**Case**

One of his most difficult decisions at Actna was cutting more than 10,000 jobs "The result was that we became a healthier organization," he says. Elease E. Wright, senior vice president of human resources at Actna, says Williams' understanding of people greatly improved the corporate culture. Adds Mark T Bertoloni, executive vice president of regional businesses, "It was a very poisonous environment before It had gone from internal sniping politics, and self-promotion to one of a real team environment focused

on getting things done." Walking through Aetna, one finds Williams' guiding principles displayed on its walls. "Deliver had news carly and personally" "Own your plan and, quick, proactively, act on variances," "Attack the issue, not the person," and "Assume positive intent. They're not just mantras. They represent key elements of the company's operational model. Most employees know them by heart Williams lives by them.

To give employees a better understanding of the competitive landscape and how Aetna earns and spends money, Williams introduced a business literacy program. He also conducts a series of quarterly managers' meetings, regular site visits, and town hall meetings. "We spend a lot of time educating employees about the condition of the business, what our plans were, and their roles in helping us to be successful." he says. "It's really to create an environment in which people know its OK to ask the difficult, tough questions."

Challenges of Being Chairman

As Williams moves into the chairman's seat, some believe letting go of the reins will be difficult. He is undoubtedly a micromanager, involved in every minute detail of running the company. "At heart, he's an engineer and mechanic and now he's a pilot," quips Bertolini. "He shouldn't be screwing around with the engine." Rowe believes that "the Ron years are going to be marked by true industry leadership," and a continued emphasis on customer service.

Questions

1. Identify several of the management roles that Ronald A. Williams is carrying out.

2. In what ways does Williams appear to be a professional manager (someone who applies formal knowledge about management to his or her job)?