to own the relationship with the majority of people in an organisation. While this may seem obvious, its significance is mostly overlooked. There is widespread acceptance that the Human Resource departments own anything and everything that has to do with people. Managers therefore assume they have little responsibility for anything outside of achieving productivity outcomes from people, such as their wellbeing and development.

However, this doesn't stand up to scrutiny because people spend their time with their managers, they report to their managers, and they interact with their managers. This constitutes a direct relationship between two human beings. How people feel, how much they want to give of themselves, how motivated they are and so much more comes out of this relationship with the manager and not with the HR department. When managers take responsibility for the relationship with the people they manage, it can elevate people's performance, potential and wellbeing manifold. Let's look at this word 'responsibility' and what it means. About 20 years ago, I participated in the advanced level of an intensive personal development workshop designed to step people up into the big visions they aspired to achieve. A part of making sure things happened or 'being the cause of the outcome' was taking full responsibility for everything to make it happen. This extended to personal relationships and being responsible for how the relationship worked, which left no room for blame, apathy or victimhood. It is a big departure from the conventional belief that it takes both parties to make a relationship work but this context was about being the person who assumes a h*igher* level of responsibility and comes from an elevated place of being, one

where your intentions, behaviours and actions are intentionally shaped to achieve specific outcomes. When the same principle is applied to the leadership of people in work, the manager assumes all responsibility for the relationship with people, determines the quality of it and how it turns out. This doesn't mean that people aren't responsible for their personal behaviour or achievements—they are—but the manager holds the power in this dynamic; thus, influences relationship outcomes. This level of relationship responsibility is part of being a benevolent leader—a trait identified for emotional talent and is covered in Part Two.

Because of this direct relationship, managers are in a unique position to be able to grow, shape and support their people and be a robust and dependable pillar of guidance.

Can a person flourish to their highest potential in work without this kind of support from a higher authority? It is unlikely. The reality is that it's very difficult for a person to self-generate absolute determination and unwavering strength through sheer self-belief, especially in the face of challenge or lack of sponsor. The impact of someone in authority who stands for you or believes in you is one of the most powerful forces for igniting human potential and taking you to new places of possibility. I have managed people who started as shy, obedient analysts rise up to levels of confident senior managers. This level of transformation requires more than acquiring experience. It requires the development of inner attributes such as self-belief that can be powerfully instilled by the manager.

When managers are people-focused, they are able to recognise people beyond their work façades and see more of their whole selves. Knowing more about them and what's important to them can arm a manager with valuable support. For example, she knows Ming combines full time working with parenting and respects her need to leave the office at exactly 5:30 p.m. each day. She knows Lucas loves attending Formula One racing events and supports his wish to organise his leave around race dates in various places around the world. She knows Amrita, her youngest team member, cares strongly for sustainability and conservation so puts her name forward as a contributor when there's

an organisation-wide environmental campaign underway. She is even amenable to Dominic, tagging a few days of his leave to a business trip to the Swiss office in Geneva so he can ski in Verbier.

When a manager accommodates or enables needs that are personally valuable to people, not just in their professional capacity but also in their personal lives, it carries enormous weight and the payback is a huge amount of goodwill and giving back. However, it doesn't only generate more willingness to work, it generates huge loyalty and support for the manager in return because care of this magnitude elicits deep heart felt gratitude. This response is something which is simply not possible from indifferent managers or a strictly transactional work relationship.

I believe personal demands from people will increase in the future, particularly in areas such as care taking for elderly relatives, infertility treatments or managing personal health, so managers will need to respond with humaneness and have the initiative to do the right thing especially in the absence of clear policies. How workplaces are dealing with these issues with guidelines and provisions is unclear. However, managers, as the first point of authority will need to be responsive and caring with sensitive personal needs such as granting time off for appointments, after treatment rest and the emotional toll if outcomes aren't successful. And this is not only on grounds of ethics or inclusivity but also because people work better when they know their critical needs are supported. To assume that people should not bring personal issues of this kind into work is not only insensitive, but it's also unrealistic and dehumanising to think people can work at full capacity when dealing with deep personal stress.

To illustrate how arbitrary managers' responses to personal situations can be, I show two examples gathered from my case studies. The first one is how two women trying to conceive via IVF [8]were met with two completely different responses. First, Lyn, a senior lawyer working for a well known global law firm was advised by her doctor to take one

8. In Vitro Fertilization

week off work to rest in bed after her latest IVF round as the previous three attempts had failed to maintain the pregnancy. This was unprecedented in her firm and she was apprehensive about asking for time off while not technically sick. However, her manager was totally supportive and took it up with the HR manager who happily agreed. Contrast this with the experience of Dr Pragya Agarwal, Inclusivity Consultant, who wrote in Forbes magazine[34] that she kept her IVF treatments private in the university she worked for fear of being stigmatised, and when she quietly enquired with HR about her leave allowances, she was told there was no such policy or provision. She experienced much emotional trauma after successive failed attempts, and only then did she did tell her line manager who reacted with no sympathy, instead reminded Dr Agarwal that she still had a job to do. It is worth noting that Lyn, the lawyer, has since turned away approaches from head-hunters with prospects of higher paid jobs.

The second example comes from two women based in Hong Kong who spoke to me directly about how their bosses responded to their serious issues while pregnant. Annie is a senior manager in the Asia head office of a large global multinational firm manufacturing skin and hair care products. After three months of pregnancy she experienced bleeding and was told by her doctor to take immediate rest. Her boss agreed with no hesitation and agreed to her taking three weeks off. At 28 weeks of pregnancy, she saw some more bleeding. This time her boss insisted she go home and do any urgent work from there. Annie offered to take unpaid leave, but her boss said no, her health was the most important thing, and HR didn't need to know. I'm glad to report that Annie gave birth to a beautiful healthy boy and is utterly grateful and loyal to her to boss.

Contrast this with Louise who worked for a large well known insurance firm in a demanding role. While pregnant, she had a few issues that required hospital treatment. However, her boss expected her to work long hours to ensure work was completed, especially ahead of her pending maternity leave, and even insisted she accompanied him on some overseas travel. After three months, Louise miscarried

and is sure that the stress of the job and lack of support contributed to this. She quit the job shortly after.

Mangers should not need an HR policy to inform them on how to respond in such sensitive situations. It calls for their personal character to respond with care and initiative and act with determination to ensure a safe resolution happens. The fact that many managers would reach for the rule book or delegate the decision to HR indicates how far removed they are from feeling they are responsible for people's wellbeing at work.

Building a healthy relationship with people in work doesn't mean a manager has to know every personal detail about them. A manager is not a buddy, but as I describe in Part Two, a benevolent leader—that is fully taking the responsibility of leadership but with an equal care for people as they do with targets and strategy. Personal details often emerge through relaxed conversation, team socials and being an approachable manager. A people-focused manager will build up a more whole rounded picture of the person and use that knowledge where it benefits the manager and the people. Without probing, as a manager, I knew who in my team was doing an MBA, who was learning Japanese in evening classes, who was single and looking for a partner and who was planning their wedding. It gave me a knowing of their initiatives, interests and important personal events in their lives.

No other level of leadership can have this degree of relationship with people. Senior leaders do have communications with all levels of people and can even establish friendly relationships with them but the *ownership* of that relationship rests with the direct manager and he is the one that can respond and make things happen especially spontaneously and opportunistically.

Case Study

The Human Perspective in Management-Airline Crew Relations

In 2010 Cecilia Leung was General Manager of Inflight Services for Hong Kong based Dragonair (re-branded as Cathay Dragon Airlines in 2016), an award winning Asian airline which served fifty destinations around the region. Cecilia's responsibilities included the airline's cabin crew management. In August of that year flights were severely disrupted due to severe air traffic control issues in mainland China, and consequently crew rosters had to be re-planned urgently. This required additional hours from crew to cover delays and waiting passengers, however this need was met with contention. Management and crew relations had traditionally been a sensitive one often characterised by mistrust on both sides and this situation fuelled these already strained relationships. The crew felt these management demands were not justified and soon their influential union became involved, threatening industrial action. The situation was finally resolved after a month of negotiation and mediation with the Hong Kong government who had intervened. Despite this, relationships between the management and crew remained tense. At this point Cecilia took it upon herself to break with the typical management position that prioritised operational needs, and urgently reassessed the situation through a human perspective. She asked herself, why had communications broken down? Why was there no mutual understanding? What did crew members truly need, and how could management support them to do their work well? This called for her to be a compassionate human first, ahead of her management persona. One of the first things she did was fly out every Friday evening on a Dragonair flight to visibly show up for them and then have dinner with them at the destination. She asked what problems they faced and how they felt about management. Most importantly, she explained

management decisions with honesty and transparency and listened to their responses without making them wrong. Their answers were often revealing and new to her. Eventually Cecilia got to know crew members by name including all the chief and senior pursers personally. However, this exercise wasn't only about placating disgruntled crew and avoiding a possible strike action; it was also because she knew that it was only when crew members felt good themselves were they motivated to go the extra mile and care for passengers with heartfelt acts of kindness such as making a hot drink for someone with a cold. Disaster for the airline was averted, furthermore Dragonair won the Best Regional Airline award by Skytrax in 2010.

Managers Implement all Motivating Factors for People to Flourish

In chapter one I introduced the six key motivating factors that create states of flourishing in people. These are: autonomy, contribution, growth, psychological and emotional safety, respect and recognition. The key factor that enables *all* these to happen in the most impacting and optimum way is the direct manager. These motivating factors leave people empowered; thus, enabling them to operate from a place of greater self-belief and confidence in anything they turn to. Granting these motivating factors are some of the greatest gifts managers can give to the people they lead but it's also a great gift for managers and organisations too because performance outcomes are so vastly improved. Let's briefly look at how a manager is the initiator and enabler of these motivators.

Autonomy: People who are ready for working more independently thrive when managers give them the freedom and trust to be self-managing. Micromanaging on the other hand leaves no room for growth and building trust but instead creates disownership and alienation of one's work.

Contribution: To be highly motivating, people need to have work that is valuable and contributes toward meaningful outcomes. This generates a high level of personal accomplishment. Managers can scope and design tasks in a way that includes this.
Growth: Managers have the discretion to present many different opportunities for growth such as increasing autonomy, responsibility or tasks such as presenting work or filling in for them in meetings.
Psychological & Emotional safety: Psychological safety is the belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks without a fear of rejection or ridicule. Emotional safety is feeling safe, supported, belonged and accepted. These are determined by managers and are a key part of their microculture.
Respect: Respect bestows worthiness, relevance and significance onto others, and this can be powerful coming from a person in authority such as the manager.
Recognition: When managers acknowledge people for their contribution and good work it is a powerful motivator for them. It enhances their self-esteem, belief in themselves, how they see themselves and so empowers them to do more.

Part Two of this book dives into these motivating factors deeper and why they are key to motiving people toward states of flourishing.

Managers Enhance or Diminish the Wellbeing of Their People

Great people managers are good for people's health. This shouldn't come as a surprise. When your workplace enables you to be yourself, do your best work and feel good about yourself, you have all the ingredients in place for optimising healthy mental and emotional wellbeing. As a Harvard Business Review article[35] stated, harsh work climates are linked to poorer employee health; however, the opposite is true of positive work climates, where employees tend to have lower heart rates and blood pressure as well as a stronger immune system.

Bad bosses are unfortunately all too common but the damage they can inflict on people's health is greatly underestimated. Dr Travis Bradbury author of Emotional Intelligence Habits reported that the

American Psychological Association showed that 75% of American workers identify their boss as the worst and most stressful part of their job and 60% of US workers would take a new boss over a pay raise. Their data shows that 38% of people leave a bad boss but 59% stay put and continue to live with the overwhelming stress and the effects this has on their sanity and health[36].

Sir Professor Cary Cooper[9], a leading expert in workplace wellness in UK said in most developed countries between 50 to 63% of long term sickness absence is down to stress. One of the key reasons for this is managers and their lack of EQ (Emotional Intelligence). As he says:

> "*Everything that affects you as an employee is linked to the environment that your line manager creates. Line managers need to know how they can affect people. When line managers are being appointed their bosses need to not just consider their technical skills but their interpersonal skills*."[37]

According to Gallup, teams with good managers have lower healthcare costs and 41% less absences[38]. Therefore, organisations should take note. A 2020 US survey conducted by Business Group on Health in conjunction with Fidelity Investments showed that organisations with over 20,000 people were spending $10.4 million overall in health costs.

An analysis by US based Grand View Research showed the total U.S. corporate wellness market size was valued at USD 18.4 billion in 2022 and is expected to expand at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 3.87% from 2023 to 2030[39].

The services included in wellness programmes vary but can include fitness facilities, health education, assessments and coaching, wellness allowances for spend on services such as gym memberships and a small shift toward holistic practices such as social connectedness, job satisfaction and spiritual contentment[40]. Many companies have Employee Assistance Programmes to deal with issues such as stress and the discussion around workplace mental health and burnout is now openly

9. Professor of Organizational Psychology and Health at Manchester Business School

discussed rather than hidden and stigmatised. These developments in employee health services are positive moves in modern day working culture, especially in a post COVID-19 era and also as certain lifestyle influenced diseases such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes continue to grow. It is therefore surprising that wellness programmes don't acknowledge and include the beneficial health effects of a people talented boss or that toxic bosses can create ill health for people. A Swedish study published in 2009 in the journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine[41] surveyed 3,122 men over a ten-year period to ascertain whether there was an association between the leadership qualities of their managers and a risk for fatal or non-fatal heart attack, angina and death rate due to heart disease. The conclusion was that when managers lack certain skills, the risk of suffering a heart attack increases by 40 per cent for men in this study. This was much less common in men who rated their managers as 'good' meaning considerate, providing feedback and information and allowing sufficient control over work. Although the study did not prove causality the association became stronger the longer the employee stayed at the same workplace.

The openness to discuss work related mental health is a welcomed step; however, the key role managers play in influencing people's mental health remains largely unacknowledged. As Gallup writes in their report, "managers can be the number 1 benefit no one is talking about"[42]. The report states that hundreds of millions of dollars are spent by companies in benefits programmes but the actions of a poor manager negates any of their positive effects. Although little research about this subject exists, the beneficial effects of a caring, people-focused manager are indisputable.

Dr Raj Sisodia, an international speaker on organisational philosophy and co-author of the book *Every Body Matters: The Extraordinary Power of Caring for Your People Like Family*[43], says it's not wellness programs that boost worker health and productivity—it's whether employees identify their company as genuinely 'caring'. Unwellness at work he says now costs the US $2.2 trillion annually, or 12% of GDP!

Not only will properly trained managers reduce employee health related costs, the ethics of managers who treat people with respect and dignity should hold strong and be a key principle of people management skills, and employer ethics. Furthermore, whether they are treated well or badly, people take these emotions home with them and transfer them to their loved ones. The effects are far-reaching.

Points for Reflection

- How is the microculture of your management domain distinct from the wider organisational culture? What elements define it?
- How much unrealised potential lies in each of the people you manage?
- How engaged are the people you manage? Do they perform their work just adequately, or do they love their work and give their all to it?
- Do you implement any of the motivating factors with the people you manage? If so, which ones and how? If not, why not?

3

The Urgency for Change

Enabling People to Flourish in a Radically Transforming and Disruptive World

When the winds of change blow, some people
build walls and others build windmills.

Chinese Proverb

When I first started writing this book, the pace of change was speeding up with much talk of how our work, social and personal lives would change with the onset of disruptive businesses, new technologies and increasingly sophisticated Artificial Intelligence. Adopting the military term VUCA, the discussion was around how organisations would navigate the world of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity. That discussion seems tame now in light of a world being transformed by the COVID-19 pandemic which started in March 2020 and where the scale of volatility and uncertainty has leaped forward in giant steps.

We are yet to understand the full repercussions of the post-pandemic world, and although we have experienced many changes in our lives already, the full impact it has on work is yet to be seen. However, there are also other changes that are impacting social, consumer and economic norms that will influence the working world and which managers need to be aware of. I say managers rather than organisations because the latter can often wake up too late to realise what changes need to happen, but managers can move quickly and have direct impact on practices, performance and outcomes in their realm of responsibility immediately.

In this changing and unpredictable world, we need people who flourish and can be the force that enables survival and growth for organisations. We need highly trained managers who can take them there more than ever before.

Let's turn to look at the key changes impacting our world now and, in the future, and what this means for managers and how they lead people.

The Post-COVID-19 World

Engaged, committed people who want to support the company's survival and growth are one of the most powerful and valuable assets an organisation can have in economically challenging times. This matters more than ever as the world experiences a global economic downturn after the pandemic that struck in 2020 causing many industries to be greatly affected. Gallup[44] reported that companies with a high number of engaged employees recovered from the 2008 recession at a faster rate than industry equivalents. In the post-recession rebound in 2009, having an engaged workforce became a strong differentiator in earnings per share (EPS). Conversely, companies with average engagement scores saw no increased advantage over their competitors during this recovery period. The COVID-19 situation highlights the need for engaged people more than ever before. Engaged employees are the most productive and are the only ones who move the organisation forward according to Gallup. With engagement standing at only 23% worldwide, it means that only a fraction of your organisation's employees are contributing to its survival at a critical time. Since managers are key for people engagement, the need for developing their skills has never been more urgent. Gallup also reported another timely benefit of employee engagement in times of uncertainty: that high engagement boosts retention. Employees who are actively engaged are less likely to be looking for new job opportunities. In fact, low engagement teams typically endure turnover rates that are 18% to 43% higher than highly engaged teams. This matters more than ever; 2021 saw a record 23% of USA's workforce quit in what

became known as the 'great resignation' with similar trends in countries such as China, India, UK, Netherlands and Australia[45].

Managing remote workers is also another emergence from the pandemic and it's likely to become a bigger and normal part of working life for many office based workers. Its success will depend on self-managing people and managers who trust them. This is where flourishing people are a huge asset as they want to perform well regardless of whether they are visible or not. On a personal basis, working from home suits many people as it cuts down stressful and expensive commuting time. For organisations, it has the benefit of cutting down sizable property and maintenance costs. It looks like remote and hybrid working is here to stay. This will require a different style of people management where trust is key to success. It will also require different ways of motivation for those easily distracted in a domestic setting. Micromanaging or keeping checks by spontaneously calling people during the day will not endear people to be fully engaged. Let's be realistic here. Someone may go off to the gym at 11am but work later in the evening or start work early and then do the school run. There will be a greater need for granting autonomy not just in the work itself but also how personal lives are designed around work. The focus should be on the end result. If outputs are delivered on time and with quality that's what matters, not the start times or hours logged.

However, one of the risks of remote working is that it can make work more transactional with a flow of commands devoid of easy conversation, body language cues or humour. It can also block visibility of great performance and thus inhibit rightfully owed credit for deserved people especially in the eyes of a wider audience such as senior leaders. This is where managers have to step up and be conscious enough not to lap up all the glory. For example, by ensuring people are credited by name such as on reports or updates.

Working away from the office loses a lot of opportunistic factors such as observing how others do things, exchanging useful information spontaneously, strengthening social ties or casually catching five minutes with the boss to check things. This means managers will need to be

proactive and lean in even more to anticipate needs. Communications should not only be one way or transactional commands but present opportunities for two-way communications and ease of conversation especially as it's more difficult to offer spontaneous thoughts and read others' body language. Managers also need to ensure they are accessible and approachable and build in ways to make this happen such as having ad hoc one to one chats and finding out if anyone is facing any challenges working from home. This is important for enabling personal support especially when managers cannot see if someone is stressed such as with anxiety over job security or working in noisy home environments.

Challenges of Managing People Remotely

Findings Gathered from Personal Interviews and Online Sources

- Harder to supervise people and make improvement suggestions until you have scheduled meetings or see end outputs.
- You can't see how much or when people are working.
- There's less learning and less picking up information that could be crucial when discussions or encounters aren't spontaneous.
- People in teams aren't so cohesive or coordinated as they don't know each other so well, especially for new joiners.
- It's more difficult to pick up on issues directly or intuitively until later when the problem has become bigger.
- New joiners who haven't had the immersion of the office experience take longer to understand the culture and the ways things are done. It's also more difficult getting to know their personal qualities.

The COVID-19 pandemic also brought in an era of extreme uncertainty. Managing work and people in this state will test the personal character of managers as well as their critical thinking, adaptability and decisiveness. The COVID-19 situation impacted once solid industries such as airlines, food and beverage and hotels as well as many small independent businesses. Those who survived had to implement urgent steps such as cost reductions, streamlining operations, reducing services and introducing new business models. No one can say what all the implications are and what world we'll be living in over the next few decades. However, we have some indications of what kind of managers we will need to navigate this uncertain, volatile world where we've seen crisis and opportunity come together simultaneously. In many large organisations, managers are rarely trained for managing such circumstances. Many work with specifics and precise rules knowing what to focus on and how to deliver it as prescribed. However, navigating uncertainty requires mindset and character skills that managers are rarely trained for. Agility in the workplace is one such skill and it has been a popular topic in the last few years. It gives the often quoted saying that the most adaptive, not the strongest, survive more meaning in this era of drastic change. Agility is the speed of responding to changes reactively or opportunistically and balancing this approach with sound judgement. Agility also refers to the personal self too. For example, trying new things, having the courage to suggest untried possibilities and being resourceful in finding solutions. Managers have to role model these critical new skills for their people too so that a culture of agile people emerges. This way of working fits in elegantly with people who flourish because they often develop characteristics such as courage, proactiveness and resilience in the presence of psychological safety and management support. It is these qualities that organisations need in order to seek out untried options or unseen opportunities in uncertain times.

Another characteristic that is critical for managers in times of uncertainty is resilience in the face of the unknown and mirroring this quality to people, even though managers may feel vulnerable themselves.

Resilience isn't a lack of stress or vulnerability; it's having the emotional and mental resources to manage the stress and not falter.

Managing people in uncertain times also requires authentic and honest communication against a backdrop of increased anxiety and stress. When I worked in the airline business, a valuable piece of feedback received from customers encountering flight disruptions at the airport, such as with a system breakdown or natural disaster—as happened with the Icelandic volcanic eruption in 2010, which closed down airspace and cancelled the largest number of global flights since World War II—was that they could accept that a problem existed, but they needed to be kept updated with honest information and not be silenced with inaccurate or useless statements. That's what sets in additional anxiety. The same principle applies here between managers and people. If a manager doesn't have concrete information, as is often the case, then this needs to be said. Otherwise, the rumour mill starts to work overtime and cause more stress.

Should people have to be made redundant and leave their jobs, those who flourish are equipped with high personal and emotional skills to move forward. They are resourceful, have self-confidence and resilience. If managers can leave people with these self-managing qualities in the most difficult times, then they have made a difference in people on a whole new level.

The Acceleration of Technical Change

The radical speed of new technologies will continue to accelerate change faster than we can keep up with them. Examples of these include artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, genetic engineering, digital money, automation of customer services, online medical consultations, mass data collection, virtual reality, 3D printing, biotechnology, and much more, in addition to many things we haven't even conceived of yet. To illustrate how impacting this transformation has already been, Harvard Business Review[46] showed research that since 2000, 52% of companies in the US Fortune 500 have either gone bankrupt, been acquired or ceased to exist as a result of digital disruption.

We've already been seeing the changes in our personal lives such as Apple's Siri, proposed driverless cars, the surge in online buying, the growth in home entertainment streaming services and yoga classes via Zoom, to name a few. However, it's the business world that is being radically reshaped not only in the innovation of products and services but also in transforming internal processes and operations. The disruptive events of 2020 will only accelerate changes in the pursuit of cost savings, increasing productivity and innovating new products.

Although it's difficult to see the death of human creative skills in subjects such as design and advertising, AI is already making moves in usurping these skills so what remains strictly in the realm of human domination is uncertain. Against this technical revolution, what are the implications for managers and the people they lead?

Firstly, let's look at the nature of such work. Products and services will be constantly evolving while also disrupting and transforming existing practises and business models as technology becomes more sophisticated. Very little will be static for a long period of time, unlike some of the age-old 'legacy' systems and operational processes that had existed for decades when I first joined the airline industry. Not all new products will be the result of incremental evolutions, many will leap frog to new paradigms and unfamiliar models. This requires a whole new mindset, one divorced from the entrenched historic way of doing things in a tried and tested, consistent way. Even if the end vision is clear, how to get there often is not. The work is investigative, iterative, complex and experimental. It requires curiosity, focus, dedication and a commitment to getting the optimum results. It requires mental multi-tasking and holding several possibilities in your mind while cognisant of all their implications. It needs a beginner's mind to ask basic questions and an unconditioned mind to enable new concepts to emerge unhindered. Achieving this kind of mindset comes from people who feel safe suggesting unconventional approaches and are committed to betterment. It does not arise from people who are stressed or limited in any way from being their best. Working at this level also

calls for discretionary effort and inner volition. You work at this level of excellence and dedication because you want to, not because you have to.

This type of work cannot always be specified in detail, especially in how solutions will be met. It therefore requires managers to create the conditions in which people flourish so that creative problem solving skills and the tenacity to keep going are offered proactively. This is important because you can't demand such skills at will from people. This point is even more crucial when managers are less technically informed than the people they manage, as was the case with some of the complex online systems I specified for the business in my former role as a manager. I was often reliant on the technical minds in my team and the IT department for whether my requirements could be delivered and, in some cases, how they could even be enhanced because of the capability of the technology. I depended on their knowledge but also on how much of their discretionary effort they wished to contribute. People who flourish do contribute all their discretionary effort. People who are uninspired, disengaged or disgruntled do not.

Organisations that still operate in a traditional method of top down cascade of commands should rethink how they best collaborate rather than command with these intelligent knowledge workers. In some of my past corporate experiences, the top leadership team didn't have enough knowledge of new technology and were usually forced into action because of competitor moves or changes in the wider airline industry such as the introduction of online ticket booking by customers in the late 1990s. Although visions and direction may come from the top, there will be a greater need to open up channels of contribution, ideas and possibilities from people below who have the expertise. As many top leaders in traditional organisations don't understand what's possible with advancing technology, their strategies and plans could also be sub-optimised. For example, a solution could be to have collaborative groups created on the basis of knowledge and expertise rather than ranking. This group with both technical experts and senior leaders would hammer out the possibilities on how a strategic goal could be designed and delivered. It is likely there are also new roles

waiting to emerge such as creativity facilitators that encourage the emergence of uninhibited and inspired thinking. In such a scenario, managers would have to be comfortable with empowering members of their teams and allowing them visibility and open expression with senior leaders.

It is easy to get swept away by the idea of technology commanding all aspects of our lives, and many jobs disappearing as a result. However, human intervention will always be needed, and not only in creating vision and design—assuming AI doesn't totally invade this space—but also in bringing forth the best of the human spirit such, as the joy of work, social interaction and feelings of personal accomplishment and deep fulfilment. The qualities that arise when people flourish.

The High Demand for Specific Skills

Linked-In reported in 2020 that the most highly demanded skills were cloud computing, AI, analytical reasoning and block chain. Other areas that will require skilled people are likely to be the care economy, sales, marketing, content creation, digital skills, the green economy and people and culture, which includes learning and development.

The pace of growth is confirmed by ambitious government goals such as the UK government who stated in a 2020 policy paper:

> *We want to build on our strengths in developing and deploying ideas to become the world's most innovative economy. We want to raise our total investment in R&D* to 2.4% of *GDP* by 2027, the biggest increase on record[47].

There is no reason to suggest that the events of the 2020 pandemic will change this goal. In fact, the disruption to many businesses will speed up the need for innovation and transformation, especially to aid cost and productivity efficiencies and accelerate the entry of new business models, products and services.

The vast majority of high demand skills are roles requiring higher education qualifications. Much of these fall within the STEM category—Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths—highly cognitive and intellect based skills. In 2018, the UK government declared concern at the shortage of STEM skills. According to STEM Learning,[48] there was a shortage of 173,000 workers with an average of ten unfilled positions per business and costing an annual £1.5 billion through recruitment, temporary staffing, training and inflated salaries. This shortage continued into 2022 with a UK government paper[49] declaring that it was impeding improvements to productivity and economic growth and urgent action was needed if the UK was to achieve its ambition of becoming a science and technology superpower by 2030.

In the US, there will be a shortage of up to 3.5 million STEM workers by 2025 according to a report by HR Forecast[50] quoting statistics from a National Association of Manufacturing and Deloitte report. Germany was short of around 320,000 STEM specialists according to a 2022 report by the German Economic Institute, and Japan will have a shortfall of 450,000 information technology professionals by 2030.

This shortage of skills looks set to continue for the next few years (at time of writing in 2023) especially as STEM employment isn't vulnerable to economic downturns, instead tends to be associated with higher productivity and employment growth during recessions. STEM roles are also non-routine and difficult to automate and replace with robots, thus keeping the demand high.

Those with these in-demand skills will be able to pick and choose with greater choice and leave a job with relative ease knowing they'll have other options to go to. Organisations must offer more than pay and benefits to attract and keep high demand skilled people. If market rates equalise in the war for talent, then the only advantage a company will have is a working environment that is personally fulfilling. One that offers profound satisfaction and enables people to flourish in a way that only emotional fulfilment can match. Pay will be valuable to a point but it has a ceiling for ensuring retention. After that it is how

good your workplace makes you feel. And that is largely down to the person you work for.

As I showed in Chapter 2, offering a modern culture with great wellness benefits won't ensure these people will stay if they aren't able to work in their most fruitful capacity and with a boss who supports them. Organisations will need to think deeply about their most effective retention strategies—their managers and how effective they are in enabling intelligent, skilled and knowledgeable workers to flourish into their best selves and produce work that more than meets the goals set.

This trend also opens up the debate on how best to manage intelligent, qualified workforces. And this also goes for non-STEM workers such as professionals in the Care, Sales and Marketing and Human Resources industries, who will also be in an expanding job market[10]. Attempts to control or direct such people closely or to not allow them to take responsibility and have ownership will stifle their potential and their discretionary effort. However, allowing them to work and contribute their best possible work will enhance engagement significantly, with positive effects on productivity and innovation. This people-focused solution shouldn't be categorised as a risk management plan to ensure people are retained. It should be approached as a fresh debate over what factors and conditions will keep in-demand intelligent people stay. The answer is beyond pay and perks; it's about work being a profoundly enriching place both personally and professionally, so you don't want to leave.

A Higher Educated Workforce

The number of people with tertiary education—that is education following secondary schooling and includes college, university and vocational courses—has increased significantly since statistics began. This means the profile of the 'typical' worker has changed in the last few decades and continues to do so as more students enter higher education and subsequently, the workplace. This should have

10. Especially for digital and technical roles within these sectors.

implications for organisations and how to manage an increasingly intelligent workforce. Let's look at the statistics and trends. According to statistics from the OECD,[11] 47.4% of 25-34 year-olds had tertiary education in 2022, up from 44% in 2018 and up from 35% in 2008. The number of higher-educated people is now larger than the proportion with upper secondary education only. Furthermore, the number of university degree graduates within this age group is forecast to grow to 300 million by 2030 from 137 million in 2010. Two of the largest graduate populations in the world are forecast to be in (non-OECD) China with 27% and India with 23% (half of the world's graduate numbers).

In terms of the percentage of population aged 25-34 years, some of the world's most educated countries have 50% or more of this age group with tertiary education. Figures from 2022 OECD's data[51] include the following ten top ranking countries:
Korea 69.6%, Canada 67%, Japan 65.7%, Ireland 63.3%, Russia 62.1%, Luxembourg 60%, Lithuania 58.2%, UK 57.7%, Norway 56.4%, Netherlands 56.4%.
Data from other major economies shows:
Australia 55.9%, USA 51.3%, France 50.4%, Germany 37.3%, India 20.5%.

In terms of employment, OEDC states that 85% of higher-educated graduates are employed and this group is also more resilient to long term unemployment[52]. Despite a large pool of graduates, demand is likely to remain high as tertiary education fuels innovation, technology and product development –the ingredients for the technical revolution.

There is also a strong correlation between higher education and productivity that will keep the demand for people with tertiary education constant, especially for those high demand skills such as STEM, despite challenges to the economy after 2020. A 1% increase in the share of the workforce with a university degree raises long-term productivity between 0.2% and 0.5%[53].

11. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is a group of 34 member countries that discuss and develop economic and social policy. OECD members are democratic countries that support free market economies.

People with higher education in universities and competence in scholarly research also impact the wealth of an economy. The Digital Marketing Institute[54] reported that British universities contributed £95 billion to the country's economy, Australian universities generated $25 billion and Canadian universities created $55 billion. In the United States, technological advancements developed in universities and colleges contributed $591 billion to the national GDP between 1996 and 2015 alone.

A highly-educated workforce is here to stay for many years in the future, especially as jobs requiring less education and skills are increasingly being automated.

What does this all mean for many managers? It means that they will be managing a highly educated workforce with a people management approach that has hardly changed in the last 50 years. There is little discussion and research around the role of managing intelligent workforces. This is huge blind spot for organisations given that most economies will continue to increase graduate and skilled recruitment. Intelligence and higher education don't automatically confer wisdom, personal skills or emotional maturity, but they do indicate a person's ability to understand, process things and learn at a sophisticated level. It also demonstrates a commitment to growing yourself and an ambition for high aspirations.

Intelligent people have a treasure trove of precious potential locked up inside them. They want to use this, apply it and see it contribute to positive results. Furthermore, they want their intelligence to continue unfolding and developing and being put to good use. They have opinions, insights, initiative and quite often, egos that need to be acknowledged and made to feel good. Managers need to open up to their suggestions and ideas and be resilient enough if alternatives are suggested. This may be challenging for more obedience-oriented cultures such as Japanese and Chinese styles of management; however, diverse opinions can be presented respectfully and usually are to people-focused managers who have the deference and often adoration of their people.

Just as the points made in the previous section on managing high demand STEM workers, intelligent, knowledge based workers need to work in conditions that enable them to flourish and bring forth everything that makes them contribute their best—with absolute enthusiasm and willingness. This means implementing those all-important motivating factors, which are covered in detail in Part Two.

It's important to note that no matter how self-directed these workers are, they do need some guidance and support from managers. This is the benevolent leadership I have described and is detailed in Part Two. The manager remains accountable for the team's outcomes; however, direction and guidance for people is not about control and closely managing (unless there is a performance issue). It is, for example, about being clear about expectations and requirements and how their work fits into the overall goals of the department or organisation.

Diversity in the Workforce

Diversity has become a growing subject in many Western countries in recent years. In the workplace, diversity means including people from diverse groups such as race, gender, ethnic groups, age, religion, sexual orientation, and mental and physical conditions, as well as other groups such as social class or physical body size. As younger generations particularly, become more diverse in race and other identities, such as gender, managing such a heterogeneous workforce effectively is increasingly becoming a critical priority for organisations. Racial diversity has come to mean fair representation of ethnic groups other than white, the traditional holders of power structures in the West, although what tends to get overlooked is how non-white managers lead white, black or other ethnicities. For example, in the territory of Hong Kong with a large Western expatriate workforce, a Chinese manager could be managing Western or Indian people. This is a greatly unexamined topic, but according to research, by 2055 the USA will have no single racial or ethnic majority so this scenario will become more prevalent.

All diverse groups matter; however, given the sensitivity and urgency around racial diversity, this is one of the most urgent priorities to tackle. Organisations in the USA have reacted quickly to implementing implicit bias training ever since the 2018 incident in Starbucks in Philadelphia, where two black men were refused access to the toilets because they hadn't made a purchase as they were waiting for an acquaintance. The branch manager called the police, and although the men were not charged, the incident caused a huge public outcry, accusing Starbucks of anti-black behaviour which forced the company to close all of its 8,000 US shops in May 2018 for staff to attend racial bias training.

Implicit or as it's also called, unconscious or racial bias, is defined as the unaware bias toward another racial group. For example, someone may tell herself she's not racist but in practice not hire anyone black because of an unconscious belief.

To tackle this sensitivity, many workplace leaders in the US are sending their employees to compulsory implicit bias training spawning a multi-million training industry. But does it work? Some of the evidence questions the effectiveness of it especially if it's a short workshop where attendance is compulsory. In fact, under these circumstances, it can be counterproductive as they can introduce resentment in people being forced to think and feel in a certain way and can therefore even activate bias! This was shown by research undertaken by Dr Alexandra Kalev, Professor of Sociology and Anthropology from Tel Aviv University, and Dr Frank Dobbin, professor of Sociology from Harvard University[55] after analysing 30 years worth of data from 800 US firms. Furthermore, any positive effects from training rarely last beyond a day or two. They do not induce any behaviour change. The researchers say it's better to do nothing rather than mandate such training.

One reason why this failure in training effectiveness is overlooked despite the fact that nearly all Fortune 500 companies in the US participate in it is because of the pressure many of them are under to prove that they've taken action in case they face legal claims by an employee declaring discrimination. With the racial sensitivities ignited from the

events in 2018, there is also more urgency for organisations to show they're doing something.

It also points to another blind spot for most organisations: the lack of understanding of the emotional drivers in people. Implicit bias has a strong irrational component, and some psychologists don't believe it's possible for people to get rid of it, especially through training. Professor John Dovidio of Yale University likens it to trying to resolve fear of flying by educating people on flight safety records[56]. So what does work? Research shows that human values such as respect and psychological and emotional safety—that is, feeling safe to express personal views without ridicule or being ignored, trusting people and feeling supported—are the most powerful factors in feeling included, accepted and that you belong.

When a manager leads people with these values, they trump anything diversity training can offer. This is not to say people should not be aware of cultural differences and sensitivities, especially when working with people in different countries. However, the transference of human connection and acceptance comes from the dignity given by a person to another. When this happens, even cultural faux pas are forgiven. A good example of this comes from the time I was working in Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong for a senior manager, Tom, an American from San Francisco. From my British perspective, Tom was *very* American, as he freely expressed himself loudly and confidently with little self-editing. This contrasted sharply with the quiet natured, deferential team of Chinese people (I was at that time the only non-Chinese in Tom's team) who often didn't understand his sense of humour or choice of words. In fact, Tom would often tease team members about the cuddly toys and cartoon pictures adorning their desks. However, none of this mattered to people because Tom was one of the most supportive managers we had ever had and everyone loved Tom. He was caring, generous and praised us just as loudly as he made fun of us. Despite the huge cultural differences this was the most cohesive, cooperative and happy team I had worked in during my career with this company.

People engagement has a particularly strong impact on inclusiveness, as evidenced by Gallup research[57]. They studied engagement where the manager and the employee were of different races. When engagement was high, employees' intentions to stay with the company were higher than even engaged employees working with managers of the same race. Gallup also showed that engaged employees are more likely to strongly agree that their company values diverse opinions and ideas, whereas disengaged employees did not view their organisation as inclusive.

When a manager has strong emotional talent and implements the critical motivating factors for people to flourish to their highest potential, it transcends unconscious biases or personal sensitivities toward different people because it puts the emphasis on leading people to their greatest potential regardless of who they are. As professors Kalev and Dobbin stated in a Harvard Business Review article,[58] some of the most effective solutions aren't even designed with diversity in mind. Professor Dovidio echoes this too, as he says it's more effective to put diverse people together in a project or task group to work together and let race or gender fade into the background. This has worked well in the military and with sports teams. An example from my working days in Hong Kong illustrates this well. A colleague of mine, a white British procurement manager, had acquired a new Chinese female recruit. This young person confided to my colleague that she had left the high-potential scheme designed to groom future senior management to join her team because she had felt so rejected by her scheme colleagues due to her overweight and unattractive looks[12]. My colleague mentored and trained her, and soon this young lady flourished into a very accomplished and confident procurement manager herself. She adored her white, British manager because she felt like a valued human being by her for the first time in that company. I myself, a British-Indian expat in Hong Kong, led teams of Chinese people. There were cultural differences, and I often would modify my vocabulary, refrain from using some British expressions and adapt my sense of humour; however, as a manager, the differences

12. This is how she described her reasons for being rejected.

faded, and what took precedence was managing people as valued human beings. And I got great performance and loyalty in return.

When emotionally talented managers come from this non-judgemental plac, where acceptance of people is a natural way of being, it automatically confers inclusiveness, not as a policy or education but *as a normal way of being* Everyone feels valued regardless of their differenc Furthermore, when people feel valued and safe research shows[59] that teams work more harmoniously together as the emotional and psychological needs of each individual are met.

Another reason for emotional talent being more effective than diversity training is that no manager will ever be versed in the differing cultural etiquettes related to all people in a diverse workforce. Sometimes unconscious or innocent mistakes may happen but when people know their managers genuinely care and champion them—as Tom my former manager did—it negates any thought of offence.

One of the assertions made about the benefits of having a diverse workforce is that it improves product customisation for racially diverse markets. In theory, this is because of input from employees who understand those needs. In my experience, this is a short-sighted view. Managers must first create a psychologically safe space for diverse opinions to be expressed. This isn't always the case as many managers are better at creating groupthink—that is swaying the opinion of the group toward an outcome, usually of their own preference and shutting down alternative views. If valuable input is to be gathered from diverse employees, then organisations must have a culture of safety to allow diverse expression to be heard. This way valuable input can come from within. However, to illustrate how this seldom happens in practice we can look at the following examples. Tesco, is one of the largest supermarket chains in UK and employs culturally diverse people particularly in multicultural towns. They produced skin plasters in different skin tones as late as 2019[13]. Marks and Spencer, the UK chain beloved for its underwear re-defined the colour 'nude' from light pinks and beige to

13. However, Tesco introduced 'world foods' including Indian food products a few years earlier.

include brown underwear only as recently as 2021. I am also often amused with the choice of advertising on Indian TV channels in the UK. For example, Western dating sites unmodified for a large viewing demographic of traditional, 60-year-old plus Indian parents—furthermore, a group unlikely to be in the market for dating. Culturally diverse input looks unlikely to be happening in such cases.

Managing a Multi-Generational Workforce

For the first time in history, there are five generations in the workforce today. These are the Traditionalists (1900-1945), Baby boomers (1946-1964), Gen X (1965-1979), Gen Y Millennials (1980-1996) and Gen Z (after 1997). Are managers ready to manage generational diversity with each generation coming with their unique characteristics and needs?

A single organisation could quite feasibly have four generations employed simultaneously. One of the reasons for this is that more 55 plus year olds are continuing to work well into their 60s and 70s because retiring is not financially feasible and also because today's 60 plus year olds remain vibrant and healthy with lots still to contribute.

In 2020 the global workforce percentage by generation[60] was:

Baby boomers 6%

Gen X 35%

Gen Y 35%

Gen Z 24%

Global regions will vary in their generational composition, especially countries such as Japan with declining population growths and Europe where millennial and Gen Z size is lower than baby boomers.

How do you manage multi generation teams effectively? For new managers, how do you manage older people so that they don't feel patronised or resentful about sharing their depth of experience?

While generational differences shouldn't be ignored, there are commonalities that remain strong across the generations. For example, meeting the desire for greater flexibility such as remote working where younger generations design work around their mobile lives and older

generations need the flexibility of managing families or caring for elders. A one size fits all style of managing will not get the best out of people with different desires and needs.

Understanding and responding to generational strengths and needs is important and an emotionally talented style of management has all the ingredients for managing different workers. When a manager can harness the best out of each group and create cross generational sharing, the results can be immensely fruitful with each generation learning from each other.

Points for Reflection

- What urgent issues or challenges are facing your workplace or industry? What are the implications for the people you manage or the type of people you will need in future? Think in terms of skills, mindset and behaviours.
- Considering all the changes happening (globally and locally) what skills will you need for managing people so they perform at their best?
- What kind of manager do you need to be to stop your high performers from leaving?

Summary of Part 1

People who Flourish

Flourishing engages a multiple number of personal resources: talents, mental skills, personal senses, positive behaviours and positive emotions. When all these are engaged and work in harmony they produce a level of performance that excels. In this state, people can reach unprecedented levels of potential.

The direct manager is the catalyst and enabler of people flourishing, but they must have the emotional talent to allow people to grow to this level of success. The problem is that organisations don't recognise or aspire to this high level of performance for their people. They also don't recognise the untapped potential in people that remains unused and could be released with the right managers.

Managers are the Only Ones Who Can Take People to States of Flourishing

Managers have the biggest influence on the lives of the people they lead. They impact people's performance, potential and the quality of their mental and emotional health. They have more influence than organisational culture and benefits. Managers own the relationship with the people they lead and create micro cultures within an organisation that determines the quality of people's working lives. The manager is also the catalyst for making all six motivating factors happen – these enable people to flourish.

People Management Skills Affect Outcomes

So important are people management skills that they affect the outcomes for the organisation, including productivity, survival and innovation. The ability to manage people effectively is a critical skill, not a soft skill only to be considered if budgets allow during times

of economic prosperity. Managers are more impacting on people performance than company culture, benefits or the top leadership.

The Need for Change is Urgent

The world of work is undergoing radical changes but People Management remains unskilled and stuck in a 50-year-old model designed for another era. The forces accelerating change come from the uncertainty of the post COVID-19 pandemic, the rapid progression of technology, increasingly highly-educated workers, the shortage of skilled people, especially in STEM, and increasingly diverse workforces including cultural and multigenerational ones. Managing people will need a skilled approach based on emotional talent and enabling people to flourish into their best selves if organisations are to get the best from such workers.

PART 2

The Power of Emotional Talent

Understanding the power of human emotions in the workplace and their role in unleashing human potential

4

Introducing Emotional Talent

The Mega Skill of High Impact People Managers

"The most exciting breakthroughs of the twenty-first century will not occur because of technology, but because of an expanding concept of what it means to be human"

John Naisbitt, Future Trends Author and Speaker

Tony Jones retired from British American Tobacco in 2005 as Regional Chief Executive for Asia Pacific based in Hong Kong. In the 1970s, Tony was Financial Controller Operations for Carreras Rothmans, a tobacco company in the UK and one of his responsibilities was to produce management accounts together with performance and productivity statistics for all the UK factories. One factory in particular stood out as it consistently produced the best results despite the fact that it was one of the smallest factories employing just 300 people. It outperformed the larger ones with 1000 people and more every month. It had the highest productivity, lowest wastage, lowest absenteeism rates and highest machine efficiency.

The factory was based in Rayleigh, a town in Essex in the east of England and managed by Ken McGimpsey, a traditional factory manager with moderate education.

This all didn't make sense to Tony. Ken was the least academically qualified manager in all the factories whereas the other larger factories were managed by modern, better qualified and highly trained managers. Furthermore, as a rule, the larger the factory, the better results were produced; however, Ken's factory outperformed them. Tony was perplexed

by this anomaly and started to wonder whether the figures were caused by faulty submission or even manipulation. So he did an audit on the figures but found no evidence of error or manipulation. He then asked Ken how he managed to get such good results every month and Ken replied, "Well, we are one team and we all just work hard". No other explanation was given. This didn't satisfy Tony so he continued to examine the factory operations in further detail and found the following: Machine operators waived their right to the 20 minutes wash up time at the end of each shift and continued working to the end. Before leaving work, materials handlers always left sufficient stocks ready for each machine so they were ready for the next shift workers. And the next shift of machine operators started work 15 minutes earlier to ensure machines weren't turned off at the end of the previous run thus eliminating the extra time needed for machines to get to full speed which minimised any gaps in the operation between handovers.

Furthermore, when it came to team cooperation, there was incredible camaraderie and team spirit. If anyone was asked to perform a task outside of their responsibility, they would do so willingly without complaining. People would voluntarily help another person falling behind. There was no blame or undermining anyone, and despite having a strong union and management structure, the workers would police themselves on discipline, commitment and output.

This would be a highly unusual situation for any workplace even today but even more so for Britain in the 1970s, an era marked by heavy trade union demands and strike actions. Many manufacturing industries 'worked to rule', an industrial action where work was done strictly to the letter of their job description with no additional duties or time undertaken. There was great suspicion of management, and even when workers were not militant themselves, they were often pressured by both managers and unions. But nothing like this was happening in Ken's factory; in fact, it was the complete opposite. Tony's findings confirmed the figures were correct, the operations ran very efficiently and the people worked way beyond their obligations. Furthermore he had never seen such cooperation amongst workers. However the

investigation continued to confound him as there still didn't seem to be an obvious answer. So the next action was to interview Ken's direct reports and other key people for answers. Then an interesting picture started to emerge when the following responses arose:

"We love Ken, he's a great guy."

"He supports us and allows us to get on with our work."

"He will do anything to support and defend us and we'll do anything for him."

"We would rather come to work than stay at home."

"He knows everyone's birthday including our kids."

"He takes us to the seaside in Margate every year."

Every single person loved Ken and would do anything for him because Ken would do anything for them. Ken achieved these results even though he was the least academically and managerially qualified factory manager in the entire UK division. But Ken was a man of the people and he cared for his workers deeply. He treated them all with respect and as fully capable adults regardless of their rank. The working environment he had created was one of harmony and happiness where each person felt valued and significant. This in turn generated a freely given will to work for the good of all and produce the exceptional results on a consistent basis. The irony was that Ken didn't have to work long hours as his workforce always made sure everything was under control so he often packed up to go home before they did. In return for Ken's support and care his workers made him the best factory manager in the UK Operations division.

I love this account because it demonstrates the power of a manager and how great performance results can be achieved through human values alone and not rules, strategy or business models. It shows how powerful human values can be to generate extraordinary motivation, the likes of which are rarely achieved by renumeration, incentives or perks alone. Furthermore, consider this: the work itself was dull, repetitive and manual, not mentally rewarding; however, Ken's environment— or management microculture was immensely rewarding and gave people deep emotional fulfilment and a positive sense of self that trumped

the nature of the work. For Tony Jones, this account still stands out as he looks back over his career after more than 40 years.

Ken may not have known this but as a manager of people he had great emotional talent.

Emotional talent is having, recognising and managing the emotional qualities within oneself that give rise to a positive sense of self and healthy interactions with people and the external world. For managers, emotional talent is a necessary component in creating rewarding relationships with their people and for enabling people to flourish into their best selves. It is the opposite of the self-serving priority characterised by many managers.

In the account of Ken McGimpsey, an important point to note is that his workers were performing at exceptionally high levels *because* of Ken and *for* Ken and not for the company. This salient point is completely overlooked in modern day discussions on what motivates people in the workplace—that the person you work for is a motivating or de-motivating influence.

When someone has high emotional talent, they experience the following:

A Profound Sense of Being Comfortable with Oneself

This includes having self-acceptance and embracing every part of yourself, including your less attractive traits. Even when unfortunate events happen, they may get you down but they don't define or diminish you to the point of helplessness or failure because you have the capacity and resilience to rise, learn and take recovery action. This state isn't vanity or conceitedness. In fact, self-acceptance often takes your attention off yourself because you have genuine self-assurance that doesn't need constant attention or validation from others to feel worthy. This state of being also brings in authenticity because there is no need to misrepresent a self that you are fully accepting of. It attracts people to you because self-

acceptance and authenticity are highly attractive qualities which others perceive instinctively. It sends out the energetic signal that says 'I fully accept myself' and so others accept you back in return too.

Having the Capacity for Others

This capacity to care for or consider others becomes available when you're emotionally talented because you feel emotionally whole and therefore there is no need to be constantly filling in an inner void that needs attention and priority above all others. When you don't feel empowered, it's difficult to empower others as all resources are focused on self. Compensating behaviours often come into play, for example, a need to appear impressive or to exert control over others in order to assert your authority. Having the capacity for others is the quality that drives the pursuit of something bigger than oneself, an attribute of high performing leaders as identified by Dr Daniel Friedland author of *Leading Well from Within*[61] and leader of Engaging Conscious Leadership workshops.

A Healthy Sense of Self

Any leader, be it manager, executive or director requires presence and gravitas. This energy is amplified when one has the self-belief in being able to fulfil a position of authority and influence well. Some of the most impacting people I've seen have a strong self-belief in what they stand for. A healthy sense of self is never driven by excessive ego, dominance or a need for significance—these are compensating for emotional lack such as deep seated feelings of disempowerment. It gives rise to determination and will and gets things done. It is a quality needed when you pursue matters of principle, ethics

and belief and when you dare to bend the rules for a greater good.

The Admiration, Respect and Gratitude of the People You Lead

When you manage people in a supportive and caring way, the return is huge. This is a natural human response; however, in the workplace, this level of relating to people is uncommon. When a manager has been instrumental in people feeling good about themselves and what they're achieving, the response is huge and heartfelt. This gratitude is particularly amplified when personal needs around work have been recognised. It comes from their centre of feeling and emotions which produces a potent force stronger and more genuine than the head and logic.

One of the reasons for emotional talent being so under-estimated as a potent force for managing people is because emotional development has been left out of our general education and for many, our upbringing and certainly out of the workplace despite the inroads made by psychologist Daniel Goleman and the importance of Emotional Intelligence[14] for success in career and personal life.

Consequently, most humans live with an untrained emotional self rather than a talented one. Let's look at this next and why this matters.

The Untrained Emotional Self

The emotional self is the source of personal wellbeing when it is strong, positive and healthy. However, here's the thing about your emotional self; it's largely untrained for knowing how to navigate a successful life, for example, for fully accepting yourself as you are, developing deep personal happiness or loving relationships and certainly undeveloped for how to lead people effectively. This would

14. Daniel Goleman is an author, psychologist, and science journalist whose 1995 book Emotional Intelligence became a best seller. It discounts IQ as the sole measure of one's abilities but looks at emotional qualities as drivers of success in life.

explain the number of toxic managers out there who have no clue about how to manage their emotional selves and how it impacts the people they lead. This is backed up by Gallup's research[62] that shows that only one in ten people – not managers, but people, have the talent to manage people effectively.

This untrained emotional self doesn't mean that people don't have happy lives without working on their personal development, of course they do and these are often the people who have been brought up with love, acceptance of who they are and emotional safety.

For many, however, this isn't the case even if they've had a loving upbringing. The emotional self is the totality of life's experiences marked particularly by childhood experiences and often later by emotional life events. What you consciously or subconsciously believe these experiences mean is the lens through which you view life. For one person, a failure could mean 'proof' of inadequacy and lead to giving up while for another it could be taken as a learning experience in how to do it better next time.

In some of the intensive personal development I've done, it was eye opening to see so many people, including successful professionals at the top of their game harbour deep feelings such as inadequacy or lack of worthiness in response to a childhood experience, and how their professional success was often driven by a need to prove themselves. By nature of being human, we all have an emotional self which when untrained can govern our behaviours unconsciously and respond untamed to life's events; for example, with unregulated responses to hurt, envy or inadequacy. But when the emotional self becomes self-aware and emotionally talented it can be a force for great personal fulfilment and wellbeing. This makes it easier to understand managers who don't easily credit their people or who block their visibility as was the case with a manager I once had. They don't feel emotionally secure in themselves so they hinder anyone who may eclipse them. Consequently, these managers will never get people to flourish into their best selves.

Nobody but you owns your emotional self. It is your personal 'intellectual property', actually your 'emotional property'. You define

it and can decide what it's going to be. The workplace hasn't traditionally placed a lot of value on emotional talent; therefore, hasn't defined requirements or standards to be met other than a tacit expectation for basic civil decency. This is one of the reasons why this book can be applied and implemented by individuals themselves without the need for leadership permission or endorsement, although that would be good too!

A challenge could be maintaining high emotional talent in a toxic culture or when having a toxic manager. Even then you can choose to be who you wish to be without mirroring these external factors as I found to be the case when working for the worst manager in my entire career.

Some people may question whether emotional talent can be learned, and behaviours changed. In 25 years of exploring personal development in groups, I have seen many transformations happen to people— even tough highly successful ones, when they awaken to profound realisations prompted by a deep personal enquiry. Often this is when the unconscious becomes conscious and they suddenly see what's been governing their thoughts and behaviours for much of their lives.

I believe everyone has the capacity to change and progress, some to small degrees and others in giant leaps in transformation. For people who are not natural people managers—and I have worked for one who told me he disliked managing people and preferred spread sheets—I have included lots of examples of how to implement emotionally talented practices even if it feels challenging at first.

Emotions Have Been Left Out of the Workplace

Understanding emotions in the workplace has rarely been a priority of senior decision makers. Even though Daniel Goleman's excellent work on Emotional Intelligence[63] has been popular since the 1990s, in my experience, the implementation of it has been thin on the ground. This is because the world of work still assumes that the left-brain talents of strategy, processes, targets and measurements will determine success, especially if you have go-getting leaders and

managers who can put these into action swiftly and mechanistically. These talents are important; however, their success is determined by the quality of human implementation. After all, the most robust and carefully designed plan would go adrift if the human commitment behind it was slack.

An example that illustrates this aptly comes from one of the most flawless processes ever studied—the famous 'dabbawalas' in Mumbai, India. These 'lunch box men' deliver 130,000 daily home- made lunches in stacked metal boxes called tiffin boxes from homes to their recipients at work all over the city and then collect all 130,000 empty boxes and return them back to their homes. That's 260,000 transactions daily and 80 million annual deliveries, six days a week in stifling heat or heavy monsoon rain using mostly push bikes and Mumbai's extensive train network. So exact is this system which has been operating since 1890 with 99.9% accuracy that even a Harvard Business review[64] stated their process met Six Sigma's[15] rigorous standards of 3.4 defective parts (errors) per million opportunities—that means less than 300 or less lunchboxes go astray each year. It is a process that has been studied by consultants and companies such as Fedex and notable admirers such as Richard Brandson. Furthermore, 50% of the workers are illiterate and the process has remained the same as before the use of mobile phones and the internet. The studies on this in the West have focused strictly on the process itself as tasks and activities, typically depicted in a flow chart. This is very telling of the rational way in which workplaces operations are typically analysed. However, another picture emerges from the perspective of Dr Pawan Agrawal, an India based academic who himself comes from a family of Mumbai dabbawala and who did his PhD thesis on the dabbawala and their supply chain and logistics. As well as examining the processes, he included the human factors that made this system work. He cited passion, values and dedication of the workers as crucial criteria and that these personal drivers made

15. A measurement system developed by Motorola in the 1980s and now used by other large companies such as General Electric and BAE systems, contractors to British defence.

the system work better than incentives or the fear of reprimands. Even remuneration was not the strongest incentive as a dabbawala received only $10-13 per month per customer with no tips and only a bonus on the annual festival of Diwali.

So what are these personal values that make this process work so efficiently? Many of them are culturally driven and different to the way Western minds understand workplace operations. For example, the commitment to customer satisfaction is extremely high and goes beyond any concept understood in the conventional Western sense. One of these values is that the customer is God. This is more than the similar notion in the West of the 'customer is king' that comes from the economic need to retain customers. The premise behind the 'customer is God' involves a respectful and grateful deference from one human to another human, an ethos engrained in Indian service culture rather than a marketing rulebook. Dr Agrawal, in his TEDx presentation[65] also talked about the value of home-made food made through the love of the mother or wife and how this is well understood and respected by the dabbawala. Again, this notion, deeply embedded in the Indian psyche, believes that home cooked food is an expression of care, an almost sacred act of devotion by a woman for her family. Another is the strict policy never to smoke or drink whilst on the job, not only because of any possible blurring of the senses, but also because it is disrespectful to wives and mothers during pick-ups and drop offs. The dabbawala are also highly aware of the social and religious scandal should they get the orders wrong, for example, if a pork dish were delivered to a Muslim or a meat dish to a strict vegetarian Jain.

Another factor that is marked by people rather than processes is that the dabbawala come from the same community of people and entry into the profession comes via family and community. It is a tribal tight knit group of like-minded people bonded together in a system that generates familiarity, support, dependability and trust.

The dabbawala also own their work and are self governing, creating new rules as needed. For example, if the trains are running late, they will develop their own Just In Time system.

These workers know nothing of Six Sigma, Total Quality Management or Business Process Re-engineering; yet work a complex but beautifully elegant system that companies pay huge sums to management consultants to emulate. It is impossible to say to what extent this system would work error free without the human elements of commitment, respect and mutual worker support. One thing that is certain, however, is that a process with this degree of logistical complexity and potential for error needs the human factors to keep it working flawlessly.

Given how much of a role emotions play in our life, it is extraordinary that we don't get any education in awareness and developing emotions for our best advantage and success in life. One of the most unrealistic notions in working life is that we shouldn't bring our emotions to work as if we can all transform into Star Trek's Mr Spock as soon as we pass through the barrier. To clarify, this doesn't mean it's ok to let out uncontrolled emotions if someone's had a bad day. It means that we human beings are made up of emotions as well as rationality and we are far more driven by our subconscious emotions than most people realise. In fact, 95% of the time we are led by our subconscious and 5% by our conscious mind. It would be a good idea then to understand and become aware of our emotions and how we can use them in a way that is effective and makes us feel good too. This goes for both managers and the people they manage.

The workplace hasn't really attempted to understand emotions of people. It has ignored this large part of our natural make up preferring to engage mostly with our rational left-brains as if we can compartmentalise our emotional-rational selves into distinctly different worlds that never interact during the 9 to 5 at work. Not only does this fail to recognise our whole selves, it also fails to harness our emotional components as a force for great advantage. The truth is we do bring our emotional selves into work but they are the untrained parts of ourselves operating mostly from a subconscious, unaware state that we inflict onto each other or let fester silently inside. The emotional self of a manager is the untrained component of him and can range from super supportive

to downright narcissistic and self-absorbed with most somewhere in between.

With this emotional self coming untrained and unaware, we end up with the great manager lottery. The quality of working life for someone isn't influenced so much by their manager's experience and competence but by their emotional self and as an employee you can only pray that their emotional self is highly conscious. Managers lead people with their emotional selves and not their expertise. This is why the experience of working in the same organisation under two different but equally experienced managers can be like night and day. It is hugely ironic that the part of a manager that effects people the most—that is their emotional self and how they use it to lead people—is the least trained and understood in the workplace.

The dehumanised workplace is also evident in the language of work as every soft association with humanness and values is stripped away even in an era where organisations declare their people are great 'assets'—the use of that word itself likens people to tangible objects owned by the company. We have become so accustomed to this culture of dehumanised language that often begins in business education that we rarely even question it. Although a few workplaces, in their attempts to emphasise the significance of people have replaced 'Human Resources department' with titles such as People Operations, Talent Management or Employee Experience, most organisations still use terms such as headcount, human capital, FTE (full time equivalent), human assets and human resource. However, people aren't resources like a chair or desk, they are thinking, feeling, and sensing human *beings* with needs. Dehumanised workplace language belongs to an era of ninetieth and twentieth century industrial work where a person's labour, not mind or heart, was needed to produce outputs, therefore, making humans a part of the mechanistic process.

In the writing of this book, I often struggled to find the right terminology to describe positive and higher states of emotions for managers and people respectively, and as no such terms existed, I had to invent terms such as 'emotional talent' and 'flourishing' to bring

these concepts into being and recognition for the workplace. The closest workplaces get to positive emotions are words such as 'satisfaction', which is a bland emotionless word. People don't want to be satisfied at work, they want to be exhilarated and highly fulfilled. They may even want joy and happiness and love their work especially if they've accrued up to or even over $50,000[16] in student debts in order to develop good careers. Loving their work means they can't wait to get out of bed each morning and get working on the things that make them feel good about themselves whereas being satisfied means staying in bed if you had the choice.

The absence of suitable terms to describe positive workplace emotions points to their lack of existence in the working world as everything comes into being and concept from language.

Diminishing workplace emotionality and human value has encouraged the lack of effective people management to remain in place, for if people are resources and assets, they can be directed and commanded, they don't need to be pleased or understood as human beings with needs and desires. Endeavours to satisfy people are largely restricted to external rewards such as remuneration, benefits and subsidised facilities—which are great to have; however, they aren't on the same level of human values such as dignity, care, support and trust. These are the values that meet deep and meaningful human needs and move and inspire people to give more of themselves and do great things. There may be some concerns coming from a cultural angle, especially in some parts of Asia where those in positions of authority are revered; thus, the fear is that empowering people and fulfilling their needs for emotional wellbeing will encourage self-pride and thus diminish obedience and compliance. What gets missed with this concern is that leadership still retains a strong role of overseeing but is also benevolent, an attribute that is introduced in this part of the book. Furthermore, when managers are the source of people's success, they get fierce loyalty and commitment back from them.

16. Based on average student debt of £40,000 in England for a 3 year undergraduate degree but varies considerably depending on citizenship, country and university ranking.

In my own corporate career spanning 25 years, I received only one day of people management training and that was all based on the need to recognise people's strengths and not what I as a manager needed to be and do to make people perform and thrive. Once the managers were back in the workplace there was no behavioural change and no benefits were seen from this expensive off site management training. How could there be if managers started and ended the training with their old emotional selves in-tact—the part of them which determines the quality of relationship with their people? There was no recognition of the manager's emotional self and how it generated or hindered people performance.

Even with the large shifts from manufacturing to knowledge and service work, especially in developed economies but also increasingly in rapidly developing countries such as India and China, the ethos of managing people hasn't really changed very much over the last 50 years and more. Although large companies have been progressive in providing facilities and services that make for a comfortable workplace, they fail to understand what really motivates people and makes them love their work. Cheap food it is not.

One of the reasons for people management skills being overlooked is because of the aggressive pursuit of talent in recent years. This is about recruiting and retaining the best skilled people so that the organisation can thrive into the future, especially one increasingly driven by disruption, change and technology. Talent is important but its focus has eclipsed the importance of character attributes. This is ironic as the case has been made in part one that talent can be boosted to extraordinary levels of potential under the supportive conditions of a great people manager, and conversely, can be withdrawn under unsupportive management. As David Brooks, New York Times columnist and author of the book, *The Road to Character*, says: 'Most of us have clearer strategies for how to achieve career success than we do for how to develop a profound character'[66].

Developing Emotional Talent

This part of the book kicks off the learning process for how to be an emotionally talented people manager. It covers the three parts that make up emotional talent, as shown in the diagram below. These are the manager's inner self, behaviours and the motivating factors that generate flourishing.

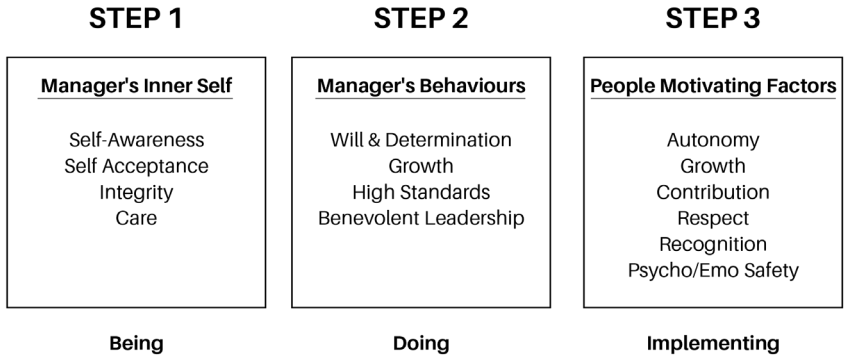

Figure 3
The Three Steps to Develop Emotional Talent

This process introduces different and even novel way of learning for many managers. Unlike the typical method of knowledge acquisition which is about knowing how to do something, learning how to be emotionally talented is not an intellectual exercise. It is about 'being' first after which doing happens. It starts with an inner process that includes self-enquiry and reflection, and is about *being* certain states not *knowing* about states. For example, I could know what it means to have integrity but that makes no difference in behaviour until I fully embrace integrity as part of who I am and demonstrate that in my actions and behaviours.

When realisation happens as a result of self-enquiry—that is, consciously awakening to how you're being and operating—it paves the way for behavioural changes to happen because you now recognise the state you've been operating in, something which you may have

been oblivious to before. For example, when attempting to lose weight, you know which foods to avoid, but that may not stop you from eating them. However, if you realise the subconscious reason for wanting too much of the wrong foods, for example, if food is being used for emotional comfort to detract from depression, anxiety or a lack of fulfilment, it gives you valuable insight into the root cause of the issue and offers the opportunity to make changes to the source of the problem, not its symptoms.

Another underestimated and overlooked quality is feelings. Because the workplace has rationalised much of human behaviour, the realm of feelings has been relegated to unnecessary interference. But feelings are a part of emotional talent. How can you have empathy or care for another if you cannot access your feelings for what they may be experiencing? Feelings are also the signal for perceiving, sensing, picking up instincts and being intuitive. Not only are these important for awareness when dealing with people such as watching cues or sensing discontent, they are also useful in acting on hunches and unravelling new paths of discovery. The realm of feelings is also the source of personal change. Feeling differently about something is the first step toward changing it.

For each step, I include a clear definition of the individual components, their benefits and many practical examples of how each of them can be put into action. This is very intentional for two reasons: Firstly, we have become so accustomed to underestimating human values in the workplace such as integrity and care—two of the attributes that are included in the first step of manager's inner self, that they have lost much of their credibility and potency despite the fact that they can generate huge payback when demonstrated. These are not merely nice words; they are powerful and influential ways to be and this needs to be understood. Secondly, during my research for this book, I came across studies and surveys undertaken by organisational psychologists and PhD researchers that would prove the benefits of values such as respect, trust and integrity in the workplace; however, (and this was surprising to me) it was often declared that the problem was that leaders

and managers did not know what these values meant in practice and how to implement them! This further proved how disconnected the workplace is from healthy personal attributes.

Included in Part Two is also published research from psychology and neurology that backs up the points made in each step of the process and proves how powerful they are for managing people effectively. Research has shown that when the power or purpose of something is proven, it reinforces the doing of it. Assigning more meaning behind what you're doing gets better results.

This has been explained by Dr Joe Dispenza[17], a leader in mind-body transformation who proves the benefits of his meditations with science and real-time brain scans in his advanced workshops. As he says, if you see the evidence behind the benefits, you're more committed to achieving it. He gives the example of experiments done with hotel chambermaids, who were told their work was generating healthy levels of physical exercise for them. As a result of knowing and embracing this, they lost weight. In contrast, a control group that was not told of its benefits experienced no changes in weight.

Ontology, Psychology and Neurology: A Tripartite Model

Beingness as mentioned earlier belongs to the study of ontology and when this is put together with psychology and neurology, it offers an interconnected model of three parts that have rarely, if ever, been identified together to understand human workplace behaviour. However, it offers some startlingly new and different insights into leading people and performance. I had been exploring ontology for a number of years as part of my own ongoing development of self but it was the connection with the psychology and neurology research that gave me a complete understanding of what I had witnessed many times with people I managed. Great performance was one aspect, however, the unexpected dividends were seeing people blossom in

17. Dr Joe Dispenza, leader of mind based transformation gave this example in his Progressive Workshop.

confidence and self-belief beyond anything expected. Not only were they very committed with strong ownership of the work, they were also resilient, positive and creative, especially with problem solving. Their relationship with work had changed from something they 'did' to something that was shaped and enhanced by their very involvement; like a symbiotic relationship where the results reflected who they were and the greater the results, the more enhanced they felt as human beings.

To see people grow from a baseline level of 'adequate' to 'maximised potential', from administrative or junior management roles to being senior managers within a few short years—when this was, quite honestly unpredictable for many—meant something significantly more than building knowledge and expertise was happening. The real driving force came from the inner resources of confidence, self-belief and self-esteem that initiated and accelerated their transformations. In some cases, people were like completely different people from start to end of their time with me. This is why Tony Robbins, the powerful motivational leader, says personal success is 90% psychological and 10% strategy. It was a real revelation for me to see how impacting a manager could be on the professional and inner lives of people being managed.

This tripartite model: ontology, psychology and neurology, offers a wholistic approach where the three aspects work together in an interconnected dance. Ontologically—that is how you are *being* as a manager, for example, supportive and caring for people, influences people psychologically; it makes them feel safe and accepted which helps to generate greater self-worth and confidence , which in turn triggers their neurological responses such as being able to tune into creative or higher level thinking in the prefrontal cortex of the brain because feeling safe enables resources to be devoted to higher cognitive states. The opposite is also true. When a manager is self-serving or over controlling, there is nothing there that validates their person's significance or contribution. Psychologically, this can be felt as stress or a constant low-level anxiety which is translated in the brain as needing to protect oneself and focus all resources into the limbic brain that is

designed for survival. It takes away the energy to create and think clearly and calmly.

This perspective offers a simple but unique lens with which to understand the relationship dynamics between managers and people and why it influences performance, potential and wellbeing in the workplace. The table below shows a high level illustration of how ontology, psychology and neurology work together in a manager-person relationship.

The Ontological, Psychological and Neurological Connection in Manager – People Relationships

Manager's State of Being	Employee's psychological response	Effect on employee's neurology
Integrity	• **Ability to trust** • **Ability to depend on the manager** • **Mirrors the same way of being**	• **Resources are available for prefrontal cortex and higher states of thinking** • **Calm, focused state**
Caring for people	• **Feeling supported** • **Feeling significant and relevant** • **Feeling emotionally and psychologically safe** • **Mirrors same behaviours**	• **Affinity and bonding with people through oxytocin produced** • **Resources are available for the prefrontal cortex and higher states of thinking and creativity**
Intimidating	• **Feeling unsafe** • **Feeling unprotected** • **Stress and anxiety** • **Lack of team bonding as all resources focus on self-survival**	• **All resources focus on survival and self-protection—the limbic brain** • **Prevents ability to access prefrontal cortex and higher states of thinking and creativity**

Intimidating **Continued**		• **Production of cortisol in response to stress, which robs the immune system when long term**
Self-serving priority	• **Feeling ignored and irrelevant** • **Low level stress and anxiety** • **Self-protection in the absence of support** • **Withdrawal of best self and any extra effort**	• **Hinders access to the prefrontal cortex and higher states of thinking and creativity** • **Energy is focused on self-survival, which puts focus into the limbic brain** • **Production of cortisol in response to stress which robs the immune system in the long term**

Being, the study of ontology, is looked at in more detail in the next chapter as it underpins the attributes required for step one of developing emotional talent, the manager's inner self.

Points for Reflection

- Is there anything about Emotional Talent that surprises you or brings some realisations up? Explain this in the context of your people management role and your organisational culture.
- What are your dominant states of being? Using one-word descriptions such as 'caring', 'aloof', 'present' etc, what attributes do you display in your roles as a manager? In your role as a friend? And finally, as a partner, if you have one?
- How do you think the above states of being you've identified impact the people you manage?

5

Inner Self Attributes

Step 1 of Developing Emotional Talent

"Managers lead people with their emotional selves not their expertise"

Harjeet Virdee

The first step in developing the manager's emotional talent starts with developing the inner self. These are emotional attributes that are states of being, and when they are incorporated as a natural expression of oneself, they pave the way for steps two and three to happen. This is shown in the diagram below.

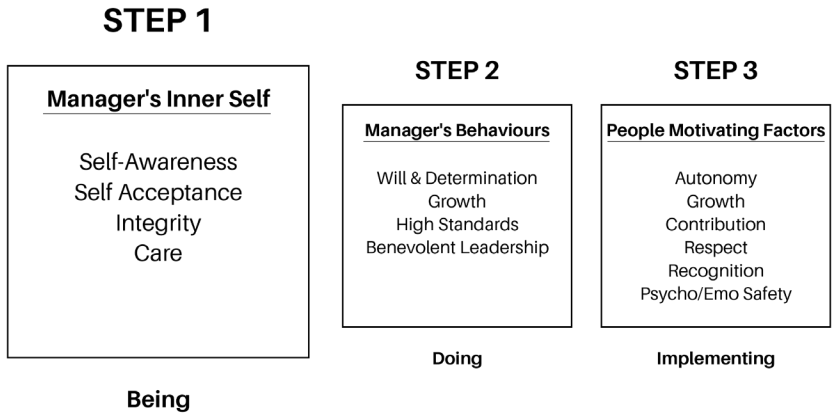

Figure 4
Step 1: The Manager's Inner Self and Attributes

Before examining these four inner self attributes let's look at what the concept of being means in more detail.

Ontology and Beingness

Beingness or the state of being comes from the study of ontology. It can apply to the nature and function of being for anything including objects, however, in this context, it applies to the beingness of humans and specifically for this book, managers. This definition may sound nebulous but once understood and embodied it makes a profound impact on the manager and the people in the sphere of the manager's influence. In some of the most intensive personal enquiry work I've undertaken examining who you are being has been the fundamental precursor to understanding personal motives and behaviours. Take a simple example: your goal is to be fit and healthy, however, your being state is procrastination which hinders a regular workout schedule and furthermore, in moments of weakness you give into the temptation for sweet treats. So what you aspire to and how you're being is incongruent. You need to change your state of being before changing your 'doing' to achieve your goals. This is why therapies such as hypnosis or visualisation can work as they work on the level of changing the mind and feelings, for example, by focusing on a healthy body and visualising how great you look in skinny jeans so that this image becomes a stronger desire than the craving for the wrong food. Changing your being becomes the driver for changing your actions, which now require much less effort to implement. The problem with many personal strategies is that they dive straight into goals and then actions without changing the being first.

Becoming aware of your being states can offer a useful tool for understanding your relationship to goals you wish to achieve in all areas of your life. For example, beingness is easily understood in the context of personal relationships. You know whether a partner is being caring as a natural expression of who they are versus them carrying out an occasional act of caring when reminded to do so. The two are very different experiences for anyone on the receiving end of them and invoke different responses too. In the workplace, we can easily distinguish between caring managers and those who occasionally

implement a caring gesture. I've experienced a few indifferent managers who would show little interest in their people but turn up with chocolates or cookies at Christmas. That occasional gesture did not make them caring. One manager I had would be prone to frequent bursts of temper and viciously attack people when he was under pressure but would regularly take his team out for lunch. He was mirroring the company culture which encouraged such gestures as a way of acknowledging people, however, any notion of caring was entirely negated in the face of someone who so obviously did not have it as an authentic quality.

In the context of management, the beingness of a person is rarely examined but is fundamental to how that human being who inhabits the managerial role operates. Being determines one's relationship with oneself, people, bosses and work. For example, as a manager, your ability to provide a psychologically and emotionally safe work environment for your people is a direct expression of your being—caring, responsible and empathetic.

In the domain of work, healthy and authentic ways of being can be profound enablers of potent and influential leadership. Embodying positive states of being such as integrity, authenticity and dependability as natural expressions of who you are become powerful personal signatures; they define you and determine what you broadcast to the world energetically. I believe these powerful and genuine states of being are what true charisma is and what attracts people to someone in this state. Conversely, *trying* to be a state that is inauthentic gets picked up instinctively by others and doesn't attract them in the same heartfelt way. Many states of being are also not conducive to people flourishing, such as being self-serving—a common management trait. Being in this state will never entice people to give their all.

Much of leadership and management training is in the realm of learning, knowing, doing and not being. However, knowing something doesn't always achieve behavioural change, especially if limiting sub-conscious beliefs remain in place. For example, you know your team member is motivated by opportunities to attend senior management

meetings with you and you are being tasked with developing people with potential, but you fear being overshadowed, so you don't allow it.

Someone who knows this subject well is Professor Michael C. Jenson, Professor of Business Administration, *Emeritus* of Harvard Business School, who teaches leadership courses with ontological principles and believes most leadership courses taught in business school are ineffective. The promise of the course he teaches is to leave participants actually *being* leaders and exercising leadership effectively as their natural self-expression. On the course website,[67] he talks about ethics courses taught in business courses and says:

> *These ethics courses have almost no impact. The students don't leave being ethical men and women. That's what they're supposed to be, but they leave knowing something about ethics but not being an ethical person.*

This highlights the difference between knowing something and being something.

I was reminded of this when I attended a presentation in London on people management by a USA based company that has a great ethos in leadership with human values. However, their solution was for managers to document and fill in forms for every person in their team, identifying their needs, skills, knowledge and strengths according to various situations. For me, this was not only unworkable and time consuming but also totally missed the point that real power comes from who the manager is being. This company's method relied on techniques that had to be implemented but not on any inner or behavioural change on the part of the manager.

Time is often one of the reasons managers say they don't have enough of for developing their people. However, when you're naturally being the attributes that motivate people, such as supportive and encouraging, it does not feel like additional effort.

The ontological approach has made its mark on leadership training by the Being A Leader programmes. Designed by Werner Erhard, creator

of transformational models of individual, organisational, and social training and Michael C Jenson, the aforementioned Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School. These programmes introduce a powerful new science of leadership that takes participants through what it means to be a leader in life as a natural expression of themselves and not because of title, money or status. The emphasis is not on learning about leadership or emulating the styles of noteworthy leaders but on discovering them being a leader in a powerful way and identifying any personal constraints that limit its manifestation. This may sound conceptual but a strong component of the training is the importance of experiencing actions and behaviours emanating from that being—'being on the court' as opposed to 'watching from the stands'—the effect you're left with when you are merely learning about leadership. This leadership training has been undertaken by business executives, military leaders, entrepreneurs, educators, graduate and undergraduate students and has been offered as part of curriculums at the US Air Force Academy since 2008 and various academic institutions and universities in countries such as Netherlands, USA, India, Canada, Singapore and United Arab Emirates. The foundation of their leadership model is made up of three fundamentals: integrity, authenticity and being committed to something bigger than oneself. To demonstrate the power of these ways of being, let's look at integrity. This is defined not only by honesty but also by honouring one's word fully and where ethics and morality are a given unless explicitly declared not to be. It is not practised as a virtue to impress others but as a natural way of being, as a 'whole and complete' person. This develops trust and 'workability' which then produces performance and productivity. The problem, Professor Jenson says is that most people do not operate that way, which then creates unworkability. In the workplace, integrity is not seen as a way of increasing productivity but as a virtue that is dispensable or courteousness or a nice to have like "*the new sinks in the men's room*", says Professor Jenson.

Most people in business do not operate with this level of integrity. However, it pays to do so. Professor Jenson, in his role as Managing

Director and Integrity Officer of SSRN (Social Science Electronic Publishing), achieved a 300% increase in productivity and revenue in his company over three years with only one new person added. He says: "How can you have 300% productivity lying around and not be noticed? That is the state of affairs in most companies".

The example from Professor Jenson clearly shows the connections between being, behaviour, action and results. Beingness is not merely a lone state residing in the mind; it determines behaviour and actions. In fact, actions derive from states of being. If you are being caring, it does not only exist in your mind and beliefs, but it also shows up in behaviours such as arranging additional support for overwhelmed people or suggesting home working for a parent of a child who has become sick. States of being align the inner and outer selves. When inner states of being are strong and positive, they give rise to positive outer behaviours.

An important distinction to make is that being something is not *trying* to be something. Because if you're trying, then it's not natural and actually makes your being state trying to be something you're not! However, you can learn to be a new way through awareness and frequent practice until it becomes a natural state of being. At first, it will require conscious effort and won't feel natural and only deliberate and frequent practice will make it stick as a habit and eventually become a perpetual way of being so that it becomes your default way of operating.

Dr Joe Dispenza, one of the world's most influential leaders of mind-emotion-brain transformation, refers to your state of being as how you think and feel which subsequently shapes your life and what materialises in it. Therefore, to change your state of being, you change your thoughts and feelings, which changes your doing. In Dr Dispenza's training, this is done through a daily practise of guided meditations where the regularity of practicing the vision and feeling of the new state of being enables new neural networks to be made in the brain. The frequency of the practice makes the new neural connections bond strongly, thereby changing your state of being.

When a state of being becomes an authentic and integrated part of who you are, you often become unconscious of it because it requires no effort to keep it alive. When this is a skill or virtue, it is referred to as an unconscious competence. This is why when you are naturally gifted with a talent it doesn't feel like a lot of effort is required. For example: a graphic designer who can come up with creative designs easily, a waiter who loves interacting with people and welcomes them wholeheartedly into the restaurant or speaking a foreign language easily without having to think of the vocabulary or grammar. I was reminded of this unconscious competence during the writing of this book when I would refer back to my management days to examine which states of my being and behaviour generated people to flourish. Because I believed in and enjoyed developing people, it became an integrated and natural part of the way I managed and consequently required less conscious awareness of it. This was because many of my ways of managing people were simply obvious to me as well as paradoxically, oblivious to me.

Being something, such as being dedicated to something bigger than oneself, becomes a solid part of oneself. That does not mean that it is not shakeable when tested. It does, however, mean it is resilient and can weather challenges. My style of managing people during my later corporate career was in complete contrast to the culture of management around me. Whereas most people's management styles entrain themselves to the dominant environment, I pursued a different approach, one that inspired people to reach their potential. This not only came from years of learning about and exploring human potential but also from a shift in my being that took on the responsibility of being a manager and the impact I had on people's lives at work. As their authority figure, I was a shaper and influencer of that. Because this sense of responsibility for others' lives was part of my being, it was natural to be this way despite the fact that nothing in my immediate environment or the company culture demonstrated or expected this. This way of being continued to become stronger the more I saw great performance results.

When it comes to people management training, most of what is available is designed with the same level and limits of thinking that created the ineffectiveness in the first place. If the workplace operates with a mental mindset of logic, then solutions will also be created with that mindset, similar to the way that the Mumbai dabbawalas shown in the last chapter, were examined as a logical flow chart by minds that assess information within these rational parameters. By doing so, they were not able to comprehend and include the personal and emotional aspects that were also critical elements in driving the dedication for flawless operations.

As mentioned before, people management that drives people to flourish does not come from processes, techniques and targets but from human attributes and qualities—most effectively from beingness. This is a radically different way of looking at effective and powerful ways to manage people. If this feels too out of the box, then it's worth reminding people of the dismal state of low engagement in the global workplace, much of which has been linked to management. Many organisations have maxed out their employee engagement endeavours with very little shift in outcomes so it's time to consider something completely different.

The absence of beingness from all leadership and management development is one of the reasons behavioural change is so rarely achieved because the core inner essence of the human being in that management role is rarely examined. During my management career, the miniscule amount of people management training received never resulted in any personal change from any attendee once back in the office. If change at the level of being does not take place, then people shift to their familiar default position along with all the old habits and beliefs, especially when they re-enter environments that maintain the status quo.

The good news is that people can be trained in new ways of being even when they are not their natural ways of being. This learning process requires:

1. Starting with a genuine and determined desire and intention to change—otherwise, it's compliance and not a natural way of being.
2. Establishing your goals, such as becoming self-aware, developing integrity or empathy.
3. Writing down what that goal means to you, e.g., integrity means always honouring commitments made.
4. Assessment of how you are currently being and the gap with your goal e.g. I'm often late for meetings or I renege on agreements made with others.
5. Identifying what that goal looks like in action and practise e.g. being on time, doing what you agreed to do, making immediate amends when unforeseen events disrupt plans.
6. Practising that intention and action on a regular basis until it becomes a natural way of being.

To practise this, pick an example from your personal life, such as wanting to be a more caring partner, a more loving parent or being more self-loving. This is an easier way to understand the process — and the results may surprise you. If this exercise appears lightweight or trivial it's worth dispelling that notion. States of being are significant indicators of character and they signal who you are to the world. Others get to know you for them. For example, being faultlessly dependable will land you with important responsibilities, being very trustworthy will bring you into the confidence of others and being caring to others will generate goodwill and support in response. What's more others instinctively pick up these marks of character. As the late leadership expert Warren Bennis wrote in his book *On Becoming a Leader*[68]*:* "Leadership is first being, then doing. Everything the leader does reflects what he or she is".

Why is the subject of states of being important for managers and leaders? Because I believe it will be the next model of great leadership across all management ranks, especially when it becomes more widely accepted that people who reach their potential and flourish are one of the most significant assets for organisational success.

Let's now turn to the attributes of being in step 1 – Inner self.

Inner Self Attributes

The four attributes of inner self include: self-awareness, self-acceptance, integrity and care (for others). The first three are focused on self and work on the same criteria as the aircraft oxygen mask theory—be fit and healthy yourself first before you can devote your time and resources to others. The last attribute, care, is included as a being trait and not a doing trait because this value is so fundamental for the wellbeing and performance of people under the leadership of a manager. Its true value comes from *being* genuinely caring for people and not merely implementing acts of occasional care. The following table shows what each attribute includes.

Attribute	What it Includes
Self-awareness	• **Awareness of your thoughts and feelings.** • **Understanding the drivers behind your motives and desires and actions.** • **Knowing how your beliefs, actions and behaviours affect and influence others.** • **Awareness of how your energy and moods influence others.** • **Clarity about your values, desires, purpose, goals and priorities in life.** • **Ability to regulate and manage personal moods and behaviours.** • **Mindfulness and the ability to be an observer of your beingness, thoughts, feelings and behaviours.**
Self-acceptance	• **Embracing yourself as you truly are without hiding or misrepresenting parts of yourself.** • **Authenticity, which comes naturally and easily because you accept yourself as you are.** • **Having the capacity to consider other's needs and best interests because your emotional needs are met.** • **Accepting the parts of you that you consider weaknesses and knowing you have the choice to change them if you wish.**

Self-acceptance Continued	• **Your weaknesses, inner critic and others' negative opinions don't define or diminish you.** • **Self-respect—keeping your boundaries from unhealthy choices or people.** • **Not seeking others' approval to feel good about yourself.** • **Feeling worthy enough to fulfil your most important values, priorities, goals and passions.**
Integrity	• **Your ethical constitution, moral fibre and codes of conduct.** • **Doing the right thing even if no one knows.** • **Being honest.** • **Being trustworthy.** • **Being dependable.** • **Honouring agreed commitments.** • **Delivering as promised.** • **Being fair with all your people.** • **Having the courage or determination to act in defence of your ethical or moral principles.**
Care (for others)	• **Creating psychological and emotional safety for people.** • **Supporting people in what's important to them.** • **Your respect and dignity for people as valuable human beings.** • **Being responsible for the relationship with people you manage.** • **Supporting people when personal issues affect their work.** • **Ensuring people at work are emotionally, mentally and physically well.** • **Recognising people as whole human beings with families, interests and talents outside of work that make up the whole of who they are.** • **Recognising stress or issues in people.** • **Inviting opinion or views especially when decisions affect people.**

A way to illustrate the power of these inner self attributes is to present the opposite and show what emanates when they are missing in a manager. It is important to note that many of us have aspects of

these missing traits to some degree. The issue arises when managers are devoid of the majority of these inner self attributes; this is when people's dissatisfaction, stress and under-performance sets in.

When Inner Self Attributes Are Missing

Attributes	When it is missing
Self-awareness	• **Inability to recognise and understand personal motives and behaviours. Therefore, there's no responsibility for personal actions and even outcomes.** • **Inability to recognise when personal behaviours and actions affect others, thus alienating support, loyalty and goodwill from them.** • **Limited ability to change thinking and behaviour because you don't have awareness of them.** • **You operate without self-regulation, especially when reacting to stressful or sensitive situations.** • **Impairment of self-honesty and the potential for self-delusion** • **Inability to recognise how personal mood and energy affects others**
Self-acceptance	• **Inability to totally accept oneself because limiting or negative feelings persist, many subconsciously.** • **It can affect self-esteem, set in self-doubt and affect feelings of worthiness.** • **Compensating behaviours develop to prove oneself such as chasing attention, approval and validation.** • **Your needs come before those of your people.** • **Inauthenticity may emerge to create a self that is accepting or impressive to others, therefore, putting energy into 'impression management'.** • **An inability to be okay with personal vulnerabilities and weaknesses.** • **It signifies that you are not okay with who you are, which is not an attractive quality for a leader. This also encourages people to not accept you.**
Integrity	• **Lack of trust and dependability in you.** • **People cease to be forthcoming when they can't trust you.**

Integrity Continued	• **Withdrawal of useful information and communication with you.** • **Affects 'workability' and getting things done efficiently.**
Care (For others)	• **It creates an emotionally unsafe environment when people feel they are being ignored or unsupported.** • **People withdraw their full input and do the minimum required of the work.** • **You fail to get optimum performance and quality of work.** • **You fail to get any discretionary effort from people such as extra effort, additional time and creativity.** • **You fail to get respect, admiration and support from your people.** • **People will put self-survival ahead of team cooperation as everyone looks out for themselves.** • **You should not be a people manager.**

Let's turn to each of these inner-self attributes in more detail and look at why they are important and what they look like in action.

Self-Awareness

Why is it important?

Self-awareness is the ability to understand and know yourself honestly through your emotions, feelings, behaviours and actions and through how others see you too. Organisational psychologist, Dr Tasha Eurich, says self-awareness is critical for success in today's world and describes it as the meta-skill of the twenty-first century—a skill upon which many other personal skills such as emotional intelligence, empathy and influence depend on. In her book, *Insight: The Power of Self-Awareness in a Self-Deluded World*[69], she writes that there is strong evidence that people who know themselves are happier. They are better performers at work, get more promotions, they're more effective leaders with more enthusiastic employees and they even lead to more profitable companies.

The problem is that self-awareness is not very common. Although 95% of people think they are self-aware, Dr Eurich says only 10-15% of people actually are based on surveys of self-assessments and the

assessment of them from others. Both self and external assessments are critical to forming the closest to an accurate picture as possible, as it avoids the pitfall of self-delusion. Research often highlights the perception gap where managers rate themselves significantly higher on how they come across to their teams than their teams do of them. Expectations become misaligned and the potential for disharmony increases.

However, self-delusion can also work the other way. Managers can also rate themselves lower than others do. This often comes from humility and the absence of a strong ego.

During my experiences of intensive personal enquiry in coaching or workshops, self-awareness often emerged from having the courage to be brutally honest with yourself. It's not always comfortable when you realise that parts of you are not quite the positive you've made them out to be. I used to think my directness was about being honest and transparent, but it was often received as being judgmental and inconsiderate! So I learnt to offer honest opinion but by using a softer approach and never at the expense of someone's dignity. Gaining self-awareness isn't a self-condemning exercise, it's a liberating one. If you can identify those parts of you that aren't in alignment with who you say you are or wish to be, then you have the choice to do something about it and take full control of your behaviours and decisions rather than letting them control you unconsciously. Warren Bennis, the late leadership expert and professor, wrote extensively about the importance of self-knowledge for leaders. The following comes from his book *On Becoming a Leader*:

> *Until you truly know yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, know what you want to do and why you want to do it, it is so difficult for you to achieve success. And never lie to yourself about yourself, know your faults as well as your assets, and deal with them directly*[70].

People who are self-aware know what their values and goals in life are. They know what matters to them, what gives them purpose and meaning in life. This isn't always very clear for many people. I lead a workshop for women called *SoulStyle,* and it's about aligning your personal style with your authentic self. We first go through a process to define each person's unique self: who you are, your values and what attracts you. This always turns out to be a deeply reflective and sometimes cathartic part of the course, where some women struggle with knowing who they really are, especially separate from roles such as in work or family. But the joy that can be seen when they start to awaken to their true selves and are able to say, "This is me, and this is the style that makes me feel the best, real me", is immensely rewarding to see.

Another valuable skill that self-awareness enables is to become aware of discordant feelings within yourself. Instead of ignoring them and letting them fester, awareness of them will enable you to explore them and understand why you're feeling the angst, sadness, envy or what ever feeling it is. I often do this through a mindful practice where you become an observer of your own thoughts and see things objectively. This is a valuable skill for people managers because it allows you to check in with yourself if you feel any personal unease such as feeling threatened by your empowered people. If committed to the development of their potential, you will need to be emotionally resilient.

Looking inside yourself and recognising your emotional reactions also lessens the temptation to blame others and become a victim. Even though there may be legitimate cases where you've been treated unfairly, many times it's how we react to things that matter more than the event itself. When you can own your reaction and decide how you will manage it rather than give in to a spontaneous burst of unheeded response or even a prolonged pity-filled state, you have mastered a part of yourself powerfully. As Viktor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist, psychologist and Holocaust survivor said in a quote attributed to him: "*Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom*".

I wish a former manager of mine had known that. He was a very compliant subordinate to his senior managers, but if he felt challenged in his weekly updates, we would know it. The first thing he would do is severely reprimand the person who had something to do with the work he presented. He would take out his loss of face on another without stopping, thinking or assessing. The impact it had on the whole team was very unsettling.

Self-awareness also enables you to be conscious of your behaviours and how they affect others, and this is significant for managers leading people. A lack of self-awareness in managers can have detrimental consequences for people and I've witnessed this many times in my career. If you are not aware of how your behaviours affect others, not only do you risk causing discord and the withdrawal of people's best efforts, you're also not in a position to take corrective action if needed. Even ignoring people has a negative effect on people but these non-communicative managers I've seen don't have a clue that they are alienating people and being perceived as uncaring and unsupportive. This also applies to personal moods and energy. People in positions of authority often have a large presence that is notable; what they say or how they behave is magnified and more impacting. And so is the energy of their temperament—how they feel and what mood they're in. For this reason, awareness and regulation of personal energy is important because it affects people. If a manager is having a bad day and showing it with actions such as shutting their office door, ignoring people and behaving anxiously, it sets the tone in the immediate environment. People will pick this up instinctively and may be affected by this invisible energy. Managers will of course be personally affected by adverse events but they also need to have methods to regulate emotional outbursts and ensure harmony is maintained around them.

Managers should also be aware of their personal energy for another reason: using that personal energy to manage discordant situations by not reacting but by controlling the situation. In a fiery situation, for example, if handling an angry person, the important thing is not to react and match the energy of anger but to diffuse it by taking the calm,

even caring and what I call the higher position. It's like being the water to put out the fire.

Self-awareness also allows you to be fully conscious of the choices and decisions you make in life and work, and therefore, fully in control of what you pursue and where you put your time and energy. It can make you proactive, take initiative, be responsible and have clarity. These are strong leadership and management traits.

Self-awareness is a skill that can be learnt, even if it's a life-long process. In my own experience, for those committed to a life of growth the self is never static; you can discover new parts of yourself you didn't know existed—that's also part of the awareness skill, to keep up with changes and not let your mind define you into a fixed image.

Awareness of self happens at two different levels: conscious and sub-conscious when it becomes conscious. The root of much of behaviour stems from the sub-conscious, the deep buried layer that holds many of our unconscious beliefs. Cognitive neuroscientists say 95% of our cognitive activities such as decisions, emotions, actions and behaviour are generated in a non-conscious manner and only 5% are conscious. Making the subconscious conscious can be achieved through processes such as meditation, mindfulness, journaling, self-enquiry programmes and psychotherapy. In my experience, unrevealed subconscious layers come up to the surface throughout a lifetime. You are never 'done' especially if you aspire to a life of continuous growth and challenging your comfort zones. However, you can cultivate the tools for self-enquiry and use these to understand what limits you or makes you react. It's as if you are having a private look into yourself with honesty and non-judgement.

Examples of Self-Awareness in Action Include:

- Knowing whether you have created an emotionally and psychologically safe environment for the people you manage. Are people freely expressed, forthcoming and able to depend on your support?

- Awareness of the management microculture you've created and how your demands, personality and behaviours have defined the environment within which your people work.
- Knowing whether your people enjoy their work and enjoy working for you or not.
- Knowing your management style and where you are on the spectrum of self-serving vs. people-championing.
- Knowing whether your people agree with your own self-assessment of your management style.
- Knowing when your actions are coming from a place of limitation such as ego or protection.
- Recognising how your moods and energy transfer and affect others.
- Recognising how even subtle behaviours can be signals such as body language. Using your phone while talking to someone, raising eyebrows or supposedly listening to someone while mentally formulating your response can be disrespectful or dismissive of people.
- Having clarity over your personal and professional goals, purpose and priorities and aligning your ways of being, behaviour and actions accordingly.

Case Study

Lack of self-awareness of unregulated Anger

Lawrence was the head of a commercial department in a large company in Asia. He was ambitious and approval seeking from his senior managers. It was always obvious when he had emerged from a meeting with them and concerns had come up. He would charge back into his office, ignore everyone en route and slam the door shut. Or he would march directly up to the person he

deemed responsible and blast them with anger and blame. This happened to Brendon and other team members a few times. He would turn on Brendon, cut him down to size and on a few occasions demand that he look for another position. The encounter left him shaken and emotionally demoralised for days. Instead of being able to calm down, take responsibility and review the concern in a constructive way, Lawrence would vent his own sense of failure and wounded pride on his people. Many people eventually left that department.

How Do You Become Self-Aware?

There are several paths to becoming self-aware, it's not a clear cut formulaic process but rather an unfolding and awakening journey that's unique to each individual. Self-awareness requires a deep commitment and intention to achieve it. The motive behind wanting it will also determine your success. If it's to make you a better manager with enhanced promotion prospects, then be honest and aware of that. If, however, you're committed to something bigger than that, such as making a difference to the quality of work life for people then be clear about that.
The following are useful tools for becoming self-aware:

Personal Tools

- Reflection such as in response to questions at the end of each chapter.
- Journaling: this is useful to allow unconscious thoughts to come out, especially if you continue beyond your immediate responses.
- Meditation: this allows you to stop, get out of reacting mode, get some quiet time and create a space in which realisations emerge.

- Mindfulness: practices that enable you to be fully present so that you can sense, perceive and observe thoughts, feelings and happenings around you and within you.
- Self-assessments. (See the link to a free self-assessment on Dr Tasha Eurich's website: https://www.insight-book.com/quiz).
- Doing something outside your comfort zone and seeing what realisations transpire for you.

External Sources

- Personal development courses.
- Counselling / Psychotherapy.
- Coaching.
- Feedback from others.

In the meantime, while the reading in this section remains fresh, start with answering the points for reflection below. If you can discuss your answers with someone you trust, someone who respects your growth and learning, it may be useful to get their feedback. You may get some new realisations.

Avoid doing this reflective exercise quickly as if to tick off things on your to do list. Easily done when you're in work mode but this inner work requires focus, reflection and time. And remember this is not an intellectual exercise – it's answering from the realm of feelings and emotions.

Points for Reflection

Answer the following questions in as much detail as possible by writing your responses. Aim to write for 15 minutes for each question, and even when you think you have nothing else to say, keep going. If you find yourself going off the subject, that's okay. What comes out may surprise you.

- Do you enjoy managing people? Why or why not?

- Think of three people you manage. What do they think of your people management abilities?
- What are your three highest values? Are you living by them and how are they incorporated into your life? If not, then why not?

Self–Acceptance

Why is it important?

The ability to accept and embrace oneself as a manager may be one of the more surprising requirements for great people management as well as strong leadership. However, in my corporate career, it was easy to see those managers who had healthy self-acceptance. They were comfortable with who they were and exuded power as a natural part of their being. This contrasted with managers who operated from ego and were constantly affirming and protecting their authority.

In a personal development context, this has often been described as power versus force where power is something you have as a natural way of being—acquired through practices such as self-awareness and self-acceptance whereas force is needing to assert yourself as the only way to get your demands met. Power serves others whereas force is self-serving.

Self-acceptance also paves the way for self-esteem and self-belief to emerge. These are powerful factors for shaping the lens with which you see your place and potential in the world. They are also great for role modelling positivity in others because when others see these traits in authority figures, they act as mirrors for them to be the same.

Managers who are in their genuine power have high degrees of self-acceptance. Why this is a valuable ingredient in being able to champion people is because when you are fulfilled with who you are you have the emotional availability for others. It shifts the focus from oneself to others without feeling any diminishment. This is a key requirement in creating the conditions in which people flourish. It

means you can empower others without fearing the risk of being overshadowed by them.

A good example comes from an interview I did with Amit Mohan in 2019. He heads up a multimillion-dollar fund based in The Hague, The Netherlands. He works in an industry I had assumed was cutthroat and strictly centred on the hungry pursuit of money, not people. However, during our conversation, Amit gave me an example of his people-focused approach. He talked about encouraging people in his team to communicate directly with the company's Chief Executive for relevant updates instead of going through him every time. It struck me that he was very comfortable in his skin and had the emotional resilience to not feel threatened about that. Most leaders and managers would not be comfortable with this, but he hadn't even considered it an issue. Amit also implemented 360-degree feedback to allow his people to express their views on him, and when people were not entirely satisfied, he would consider and assess the situation and be open to learning and making changes where needed. It's worth noting that he has an extremely successful track record of exceeding his financial targets.

Looking out for others doesn't mean that you don't look out for yourself. You do. Self-acceptance also includes self-respect and fulfilling your healthy needs. But because you are emotionally fulfilled and content with who you are, you are not constantly focused on an inner void which needs priority attention and constant replenishing. It reminds me of a time when sitting in the British Airways lounge at London Heathrow airport I got chatting with a woman who sat next to me and it turned out she was a Hollywood actor, who I admit I didn't know. When I told her about my writing which I was doing for this book at the time, she offered her experience of working with directors. She said she immediately knew when they were in their true power because they would give you a lot of freedom to interpret the character in your own way whereas the directors who were unsure of their authority would compensate by asserting themselves and over specifying how they wanted you to act.

Self-acceptance gives you a positive sense of self. This has also been referred to as a positive ego—a self-embracement of all of oneself, including the negative aspects, with no unhealthy self-criticism, inauthenticity or self-delusion.

I want to stress that self-acceptance doesn't mean you don't have flaws or days when you feel vulnerable or disappointed with yourself. As human beings interacting with the challenges of life, we bring all kinds of responses and feelings forth no matter how resilient we may be. However, when your foundation includes self-acceptance, negative events are managed with strength and responsibility and not feelings of disempowerment or victimhood. When negative experiences get you down, you have the strength to pick yourself up again and you don't allow yourself to be defined by them. Self–acceptance provides a powerful reserve of personal resourcefulness. But it can also mean that a self-accepting person can live with one's perceived flaws or weaknesses assuming they aren't unhealthy or dominating traits. Often referred to as embracing one's shadow in inner emotional work, even the most charismatic and successful people have parts of themselves they don't like or consider imperfect. Denying or hiding such traits can initiate a low-level background angst that consumes personal energy. Acceptance or choosing to change these things in yourself is more powerful than denial. This is also positive for those on a journey of personal development, as I have been for over 25 years. When I first embarked on my personal development journey, I thought personal growth meant eradicating all your flaws and weaknesses and healing all emotional and mental limitations and I was in constant judgement of how much I still had to achieve. Now I know that the perfect version of yourself is one where flaws come and go but a higher part of yourself grows stronger than the power of flaws and their ability to define you. It's a liberating experience.

Self-acceptance also doesn't mean or include smugness, entitlement or conceit. These traits come from unhealthy experiences locked in the subconscious and not a positive sense of self that is cultivated from self-awareness.

The reality is that not many people have strong self-acceptance. Most have their inner critiques firmly in place and resort to compensating actions in response such as seeking to impress or gain approval. So if this is the case for people managers, their first priority will always be themselves and not their people. A self-serving style and people championing style of management are mutually exclusive. Unhealthy self-criticism or an inability to accept parts of yourself can also transfer to what you find unacceptable in others. An easy example to explain this is dislike of obese people, especially if you are or have been obese yourself and judge yourself harshly for it. You can see how this could create problems in managing people, especially if there's no self-awareness of the inner issue and how it's influencing behaviour toward them.

As with many emotional qualities, self-acceptance often starts with childhood development, however, for many people there are also other influences such as culture or religion. For example, Asian cultures traditionally value conformity to social or religious norms rather than free choice and individual expression. In childhood this can stifle a child's needs for being accepted for who they naturally are which can gradually diminish their own ability to accept themselves fully in adulthood. They've never had the reinforcing experiences that confirm and solidify their true selves.

The good news is that self-acceptance can be nurtured and developed later in life.

When people have a healthy self-acceptance, it is a quality that attracts others because your self-fulfilment means there is always available capacity for others, such as genuine interest, time, listening and acceptance of them.

Self-Acceptance in Action

- A genuine championing of people, such as their needs for growth and recognition, without fearing a loss of control, visibility or authority.
- As a manager, you do not constantly seek approval especially from your seniors when you have self-acceptance. This doesn't

mean that you cannot feel good about being praised or recognised, you do but your priorities and actions are not designed to gain validation because you grant that to yourself. This means you can focus on building up your people.

- It enables authenticity because there is no concern or denial about who you truly are. Authenticity also generates trust because people know who they are dealing with.
- It generates healthy self-belief and conviction in contrast to self-doubt, which does not coexist with self-acceptance. When well meaning managers have genuine belief in what they say and do, their power is amplified in a way that engages and moves people.
- It is the force behind determination and will—attributes that charge up the energy to make a stand, bend some rules or do things differently.
- Self-acceptance is an attribute that encourages others to mirror for themselves. As a manager, when you lead with a way of being, people will often unconsciously adopt a similar way of being. It's like giving them permission to accept themselves—because you are doing it.

Case Study

The limelight manager

Marta worked for a senior manager in a large transportation company and her manager would sometimes ask her to accompany him to high level meetings with the company directors as she had the details of the project. But he would explicitly command her not to say anything in the meetings unless she was asked to by him, and even then, it was only for when he didn't have the answers. He didn't want her to be involved in any

aspect of the update or presentation or engaged in any discussion. He clearly needed as much credit as possible in front of the senior people he was desperate to impress; however, he remained oblivious to the demoralising effects this muzzling had on Marta.

Points for Reflection

- What qualities do you really like about yourself? Write these down in as much detail as possible. Then reflect on how you feel about yourself after recognising all these great things about yourself.
- When or in which circumstances does your inner critic come into play? How does it make you feel? Does it affect your self-worth and feelings of being good enough?
- What are your perceived weaknesses? How do you feel about them?
- In which ways do you support the growth and best interests of the people you lead?
- In which ways does self-acceptance show up in your life?

Integrity

Why is it Important?

Integrity is not an attribute that is explicitly demanded of great management or leadership. This is a significant oversight because it makes a huge difference in how a manager is perceived, especially when it comes to dependability and trustworthiness. It is also a characteristic that people sense instinctively—you know when something isn't quite right about a manager who lacks integrity and as a result, trust diminishes. When this happens you can't rely on them for support

and you end up having to watch your own back and protect your interests. It paves the way for an environment which lacks emotional safety, one of the necessary ingredients for flourishing into potential.

The UK based Economist magazine featured an article[71] where senior leaders and employees were surveyed on values expected from leaders, and integrity was highlighted as an essential leadership trait required. The director of the survey firm, Tim Hird, said:

> *People want to work for those who are ethical," he explained. "They know that if their leader acts with integrity, that leader will treat them right and do what's best for the business. Companies with strong, ethical management teams enhance their ability to attract investors, customers and talented professionals.*

Although the survey referred to senior leaders, integrity is also highly important for managers because it influences the relationship with people and their performance in a significant way.

Most people think of integrity as honesty and having a sound moral character. This is true but it means much more than that. Firstly, highly effective people management skills require an exceptionally *high* degree of integrity—an impressive quality that few people understand, aspire to or are expected to operate at. This level of integrity means conviction for doing the right thing as a deeply held principle. You would act this way without having to be told to do so and even if no one knew or was watching. This calibre of integrity means that you don't operate for personal gain at someone else's expense. This doesn't mean being self-sacrificing, it means being fair and sticking to anything that's been agreed or even doing the right thing in the absence of explicit agreements. In personal life, an example would be giving back money you owe to a friend who has forgotten you owe them.

In work, a key aspect of a manager's integrity is honouring your word and commitments. This is because it creates dependability and trust. Not only does this enable the flow of work to operate smoothly but it also gives people reassurance and the feeling that they are supported.

Many years ago, I had a manager who had to present my needs to HR around a long standing issue of salary; however, he would either keep forgetting or leave it to low priority. It destroyed my faith in him to act in my best interests and also affected the working relationship as he was no longer dependable. Consequently, I didn't feel any need to go out of my way and support him.

The reality in work is that plans do get disrupted especially with unforeseen circumstances. When this happens, immediate communication with the affected parties is key with an agreement for a new commitment.

Honouring your word also confers respect onto others. For example, lateness or reneging on commitments is more than personal tardiness. It is also a lack of consideration for others who may be prepared and ready to meet the commitment.

Integrity also involves responsibility and accountability. To be a talented people manager means assuming the responsibility for people at a whole different level. It means being responsible for their wellbeing and the quality of their work life while under the guidance and direction of the manager. Warren Bennis, a renowned leadership expert and Business studies professor, wrote in his 1993 book titled: *An Invented Life: Reflections on Leadership and Change*:

> *A leader is not simply someone who experiences the personal exhilaration of being in charge. A leader is someone whose actions have the most profound consequences on other people's lives, for better or for worse, sometimes for ever and ever*[72].

However, this salient point is often overlooked. Poor performers will usually be blamed for their lack of diligence rather than any assessment made of the manager's ability to lead effectively. This doesn't mean that people aren't responsible for their own working lives and choices—they are. And sometimes there will be people who aren't performing to the levels demanded. However, in my experience, these are exceptions because the vast majority of people will surpass their

levels of best performance and flourish to their potential when managed by emotional talented managers who champion them.

Managers need to be accountable for whether they operate in the best interests of their people or not. Where managers are directly causing unhealthy stress and even illness in people, it should be considered a serious malpractice. I have seen people become severely stressed and even ill because of abusive and over demanding managers who have gotten away with their actions even when reports have been made against them. This is unacceptable on ethical grounds and certainly counter-productive for high performance.

Accountability also means owning up to mistakes made. For many managers, this can be embarrassing but it is in fact a sign of a manager who is big enough to own the issue and responsible enough to make amends. People don't expect perfection from their managers but they do expect accountability.

Integrity also involves being ethical. This covers a number of things such as honesty, confidentiality of people's personal or professional sharing and being transparent when prudent to do so. It also means the absence of traits such as underhandedness, subtle manipulations and failure to disclose relevant information.

All these examples above may seem obvious; however, strong integrity is not a trait exhibited by many managers despite it being a top requirement people want in their leaders. Issues such as a lack of trust and dependability in managers often came up during my case study research and it had a detrimental effect on relationships and performance because people will not give anything more than they need to when they don't trust their managers. When this happens, they are not going to be in the small percentage of engaged people who are supporting the manager or moving the organisation forward.

Integrity in Action

- Managers must honour their word with people they manage. If they say they will do something, that commitment must

stand no matter how small or big it is. This also refers to being at meetings on time.

- Not reneging on agreements in favour of a better offer or because of bad time management. Make dependability a strength of yours and people will know you for it, as will peers and senior bosses.
- Honouring commitments to people that affect them personally. This could include aspects around their pay, leave, job size or home working.
- Ensuring credit is given to the rightful person. Do not claim credit if someone else did the work.
- Maintaining confidentiality of each person's personal conversations and not sharing it with other fellow managers.
- Being as open and transparent as possible. If certain things cannot be shared, then say so if asked about them rather than cover up and mislead them.
- Ensuring people are treated fairly. It is easy to have favourites and those you feel closer to but avoid making this obvious as far as possible.
- Managers with self-serving priorities will always attract a lack of trust from people because they cannot depend on their manager to serve their best interests. There needs to be a genuine focus and care for people and when this is present it generates trust from people.
- Don't expect or demand any actions that may compromise a person's health such as long working hours or for example expecting a stressful travel and long hours from a pregnant woman.

Points for Reflection

- How do you demonstrate integrity in your life? Think of three actual examples
- Think of situations where someone's' lack of integrity has affected you personally. What were the consequences of this?
- Do you always honour your commitments to people? If not in which situations do you renege on them?
- What does integrity mean to you? Define each example.
- Does your direct manager demonstrate integrity? If so, how? How does it impact you? If not, then how does that impact you?

Care

Why is this important?

Caring for people is one of the strongest ways to support them. It is a surprisingly easy quality to be and to offer and one that returns huge gains from grateful people. This is because caring happens at the level of humanness, not policy and strikes at the heart of a person.

When people know you are behind them and consider their best interests, it can be one of the most powerful ways to create psychological and emotional safety. Psychological safety, a term created by Organisational Behavioural scientist, Professor Amy Edmondson of Harvard, defined it as "A shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking."[73] This means, for example, speaking up in meetings without the fear of sounding stupid. Emotional safety is a term I describe as feeling belonged, accepted and included by your manager and the team. Emotional safety is particularly important for managing teams of diverse individuals, such as different cultural, ethnic, religious, sexual identity or physical ability; identities that need an environment of genuine care and inclusion no matter how different each individual is to the majority of people around them.

In the context of work, caring doesn't mean mothering people or denying people their independence and empowerment, it means supporting the needs of an individual so that their mental and emotional resources will not be depleted and they retain the will and ability to perform well. It makes people feel they matter. It can also be a value that recognises what is important for another and shouldn't be compromised. For example, when any of my staff needed to take last minute time off for urgent family circumstances, there was no question of denying them or making them feel guilty and adding more stress to their lives. My standard response was – "yes and let me know how anything pressing at work can be handled in your absence".

Feeling cared for is a basic human need and when one is assured of care and support it generates a safe space and strong launch pad for advancing confidently ahead. It is a rare and underestimated leadership trait, but one which can have significant gains.

Simon Sinek in his book, *Leaders Eat Last,* talks about Circles of Safety that make us feel supported and cared for. He says that as social animals we feel stress when we feel unsupported. He goes onto say:

> *That subconscious unease, the feeling that we are responsible for ourselves and no one else is there to help, the feeling we get that most of the people with whom we work care primarily for themselves is to our primitive brain, quite scary*[74].

Furthermore, Simon Sinek says if we feel managers and leaders care more about themselves or the numbers than they do for us, our stress and anxiety increase.

Feeling unsupported can also be felt when people are indifferent to us, show no acknowledgment, only interact when necessary or make us feel we don't belong. Matthew Lieberman, Professor and Social Cognitive Neuroscience Lab Director at UCLA, says in his book, *Social: Why our brains are wired to connect,* that our brains are designed to connect socially and belong more than even the need for nourishment. When we feel social exclusion, for example, when we haven't been

invited to meetings or events or we don't feel we belong, our brains register pain in the same way as they do with physical pain[75].

Case Study

No heart and empty actions

Ruth was an extremely diligent but very self-focused manager. She led a team of four people but all her energy was reserved for personal progress and pleasing her senior manager. She wasn't hostile or toxic to her staff but her communications with them were minimal and largely restricted to commands. Linden, one of her team members, said she really didn't have any interest in them as people. One day, before the Christmas break, she came in and without saying a word dumped a tin of Quality Street chocolates on the table for her staff and walked away to her desk. That tin remained unopened until she opened it herself after the Christmas break. Linden said. It felt false, merely a gesture and created more disdain than appreciation from her team. It was like throwing scraps at waiting dogs. She had not demonstrated any genuine behaviour of kindness or care throughout the year so this was interpreted as an empty and inauthentic move that impressed no one.

Caring also involves empathy. However, I think empathy is one of those words that has suffered from overuse in the context of human relationships and has therefore lost some of its impact and value. It is usually understood as being able to understand feelings or behaviours of others by trying to put our self in their shoes. However, as human beings, we all see, interact and respond to the world through our own unique lens. And we can't always feel what others feel because of the

way they uniquely process their experiences. People even deal with bereavement differently. We think we have empathy by imagining someone else's pain or challenge by how we think we would feel in the same circumstances. But this is not always a good way to measure other's feelings because we may respond completely differently and, may not even be able to relate to their world. Empathy can be difficult for people who are not natural social animals or not even natural people managers. It can also be difficult when dealing with cultures that are unfamiliar to us. One person's shame can be another's non-issue, for example. So, the best way to be empathic is to suspend your own judgement and accept that another person feels a certain way that is distressing or challenging for *them*. Resist any temptation to judge their feelings, especially if you think it's a non-issue. Honour the way *they* feel even if you can't get into their world and fully understand it.

When a person feels supported, cared for and safe at work, it generates a whole different level of output and personal energy. The freedom to express oneself, contribute and perform is amplified manifold. Furthermore, when people feel safe they become very resilient. In this state, they can cope with mishaps, let downs and even strong correction or direction, treating it stoically as a learning and growth experience rather than a failure which diminishes their confidence and self-esteem.

Dr Daniel Friedland, an expert on the science of leadership, wellness and resiliency writes in his book, *Leading Well From Within*:

> *When you feel safe, you have more to give and feel more productive. You can more fully engage your capacity for empathy, love and compassion. And you can think more creatively and put yourself in a position to self-actualise your full potential and experience greater meaning and significance in your life*[76].

Caring in Action

- In a meeting, invite the quiet or shy ones to offer input. This way you're also acknowledging them publicly and making them feel included and valued.
- Supporting bereaved people with time off as needed, asking them how you can support them once back at work, such as adapting work tasks and loads. People manage grief in very different ways. Some use work to keep them busy and distracted from the emotional pain, some need lighter responsibilities, especially when fronting customers or public audiences. This is a time when a manager needs to show great care for a person.
- If someone is under-performing, don't jump to conclusions, especially if the person normally works to good standards. Speak to them and find out what is happening. It could be a personal issue such as illness, financial problems or relationship challenges. The person may not want to divulge personal issues but any clue can at least guide you to respond appropriately such as granting time off or offering extra support.
- If you know someone loves something such as presenting or business travel, then arrange that to happen. I often asked my people to present, instead of me, in large meetings especially if they had worked on the topic. I also often took my people on overseas trips with me even if it wasn't strictly necessary. It meant a lot to them and boosted their confidence immensely.
- There are powerful ways of acknowledging and rewarding special effort such as long hours or the successful delivery of a project. Saying thank you isn't enough. Sometimes a dinner or lunch can feel like a gesture – pleasant but not strongly moving. Powerful actions can be simple things such as acknowledging that person by name and their contribution in an update email to the project stakeholders. It could mean time off without docking leave days or allowing them greater ownership and control of other work.

- Being compassionate about personal issues that may be affecting working life such as divorce, urgencies around children, elderly parent issues and personal health challenges. Don't just hand the issue to HR or check the rule book. See what you can do first.
- Not raising your voice and reprimanding people.
- Not ridiculing, ignoring or harshly dismissing ideas or responses from your people.
- Being mindful of your body language or behaviours such as sighing, rolling your eyes, keeping your head stuck in your phone or computer when talking to others.
- Not allowing people to get to a point of being stressed out and consistently working long hours.
- Not always relying on the opinion others have about your people—rely on your own experience and make up your own mind.
- Not ignoring people—it's just as stressful as being criticised.
- It's difficult not to have favourites in your team—just don't make it so obvious to everyone when you clearly feel drawn to some people. It's a strong demotivating force for other people.
- Acknowledging people beyond their work roles and take interest in them as human beings. For example, ask about their holidays, whether their child is now better, how their charity event went, how their exams went.

Case Study

Care in Time of Personal Needs

Lyn is a lawyer in a well known international law firm. Several attempts to become pregnant using IVF had been unsuccessful and she was advised by her doctor to maintain complete bed rest for two weeks after her next attempt.

It was unprecedented in the company's history for anyone to take medical leave without being ill and Lyn was nervous about asking for this. Her senior management and HR department responded positively without any conditions or questions, firmly showing their support for her needs at this delicate time. Lyn has since refused higher paid offers in other companies because of the care her company has shown and given her—which is worth much more than any pay increase.

Points for Reflection

- Can you think of a time when someone went out of their way to show care and compassion for you? What did that mean to you and how did it make you feel?
- As a manager, how do you show care for your people?
- If you don't think you are very caring for your people, why is this the case?
- What does being caring mean to you? Define how this looks like in action in your life.

6

Manager's Behaviours

Step 2 of Developing Emotional Talent

"A leader takes people where they would never go on their own"

Hans Finzel, Leadership Author & Speaker

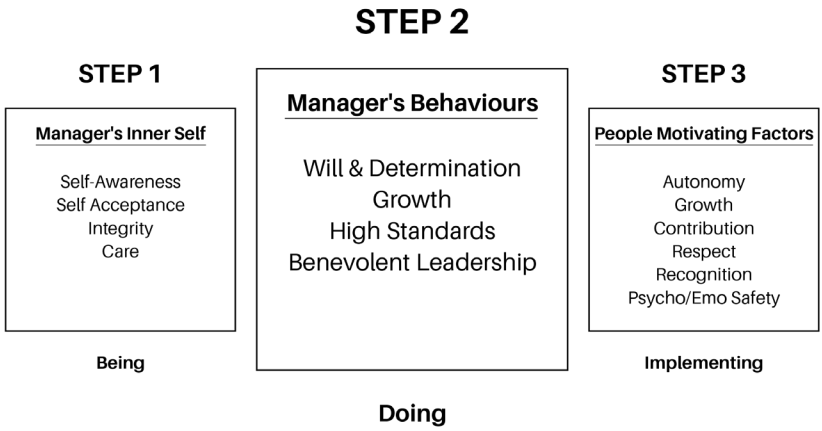

Figure 5
Step 2 – The Manager's Behaviours for Developing Emotional Talent

The second step of the three-step process for managers who lead people to flourish into their potential is the manager's behaviours. They complement inner self values in step one but are distinct in their meaning and intention. Whereas inner self comprises states of being, the behaviours involve doing. Being in a state such as caring, for example, is laudable; however, it has no effect until it is implemented through behaviour and action. That's when it becomes effective and causative. If a trait such as caring is genuinely embodied as an authentic expression

of oneself, it would be unusual not to have this channelled into action. Many managers are well meaning people with integrity; however, many of them don't have the courage or motivation to step up, take a stand and initiate the actions behind beliefs and values, especially when they aren't demonstrated in the wider organisational culture.

When it comes to developing people to flourish, the behaviours of the manager are critical to taking people to this extraordinary level. This is because this high level of people performance requires specific behaviours behind it to make it happen. It is rare, especially in the context of the workplace, for people to rise to their potential purely through their own self-belief and determination and this is because the manager is instrumental in creating the conditions in which people can flourish. Managers can open doors to new opportunities, lobby on behalf of their people and expose them to senior levels of the organisation. This was shown in the case study of Lyn, a senior lawyer, whose manager proactively ensured Lyn would have paid leave for bed rest during IVF treatment. Another example is a personal one. When working in Hong Kong, I lobbied on behalf of a contractor in my team to become a permanent employee; she was a millennial, tech savvy, mainland China citizen who understood the mainland Chinese online market which we were developing and on top of that she was a great performer who wanted to stay in the company. Despite that the company's and government's immigration rules were to employ Hong Kong citizens as a priority and my request was challenged vigorously. However, I was reluctant to lose her and eventually managed to retain her after much verbal and written justification.

Rest assured that asserting certain behaviours is not about being aggressive or breaking the rules. It's about putting action behind the inner self traits shown in part one and turning them into effective outcomes.

The four traits that make up the manager's behaviours are: Determination and Will, a Growth Mindset, High Standards and Benevolent Leadership. The table below shows what is included in these traits.

Behaviours for Emotional Talent

Attributes	What it includes
Determination & Will	• **Demonstrating commitment and action for a belief, agreement or principle.** • **The ability to make things happen and get things done.** • **Creating opportunities for the growth and success of people.** • **Being resourceful and finding solutions and ways forward in the face of challenge.** • **Taking initiative rather than inaction because it isn't your responsibility.** • **Questioning or challenging rules or workplace culture when they don't serve a greater purpose or better outcome.** • **Being proactive and not reactive.** • **Taking initiative in the absence of a policy or guidelines.** • **Suspending hesitation, excuses and stories preventing you from moving forward.**
High Standards	• **Aiming for the best possible outcomes, not adequacy.** • **Setting an example for people by working to high standards yourself.** • **Developing people to high standards of performance.** • **Instilling a continuous improvement mindset.**
Growth Mind-set	• **A belief that every individual has the potential to learn and grow.** • **Stretching people so that they are growing continuously but not beyond their capacity.** • **Developing people to the levels of potential unknown even to themselves.** • **Believing, expecting and communicating that people can reach high standards. Demonstrating resourcefulness—the ability to explore and find options, solutions and opportunities including unconventional ones.** • **Using failures as a way of learning and improving.**

Benevolent Leadership	• **To be in service of something bigger than yourself.** • **To be a leader of people as well as have functional responsibility.** • **Owning the responsibility for people's wellbeing at work, quality of work life and the relationship with them.** • **Supporting people so that they can fulfil their work responsibilities in the most optimal ways.** • **Leading from one's highest self, not from ego.** • **Embracing one's own position of authority, rank and responsibility without treating others as inferior.** • **Having dignity for each and every person.**

Let's turn now to see how each of these attributes support emotional talent development.

Determination and Will

To be a champion for people requires conviction and sometimes a gutsy attitude.

Being determined (that is, having the energy and conviction to get things done) and having will (the absolute desire to do things) are two huge unsung heroes in personal success. They are powerful in creating results; I've seen people with immense determination get what they want, such as writing a book in a week versus those who languish in the desire of it but haven't even got started in five years.

Determination and will are attributes that most managers actually do have. It's a necessity for management; however, it's often reserved for delivering results or for personal progress. It's not something often employed for the service of others. However, to develop people so that they flourish requires a strong energy from the manager to make that happen.

You cannot be an advocate for people potential *and* be a passive bystander, especially so if there's nothing else in the organisation that actively encourages people potential. It requires a mindset that can swim in the direction of the organisational culture; yet stop and be objective when needed. It is not about being aggressive—determination can be calm and graceful and presented wisely and elegantly.

Will and determination are behind many of the traits of an emotionally talented manager, such as integrity, care, benevolent leadership and people's growth and development. For example, if a person's job size, responsibilities or competencies far exceed their grade, then the manager needs to make a case for promotion or pay increase to senior management or HR. They shouldn't ignore it and hope the issue doesn't arise like many ordinary managers would do. In many organisations, managers and leaders often fail to have this degree of conviction for their people but it can pay enormous dividends as it also unleashes immense gratitude and loyalty back as well as great performance.

It is also the attribute required to create new opportunities for people—a key factor in developing potential. This may mean examples such as delegating more responsibilities to them, asking them to present updates or attending conferences and representing your organisation.

Developing people to their potential means working with a movable feast. Development will be ongoing and never static which means that the capability of the person and their outputs will transform from the start of their journey to the peak of their potential. Therefore, the manager must have the conviction and determination to reassess the situation and compensate accordingly either with expanding the job description and grade or with an incremental pay rise at the next appraisal session. I found this to be the case with many people I managed in my management days. As they grew and became more confident of the work, I would delegate more responsibilities to them, eventually letting them lead on most aspects of the projects, including updates with stakeholders and senior managers. However, most managers don't have this mindset. In my past corporate experience, I found a lot of managers to be complacent and often quite passive when it came to supporting their people or lobbying on their behalf. While this may stem from a lack of courage to go against the cultural norm, it also comes from a total lack of knowing about how people are really motivated—and this itself stems from the absence of any effective people management training.

Having determination to support your people turns intention into actions and results. In return, it amplifies the feelings of goodwill and motivation from people manifold.

Putting Determination and Will into Action

- Start with clear intentions and a strong conviction for a proposed action—that's what drives genuine determination. If you're not feeling it, then the strength behind the drive to make it happen will be half-hearted.
- Avoid aggressive and pushy actions. They won't endear people to your cause.
- If you're making a case that is likely to be challenged, ensure you have all the facts clearly outlined, including data and any damaging consequences of inaction. Make it like a business case and present it with astuteness and wisdom.
- When pursuing an objective get as many people on your side as possible, especially your direct manager.
- Having the will to do something doesn't mean you need to bring out your fighting spirit. Sometimes having the will simply means getting something done. This could be speaking to others about creating opportunities for your people, reshaping a job or giving someone more responsibilities. It is easy to do, but it's surprising that not many managers will be creative or determined enough to do this.

Case Study

Alan and Holding the Company to Account

Alan was the Head of Learning and Development for a large organisation based in West London. The company values included the goal to retain and reward its best employees. Sunita was a

high performing and well respected manager in the Sales department and her husband had been offered a promotion and a transfer by his bank employer for a job based in New York. Sunita enquired with HR about whether she could be transferred to her organisation's New York office but was met with the unlikelihood of this happening because any role for her rank and level of responsibility could easily be fulfilled locally by a USA citizen, and on top of that, less expensively than the costs of moving an employee overseas. She thought her only option was to resign when Alan stepped in. He had seen Sunita in action and respected her work ethic and the results she had achieved. He justified her transfer to New York with the HR department on the grounds that the organisation had declared its intention to retain its best people. In the end Alan succeeded and Sunita was transferred to New York and did very well in her new role as well as in her new married life. Alan acted out of conviction and principle but this outcome also had the added benefit of sending the message that the company would genuinely act behind its intention to retain its best employees.

High Standards

One of the key forces behind excellent performance and reaching high potential by people is for the manager to set high standards and expectations. Great performance and potential is never reached if the bar is set at 'satisfactory' - this encourages mediocrity.

High standards refer to quality of work, performance and results but it also refers to the values that people should live by in the workplace such as cooperation, respect, sharing and integrity. The most powerful way for people to adopt such values is for managers to demonstrate them in their behaviours as this encourages people to mirror them. They also become characteristics of the manager's micro culture. High standards can refer to:

- End results: The best possible results not adequate or satisfactory results.
- Quality processes and governance: such as project management, quality management, supplier and purchasing decisions, business cases, quality management and more.
- Competencies, skills and knowledge: Instil continuous learning and keep skills updated.
- Being unhindered by convention: Trying new ideas, out of the box ideation and brain storming.
- Behaviours: Such as commitment, accountability, responsibility and giving ones best
- Values: Such as team harmony, wellbeing, integrity and trust.

It may be surprising but not every manager aims for the highest possible outcomes. I've seen many including senior managers such as heads of departments eager to tick off jobs off as completed as soon as possible to show that the work has been done. The emphasis on completing and delivering on time often means that the best possible outcomes, which could mean greater revenue, efficiencies, better products, higher customer retention and lower costs could be foregone. I used to see this happen especially with managers who were on high potential management programmes eager to show completion of their work before moving onto their next placement.

Working to high standards doesn't mean that projects can't be delivered and launched unless they are 100% flawless because this may not be the best course in highly competitive markets. In this case the project should include a commitment for quick version upgrades as soon as the improvements can be implemented.

I have often found that when expectations from a manager are high people will work toward them. That's why it's so important for the manager to clearly explain, demonstrate and communicate these high standards so that people are clear about what is expected. In my management days, I would often do this. I was fortunate to have received high quality management training during my early career days in British

Airways so by the time I joined a newly formed e-business department in Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong I was able to introduce robust and quality project processes, methodologies and documentation for the successful roll out of major projects. These became the templates for design and development of all new business transformation projects, and also provided people with instant know-how of what to do and the standards to maintain.

I need to clarify here that having high standards doesn't mean creating a culture where people fear to underachieve or to fail. In fact, creating a safe environment for every person in the team to take interpersonal risks without fear of reprimand is an absolute necessity for reaching high standards because people need to explore, experiment and openly discuss what didn't work so that they can correct, improve and re-design.

It is also very important that high standards are demonstrated in people's interpersonal approaches and values as well as work standards. For example, cooperation, support and transparency with other team members. The two most effective ways of achieving this is firstly, for the manager to role model them through being and doing them. These behaviours imprint themselves onto the manager's microculture so that people working within its realm know what to expect and start to mirror the behaviours. Secondly, these behaviours are also achieved by the manager implementing the six motivating factors that give rise to people flourishing as shown in the next chapter.

There shouldn't be any reprimand if someone doesn't reach expected standards. If this happens, assess the situation; maybe more guidance and demonstration is needed. However, be honest if despite everything you've done the person does not have the competency or ability to do the work to required standards. This has happened only twice in my management career; once I had to fire a person after major errors occurred consistently and for another, arranged a move to a position more suitable for his skills. This is not heartless as it's better for the person to find something better suited to their skills and be happier in another role.

Creating High Standards for People

- The manager must demonstrate the high standards required. This is done actively—by showing them how to and also behaviourally—by role modelling ways to be i.e. authentic, committed and respectful.
- Make it clear to people that the aim is excellence and achieving the best possible outcomes (what this means may need to be clarified).
- Ask if it can be done better.
- Encourage people to explore, be curious, seek out best practice in different industries.
- Create a safe space for people to offer suggestions and come up with new ideas.
- Create a continuous improvement culture including the review of outcomes and building learning and improvements into future projects and tasks.
- Recognise and acknowledge an individual's achievements in excellence.
- Ask people to present their high quality achievements to a wider forum. This acknowledges their work and encourages a culture for high standards.
- Ensure team member competitiveness is discouraged. This is about reaching individual best not being better than teammates.
- Offer support to anyone who isn't progressing to standards required.
- Having high standards are not about delaying outcomes in order to find perfection. It is about embodying that principle and integrating them into all aspects of work.
- Do not assume the manager will always have the best answers. As people grow and learn, they will be increasingly informed and may have better suggestions than those of the manager. Be open to that and remember if this happens it's a sign that you're doing a great job in developing their high standards and potential.

Growth Mindset

To take people to their potential requires a manager who supports people to grow and learn, therefore the manager must have a growth mindset. This term has been used by Psychologist Carol Dweck, Professor at Stanford University USA, who defines a growth mindset as one which believes people can grow through application and experience as opposed to the fixed mindset which believes people come with their abilities, skills and talents largely fixed—employees either have it or don't so managers don't consider all people have potential to develop. As Professor Dweck writes in her book, *Mindset: Changing the Way You Think to Fulfil Your Potential*:

> *Managers with a growth mindset think it's nice to have talent but that's just the starting point. These managers are more committed to their employees' development and to their own. They give a great deal more developmental coaching, they notice improvement in employees' performance and they welcome critiques from their employees*[77].

Research carried out by Professor Dweck looked at mindset in a group of large corporations consisting of Fortune 500 and Fortune 1000 companies. She writes: "*people who worked in growth mindset organisations have far more trust in their company and a much greater sense of empowerment, ownership and commitment*". They also felt supported to be innovative and creative and furthermore, reported that they were much more willing to go the extra mile for it. She adds "*those who worked in fixed mindset companies, however, expressed greater interest in leaving their company for another*". She also makes the important point that supervisors in growth mindset companies rated their employees as having far greater management potential. This salient point demonstrates that talent can be developed in contrast to companies that employ talented people and continue to invest only in them while ignoring the mass of employees and the potential leaders among them. This certainly supports my belief that the vast majority of people

can grow when given the right conditions to do so, something that was proven many times with the people I managed.

A growth mind-set is an absolute must for managers who want to develop people to their potential for how can you expect them grow into higher levels if a manager doesn't have the belief and expectation that they can or does not create the growth opportunities for them to do so?

As a manager, my belief was to push people one step beyond their comfort zone, so it stretched them enough to learn something new but was not so intimidating that they were stressed out about it. This included things such as presenting work publicly, representing the company at a supplier conference or taking responsibility for a major task. It should be noted that I had the assurance of their abilities before stretching them further and always provided the psychological safety net in case they needed more support or faltered—which was rare. This kind of challenge can even be beneficial and foster creativity according to Dr Daniel Friedland. This is the challenge response[18] - when your personal resources are more than sufficient to meet the needs of the task. As Dr Friedland says, "*Your challenge response enables you to lean into your challenges, seek creative solutions and embrace the stressful situation as an opportunity for growth and learning.*"[78]

In the next chapter, I dive deeper into the neurology of the challenge response when looking at growth as a motivating factor for flourishing and why it fosters creativity.

The growth mindset is also a necessity for generating one of the people motivating factors discussed in the next chapter—the need for growth and learning. When people are doing their work and also, growing and learning while doing it, the experience of work becomes highly rewarding and enriching because people are expanding their self-identity and self-worth too.

Professor Dweck also writes about the benefits of having a growth mindset when recruiting, especially as the right person doesn't always come along. This was often my experience when recruiting for a new

18. A term created by Jim Blascovich, professor of psychology, University of California and featured in Dr Daniel Friedland's book Leading Well from Within

role where I did not select the most qualified person but the one with the most potential to grow into the role and make it successful. This was often because they had the willingness and determination to enable that. Having a growth mindset was also useful when I inherited staff made 'surplus' from other departments such as the time a former personal assistant joined my team initially in a data input role but rapidly developed and rose to managing small projects and advising project teams in the company's overseas offices. She eventually left for a great project manager role with another company. It is highly doubtful that she would have grown her skills and confidence working under a fixed mindset manager who would probably not have seen her beyond her PA role.

A growth mindset also can be more adaptive and resourceful, two skills seldom taught in the workplace but are becoming increasingly important in an unpredictable world. This is because a growth mindset doesn't rigidly stick to instructions and rules without deviating. It looks for new and better ways of doing things and is more likely to seek unconventional ways to get results. For example, when I was working in Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong, we had yet another recruitment freeze during a phase of economic downturn and I could not recruit a position for a particular phase of a project ready to start. So not being prepared to give up and delay the project, my resourceful staff member suggested we could get his university student cousin an internship (even though no places for internships existed in my team at the time). This provided him with some valuable work experience and I got a useful resource at no extra cost. I would also send my people to many of the conferences and presentations hosted by tech companies. These were free and were great opportunities to learn about the latest in industry trends; furthermore, they presented my staff with the experience to interact with some of the leading suppliers in the industry.

It's important to highlight that I seldom had any training budget for my staff so learning was on the job. However, this is the most valuable way to develop people and rapidly teach non-technical work. Organisations should develop their managers as first line trainers for their people—

especially when coupled with high standards and real work experiences that can be so much more effective than formal training. When people work for an emotionally talented manager, they also 'absorb' these emotional skills through being on the receiving end of their benefits. One of the biggest complements I received from a former staff member of mine was how when she became a senior manager in a large company she led her team of people in the same way as she had experienced my leadership.

Almost everyone has the ability to grow if the manager fosters that belief onto them and creates the conditions for that growth to flourish. Over a number of years, I witnessed the growth and transformation in many of the staff I managed. Who people were at the start to the end were like different people. The real magic was when people grew into unknown potential, a concept introduced in chapter one. This is when people grew into versions of themselves they had never predicted or had even seen possible for them. This included new skills and competencies but also their personal growth—particularly their confidence and self-belief that gave rise to chasing bigger goals. This is a key attribute of flourishing.

A growth mindset manager never lets people work below their level of competence as this is a significant motivation killer. This is the opposite of the Peter Principle which is being promoted to one's level of incompetence. Working below one's level of competence happens when managers have little interest in the motivation and development of their people or are happy to benefit from their competencies at a lower paygrade. When developing people to their potential, it is important for the manager to keep the work and opportunities expanding in line with their personal growth.

A growth mindset will increasingly be important in the age of uncertainty and disruption; for it can make people more adaptive, agile and learn fast. We are already in the era of certain skills becoming obsolete and new ones being demanded. If an organisation can readily

re-skill people who are adaptable, it will gain advantage in moving forward rapidly, and without the need to recruit new people externally.

Having a growth mindset is also a great growth exercise for managers too. As managers take risks and create new opportunities for people, they are also stepping into the unpredictable and seeing what emerges for them. But they are also continuously growing themselves—after all, if you're closed about your own potential to grow, then how are you going to foster a growth belief for others? Are *you* as a manager open to learning and improving? If you're reading this, then I assume the answer is yes.

Developing a Growth Mindset

- Believe that people can grow and learn if they desire it. This can happen in incremental steps as well as in quick radical transformations.
- Take on the notion that people have the ability to grow into unknown potential—unforeseen or unpredicted states of achievement.
- Provide opportunities for people's growth and learning while on the job, particularly in line with their competency levels.
- Give tasks to people that stretch them one level beyond their comfort zone.
- Review and amend any situation where the person is working below their level of competency.
- Can you align opportunities for growth with people's personal interests? If they're doing a business degree or an MBA, can you give them a real work project or assessment as part of their study?
- If there are opportunities across the company, can you offer them to your people? I have been part of a company-wide group to design new ways of working, including hotdesking and home working. I was a team leader for emergency support in case

of airline disaster and part of a Future Travel group that drafted plans for ten years forward.

- Create a continuous learning and growing environment, especially if people have the capability and desire to step up. This means the manager must be open to suggestions, requests and feedback for improvements or change.
- Create a culture of personal resourcefulness—a mindset that can think beyond convention and norms and step into creative ways of getting things done.
- Can you organise developmental 'away days' with your team? This doesn't have to entail the hiring of expensive hotel rooms and training companies. I've done this with my teams in a meeting room, and I've also had a manager host a team session in his home. The subjects have included presentation practice and sharing updates, challenges and achievements with group feedback and questions.
- Create a psychologically safe place so that people are not afraid to take risks, experiment and try new things, including offering novel suggestions.
- Ensure you as the manager are also growing and learning. Be open to the fact that you may not always have the answers and can learn from others including your people.

Case study

Stifling Growth

Brad was the head of a department for online product innovation in a large organisation based in Singapore. As an American, he had joined the company after a demanding career in a major management consultancy firm in a move to minimise frequent

overseas travel and long hours that encroached on his family life. He had great intellect with a good grasp of data and numbers. However, although very he was focused when working, Brad did not give anything more of himself than needed. Unusually, for a senior manager of his rank, he would pack up each day at 5:25 p.m. to take the 5:35 p.m. bus home while most of his people including the junior people continued working. This meant projects were designed in a minimal way, to produce outcomes that would just satisfy requirements—they were never fully scoped out to capture all the features that could create a superior product. When people suggested ideas for improvement, he would get tense and almost always reject them. Laila, a manager who reported to Brad, would often point out potential improvements based on what the data or research was showing, but as Brad showed little interest and pushed instead for nothing more than basic delivery, she gradually stopped trying. She said her work ethic was of higher standards than Brad but resulted in no action or recognition for her. In fact, Brad actively discouraged creativity and betterment and not only because it added to his workload but also because, as Laila felt, it singled him out as less competent and willing than his direct reports. Instead of a growth mind-set, the opposite was encouraged, a contraction of ability and potential. Laila even felt the department could have achieved much more in the absence of Brad, as he stifled potential and great outcomes.

Benevolent Leadership

Benevolent means being characterised by or given to doing good. When it's combined with leadership, it means leading with the greatest good of all in mind. This means the best for the people, the organisation and the manager himself or herself too. It may sound altruistic or even idealistic, but it is in fact common sense for business even if very few organisations recognise this powerful approach to leading.

It is a caring leadership trait that speaks to the emotional core of a person and not only to their role of employee. When this is delivered by a leader, its effects on people are profound. This was aptly demonstrated by the story of manager Ken McGimpsey in chapter four where because of the unwavering support for his people, they went far beyond their expected duties and in return made his small factory the most successful one in the UK.

Benevolent leadership generates a specific type of motivation in people—that of inner volition. This is doing work because they absolutely want to and not because they have to. It can make people believe in themselves, feel good about what they're doing and give the best of themselves to work. This is because of the power of validation—making someone feel that they matter, that they are significant, valued and relevant. When validation comes from a person in authority, it is particularly impactful because we heed the words and beliefs of people with influence, especially when they have control over our lives. This is why I believe the power of benevolent leadership can progress people much further and faster than any self-development work alone. For example, it can take years of conscious effort and dedication to develop states of being, such as self-belief or self-acceptance. However, when you have someone in power who believes in you, supports you to be your best and even sees more in you than you see in yourself, it can fast-track your potential more powerfully, effectively and faster than anything I have seen. This is also why benevolent leadership is a strong impetus behind all six motivating factors that drive people to flourish as I'll show in the next chapter. As a reminder, these are: respect, recognition, contribution, autonomy, growth and psychological and emotional safety.

A key theme in benevolent leadership is firmly establishing the leadership principle for a manager. This emphasis is made because there are many variations today of what it means to be an effective leader or manager, particularly in progressive or enlightened organisations. Servant leadership, managers as coaches and mentors and self-managing teams without supervision are some of the approaches that have received

attention in recent years. All these approaches have merit. They all promote the value of people so that they are not considered mere minions subjected to an all powerful leader. Benevolent leadership includes aspects of these many different approaches but importantly it retains the concept of an overall leader or manager, however one who is evolved emotionally as well as professionally.

This type of leadership acts as a guiding force, sets the scene, defines the manager's micro culture and role models evolved behaviours which others will unconsciously mirror. It leads from the front to make things happen and to inspire others. But it also knows when to step back and let others shine; to let them have their time in the limelight and be given full credit for their work. It can be a challenging way of being at first as leaders often embody the visible leadership role at most times—sometimes even in their personal and social lives and can't sense when it's right to step back and let others take centre stage. It can also be counter to the way new managers take on the role of management as they are often chasing validation from their bosses and feel they must invest in their own progress and success first. The me-first or self-serving style of management is counter productive to leading people with emotional talent which, while is not self-less, comes from the magnanimousness of a person; someone with a strong and healthy sense of self and who has sufficient emotional security in order to give to others without fear. So benevolence does not mean the absence of personal ambition or withdrawing from visibility. It means personal motives do not constantly take precedence over the best interests of people you manage.

This is a powerful leadership principle that few have understood in the working world. Service to self is the primary motive for many managers and leaders. However, as Simon Sinek says in his book, *Leaders Eat Last*, the more leaders give themselves to see others succeed, the greater the value of them is to the group and the more respect they receive. This increases the value of such leaders to the group. He writes:

> *Those who work hardest to help others succeed will be seen by the group as the leader or the 'alpha' of the group. And being the alpha, the strong supportive one of the group, the one willing to sacrifice time and energy that others may gain – is a pre-requisite for leadership.* [79]

Another aspect of benevolent leadership is having dignity for the people you manage. This is according people with a level of respect as a fellow human being even if your position ranks higher professionally. Having dignity for others is not a word used in the workplace although the behaviours and actions behind the act of dignity clearly exist in other areas, for example, for senior executives or high paying clients and customers such as First Class airline passengers. But dignity should not be dependent on rank or financial value—it is a human right. This concept should not be confused with deference or lessening your authority. You can offer the respect that comes with dignity for another and be the manager at the same time. I used to work for a senior manager many years ago who thought it was his right to verbally attack people when he was angry with them. Rather than explain what he didn't like and how he wanted it, he would tear people apart with no regard for their personal and human respect. This is abuse and should be a serious offence.

Taking on the mantle of benevolent leadership does not imply any weakness or a lack of courage in leadership. It does not mean you cannot correct people, say no to them or act in response to a serious misdemeanour or offence. Benevolence does not disable the correct course of action to be taken in specific situations. However, when people know their manager cares about their best interests, they are more receptive to taking corrective action without it feeling like a serious or hurtful rebuke. Managers will sometimes need to make unpopular decisions or take drastic actions such as project closures, reorganisations or even redundancies. Even these can be done humanely by offering understanding and support services where possible and appropriate.

In its most enlightened form, benevolent leadership is in service to something higher than oneself. This is one of the attributes identified by The Leadership Circle, an organisation that offers a model of traits that generate the highest leader effectiveness and business performance. Termed 'Selfless Leader', it is described on their website as: "*The extent to which the leader pursues service over self-interest, where the need for credit and personal ambition is far less important than creating results that serve a common good.*"[80]

The most enlightened leaders of people also take responsibility for what their relationships with others look like. Just as they take responsibility and accountability for business outcomes, they are also accountable for ensuring that their relationships with people and between people are positive and healthy. This doesn't mean that they overtake the accountability that people have for their own lives and outcomes; what it means is that given that the manager has the power and influence in this dynamic, they are in a unique position to shape the quality of it through their behaviour and hence determine the outcomes.

Becoming a Benevolent Leader as a Manager

- Include people in decision-making, especially when they have relevant information or will be affected by the decisions.
- Listen to people actively and with *generosity*. This means listening without mentally overriding their voice with your opinion.
- Be aware of the hours people spend working, and if they are regularly working long hours, investigate, and don't just let it go on the premise that it's good for the business to get more out of people because it is not in the long term.
- Become aware of whether your ego is influencing your decisions. This is gained through self-awareness and can be detected if the decision is based on making you look and feel good.
- Ensure people have the ability to do their work as effectively as possible. This may mean having the correct tools, a conducive

environment, access to the right people or cooperation from others.

- Be accessible to people, ensure they know they can approach you without fear.
- Take an interest in people and who they are. Ask their opinions; take them for lunch or a coffee.
- Create an environment where people feel safe to express themselves and offer opinions.
- Ensure you retain your role as leader which does not get compromised when you create a human connection with people.
- Can you create magnanimous gestures for people? This will depend on your organisational culture, budget and level of authority but examples include: overseas team building trips, special team lunches or dinner, an away day to a great destination, gift vouchers or time off in lieu of long hours worked. This not only acknowledges people but also sends the message that 'we care'.
- Integrity, care, will and determination (attributes of emotional talent) are critical aspects of benevolent leadership and should be included in this style of management.

Case Study

The Voice of The People

Bill Kalyan was Head of Sales and Service from 2005 to 2015 for Autoglass, a car windscreen repair and replace company with over 2,400 employees in the UK. As a passionate people-focused executive, Bill genuinely believed that when people are valued and appreciated their performance is boosted and they succeed. During his time in the company, he initiated many successful

employee engagement programmes that stemmed from a genuine care for people. This meant going beyond implementing measures to satisfy an engagement strategy to being an authentically caring leader with the actions to back that up. Bill had 500 people under his division and he knew at least 95% of them by name. He would always make a point of acknowledging the workers on the 'shop floor', ensuring he greeted them in the morning and bid them good night when encountered. He recalled a time when he approached a shy Nigerian woman who could barely make eye contact and she told him later that she was so surprised to have been noticed by him as she had grown up in a culture where people of high rank rarely interacted with lower level workers. Bill also made a conscious effort to initiate casual conversations with people that often resulted in gathering useful information that would not normally have come to his attention. Seeing the usefulness of these interactions, Bill then implemented a 'Walk the floor' practice where senior leaders would be scheduled to spend time with a worker to get feedback and sometimes to even accompany them on customer visits. Feedback was reported back to board meetings.

As Bill created a people-focused and caring culture, he also set the example for all management ranks too and they too also adopted the same behaviours.

Following this, as well as the implementation of other employment engagement plans an employee survey was conducted where the highest ever scores of 83.4% engaged employees with a 90% response rate were achieved. Employee feedback from the survey also demonstrated the strong emotional bond that the employees had with the company. These included:

"My line managers are highly approachable and engaging." "In my day to day dealings with my manager, I find him to be innovative and creative with his ideas." "Autoglass is a fantastic company to work for. They have time and patience for their employees and I feel privileged to be part of the company."

Points for Reflection

- Think of a time when steadfast determination helped you achieve your goal. What were the key factors that drove that determination?
- Do you or someone you know have exceptional talent, expertise or work ethic—a calibre that surpasses their peers? What approaches, mindset or practices got them to these high standards?
- Have you ever witnessed a person achieve a goal that you never thought was possible for them? Think about examples from work, personal or social life. What factors made this possible for them?
- Think of someone who demonstrates benevolent leadership, either in your own experience or as a public figure, in any walk of life. What is the effect on people and the outcomes they have or have had?

7

Motivating Factors

Step 3 of Developing Emotional Talent

"Instead of 'How can I motivate people?' we should be asking, 'How can I create the conditions within which people will motivate themselves'?"

Edward L. Deci, Psychologist

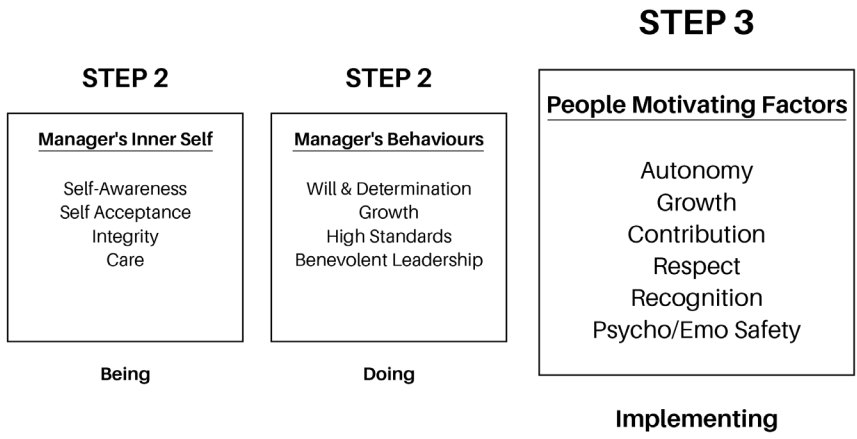

Figure 5
Step 3 – The Motivating Factors That Drive People to Flourish

Steps one and two are focused on the manager, but step three is about the people being managed and the key motivating factors that drive them to flourish. This is the last step in developing managers' emotional talent, as shown in the diagram above, and its success depends on the self-development work the manager undertakes in the previous two steps.

When people thrive at work, it is not only because they are self-motivated or have a good work ethic. It is also because they are given the right conditions to do so. Diligent people can work well with a self-directed ethos, but to reach the elevated state of flourishing and its extraordinary potential, it requires an equally elevated level of support by the direct manager. All six of these motivating factors are created by the manager.

Let's revisit the definition of flourishing from chapter one:

> *A state in which a person reaches known or unknown potential as a result of favourable conditions and in doing so gives rise to high levels of performance and emotional fulfilment.*

In this state people don't only operate from the usual limited dimensions of work, such as talents or skills, they also engage other resources which include positive emotions, constructive behaviours and sharpened senses. Furthermore, talents are optimised and mental skills heightened. The figure from Chapter 1 is included here again as an important reminder for this chapter.

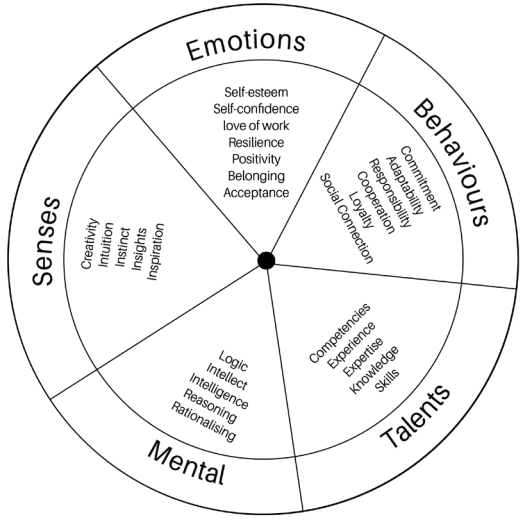

Figure 6
Flourishing: An Engagement of Multiple Personal Resources

When these multiple resources are engaged in synergistic elegance, it gives rise to high performance, high fulfilment and high wellbeing. Because being in a flourishing mode is so rewarding, people give their all to the work as it is the source of their personal enrichment.
This is a very different concept from the traditional model of employment, which is to exchange your knowledge or labour for a salary. Flourishing is about work nourishing you on several levels including your emotional self, and when this happens, you give your work deep commitment and even love.

To see how this works, let's look at this example. Ming is a manager in the Sales and Marketing division of her company. She has been asked to work on a new project, analysing the costs of their customer loyalty programme and to ascertain whether it is an investment returning additional revenue or a protective strategy which keeps customers from going to the competition. Ming's manager, Thomas, trusts her and values her ability therefore, gives her ample autonomy to design and plan the project her way. He sends an email to the various heads of departments, asking them to support Ming with any information she may need from them; therefore, easing access to them for her. Ming is excited about this project and feels a heightened sense of responsibility; trust and expectation in her is high and she wants to deliver excellence especially as her name, and not only Thomas's, has been publicly associated with this project. The great thing for Ming also is that the project plays to her strengths; she has great analytical skills with an eye for detail and has the curiosity to pursue possible correlations and patterns in data, allowing her to investigate potentially significant reveals. The project may provide valuable information for the company's customer loyalty strategy and she is motivated by the possibility of her contribution making a difference to the bottom line. Half way through the project, she has identified several important findings. She has been updating Thomas regularly and he has been excited with the outcomes so far. His positive feedback spurs her on and she continues with focus and responsibility even when she hits roadblocks because her ownership of the project and resourcefulness drives her to seek solutions.

Furthermore, Thomas has created a psychologically safe environment that encourages her to pursue some novel and unusual routes of investigation. Later in the project, Ming recommends having a customer survey done that may reveal insights not showing up in the sales data. The cost for this survey has not been budgeted for and is surely to meet opposition from senior managers. But with Thomas's backing, she feels confident in making a strong case for this additional spend. This proved to be a valuable suggestion. The survey feedback revealed the reasons why some loyalty tactics failed to attract customers, thereby encouraging them to shop with competitors. Understanding the full picture, they can make some changes in their customer loyalty proposition with the potential of reducing costs by 15-20% annually. Ming is asked to present her findings to senior leaders—this visibility makes her feel trusted and acknowledged. Overall, Ming feels a great sense of accomplishment with this project. Her self-worth grows and she is so grateful for the recognition she's had from Thomas who has backed her all the way, giving useful guidance but never overtaking the lead or taking credit for her work. This deepens her loyalty and commitment to him and she is ready to support him in the best way possible for all other projects – but also in any other way; she offered to take over the task of organising a team dinner with a suitable restaurant as Thomas had critical deadlines to meet that week. Thomas also feels pretty good after receiving praise and recognition from his senior manager for delivering outcomes that were more successful than anticipated. He is fast gaining a reputation for a manager who delivers with excellence.

This example illustrates how people flourish through the interplay of emotional factors and performance drivers. These factors also give rise to behaviours such as resourcefulness, tenacity, curiosity and initiative, all of which influence the quality and value of work produced. The important highlight, however, is that Thomas, the manager, created the conditions within which Ming was able to flourish and give her all. And this is key because although people do come ready with their package of talents and abilities, it is the manager who creates the conditions for these to be fully optimised. This is crucial for developing

people into their potential because to achieve extraordinary levels of performance requires an extraordinary mode of management to make it happen.

There are six motivating factors that promote states of flourishing: autonomy, growth, contribution, respect, recognition and psychological and emotional safety. There are also three conditions that are an integral quality of these motivating factors. They are key to what happens when people flourish. They are:

- **Intrinsic motivation**: Work must be rewarding so you *want* to do it.
- **Self-esteem**: Work must positively enrich your sense of self.
- **Inner volition**: You do the work because you *want* to and not because you have to.

We briefly look at these first before turning to the motivating factors in detail:

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is when the act of doing an activity is the reward itself. It is absorbing, positively challenging or engaging and this is the motivation for doing it.

Think of something you enjoy doing for the sake of it without any need for an external reward. For me, it is painting, dress design and writing.

Most organisations have bypassed the power of intrinsic drivers and have built motivation systems around extrinsic reward systems such as money, bonuses and benefits. This assumes people are primarily driven by the lure of an external reward or recompense. Money does have a role to play. For repetitive low skilled work, monetary rewards can be motivating[19]. For higher skilled 'knowledge' work, money should be high enough and fair. After that point, intrinsic factors have a greater motivation. Danial Pink in his book, *Drive: The Surprising Truth About*

19. Although this was not completely the case with the account of factory workers and Ken McGimpsey as shown in chapter 4

What Motivates Us, says: "One reason fair and adequate pay is so essential is that it takes the issue of money off the table so that they can focus on the work itself." [81]

The theory of intrinsic motivation[20] gained prominence through the work of psychologist Edward Deci, now Professor of Psychology at University of Rochester and director of its human motivation program. Along with his colleague, Richard Ryan, PhD, their research in the 1970s led to the theory of intrinsic motivation which countered the conventionally held view that people in work were primarily motivated by extrinsic factors such as money[82].

Their research also showed that for highly, intrinsically motivated people, monetary rewards could even compromise motivation because it took the focus away from the joy of the work. The activity became about reaping the monetary rewards without bringing to it any heart or psychological needs.

My own experience in corporate life shows that what makes work compelling and rewarding often includes more than the nature of the work itself; it's the conditions and the microculture set by the manager. When working conditions are enriching, they bring a whole different quality to working life and this can only be a good thing because for many people work is not the stuff of passion, purpose and dreams. What gives those work activities staying power is part of something bigger—the emotional rewards that feed your self-esteem. To illustrate this, I give an example from my own corporate working life. When I joined Cathay Pacific Airways in Hong Kong in 2000, it was to bring in business change through new process and online solutions. The unit was in the IT department and me, a commercially experienced manager had little interest in anything technical. However, despite my initial resistance, I was soon dealing with IT managers and rapidly learned about bandwidth, traffic loads and back up servers. This could have turned into a disastrous career move; however, it was one of the

20. Their work also emphasised that intrinsic motivation had to be supported by certain conditions and these were autonomy, competence and relatedness. These three needs formed what became known as the self-determination theory.

most enjoyable and rewarding phases of my Cathay Pacific career with many successes achieved. This was because of my manager Tom and the conditions of work he created for me and the other team members—autonomy, respect, recognition and trust. He was quick to praise, especially publicly, and I felt greatly valued by him.

The importance of these human factors in motivation is also proven by the account given of Ken McGimpsey in chapter four. Despite the mundane nature of factory work, he had highly committed and motivated people who loved their work because they felt valued.
This leads on to the next motivating factor: self-esteem.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is the ability to value oneself in a healthy way. It gives rise to a profound sense of wellbeing, contentedness and joy of living. It is a subject that is usually left to the personal development or psychological fields but rarely discussed in the context of work. This is a major oversight as we place a lot of our identity, status and self-worth in our work, making us emotionally vulnerable to professional setbacks but enormously uplifted when we accomplish success. Workplaces are fertile ground for seeding and strengthening self-esteem or knocking it down. Ultimately, when something makes us feel good about ourselves, we become very attached to it.

Enriching your sense of self is one of the most powerful motivators known. Enthusiasm peaks, self-belief is reinforced, self-confidence is generated, creativity is enhanced and resilience is strengthened. Stress is also reduced and along with that, brain and hormonal changes which enhance immunity and social connection. Even access to higher thinking states in the brain is enabled because energy is not consumed on personal protection and survival through the fight or flight responses—which is the case when responding to stress. If I were to choose one thing that accelerated the development of people I managed, it was their boost in self-esteem.

Anything that fuels and sustains self-esteem is the magic elixir that drives people to thrive and flourish. The manager is the source of that

because they totally control the conditions that enable people to feel good. The problem is that most managers are usually in the Goldilocks range—that is in the middle making their people neither fired up with enthusiasm nor dejected with apathy or disinterest. Which is why they get middle of the road results.

Can a person generate their own self-esteem in the workplace regardless of how they are treated by their manager? After all, as adults, we are responsible for our own wellbeing and achievements. Ultimately, people are responsible for their lives, and if they have consciously worked on self-awareness and emotional intelligence, they may have acquired a stable and strongly rooted self-esteem which is resilient to knocks. The truth for the overwhelming majority of people, however, is usually far from this scenario. Few people have mastered a level of consciousness that is resistant to negativity from others, especially when these others are people in authority and have dominion over you.

People of all ranks look up to authority in work and seek approval from leaders who influence and shape their working lives. It would be difficult for even the most emotionally resilient person to resist persistent negative behaviour from managers such as put downs, criticisms or being ignored. Even if working for Goldilocks managers, few people could generate a consistent level of enthusiasm and excellent performance in the face of someone who offers little acknowledgement, positive feedback or encouragement.

Inner Volition

Inner volition is acting from free will and not from the need to comply. When people flourish, the relationship with their work changes to something they love doing and want to do even if no one is watching.

The quality of output generated from inner volition is vastly higher than work generated through compliance. Let's look at this example: two different people generate a monthly sales revenue report. Samuel creates the report and sends it off to the distribution list and rushes off for home at 5:30 p.m. Ashwin creates the report but diligently checks the amalgamated figures to ensure all data are included and no technical

glitches have occurred in the programme. A colleague once told him they had found problems in the data after a system upgrade a few years ago so he keeps that at the back of his mind when he checks for accuracy. He analyses the final figures for any unusual patterns and if something doesn't instinctively look right he investigates further. In his final report, he highlights the findings and makes suggestions for further actions before sending it to everyone. Sometimes he works late into the evening but as he really wants to get everything right, this doesn't feel like hardship. Both people have completed the work but Ashwin has put in much more discretionary effort—that is, acted from his own volition and produced a far more valuable and reliable report. Nobody asked Ashwin to put this extra effort in but he works for a manager who gives him autonomy and trusts him and he wants to live up to that trust. People respect Ashwin's work and warm to him. His reports are reliable and the data is often used in making decisions.

Inner volition is also the weapon that gets withdrawn in the face of an unsupportive environment such as a manager who fails to recognise good work.

As a manager myself, I often saw members of my team go above and beyond the call of duty. In one example, unbeknown to me, one person while on a long weekend break in Bangkok, left her husband in the hotel spa and spent Monday morning visiting the company's Thailand office to check in on a joint project. I offered to take that time off her vacation leave, but she said it wasn't necessary. That's when I understood the power of inner volition and giving your all freely and willingly when you love what you do.

When people work at high levels of performance out of their own volition, it is highly, highly valuable. Not only does it make the management of such people effortless, you also get a lot more output from them. It is easy to see how the bottom line could be significantly improved if most people in an organisation worked like this.

Inner volition is a quality that cannot be bought through extrinsic rewards and cannot be demanded. It is the many extra miles of effort

freely given when the conditions are conducive, and these are dependent on the manager.

Motivating Factors That Give Rise to Flourishing

When people rise to their potential and flourish, two things can happen: they surpasses their previous achievements, and they go beyond who they knew themselves to be. These are out of ordinary achievements which arise when specific conditions are present.

These conditions are the motivating factors necessary for people to flourish and they are: autonomy, growth, contribution, respect, recognition and psychological and emotional safety. They are powerful but also woefully underestimated in their potency to motivate people. Not only did I see these to be the most effective motivators in my experience as a manager, but research also backs this up.

The next diagram captures a holistic picture of the motivating factors and how they give rise to the different facets of flourishing.

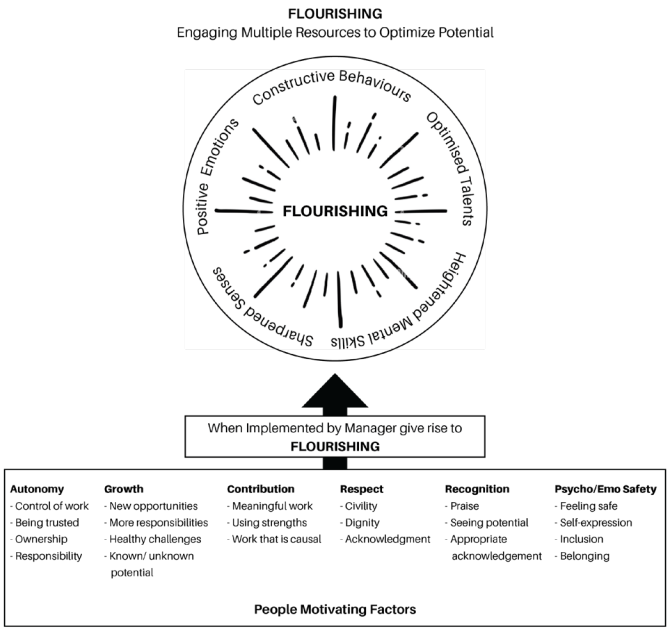

Figure 6
How Motivating Factors Give Rise to Flourishing

Let's turn to look at each of the motivating factors next and why they are powerful for creating people who flourish.

Autonomy

Autonomy is having the freedom to determine one's work and exercising choice and control in the doing of it. This is extremely important for people who flourish. Managers who allow people to work autonomously continue to interact and oversee them but they allow ample freedom in how they execute the work.

Control over one's work is one of the strongest drivers of flourishing. For Psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan, autonomy is the most important of the three motivators in their self-determining theory (the others being competence and relatedness). They say:

> *Autonomous motivation involves behaving with a full sense of volition and choice... Whereas controlled motivation involves behaving with the experience of pressure and demand towards specific outcomes that comes from forces perceived to be external to the self*[83]

Their research with Paul Baard of Fordham University in 2004 on workers in an American investment bank, showed higher productivity and satisfaction among employees whose managers supported their autonomy. Another piece of research was carried out by Cornell University where 320 small businesses were studied. Fifty percent of the employees were given autonomy whereas the remaining 50% were managed with a top-down approach. The businesses that offered autonomy grew four times the rate of control-oriented firms and had one-third the turnover[84].

Working autonomously often unleashes freely given extra effort and blurs demarcations of job responsibilities so that people take initiative to do what is best rather than stick to the letter of their job descriptions. It also allows for creativity and innovation to emerge. For example, Dan Pink, in his book *Drive*, gives the example of the Australian software company Atlassian, where people were allocated a day each month to work on anything they wanted. Many new products and

improvements came about as a result. Post-it notes from the company 3M were also conceived this way in autonomous time[85].

A manager's decision to grant autonomy in work signals to the person that she is trusted and competent which is also why it is a highly motivating factor. The opposite behaviour, to manage with control and tight supervision can be crushing to people's initiative and their sense of capability. It can deaden their enthusiasm and inner volition, so all that remains is a physical body producing things on demand robotically. There is no heart in anything.

Allowing people to be autonomous is counter to old-fashioned modes of management that believe people need to be kept in check and supervised to ensure they work. At the heart of this belief is that people don't really want to work and if left to their own devices, performance will slacken. This couldn't be further from the truth, especially for intelligent knowledge workers. In my experience as a manager, people's performance only grew when given trust and autonomy. People want to do their work well and when they are trusted to do so they rise to the expectations set by the manager.

Another reason for managers not allowing autonomy is an obsessive need for control and the fear of empowered people. This is a big killer of motivation and the likelihood of people flourishing is extremely unlikely under these managers.

Working autonomously also allows your authenticity to show. Customers, for example, can feel the difference between a script-adhering employees in a call centre—which can be off-putting even when they are being nice—and another who has the freedom to interact because of their genuine personality and empathy.

Another reason for cultivating autonomy in people is to ensure smooth continuity if and when the manager is away. In my management days, relying on autonomous people was a major relief as it meant that I could allocate time to other things and not worry when I was away from the office. It is also a characteristic increasingly crucial in times when technologies grow faster than managers can keep up with and so have to rely on the initiative and knowledge of their people.

When putting autonomy into practise, managers should first be assured that a person has the competence and sense of ownership to take the lead on work. If this is not fully established, then small tasks can be assigned first before bigger ones are granted.

When giving autonomy, the manager's responsibility is to give clear direction, set expectations, explain their scope of responsibility, be kept updated and be accessible when needed.

Clearly stating expectations is very important when setting high standards as written about in the previous chapter. In this case, standards of work can be role modelled so people know what is expected. I used to do this for example, by demonstrating templates for creating business cases or project methodologies. I also used to bring members of my team to some of my peer group meetings to 'shadow' me and observe the exchange of information and actions agreed.

Managers can also ask a person to explain to them how they are going to proceed with a piece of work and offer any helpful support or guidance if needed or even ask how you as a manager can support them with their plan.

Any aspect of the work can be done autonomously. As I saw people in my teams grow in competence and confidence, I gave them more autonomy to scope the work and make decisions and eventually for some, manage whole projects and communications with senior managers. I also encouraged them to come up with suggestions for improvements, lead on problem solving and own relationships with relevant others.

Research on Autonomy

Some of the most revealing findings on how lack of control in work can impact motivation is indicated by research on the effects on health and how debilitating this can be.

One of the most quoted pieces of research is from The Whitehall Study[86], so called because of the research into workplace stress and impact on health with British civil servants who work in the government buildings known as Whitehall. This study showed how levels of control in work were linked to health risks and mortality rates. It was significant

because of the large sample size and duration involved. The first study commenced in 1967 and lasted for a duration of ten years with 18,000 men, and then a second study between 1984-1987 with 10,000 people including women. The findings were particularly surprising as counter to popular thinking it wasn't the most senior ranked employees with highly responsible work who had the highest mortality rate. Furthermore, all government employees had the same health benefits. The findings clearly showed that it was the lower ranking employees such as messengers and doorkeepers who had mortality rates, especially for coronary heart disease, three times higher than that of men in the highest grade. Even adjusting for factors such as higher propensity for smoking and alcohol, less exercise and lower pay, there remained a strong correlation between work grade and mortality. The lowest grade still had a relative risk of 2.1 for cardiovascular disease mortality compared to the highest grade.

One strong explanation of this is that the lower one is on the chain of command, the less control one has over his or her life. Not having to take orders on how to perform a task, or when to do it, results in lower heart rate, stress hormones, and blood pressure than being told how and when to perform it. Jobs that gave employees less control were also linked to higher rates of mental illness as well.

The studies also found that the effort required by a job is not in itself stressful but rather the imbalance between the effort we give and the reward we feel.

A 2016 research study[87] from Indiana University Kelly School of Business showed one of the first findings on micromanaging and impact on health. It showed that people in high demand jobs with little control over their work die younger or are less healthy than those who have more flexibility and discretion in their work. A sample size of 2,363 Wisconsin residents in their 60s were examined and the findings showed for those in low control/high demand jobs there was a 15.4% increase in the likelihood of death compared to low demand jobs. For those in high control, high demand jobs there was a 34% decrease in the likelihood of death compared to low demand jobs.

The lead author of the study, Erik Gonzalez-Mule, Assistant Professor of Organisational Behaviour and Human Resources at the school, said that employers need not cut back on what is expected from employees but rather they should allow them greater say about how the work gets done.

Points for Reflection

- Has there been a time when you were given a lot of autonomy to fulfil a piece of work? This can be in work or personal life. What personal qualities, such as determination or ownership, arose and what was the outcome?
- Think about the roles of the people you manage. Where could you allow more autonomy for them, if appropriate for their capabilities and job?
- As a manager, what stops you giving people the appropriate autonomy for their capability?

Growth

Growth for the people you manage can mean healthy expansion on many different dimensions—personal skills, levels of responsibility or gaining new knowledge, experiences and competencies. For this to happen, the manager must have a growth mindset and create opportunities for growth.

Growth is a significant motivator for flourishing because growing and learning can expand you in ways that go beyond mastering skills or competences. It generates self-confidence and self-esteem because learning and gaining new experiences add more mileage to your sense of value and ability to contribute. As your confidence and self-esteem grow, it expands mastery and competence to new levels because confidence

reinforces the belief that you can do something well, and self-esteem knocks out any debilitating self-doubt.

Growth can also take you beyond that which you know yourself to be and take you to levels of unknown potential as discussed in chapter one. This can happen when someone, especially an authority figure you respect and listen to, sees your potential—potential you may not have seen yourself. Transcending your self-imposed boundaries creates a relationship with new parts of yourself. Sometimes they are parts you never knew existed such as the realisation that you do have the ability to present persuasively to a group of sceptical senior executives when previously, you would have feared being crushed by these hostile people.

When a new version of you awakens, it is intriguing, uplifting and even a little awe-inspiring. It is a powerful feeling that moves you onwards and upwards and opens up new possibilities previously unconsidered. I saw this happen many times with people I managed. Some would start their roles being shy, nervous or even inexperienced for the work. With the right conditions created for their motivation and growth, many transformed into confident people with a greater sense of self-belief. Some of them now occupy senior management roles in large international companies and they have been gracious enough to attribute their success to their time in my team.

One important criterion for growth is that the nature of the work must be appropriately challenging for the level of competence. If it is too much above competence, this leads to stress, and if it is too little below competence, it leads to boredom and disengagement. When the appropriate levels of both personal competence and work challenge meet, it leads to a state of 'flow'[88], a term coined by psychologist Mihály Csíkszentmihályi that aligns with some elements of the definition I give of flourishing. Flow leads to a state of intense focus and learning akin to the peak moments of psychologist Abraham Maslow's self-actualisation state, where time can be lost through absorption in the task.

As a growth mindset manager myself, one of the approaches I employed was to give people tasks that were one step beyond their

comfort zone, as mentioned previously in Chapter 6. Depending on each individual's comfort level or experience, this could entail tasks such as handling sections of a meeting, updating a senior manager or having difficult conversations such as enforcing service level agreements with suppliers when things go wrong. They could handle this without getting overstressed because it challenged them just enough to stretch themselves but not so far as to exceed their available resources. They also knew they had my support, which was their safety net should they need it, and that gave them enormous psychological safety to move ahead with the confidence to try. As Csikszentmihalyi said:

> *The best moments in our lives are not the passive, receptive, relaxing times . . . The best moments usually occur if a person's body or mind is stretched to its limits in a voluntary effort to accomplish something difficult and worthwhile*[89]

Growth can be incremental, built over time or with the support of an emotionally talented manager, leapfrog ahead in big strides. This is because when you have the encouragement from your manager and feel psychologically safe, you can take bigger risks without fearing humiliation or backlash should mishaps happen. This is one of the reasons why emotionally talented managers can impact the organisation so powerfully; they can rapidly develop people to high levels of performance and accomplishment faster than any formal training or business education ever could. And remember, these are the highly engaged people who are the ones moving the organisation forward; creating competitive advantage impacting the bottom line and helping survival in tough times.

People grow when they are given opportunities to try something new. This doesn't only mean a new task or project, it can also mean trying out new personal skills such as widening responsibilities or having more ownership of work.

As a manager, I was very 'improvement' focused on the work as well as the people. My aim was always to reach excellence and optimum

results, regardless of where the bar of expectation from my senior managers was set. In line with this, it was important to develop people to their optimum, regardless of the level of skills and qualities required in their job description. Holding this growth mindset also opens up the possibility of people's unknown potential to develop; growing to a level that isn't foreseen or even known was possible. This is the realm of transformation, and it's one of the most profound outcomes I've personally witnessed as a manager of people.

Learning as a constant practise also accumulates your store of transferable skills. This 'learning agility'—a term used increasingly in the workplace to indicate openness and ability for learning—is a skill that will hold people in good stead in a changing and uncertain world.

More than ever before, jobs are vulnerable to change and disappearance. A person who is constantly learning will be more adaptable to change, more confident and more able to use their burgeoning cache of transferable skills in work that is being transformed rapidly more than ever before.

Learning also increases neurons and new synaptic connections in the brain; this is neuroplasticity, or the ability for the brain to change and grow throughout life. This encourages healthy brain activity, and the good thing is that age is not an impediment; new neurons will grow every time you do or learn something new.

Research on Growth

A challenge can be good for growth and performance if it is the *right* kind of challenge. Jim Blascovich, a Professor of Psychology at the University of California, identified the term *Challenge Response.* This is when your resources are more than sufficient to meet the demands you face.

Whereas threatening situations switch on the flight or fight parts of your sympathetic nervous system and re-focus mental activities into the survival circuits of your brain to stimulate reactivity, the challenge response facilitates creativity. Dr Friedland explains why this state fosters creativity in his book, *Leading Well from Within*[90]; in the challenge

response, like in the threat response, the sympathetic nervous system in the body activates adrenaline and norepinephrine from the adrenals and cortisol from the hypothalamus and pituitary in the brain. However, in the challenge response, unlike a response to something threatening, there is a lower level of arousal and a more delayed release of cortisol. The combination of these responses leads to greater dilation of peripheral blood vessels and higher cardiac output—the same pattern achieved from aerobic exercise. This leads to better energy utilisation in the brain and muscles. Furthermore, these hormones are switched off more quickly when they aren't needed. The end result is greater focus, increased energy use, increased performance and a better effect on health. Conversely, in a threat response such as chronic stress, blood vessels constrict and the brain releases cortisol, which, if constant, can damage your brain and health over the long term.

Points for Reflection

- Can you think of a time when your challenge response was engaged? What did you learn or accomplish as a result?
- Do you have any examples in your life where you achieved unknown potential? Something you never thought possible for you? What circumstances enabled this to happen?
- Can you provide any new opportunities for growth for the people you manage?
- Are any of the people you manage working at a level lower than their potential?

Contribution

Contribution is more than offering your effort and time for work. Although these yield some satisfaction especially if your effort has been recognised, when it comes to flourishing, contribution is the

opportunity to use and implement the best of you—your talents, strengths and what you love to do especially for work which is meaningful and has value.

The imperative to contribute the best of oneself is particularly strong with people who are intelligent, knowledgeable or highly qualified because they have invested heavily in themselves in order to utilise these skills and gain maximum advantage, personally and professionally. A good, albeit a little extreme, example which shows how much contribution means to skilled people comes from Google's Search Inside Yourself workshop (a Mindfulness approach) which I attended in London. The instructor told us about his volunteer experience in Greece with refugees from Syria. Among the refugees were highly qualified people such as lawyers and teachers who said they felt so impotent and useless and likened their existence to being 'like cattle' merely existing to being fed breakfast, lunch and dinner. The demise of their morale wasn't only because of their tragic physical circumstances, it was also because their sense of value and purpose had been eroded too. What they strongly needed was to contribute their usefulness and skills; it was an innate part of their identity and personal ethos but these circumstances stripped this away from them.

Contribution is more impacting when it utilises strengths. This is because they usually align with things you love doing and have a need to be expressed and utilised. Using a simple example, if you love cooking, you will proactively put yourself in charge and undertake the task with dedication.

Regardless of whether your contribution is effort based or strengths based, it becomes more valuable when it is 'causal'. That is, when it contributes to progress or a result such as reaching a milestone, resolving a problem or developing a new product. You feel your work is valuable and worthwhile and it amplifies motivation manifold.

This is backed up by Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer in their book, *The Progress Principle*[91] where they surveyed hundreds of managers around the world, ranging from CEOs to project leaders, about what motivates employees. Of all the positive events that influence motivation,

their findings showed the single most powerful is progress in meaningful work.

So managers need to ensure that people feel their work is generating outcomes that are useful and meaningful. Even with repetitive or maintenance work such as inputting data or producing routine reports, it's important that managers craft the work so that its value and benefits are clear. One way to do it is to see if there's any opportunity for enhancing the work. For example, a junior but bright member of one of my teams was responsible for pulling together a report showing the number of technical errors and customer experience issues on the company's customer website. This was a routine gathering exercise. Gradually, I asked her to include the progress on the resolution to give more information. This was followed up by analysing the revenue cost of errors or bad interface design. This latter move gave the reporting instantly higher value and significance and, as a result, quickened design changes and highlighted the need for better diagnostic tools. The usefulness and insights that were being revealed elevated the value of the reporting, and my team member started to give updates directly to the General Manager of our division, which did a lot for her confidence and ownership of the work.

Contrary to some commonly held beliefs, most people do not need to be coaxed to put effort in—they *do* want to put their best selves to work. The imperative to do so often means that they are happy to ignore the boundaries of their job descriptions and work beyond them if it means working to their strengths.

A big demotivator is working below your level of competence. This doesn't mean working below the requirements of your professional grade, it means working below your best ability and potential. When this happens, it can be demoralising and bring on disengagement.

The quality of contribution is also unique by each person. Two people doing the same job will bring different elements to it. One may be more detailed, another more high-level. Personal traits will also influence working style and preferences. Whereas one may be stronger

in communication and building relationships, another may prefer working alone with his head buried in figures.

Managers must recognise the unique strengths and traits of each person. But how people occur can be subjective and humans will make judgements through the filter of their own perception. One manager may assess a person as proactive and go-getting while another may see him as self-promoting and arrogant. So where possible, craft the work around the person's strengths if work output and quality is not being compromised.

In the last few years, a strengths based focus has become popular among writers and trainers such as Marcus Buckingham. This approach deemphasises the focus on weaknesses and how to overcome them and instead puts the focus on what people do well and to amplify that.

Points for Reflection

- Think of a time when you worked on something that contributed to a big step forward in progress or the completion of a goal. How did it make you feel?
- Consider the work roles and responsibilities of the people you manage. Do they feel their work is meaningful and contributes to progress?
- Are the people you manage making the most of their strengths and what they love doing?

Respect

Respecting people regardless of their rank and grade is not a notion that has taken hold in the workplace. A strong surviving element of industrial era management is that of hierarchy and subordination—people being in their place. For some managers, this means that their right to oversee their people grants them human superiority, greater

worth and a licence to treat their people without respect. Reverence is reserved for seniors and not the people they manage. Disrespect does not only refer to behaviours such as fierce admonishments, anger, dismissiveness or belittling. People also feel disrespected when they are ignored or excluded, something the brain registers in the same way as physical pain. If the need for respect as a motivator sounds too tame, then consider the fact that according to Professor Christine Porath, the author of *Mastering Civility: A Manifesto For The Workplace*[92], people who felt respected by their managers were healthier, more focused, more engaged and more likely to stay with the organisation. When Dr Porath asked 20,000 employees around the world what they most wanted from their leaders today, the number one answer was respect.

In contrast, when people felt they were treated with incivility (a term Dr Porath uses to describe disrespect), it made people less motivated with 66% cutting back effort and 12% leaving the company. It also affected performance. Researchers in Israel showed that medical teams exposed to rudeness performed worse not only in all their diagnostics but also in all the procedures they did[93].

Unfortunately, incivility is all too common according to her USA based research. She found that 98% of the workers had experienced bad behaviour. I personally have seen senior managers shout at people, telling them to get other jobs and generally treat their people with contempt. The effect this has on people can be devastating. It tears their self-esteem to shreds, induces stress and depression and affects their personal and family lives. Even if disrespect is not overt, the absence of respect such as a lack of acknowledgement or ignoring the person can be used as a tactic for weak managers to retain a sense of superiority and can also be used as a weapon to withdraw any notion of significance or dignity for someone.

As a manager, giving respect to people shows they matter. This small gesture that costs nothing can yield great returns. It contributes significantly to their self-esteem and confers worthiness and significance. This can be powerful coming from a person in authority. It is generously

given by an emotionally talented manager who has self-acceptance and therefore plenty left in personal reserves for others.

Bill Kalyan, former Head of Sales and Service for UK based Autoglass, featured in the case study in Chapter 5, created a highly engaged employee culture with employee respect being a keystone of his 'Voice of the Employee' programme. He would make a point of saying good morning and good night to people when their paths crossed, no matter what the rank of the employee was. Something as simple as that had a huge effect on how people felt they were treated at work.

Giving respect to the people being managed doesn't mean deference, being too nice or losing authority. It means treating people with dignity—a quality of benevolent leadership as discussed in Chapter 5. Some cultures may find this challenging. In Japan, hierarchies are strong and it's the bosses who are dignified with veneration and respect, even reserving the head of the table, whether it be for meetings or dinner, strictly for the most senior person. However, in my experience of working in Asia, respecting the people you manage does not require cultural adaptation. All people respond positively to being respected; it makes them feel good and thus, motivated.

I often used to think about the responsibilities of many of the people I managed. Amongst them were parents, mortgage holders, multiple property owners, spouses, carers to elderly parents, charity fundraisers, Sunday school teachers and MBA degree holders. They were managing their lives responsibly and diligently so why would they be denied respect once they became a 'subordinate' in the workplace? Why would I need to check the timing of people's arrival and departure when they already managed several important responsibilities in their lives, and also produced results in the workplace? Innocent until proven guilty was my motto.

An illustration of how motivating respect can be comes from a podcast interview featuring cardiologist Dr Caldwell Esselstyn[94] who inspired the former USA president Bill Clinton to change his diet to plant based for his heart condition. In the podcast, he told the interviewer that getting people to completely change their pattern of eating for

life was difficult but his success rate was an incredible 90% adherence to the programme. This is impressive and far outstrips other behaviour modification rates for patients. The key Dr Esselstyn said was showing patients respect by giving them your time, care and individual attention. He personally sees the patients every two weeks at first, gives them lots of information and then reduces the schedule, which is still more frequent than most cardiologists. This is a great example of how respect includes acknowledging the person fully and in return getting a committed level of response.

Showing respect can be as simple as smiling, saying good morning, humbly asking questions and listening attentively. I call this generous listening and it's a great way to show respect. This way of listening means you don't override what they're saying with your own interpretation or mentally formulate your response while they're talking so you're ready to respond as soon as they've stopped. As the late Stephen R. Covey once said, "Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply."[21]

Respect also means consideration for the whole person, knowing they have homes to go to, families to care for and partners to be with.

Respecting people does not mean a manager cannot guide or correct their work. Feedback can be given with civility and respect. In fact, when a person knows they are respected, they receive feedback as helpful guidance rather than admonishments.

Points for Reflection

- Have you experienced a lack of respect from a boss in your working life? How did it make you feel?
- How do you define respect?
- How do you show respect to the people you manage?

21. Author of The 7 habits of highly effective people, Powerful lessons in personal change

Recognition

Recognition for work well done is one of the more traditional forms of motivation. However, when it comes to people potential and encouraging people to work to high standards, recognising when people produce work of excellence or when they go beyond expectations and give significant discretionary effort, it is crucial for motivation and ensuring that level of performance continues. Simply put, why would anyone put their all into producing optimum results if they weren't acknowledged in any meaningful way? A report by Sloan MIT Management Review in 2022[95] stated that high performing employees were more likely to leave companies that failed to distinguish between high performers and laggards when it came to recognition and reward. Such companies had higher attrition rates. The report added:

> *The issue is not compensation below market rates, but rather recognition — both informal and financial — that is not linked to effort and results. High-performing employees are the most likely to resent a lack of recognition for their results, which means that companies may be losing some of their most productive workers during the Great Resignation*[22].

Recognition not only boosts self-esteem, it also leads to higher employee engagement, increased productivity and loyalty to the company. A 2023 report entitled Empowering Workplace Culture Through Recognition[96], produced by Gallup and Workhuman[23] showed that employees who strongly agree that recognition is an important part of their organization's culture were 3.7 times as likely to be engaged and about half as likely to experience frequent burnout than those who do not.

However, it seems most bosses give out recognition sparingly. According to Gallup, only one in three workers in the USA strongly agreed that they received recognition or praise in the past seven days.

22. A term coined after record numbers of US employees left the workforce in 2021
23. A USA based company providing employee recognition technical solutions

And employees who did not feel adequately recognised were twice as likely to say they'll quit in the next year[97]. However, the effects go beyond mere disgruntlement. In his book, *Leaders Eat Last*, Simon Sinek quotes a study by University College London where the findings showed people who didn't feel recognised for their efforts at work were more likely to suffer from heart disease[98].

Recognition has more impact when it is spontaneous, personal, authentic and timely—that is soon after the event; therefore, it shouldn't be reserved only for appraisal time or formal recognition events. When it's a publicly declared commendation from a senior manager in a large meeting or conference, it can have an even greater effect.

Recognition doesn't have to be a formalised programme such as awards, grand dinners or even gift vouchers; it can be a powerful motivator when given genuinely to the individual as simply as a written or verbal acknowledgment by a manager or the seniors above. One of the most motivating forms of recognition is giving credit, a subject which can be contentious in work as many scramble for its glory, especially managers. For example, a report shouldn't just display the manager's name as author but also the names of the people who crunched the numbers. In conversation or email communications, especially to a wider audience or senior managers, acknowledging people by name and how their contribution made a difference can be powerfully motivating.

Managers should also be aware that people value recognition differently. Monetary rewards are actually not the most effective ways to recognise people especially if a level of accepted remuneration has been reached anyway. Profit related bonuses are great to receive but as they're given to everyone eligible, they don't offer the same boost that comes from personal acknowledgement. What many people want is personal recognition that is meaningful to them. For some, this means being publicly credited especially if it was high profile work or produced significant outcomes. For others, it could mean verbal acknowledgement and appreciation from the manager. One of the ways I would recognise people would be to give them more ownership and visibility so they were publicly known to be instrumental in delivering the work, especially

for high profile projects. Also, I would often take members of my team on overseas trips with me and they loved that.

One of the ways I personally liked being recognised was being given more responsibility. I sometimes deputised for one of my senior managers in his absence and also was given some of his responsibilities such as interviewing people for new management roles in the department.

Managers can also be creative and resourceful in how they recognise people, especially as many do not have entertainment budgets at their disposal. But many do have discretion or contacts in the right places and can make things happen. One of my most memorable experiences was when working in British Airways and being given the chance to fly London to New York and back by Concorde in the late 1990s before it was decommissioned and put permanently out of service. I had completed a six month project for a senior manager that had been received very well. As a way of recognition, he arranged for me to skip the twelve month waiting list for free Concorde flights[24]. To say it was a thrill was an understatement! In another personal airline example, two web designers had done a great job in designing the interface for a new website under my management. I was on good terms with a senior flight training manager in the Flight Operations department, who had invited me to a session in the Boeing 747 flight simulator whenever I wanted. This was a rare and much sort after treat but rather than lap it up for myself, I arranged for these two young designers to have a go instead. They were over the moon.

It is important to note that there will come a time when someone on the path of potential will eventually outgrow their existing role to a level that cannot be ignored. You cannot continue to expand their responsibilities and see them achieve successes without addressing their grade, salary or promotion prospects. Many managers would take no action in such events and prefer to continue reaping the rewards; however, if an organisation wishes to retain its best people, then ultimate recognition in the form of job reassessment or promotion has to be commensurate with their achievements and competencies.

24. Offered free to act as a courier for urgent documents and not as a staff benefit.

Research on Recognition

Research from Gallup on the importance of recognition shows some significant findings.

The companies in this study had high employee engagement scores and recognition and praise were regularly employed as powerful motivators. They found that employees who receive regular recognition increase their productivity, receive higher loyalty and satisfaction scores from customers and are more likely to stay with their organisation.

Their research reinforces the effectiveness of recognition the most when it is honest and tailored to how the individual wants to be recognised. As their report states:

> *Acknowledging employees' best work can be a low-cost endeavour -- it can be as small as a personal note or a thank-you card. But the key is to know what makes it meaningful and memorable for the employee, and who is doing the recognizing.* [99]

The data revealed that the most memorable recognition comes most often from an employee's manager (28%), followed by a high-level leader or CEO (24%), the manager's manager (12%), a customer (10%) and peers (9%).

The types of recognition that respondents said were the most memorable were:

- Public recognition or acknowledgment via an award, certificate or commendation.
- Private recognition from a boss, peer or customer.
- Receiving or obtaining a high level of achievement through evaluations or reviews.
- Promotion or increase in scope of work or responsibility to show trust.
- Monetary award such as a trip, prize or pay increase.
- Personal satisfaction or pride in work.

Points for Reflection

- Think of a time when you were recognised for something you did well or accomplished. How did it make you feel?
- Do you recognise the people you manage for their good work on a regular basis? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Think of up to three people you manage. In each case, what form of recognition would be motivating for them personally?

Psychological and Emotional Safety

Psychological and emotional safety in work is not a concept deeply embedded in the workplace as a requirement or recognised as a significant benefit. However, it is a key factor in creating an environment removed from fear and stress and one which allows people to be authentic, express their best selves, feel safe and rise to their potential without risk of feeling humiliated, shut down or criticised.

Organisational Behavioural scientist, Professor Amy Edmondson of Harvard, first introduced the concept of 'team psychological safety' and defined it as 'a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking'.[100]

According to Professor Edmondson, people in work focus on managing the impressions of themselves so that they don't appear ignorant, incompetent, intrusive or negative. But this also means people refrain from asking questions, appearing vulnerable, offering ideas or critiquing the status quo.

One of the first major studies on team psychological safety was done by Google in 2016 in a four year study in their quest to find out what makes for great teams. They had always assumed it was about putting the most talented people together however, the research revealed that it was in fact, about people feeling safe to be and express themselves, and this was the single most important factor in high performing teams. [101]

How psychological safety translates into quantitative benefits for companies was analysed by Gartner Research in 2020[102] and they found the following:

- 27% reduction in turnover
- 76% more engagement
- 50% more productivity
- 74% less stress
- 29% more life satisfaction
- 57% workers more likely to collaborate
- 26% greater skills preparedness since workers learn at a faster rate when they feel psychologically safe
- 67% higher probability that workers will apply a newly learned skill on the job

The managers are the crucial factor in creating a psychologically safe space by creating a culture of safety within their microculture. They must lead by example by inviting opinion, openly listening, accepting differing views and acknowledging all contributions. This means encouraging quiet voices to come forward and avoiding groupthink, which is swaying the group to think according to the dominant voice, which is usually the manager's.

It is also important in cultures such as the one in Hong Kong, where I worked as a manager. Making a good impression was crucially important to people, and a loss of face was deemed to be a dishonour; therefore, anything that risked personal embarrassment or indicated fault was shunned.

Emotional safety, a term I created after examining the micro culture I had created as a manager, means being included, feeling supported, being accepted and having trust in your boss and colleagues. These feelings are springboards for launching self-confidence and workplace harmony.

Simon Sinek in his book, *Leaders Eat Last* [103], refers to the Circle of Safety as our space of safety, care and support. He says as social animals, we feel stress when we feel unsupported. This doesn't just mean tyrannical

bosses or the lack of positive words. Feeling unsupported can also come from people who are indifferent to us, show no acknowledgment, only interact when necessary or make us feel we don't belong. When we work in such an environment, even if there is no major threat such as a toxic boss, people will suffer from what Sinek calls constant 'low-grade anxiety'. It's an environment where most people care primarily for themselves with no one going out of their way to protect another. When this happens, it has consequences on the whole team as cooperation falters and social bonds become hard to formulate.

Having friends at work or colleagues you trust and can be authentic with, is a significant contributor for engagement[25]. Surprisingly, it also affects performance. As the book, *It's The Manager,* by Jim Clifton and Jim Harter says:

> *When employees have a deep sense of affiliation with their team members, they take positive actions that benefit the business – actions they may not otherwise even consider*[104].

When a person feels supported and safe at work, it generates a whole different level of output and energy. The freedom to express oneself, contribute and perform is amplified manifold. It becomes comfortable to be your authentic self rather adjusting to fit in.

Feeling emotionally safe encourages light heartedness, social ease and positive interactions and so gives rise to greater team cooperation. When everyone feels supported and valued, there is no need to guard your territory against other people. Goodwill and even laughter emerges, and far from being distractions in work, they give rise to states of creativity, flexible thinking and greater ability for problem solving.

I believe this is also the best environment for embracing diverse groups of people, no matter what their skin colour, culture, nationality, sexual preferences or gender is. Large corporate cultures in particular, are conventional by nature and have types they deem 'a good fit' and this maybe alienating for those who aren't a typical match. This need

25. In Gallup's employee engagement survey, Q12 one of the questions is whether you have a best friend at work.

to fit in also applies to innovative technology companies despite their progressive stance as was conveyed to me by an employee of one the world's largest and well known technology companies. A basic tenet of emotional safety is inclusivity and I believe this can offer more benefit than diversity training. Because implicit in and integral to emotional safety is the core value that *everyone* is safe no matter what their identity or differences from the norm are. In fact, much diversity training highlights differences and risks setting off resentment from all sides. When the manager sets the example and creates a microculture to reinforce belonging and acceptance, then people will entrain themselves to this behaviour too, thus mirroring the example set by the manager. This isn't only good for the individual, it is also good for the whole team.

When people feel safe, they also become very resilient. In this state, they can cope with mishaps, let downs and even strong correction or direction, treating it stoically as a learning and growth experience rather than a failure which diminishes their confidence and self-esteem.

Research on Psychological and Emotional safety

What happens at a psychological and neurological level when people operate in or out of safety makes for fascinating reading. It is well known that stress creates cortisol in the body. What is less acknowledged is what constitutes stress. Stress and anxiety have less to do with the work we do and more to do with weak management and leadership, says Simon Sinek in his book, *Leaders Eat Last*[105]. Working with such leadership can mean a constant drip feed of cortisol, which is dangerous to our health in the long term. This hormone was designed to be released in the body at times of stress and danger when it would divert all energy into your fight or flight ability and away from functions such as immunity and digestion until danger ceased. Our bodies interpret modern day stressors such as unhealthy workplaces as dangers and when we're locked in such places on a daily basis with constant anxiety, immunity is compromised ongoingly. This can have devastating and lasting consequences such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and depression. Is it no wonder then that

these along with cancer have become the prevailing sicknesses in the modern age?

What is less known is the flip side to this scenario. This is when great things happen inside your body as a consequence of positive emotions emanating from feeling safe, supported and accepted. This is thanks to serotonin and oxytocin. Simon Sinek calls these the selfless chemicals that keep the Circle of Safety strong. These chemicals get secreted in the presence of happy emotions, and they help to create bonds of friendship and trust and looking out for each other. In turn, this generates security, fulfilment, belonging and trust. When feelings of safety are missing and these chemicals cease to be created, our cooperation falters, we become more selfish and stop looking out for others too.

Serotonin amongst other things drives us to seek recognition from others and gives us the high when we get approval from our peers and superiors.

Oxytocin is better known as the love hormone. However, it's not just produced when feeling love for children or partners—it's also vital to our survival instincts. Without it, we wouldn't form bonds of friendship or have empathy, trust or social connections. Now here's the rub—cortisol inhibits the release of oxytocin. In situations of anxiety and feelings of low safety, the capacity to bond, support and look out for others as well as for the organisation is severely weakened. It makes us more selfish, less trusting of others and ensures we put our needs first. This isn't good for our emotional and physical health, and neither is it good for the organisation.

Unfortunately, many of us have experienced situations like this. One of the worst managers I ever had would criticise his team fiercely and tell his least favourite people to look for other jobs. There was little cohesion and trust among people in the team, with everyone looking after their own survival. In contrast, the best manager I ever worked for supported his team to the hilt. There was great camaraderie, trust and support among us too, and we would even socialise together after work hours.

Dr Daniel Friedland has looked at stress and safety and how their effect on the brain alters behaviour and emotions. In his book, *Leading Well From Within*[106], Dr Friedland maps out what he calls the triune brain and shows each part of that triune and how it corresponds to its counterpart in Maslow's hierarchy of needs[26]. If we don't have our needs met, then we are constantly drawing resources from that part of the brain. For example, if we don't feel safe in the face of an intimidating boss, we are constantly engaging with our reptilian brain, which is involved in flight or fight responses in order to seek safety, but this eventually leaves us exhausted. Furthermore, we cannot activate the next part of the brain, the limbic, to engage with feelings of love and belonging, therefore forgoing our need to connect with people. And finally, we withdraw resources away from the neocortex and the ability to experience self-esteem and feelings of significance. Is it any wonder then, that, an uncaring boss has huge power to diminish your sense of self-worth?

As your higher brain circuits also give rise to inspiration, creativity and good decision-making, we can't be fully innovative or creative when we don't feel safe, as all resources are being channelled into our survival reptilian brain.

The opposite is also true. When we have our needs for safety and belonging met then we have the capacity to engage with our higher brain and allow it to generate all the positive emotions and behaviours such as empathy, morality, compassion, decision-making, creativity and emotional regulation. These are critical states for leaders, managers and, also for the people being managed too. Thus, all levels within an organisation must feel safe in order to fulfil their potential. A manager terrorised by his senior manager will be operating out of his reptilian survival brain, pumping out cortisol and unable to access higher emotional states, therefore, lacking the capacity to provide selfless support for his people.

26. An American psychologist who developed a theory of human motivation in 1943, expressed as a hierarchy of needs.

Case Study

Psychological and Emotional Safety in a High Pressure Environment

Amit Mohan knows what it's like to work in a high-pressure, demanding role. A former Head of Corporate Banking and then Chief Financial Officer for a large, prestigious bank in West Africa, he was headhunted for his current position to head a multimillion-dollar fund based in The Hague, Netherlands. But unusually for his industry and seniority, he says he really enjoys the people part of his work. One of his priorities has been to create an uplifting environment, where everyone feels they are contributing equal value regardless of their role or position. One of his recruits was a young female intern, who, with his mentoring, saw her confidence blossom and now chairs the weekly meetings despite being junior in rank. He encourages people to have a voice and ensures they are heard; for example, he makes it clear that he wants to hear people's questions and views in meetings. He is also accepting of mistakes, even though he works in a highly regulated and unforgiving industry. He believes if people can learn from mistakes, improve and come back better next time, then it's not really a mistake. Amit has created an emotionally and psychologically safe environment for his people. Not only are they thriving as a result but so is the business- he has an extremely impressive track record of delivering significant financial growth.

Points for Reflection

- Was there any point in your career you felt you weren't free to express yourself, felt you didn't belong or weren't being heard? How did that affect you?
- As a manager, how safe is the microculture you've created? Do people feel safe, accepted and freely expressed?
- If you are the manager of a team of people, how well do they bond and work together? Do they support and respect each other? How is this a reflection of you?

8

Challenges in Your Emotional Talent Journey

Dealing With and Overcoming Them

"Being Challenged in Life is Inevitable, Being Defeated is Optional"

Roger Crawford, Motivational Speaker and Best Selling Author

The benefits of being an emotionally talented manager are enormous for the manager, the people and the organisation—the triple win. However, being emotionally talented is not something that has taken root in most organisations. So if you as a manager are embarking on this developmental journey alone without the support of your organisation, there may be some challenges to deal with. But don't worry, they are not insurmountable. This chapter outlines these challenges and provides some ways in which they can be dealt with.

When Your Organisational Culture Doesn't Have Strong People Focus

Despite the many declarations of most organisations aiming to be great employers and taking care of their people, this doesn't show up in many realities especially when it comes to engaging people with both heart and mind. The challenge for most managers wishing to develop their emotional talent and to champion their people will be that there is little in their organisational culture that demonstrates and encourages this. There will be very few role models. This is important, as culture can be a strong invisible force for compliance. I overcame this during my corporate management career because of a resilience and conviction built up from years of personal development

work. I was also an experienced manager and beyond learning the basic management ropes. The first thing to remember in dealing with this hurdle is the point mentioned earlier in this book—that you own your emotional state. It's your emotional property and it's not shaped by organisational standards. You are the king of your emotional domain. All the people-focused managers and leaders I interviewed for this book were that way because of personal conviction and belief and not because it was mirrored in their organisational environment.

The second thing is that you will need to have great self-belief and conviction for maintaining your emotional talent in the face of little that encourages it in the culture. I've made a strong case for the importance of emotional talent and people flourishing into their best potential in this book; however, the strongest motivator for developing this management style will be when you see the results from the people you manage—and that's when others will take note too. Finally, remember you don't need to go out and evangelise your new found realisations. You can bring them in slowly, quietly and consistently.

New Managers with People Responsibilities

New managers put themselves under a lot of pressure to perform well and manage the impressions others have of them. At this stage they and their careers are usually the priority and not the people they manage. And they're learning their style from other managers in the organisation.

This doesn't mean that emotional talent can only be cultivated in mature, experienced managers. It means that new managers need good role models to emulate and learn from. However, these are few. This book provides valuable information and learning that can apply to new managers as well as those untrained in people management skills. Even if you're under pressure to conform to the organisational culture, you can still bring the best of your personal qualities to bear in your people management skills. Don't feel these have to disappear in order to be an effective manager. In fact, you'll be more respected by the people you lead if they see you're working in their best interests too.

Flourishing in Roles Requiring Strict Compliance and Adherence to Policy

Many of the examples and references made in this book refer to work that is developmental or innovative which requires qualities such as creativity, autonomy and continuous improvement. But what about work which has strict enforcement of rules and policy, is repetitive, manual or operational? This would include work such as financial, medical, mechanical, safety or operational. These may not require creativity and innovation but they do need diligence, accuracy, timeliness and action. People still need to feel valued, trusted and supported no matter what the nature of the job is. One thing that affects focus and attention is being treated with respect. When it's missing, it can have dire consequences. Christine Porath, a management professor who has researched incivility and its effects in the workplace, gives the example of medical errors in her TEDx University of Nevada talk[107] In one case a doctor shouted at his medical team and right afterwards and they gave the wrong medication to a patient despite the instructions being clearly stated on their chart. The patient died. She also showed research from Israel where medical teams exposed to rudeness performed not only worse in their diagnostics but in all procedures they did. This was mainly because teams exposed to rudeness didn't share information readily and stopped seeking help from teammates. Something Professor Porath says she sees in all industries.

Customer facing roles deemed operational, such as call centres and airport check-in staff, are more than cogs in wheels; they represent the heart as well as the 'machinery' of the organisation and when they feel good their energy is transferred to the customer.

Keeping the Balance Between Benevolence and Authority

Being a supportive and caring benevolent manager does not mean you lose your authority as a manager. You have a responsibility to lead and ensure the work is delivered to the best of its ability through

people who are motivated, happy and thriving. You may also have to take unpleasant or even unpopular decisions, correct work, override opinions or have difficult conversations. It is important to remember this as you practise a more supportive and accessible model of people management.

If there are any concerns that you may appear weak if you're kind and supportive, then I suggest you review the section on self-awareness and self-acceptance to reflect on any need to assert your authority in order to be taken seriously.

On the other hand, don't feel you have to people please or be liked. People will respond very favourably in return for your support and be very grateful so you'll get the admiration and respect anyway. People also like to see strength and leadership in their managers; they need someone who will take initiative and have the courage of conviction.

The crucial thing is that benevolence and authority are not incompatible.

When People Outgrow Their Roles

When people flourish, they continue to grow in all kinds of ways–in their experience, skills and self-confidence. It is therefore inevitable that at some point they will outgrow their roles even after the responsibilities have been expanded. This happened with all the people who flourished in my teams. When they reach this level, they have become very accomplished and are valuable to the organisation—remember they are the small percentage of engaged people who keep the organisation progressing and thriving and are your most valuable return on human investments. Your role is to ensure they are placed in jobs where they continue to flourish, ideally in your team but at least somewhere in the organisation. You cannot have a growth mindset and expect people to stay in the same role with the same grade and salary as when they first started if they've expanded their responsibilities and competencies.

Many managers would balk at the idea of investing the time and energy in developing people for them to leave within five years for

another role. However, within that time they have contributed immensely to your successes and are worth more than two people with average performance. Better you have extraordinary performance from a person in a limited time who can deliver multiple successes than an average performer who takes considerably longer to produce results, which themselves maybe lacklustre or just passable.

When People Don't Flourish Despite Your Efforts

In my experience of managing people as an emotionally talented manager, I have only had to fire one person, move another to a more suitable role and continued to retain one person who didn't grow much from the start to the end of managing her. Everyone else progressed forward in huge leaps and bounds. There will be times when the person is mismatched for the role, cannot take it to the level you need or just doesn't have the motivation and enthusiasm. This is the point of accepting that you can create the conditions for people to flourish but then the rest is up to them to respond to. If you feel your standards of excellence aren't being met or work is being compromised, take action.

Have one to one conversations with them to determine exactly where the issue lies or to explain what you need from them. If this still doesn't resolve your needs, the next possible actions could be to move them to a more suitable position or give them work that doesn't compromise quality. This isn't being heartless or uncaring. You need to maintain high standards and ultimately, they need to be in roles where they are happy and thriving.

Self-Care and Resilience for the Emotionally Talented Manager

It is important that you maintain a practise that keeps you committed and strong on your emotional talent journey. There is unlikely to be a strong, external champion that will provide the conditions for you to stay resilient in the same way you will be for the people you manage.

This is where the power of a coach or mentor can help enormously if you are able to get this; however, many people will not have the luxury or opportunity to do so.

Identify your source of encouragement and motivation to keep you going. Review your answers in the points of reflection at the end of each chapter, maintain your self-acceptance practices and allow yourself to feel good in being the cause of people flourishing. Have regular time with people who uplift you and believe in your efforts.

Remember, being a champion for people or a benevolent leader does not mean being selfless. You need to keep yourself fully satisfied and enriched too. One of the things that always worked well for me especially in times when I needed a boost was personal development workshops and seminars, which were always powerful reminders of my responsibility to make things happen in my life. I also have a daily meditation practice by Dr Joe Dispenza that always elevates me to a higher place.

When the Manager is Not Engaged with Work

If you're not engaged and enthused about your work, then this will come through for everyone to see, especially your people. If you're a caring, supportive manager, then you will get some commitment and loyalty back from them but it's difficult to imagine how the lack of your energy and enthusiasm will inspire your people to excel. If you don't love your work, how will you generate the energy that makes people love theirs? If this is the case, your first step is to do some deep thinking and soul searching to find out why you feel this way and then do something to resolve it. In the meantime, you have a responsibility to the people you lead so maintain that at least for them.

Points for Reflection

- Do you anticipate any challenges for you in becoming an emotionally talented manager? If so, what are they?
- How do you think you can overcome them?
- What three practices can you start immediately to maintain your emotional talent development, assuming: (1) you are doing this alone and (2) there are very few or no role models in your workplace that inspire you?

Summary of Part 2

Emotional talent

- Emotional talent is a critical need for managers who want to take their people to levels of flourishing. It is the ability to recognise and manage emotions within yourself that gives rise to a positive sense of self and healthy interactions with people and the external world.
- When managers lack emotional talent, they tend to prioritise their desire for personal glory over the good of their people or even the greater good, which includes the organisation. At best, they simply don't know how to be so people thrive. This is why when a manger lacks emotional talent, people will not flourish.
- When managers have Emotional talent they experience: Being comfortable with who they are, having the capacity to consider others, a healthy sense of self and the respect of others.

Beingness Precedes Behavioural Change and Actions

- Ontology is the study of being. Actions and behaviours emerge from how one is being as a natural expression of oneself. How managers are being will impact people and their behaviour, performance and wellbeing.
- How one is 'being' signals one's personal characteristics to the world. They become known as hallmarks of character.
- Step 1 of emotional talent development includes specific states of being for managers who lead people to flourish.

Developing Emotional Talent

- Step 1: **Inner Self attributes:** These are the 'being' attributes (What the manager must be). They are: self-awareness, self-acceptance, integrity and care.
- Step 2: **Manager's Behaviours:** These consist of the 'doing' attributes. (How the manager should think and behave.) These are: determination and will, growth mindset, high standards and benevolent authority.
- Step 3: **The Motivating Factors:** These are the factors that lead to people flourishing. They are: autonomy, growth, contribution, respect, recognition and psychological and emotional safety.

There are three conditions which are integral to the motivating factors, these are:

- Intrinsic motivation: The work must be rewarding in itself.
- Self-esteem: The work must enhance your sense of worth.
- Inner Volition: You do the work out of your own free will and not because of the need to comply.

Appendix

Q12® Questionnaire used in Gallup's Employee Engagement Survey 2022

Q1. I know what is expected of me at work.
Q2. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right.
Q3. At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day.
Q4. In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work.
Q5. My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person.
Q6. There is someone at work who encourages my development.
Q7. At work, my opinions seem to count.
Q8. The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important.
Q9. My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work.
Q10. I have a best friend at work.
Q11. In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress.
Q12. This last year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow.

Source: https://www.gallup.com/q12/

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In writing this book I was moved by how forthcoming many people were to support my success in getting published. One of them was Daniel Friedland MD who was dedicated to elevating humanity globally through conscious leadership workshops and serving as an advisor to many progressive organisations. I was therefore saddened to hear that he passed away before his time in 2021. I first met Dr Friedland in London in 2016 when he presented a talk on Conscious Leadership. His work on how positive and negative emotions affect brain states, creativity and motivation was exactly the piece I'd been looking for, and it helped me tremendously in developing some key themes in this book. His book was truly valuable during this process. He totally supported my work and had offered to help in any way to get it published. I am grateful for his time in phone calls and emails, and for agreeing to endorse this book, which alas was not able to be fulfilled.

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About The Author

Harjeet K. Virdee

Harjeet Virdee integrates her extensive twenty-five-year corporate career with over two decades of dedicated exploration, study, and practical application in the realm of human potential and emotional fulfilment. Her unique blend of hands-on experience and deep expertise forms the foundation for how individuals truly thrive in the workplace.

As the Founder of Beyond Bounds, Harjeet leads immersive workshops that revolve around the core themes of human potential, wholeness, and fulfilment. These sessions not only challenge prevailing paradigms but actively cultivate an environment that fosters expansive thinking and opens doors to new realms of possibility. Harjeet's workshops serve as catalysts for personal and professional growth, inspiring participants to break free from conventional constraints and explore the boundless opportunities that lie beyond established norms.

Boasting a rich international background cultivated through extensive travel during her airline career and a fifteen-year residence in Hong Kong, Harjeet brings a global perspective to her work. British born and currently based in London, UK, her multicultural experiences

infuse a nuanced understanding of diverse work cultures and interpersonal dynamics.

Harjeet's upcoming book, 'Flourish: The Manager's Workbook for Developing Emotional Talent' will be released in 2024 and serves as a follow-on companion to this current book. It offers exercises and practices aimed at developing emotional talent for managers so that their people can flourish.

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