

Essential Management Skills

Duration: Two Days

Course Objective: to introduce participants to the complex issues involved in management, and build the foundation skills necessary for successful people managing at any level. Key topics covered include motivation, leadership, understanding & developing your team, conflict handling, delegation, and coaching.

The aim is that every participant should leave with a solid practical skills base, and also a specific action plan in relation to their own team.

With the introduction of the PRISM® profiling tool, participants learn about their behavioural preferences, which in turn helps them understand and engage their own team members, and thus motivate and communicate with them effectively.

By the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify their responsibilities as managers
 - Recognise and apply a range of people management styles
 - Understand how individuals and teams develop
 - Design individual strategies for motivation
 - Handle 'difficult' situations, minimising the need for disciplinary action
 - Give effective feedback
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Day One

- **Examination of existing strengths and weaknesses**

We start by encouraging the participants to think about what traits or characteristics they have that help them as managers and indeed those that hinder them. The focus is on personal characteristics and not technical skills. This exercise encourages group discussion and allows the participants to recognise that they should self-evaluate regularly in order to develop as managers. The discussion throws up lots of issues and problems that managers face, as well as reminding them of the positive characteristics they have. It provides an excellent background to the whole course with many themes and useful examples being drawn out.

- **The role of the manager – What are your responsibilities?**

The aim of this session is to highlight the wide variety of responsibilities a manager has and the issues that this variety presents. The session will start to focus the participants on the whole concept of management and how they have to commit to the role itself. At this point they will begin to recognise the differences between management and leadership and how these headings have a direct association with task management and people management.

- **Examination of people management styles**
Participants will learn about a range of people management styles, and which are appropriate in certain situations. We will discuss the positive and negative characteristics of traditional management styles e.g. directive, collaborative, and supportive, and work out how best they can be utilised in the working environment. Individually the participants will recognise their preferred styles and begin to see the positive impact of developing a flexible approach.
- **Developing people**
This session guides the participants through a 'new employees' development journey and helps them to identify at what stages the different people management styles will be most appropriate. It highlights the need for a flexible approach and recognises the pitfalls of inappropriate use of any one of the styles. It becomes clear by the end of the session that by developing their people they will form the foundation and competencies for effective delegation.
- **The activities of a manager – The practical aspects**
By discussing the basic activities of management, the participants are able to gain an understanding of exactly what they have to do on a regular basis. The activities that will be discussed provide the participants with a framework from which to work and will give some structure to their overall management technique and strategy.

Communication is an ongoing theme that runs throughout this course, and this session also highlights the need for a manager to effectively communicate at all times, focusing participants' attention on various types of communication media, exploring the positive and negative aspects of email, face to face, group discussion etc.
- **Taking responsibility to manage – Action Centred Leadership**
A small amount of time is allocated to this topic, simply to highlight the importance of taking actual responsibility to manage. This is particularly significant for those who have existing roles and have management responsibilities on top of other work. Too often, their management responsibilities become sidelined and only emerge when confronted by problems or awkward situations.
- **Motivation – The theory and the practice**
Motivation as a subject is a theme that runs through this entire course. Clearly, a manager is responsible for maintaining high levels of motivation within his or her team. Almost everything they do has some impact on the levels of motivation of an individual and we discuss the theory, background and practical application of a range of motivational strategies. Most importantly, time will also be spent examining motivational drivers.

- **Developing individual motivational strategies**
Participants will learn to identify classic traits of de-motivation and how to deal with them. Having spent time learning about personal drivers, this session will help the participants to develop individual motivational strategies for their team members. Using their understanding of motivation, we will help the participants to recognise causes of de-motivation and not focus on “quick fix” solutions to deal with its symptoms. They will be encouraged to work on techniques to resolve conflict and disagreement and will work on the skills necessary to avoid using short-term disciplinary measures – the philosophy being that through positive, confident management one can maintain high levels of motivation and avoid problems developing out of control. Practical exercises combined with group discussions will be used to ensure that the participants are confident to use their newly learnt techniques.

Day Two

- **Strategies for dealing with “difficult” personalities**
So-called “difficult” personalities often cause problems for managers, especially inexperienced managers. This session helps participants to recognise why individuals become “difficult” or why individuals suddenly start to behave in a disruptive manner or become rude and difficult to deal with. Managers often blame the individual for this and this session examines why managers must take some responsibility. We examine what conditions have changed to create these behaviours and importantly examine the approach managers use to deal with these personalities. We discuss how one’s attitude can change once you decide an individual is “difficult” or “lazy” and the impact that this can have. Again practical exercises will help to demonstrate the ideas and theories.
- **Techniques for coaching and feedback**
Developing staff and maintaining high levels of performance is a crucial element of the manager’s role. The aim of this session is to give the participants some practical tools and techniques for delivering feedback and coaching in order to enhance the skills and attitude in their teams. Delegation is also examined within this session.
- **Understanding your behavioural preferences (using PRISM® profiling tool)**
PRISM® is not a ‘psychometric test’. It does not measure intelligence, skills or competencies. What it does do is combine the latest discoveries in neuroscience – how the human brain actually works – with well established theories on psychological type, temperament, traits etc., and generates comprehensive, yet easy to understand, ‘Maps’ which illustrate how a person is likely to behave in a variety of situations. It also helps that individual to understand how those behaviour preferences may be perceived by others, be they customers, colleagues, potential employers or line managers. This is of enormous benefit, bearing in mind that most of the stress and conflict in a person’s life is related to how he or she interacts with others.

Through the use of PRISM®, managers are able to:

- Understand their natural behaviour in a range of situations and how that impacts on their role as a manager
- Start to understand why individuals behave in the way that they do
- Be able to develop more effective strategies designed for specific individuals
- Develop better working relationships with individuals and therefore create a more harmonious working environment
- Learn to deal with conflict more effectively
- Understand behaviour to a higher degree and ally that with management techniques to develop a much more rounded approach to management
- Build teams with balance

- **Creating a workable action plan**

In order that the participants maintain the momentum gained from the training back at work, time is allocated at the end of the course to review the key points and ask the participants to create and commit to a workable action plan. This becomes a working document that should be referred to and built upon whenever possible.

ILM Assessment Criteria

As an optional addition to this programme, participants may pay a £150 + vat supplement and complete a post-course assignment with assessment to qualify for an *ILM Endorsed Award*.

The assessment requires participants to provide evidence that they have effectively used some of the key elements of the programme back at work.

At the beginning of the programme, participants are provided with a Learning Diary to compile as they go forward using skills covered on the course. The template will make it easy for them to capture actions and activities, and encourage them to define each entry in terms of the skills used.

Then, 6 weeks after the programme has been completed, we will require participants to:

- Submit their diaries to Phoenix by email, with all entries clearly marked.
- In addition, each participant must write a case study of how they have dealt with a particular situation. This would include a description of the background to it, including how they defined their objective; a section on the actions taken and finally a section on the results seen to date and how they have measured it. In total this would amount to c. 500 words (100; 200; 200)