



Business News 04 - Management Style

Our news story today is about the changes in management style taking around the world.

Transcript:

In the past, **status symbols** for senior management were regarded as being very important. These days, some companies are already breaking free from **old-fashioned** ideas of status and **convention**.

In some countries, **open-plan** offices shared by the manager have been popular for quite a long *time*. Recent **indications** show that many more companies are moving towards more open management. Offices shared by managers and other employees are an example of this. The manager may share an office with other employees but usually he or she is at a **discreet** distance from them or has the best position, near the window!

In **Scandinavia**, the idea that "to assume responsibility is, in itself, a **privilege**" has been accepted for a long time. The **participative** style of management sometimes encourages employees to tell the Chief Executive what is wrong with the company and where improvements can be made. As a result, senior management are regarded as more **approachable** by their employees who, **in turn**, feel that their contributions to the company are **valued**.

Management style has changed a lot over the last few years. In the past, management and workers were completely separate, even **to the extent of** having separate restaurants for lunch. Now it's common for companies to operate a **single status policy**, with no separate **canteen** for executives, no executive parking spaces, and the same uniforms for all.

In some companies, "**perks**" formerly enjoyed by senior executives are being extended to all workers. This includes holiday houses, which can be used by employees, and also the opportunity to participate in company share-saver schemes.

In some more traditional companies change has to be introduced more **gradually**, as the symbols of status are regarded as very important by employees. For example, in certain companies, the model of car is an **indicator** of which grade of management a person has reached. Even office furniture and **fittings** can be status symbols. The withdrawal of such items of **recognition** can be seen as **demotivating** in companies where such symbols have been important.

Definitions & Examples:

status symbols (noun)

things which people want to have because they think other people will admire them if they have them, e.g.

Among young people, this brand of designer clothing is the ultimate status symbol.

breaking free (phrase)

separating from; dividing from; moving away from, e.g.

She wants to break free from her parents and start her own life.

old-fashioned (adj.)

not modern, belonging to or typical of a time in the past, e.g.

old-fashioned clothes/ideas/furniture

convention (noun)

(an example of) a usual or accepted way of behaving, especially in social situations, often following an old way of thinking or a custom in one particular society, e.g.

They broke with convention by giving up their jobs and becoming self-sufficient.

Convention dictates that it is the man who asks the woman to marry him and not the reverse.

In many countries, it is the convention to wear black at funerals.

open-plan (adj.)

describes a room or building which has few or no walls inside, so it is not divided into smaller rooms, e.g.

an open-plan office

indications (noun)

signs or signals that something might happen, e.g.

Did they give any indication what course of action they were going to take?

There are few indications (that) the economy is on an upswing.

Helen's face gave no indication of what she was thinking.

discreet (adj.)

careful not to cause embarrassment or attract too much attention, especially by keeping something secret, e.g.

The family made discreet enquiries about his background.

I keep a discreet distance from my staff, just so that they know who's the boss.

Scandinavia (noun)

a region including the countries of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and sometimes Finland and Iceland

privilege (noun)

an opportunity to do something special or enjoyable, e.g.

[+ of + doing sth] I had the privilege of meeting the Queen.

I was given the privilege of being the only member of staff to represent the company at the conference.

participative (adj.)

taking part, being involved

approachable (adj.)

friendly and easy to talk to, e.g.

My boss is very approachable.

in turn (phrase)

one after another, e.g.

He spoke to the three boys in turn.

I'll see each of the applicants in turn.

contributions (noun)

things that you do to help produce or develop something, or to help make something successful, e.g.

She has made a major contribution to our work.

What contribution have you made to the project recently?

valued (adj.)

useful and important, e.g. a valued member of staff

to the extent of (phrase)

so strongly that, e.g.

Some people hold their beliefs very strongly, even to the extent of being prepared to go to prison for them.

single status policy (phrase)

having the same pay structure, working conditions, etc. for all staff across the whole company or organisation

canteen (noun)

a place in a factory, office, etc. where food and meals are sold, often at a lower than usual price

perks (noun)

advantages or benefits, such as money or goods, which you are given because of your job, e.g.

A company car and a mobile phone are some of the perks that come with the job.

traditional (adj.)

following the customs or ways of behaving that have continued in a group of people or society for a long time, e.g.

The school uses a combination of modern and traditional methods for teaching reading.

She's very traditional in her ideas and opinions.

fittings (noun)

small parts or items, e.g.

plumbing fittings electric light fittings

recognition (noun)

when you accept that something is true or real, e.g.

There is a growing recognition of the scale of the problem.

[+ that] There is a general recognition that she's the best person for the job.

demotivating (adj.)

describes something that makes someone less enthusiastic about a job, e.g.

Constant criticism can be very demotivating.

I work so hard but I never get any praise; it's so demotivating.