

## School Management Skills Briefing



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Hi everyone.  
Hope you all enjoyed the first edition of the newsletter. I am open to any suggestions and comments you might have for future editions. In the following issues we will be exploring different management skills that can be practiced and developed. Let me know if you agree or disagree.

## Developing Management Skills



### STEPS IN GOAL SETTING

Steps in practicing the skill

1. **Identify an employee's key job tasks.** Goal setting begins by defining what it is that you want your employees to accomplish.
2. **Establish specific and challenging goals for each key task.** Identify the level of performance expected of each employee. Specify the target for the employee to hit.
3. **Specify the deadlines for each goal.** Putting deadlines on each goal reduces ambiguity. Deadlines, however, should not be set arbitrarily. Rather, they need to be realistic given the tasks to be completed.
4. **Allow the employee to actively participate.** When employees participate in goal setting, they are more likely to accept the goals.

## Common Leadership Styles

The Department of Education's *Guides for School Management Teams* published in 2000 identifies three common leadership styles currently practiced in South African schools. The three styles are:

**Authoritarian** leaders prefer to keep tight control over staff and learners, and often rely on rules and procedures to run their schools. There is a difference between being **authoritarian** and being **authoritative** - when a principal orders everyone to evacuate the school because of a bomb threat, s/he is being authoritative; when s/he tells them to obey orders on curriculum matters just

Leaders adopting a *laissez-faire* (pronounced "lassay fair") approach do not give their staff much guidance or direction and do not engage creatively with staff members in order to manage or lead them. They are happy to let events take their course. ("Laissez faire" is French for "allow to do".)

**Democratic** leaders prefer to share planning and decision-making and to **guide** their staff, rather than **telling them what to do**. This does not mean that they do not, or should not, make difficult and unpopular decisions when necessary.

Which style do you prefer? Which works best?

### Competition Time

The competition date has been extended due to exam pressures. The winner of the competition will be announced at the beginning of next year.  
Thanks to those who have



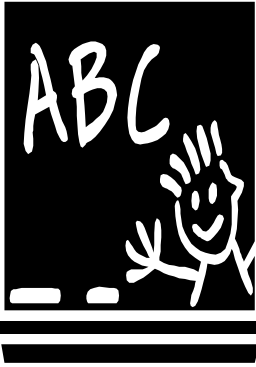
### GOOD LUCK IN THE EXAMINATIONS

To all learners in our schools, especially the Matrics.

### Can this be true?

'By three measures a manager is known:

- The thickness of the carpet in his office.
- The size of his desk.
- The volume of his car's engine.'



# Defining Management: Part 2

Following up from last month's briefing:

A process is a systematic way of doing things. We define management as a process because all managers, regardless of their particular aptitudes or skills, engage in certain interrelated activities to achieve their desired goals.

1. *Planning* implies that managers think through their goals and actions in advance. Their actions are usually based on some method, plan, or logic, rather than on a hunch.

2. *Organising* means that managers coordinate the human and material resources of the

organisation. The effectiveness of an organisation depends on its ability to marshal its resources to attain its goals. Obviously, the more integrated and coordinated the work of an organisation, the more effective it will be. Achieving this coordination is part of the manager's job.

3. *Leading* describes how managers direct and influence subordinates, getting others to perform essential tasks. By establishing the proper atmosphere, they help their subordinates to do their best.

4. *Controlling* means that managers attempt to assure that the organisation is moving toward

its goals. If some part of the organisation is on the wrong track, managers try to find out why and set things right.

Our definition also indicates that managers use *all* the resources of the organisation – its finances, equipment, and information as well as its people – to attain their goals. People are the most important resource of any organisation, but managers would be limiting their achievements if they did not also rely on the other available organisational resources.

Should schools run like businesses? What do you think

## Management as an Organisation

As an organisation, management is about creating formal structures and an establishment based on a mission (or goals), objectives, targets functions and tasks. For example, social and welfare organisations in government management can refer to education and health services, whilst public security management could refer to the police and military.

## Who moved my Cheese?

This is the title of a best-selling book that we recommend. The author is Spencer Johnson, M.D.

The book is a simple parable that reveals profound truths about change. It is an amusing and enlightening story of four characters who live in a "Maze" and look for "Cheese" to nourish them and make them happy. "Cheese" is a metaphor for what you want to have in life – whether it is a good job, a loving relationship, money, a possession, health, or spiritual peace of mind. And the "Maze" is where you look for what you want – the organisation you work in, or the family or community you live in.



We hope to share more of this book with you during the year ahead – so, watch that cheese!

## Happy Holidays

To all Principals, SGB members, educators and learners in all our partner schools.

From all at IPT

Sources of information used in this briefing:

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- Commonwealth Secretariat (1993), *Principles of Management*: Module Two. Commonwealth Secretariat, London

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Dept of Education (2000), *Guides for School Management Teams*, Pretoria



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