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ACHIEVING MORE WITH LESS Leader's Guide

CONTENTS

Copyright Waiver		2
Restrictions.		.2
Introduction	3 –	4
Part 1 Key Themes and Learning Points	5	- 9
Part 2 Key Themes and Learning Points	.10 –	12
Suggested Outline for a 2 – 4 Hour Training Session	13 –	18
Notes	19 –	21
Appendix 1 – Matrix		.22
Appendix 2 - Flipchart		.23
Appendix 3 – Matrix 2		24
Appendix 4 – Overhead Masters	25 –	- 48

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INTRODUCTION

In the public and private sector alike the pressures to Achieve More With Less are increasing daily.

Enterprises have been restructured and downsized, leaving fewer people to achieve results. Investors, whether in the public or private domain, demand greater returns. The expectations of customers continue to increase.

The pressure is well and truly on! No wonder so many employees at every level, perhaps most of all supervisors, feel beleaguered and besieged. How can we achieve greater levels of productivity, lowered costs and enhanced value for our customers? How can we Achieve More With Less?

This is the subject of this video. It shows how a number of key principles can be applied to help supervisors and work teams Achieve More With Less.

In smaller companies, everyone knows what's going on. It's easier to make things happen and get things done. People take more responsibility. Employees identify more with the company and with each other – this often results in employees having a sense of themselves and others in their workplace as being members of "one big happy family".

Small companies have more "soul". Or so it seems.

Whether or not this is actually true, the benefits of employees and employers sharing this view of small companies are clearly demonstrable, and that makes these small company traits good things to aim for, whatever size our enterprise is. Adopting qualities like this helps us Achieve More With Less.

Part 1 of Achieving More With Less looks at ways in which we can introduce this more people-friendly and work-enhancing work ethos by identifying seven key concepts, the Seven Basics, which will help change your thinking and turn your workplace around.

We all need to feel we're making a positive contribution, that our efforts are getting us somewhere. Part 11 of Achieving More With Less suggests some ways to achieve this by identifying Eight Actions for putting some "small company soul" into our workplaces.

The good news for management is that all these changes can be implemented quickly, will meet very little staff resistance, cost next to nothing and the benefits for all can be felt almost immediately.

The Seven Basics are:

- Share the Load
- Bring Solutions, Not Just Problems
- Involve Everyone
- Set Priorities Based on What is Important
- People and Planning are the Most Important Tasks
- Don't Ignore Important Tasks because They are not (yet) Urgent Tasks
- Our Jobs are About Today <u>AND</u> Tomorrow.

"What we are trying to do is get that small company soul inside our big company body".

Jack Welch Chairperson, General Electric, USA

PART 1 The Seven Basics

- Share the Load
- Bring Solutions, Not Just Problems
- Involve Everyone
- Set Priorities Based on What is Important
- People and Planning are the Most Important tasks
- Don't Ignore Important Tasks Because They are Not (yet) Urgent Tasks
- Our Jobs Are About Today AND Tomorrow

Share the load

Many supervisors make the mistake of thinking *they* must have all the answers, come up with solutions to all the problems, and think up all the good ideas. Not so! No one is omnipotent and no one expects supervisors to be!

To achieve more with less, we need to use the resources of the whole team their thoughts, ideas, experience, special skills, attributes and abilities. Everyone needs to contribute – good ideas can come from anyone, whatever their job or level.

"Brains are in.

Heavy Lifting is out

Tom Peters'

For this to happen, people need to be informed about what is going on – problems and challenges as well as opportunities and successes. In the video, we see a team meeting to discuss ways of curtailing costs. The supervisor is "Sharing the load" and gathering more good ideas than he could probably come up with on his own.

The need to "think outside the box"

Most of the easy, obvious measures to improve productivity and results have already been taken. It's time to start thinking laterally! In the first scene of the video, it is the maintenance person who comes up with an unusual idea for cutting costs: Turn off the lights in Plant B!

Good ideas can fall flat if we aren't careful

This good idea could easily have fallen flat, or been ignored. In fact it was. It was only his persistence that made the team sit up and take notice of what he was saying and consider it seriously.

This is a big danger in any team. People toss out ideas, often one after the other. Many fall flat – they are no considered seriously or even discussed. Not because they aren't good ideas, but because the person who presented it isn't "credible", or too many people are talking at once, or it's a "wild" idea that is too far outside of the box. These are poor reasons to ignore potentially good ideas.

Getting Smart

This is the age of the Knowledge Worker. Why are some companies valued much more highly by the stock market than others when they own far less in the physical assets? The answer is – their people. The stock market places a high value on companies who are known to have smart people, even though they may not own much in the way of buildings, land, or plant and equipment.

Those who learn to use peoples' brains best will succeed. It is *people* who come up with new ideas, new approaches, and different and better ways of doing things.



Bring Solutions, not just problems

In the video, we see Annabel presenting a problem as well as a proposed solution. This means she isn't just a "whinger" but a contributing team member. As it happens, her proposed solution isn't the best one, but at least it's a starting point.

Some people and some teams focus on problems: how they arose, whose fault they are, how long they've had them. They make excuses for them or even deny the problem even exists. It's as if they've hit a barrier to progress and are stuck behind it. With their energy and their focus on the problem, that's just where they'll remain – stuck with the problem.

Other people acknowledge the problem and set their sights on where they want to be and how to overcome the problem. They know what they want and what will indicate they've achieved it. They focus on solutions, actions they can take and resources they can use to reach their objective. People who look beyond problems at where they want to be can take control and make progress. Only when we focus on solutions can we move forward, leaving our problems behind, and achieve things.

If we are to achieve more with less, rather than laying blame or making excuses, we need to accept responsibility. We need to focus on what we can do and how best to work with what we've got. When things change, when resources are cut, when "the going gets tough", do we jump up and down, kick and scream, or do we get on with it?

Involve everyone

To do this, you need to know that your team is intelligent and capable. Then you will be able to trust them to do their best and encourage independent "out-side the box" thinking.

In this video, we see the supervisor trusting Matthew to get the time sheets right. This released him from the necessity of checking them and gave him more time to do more important, value-adding work. This is also an example of delegation, a skill most supervisors need to polish up!

Involving everyone helps you get more done.

Empower your staff to make decisions. Eliminate doubling up. Let people grow.

This not only makes your job easier, it helps you achieve more with less.

Empowering people doesn't mean casting them adrift. It means helping them learn and grow and develop their skills. This helps them contribute more ideas and make better decisions.

ACHIEVING MORE WITH LESS 8

Set Priorities based on what is important

Hands up any one who doesn't feel really busy most of the time or who doesn't feel the pressure to achieve more with less. No one? This is not surprising – most people feel this way! But not everyone reacts the same way.

Some people let their jobs control them. They respond to whatever is at the top of their in-tray, to the employee with the most pressing problem, to the most urgent tasks. "The squeaky wheel gets the grease" as the saying goes

"The things which matter most should never be at the mercy of the things which matter least." Goethe

The ensures they become caught up in the "tyranny of the urgent", doing the less important things. The really important things, things which often make "less noise". take a back seat. This is called "crisis management".

Unless we learn to set priorities based on what is important, we are doomed to continually feel harassed, pressured and stressed. We are doomed to manage by crisis. It's a vicious circle.

Instead, we need to take control of our jobs. This means knowing what is important in our job, what we are responsible for achieving. Then we can decide which activities directly contribute to achieving results. These are the ones we focus on. The others take a back seat.!

As the time management matrix in the video shows us, we need to prioritise the important things, those that will help us achieve goals in our areas of responsibility. And we need to do them proactively – before they become urgent and we have a crisis on our hands. Other things, those less important things which do not directly contribute to achieving goals in our areas of responsibility, we can delegate or do when we have time – once the more important things have been done.

Delegate

It's easier (and safer) to delegate to informed, empowered staff. Delegation frees you up for important activities, especially the two critical activities of Planning and People.

For a full discussion on this, see *Supervision: Management in Action* pp 130 – 134 and 723 – 725 Prentice Hall, Australia ISBN 0 7248 1121 4

The most important tasks are people and planning

Focussing on what is important, delegating other things and staying on top of our job frees us to do more important things – things that will really make a difference. These come in two categories: planning and people.

Plan to make things better tomorrow than they are today
Asking the question: "How do we make tomorrow better than today?"
helps us make the continual improvements to the way we do business
and achieve results that all enterprises need. If we never improve,
other enterprises will soon move ahead of us and we'll be left behind,
"eating their dust".

Look after the People issues

If we don't look after people issues, our people will soon lose their incentive and motivation. Giving recognition, helping people to develop, and building their confidence all help people to feel important, valued, and willing to contribute their energy and ideas.

Don't ignore the important tasks because they are not (yet) urgent tasks

Although People and Planning activities are always important,. they are often "put on the back burner" while we deal with crises – urgent but often not important matters. We need to build looking after People and Planning into our daily routine. In short, we need to spend more time in Quadrant 2 and less in Quadrants 3 and 4 (see Appendix 1)

In the video the supervisor faces a crisis when Annabel resigns. He hadn't looked after her needs enough; had he spent a bit of time with her sooner, he probably could have avoided her resignation and the subsequent personnel crisis he is now facing.

Our jobs are about today and tomorrow

If we don't look ahead, we can lose sight of the "big picture" – our overall goals and job purpose. We can easily end up spending our days doing a series of small and seemingly insignificant tasks. Keeping in mind the "big picture" and our goals of what we want to achieve tomorrow helps put these tasks in context and shows how everything fits in. This can energise us to find ways to achieve more with less.

PART 11

The Eight Actions

Make Work Enjoyable and Satisfying

Share Information

Create a team Personality and Culture

Make People feel They Belong to Something Unique and Special

Review, Review – The Team's Performance

Review, Review – Your Own Performance

Make People Feel Valued and Provide Plenty of Recognition

Make Sure Goals are Clear

Make work, enjoyable and satisfying

This energises people to contribute fully. It helps an enterprise or work team achieve more with less.

Share Information

Sharing information is a sign of strength, not weakness. Yet for some reason, many supervisors do not like to share information with their team. This is the opposite of what to do if you want to make work enjoyable and satisfying and if you want to empower and involve people to achieve more with less.

Create a team personality and culture

A unique team personality and culture can make people feel like big cogs in small machines. Feeling important and valued helps people to contribute their thoughts and ideas and find ways to do more with less.

Make people feel they belong to something unique and special

Two ways to do this are:

Encourage fun, irreverence and a certain amount of craziness This atmosphere is more often linked with small companies than large ones, but there's no logical reason this should be so. Fun is central to motivation, achievement and productivity. People who don't enjoy their jobs can't possible do them to the best of their ability!

Make time to celebrate

Teams need to celebrate – birthdays, babies, successes, great new ideas, team achievements. This helps build esprit de corps, or a sense of "we-ness" in, and commitment to, a team.

Review, review – the team's performance.

There's always a better way! Smart supervisors lead their teams in reviews of major projects and activities with a view to finding improvements for next time.

They ask two important questions:

- 1. How can we do it better?
- 2. How can we do it differently?

The first question helps us find *little step improvements*. Doing 100 things 1% better is important.

So are *big step improvements* (doing one thing a whole lot better). Question 2 takes a process re-engineering approach to help us find alternative "outside of the box" ways to achieve a goal. Stress, frustration's, and hassles are all reduced each time we find ways to do things better or differently. Post mortems avoid Mondayitis.

Review, review – your own performance Research by Dr Peter Honey shows that we can each make quantum leap improvements in the way we do things through a daily 4-step review.

First, <u>select an event</u> that happened during the day – any event, good, bad or indifferent, is fine.

Then <u>review</u> what happened. Go over it in your mind.

Next, <u>draw some conclusions</u>. What worked well? What didn't work so well? What could you do instead?

Finally, <u>plan to improve</u> the way you handle a similar situation next time. What did you learn and conclude from this one? How will you do it better next time?

Although this takes only a few minutes each day, it helps increase our performance and our effectiveness very rapidly.

As we see in the video when the supervisor "attacks" Matthew for mistakes in his report, this isn't always comfortable for us. But it is a great way to learn and improve!

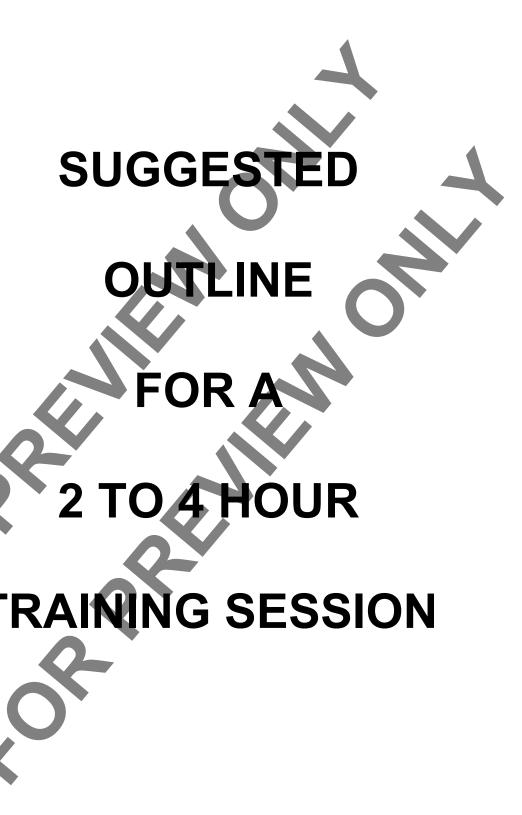
After all, the only way to achieve more with less is to get better day by day, both as a team and personally.

Make people feel valued and provide plenty of recognition

No one can work in a vacuum for long. If no one notices the good job they're doing, they'll soon get tired of making the effort.

Make sure goals are clear

Lack of focus, or clear goals, is one of the major impediments to good job performance and achieving more with less. Make sure everyone in your team is clear about what they are responsible for doing and achieving and how they (and you) can measure their success.



Note: Use Overheads (OH) as and when appropriate. Some suggested points are indicated.

TIME	TOPIC
10mins	Welcome and thank participants for attending. Lecturette: Using examples from your own organisation and drawing on the Introduction in the Leader's Guide, talk about the pressures on most of us to achieve more with less and why these are occurring.
	Explain that you will show a video which contains a lot of useful ideas on how we can achieve more with less. Afterwards, you'll review the ideas presented in the video together, and then plan ways to put these ideas into use in you organisation.
	(Especially if the group is small, you may want to ask them to note down any ideas they feel are particularly applicable to their situation.)
20 mins	View Video
10 mins	Generate a list of ideas onto flip chart
	Ask participants to call out the ideas on how to achieve more with less that they recall from the video.
ОН	List these onto the flip chart. (Participants should note these in their Workbooks.) For example: Share the Load, Bring Solutions not Problems, Set Priorities based on what is Important.
	(These should follow the key themes and learning points contained in the Leader's Notes, although in a random order).
40	Don't allow the group to become side-tracked in the details of the learning points. For now just develop a list for later discussion.
	Add any important ideas that have been missed out at the end, based on the Leader's Notes.

TIME	TOPIC
15 mins	Discuss the ideas you have listed on the flip chart one by one. The following format is suggested:
	How was this idea illustrated in the video?
	How could we apply this in our situation?
ОН	Use the overhead transparencies to reinforce key messages as required.
	Insert the exercises shown below at appropriate points to suit the needs of the group and learning points you want to emphasise.
	Get through as many ideas as you can in 15 minutes before calling a short break.
10 mins	BREAK
20 Mins	Continue discussing the ideas listed on the flip chart one by one.
	Insert the exercises shown below at appropriate points to suit the needs of the group and learning points you want to emphasise.
ОН	Use the overhead transparencies to reinforce key messages as required.
45mins	EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE: BLAME OR AIM?
	Discuss a current issue within the organisation in syndicates of about 4 to 5 people. Two discussions of 12 minutes each will take place, Part 1 and Part 2.
~	Questions for Part 1. Spend 10 minutes reviewing Part 1.
	How did you feel about this discussion?
	What were the results of the discussion?
	 How do you feel about the quality of the discussion? Of the results or outcome of the discussion?

Note responses onto flip chart.

TIME TOPIC

Questions for Part 2. Spend 10 minutes reviewing Part 2.

- How do the results/feelings of the two discussions compare?
- Which type of thinking is most typical of them and others in the organisation?
- How can we apply this insight at work?

15 mins **EXERCISE: THE TROUBLE WITH GOOD IDEAS.....**

Ask the group whether they think the maintenance person's good idea at the beginning of the video (about switching off the lights in Plant B) was ever in danger of falling flat before it was understood and accepted. (Gain agreement that it was.)

Is that a familiar situation to them?

Lead a general discussion about how often ideas are voiced, but ignored or not heard.

Lead the group to brainstorm mechanisms they could use or actions they could take to ensure good ideas are not lost in their teams. Do this from two points of view:

- 1. the idea originators what action can they take to ensure their ideas get a fair hearing?
- from the rest of the teams point of view what actions can we take to ensure everyone's ideas get a fair hearing?

Summarise onto flip chart.

10 mins **EXERCISE: FOCUSING DETERMINES OUTCOME**

Divide the flip chart or whiteboard in half vertically

Label the left half 'Focus on the Problem' and the right half 'Focus on a Solution'. (see appendix 2)

Lead the group to brainstorm the mind sets behind and the effects of each, beginning with the left side. Summarise their points onto the flip chart.

TIME	TOPIC
15 Mins	DISCUSSION: PRIORITISING IMPORTANT TASKS & ACTIVITIES
ОН	Show the Goethe quote on the overhead projector.
	Ask what this means and if necessary lead the group by asking what this means in relation to the Time Management Matrix.
	Summarise: This quote is the reason we need to learn to prioritise and delegate effectively.
	Draw the Time Management Matrix onto the flip chart or whiteboard labelling the vertical axis Important (top) – Not Important (bottom) and the horizontal axis Urgent/Reactive (left) – Not urgent/Proactive (right). (see Appendix 3)
	Review the matrix with the group and ask them to locate some of their more regular tasks, duties and activities into the appropriate quadrants.I
	Discuss what they would need to do to find more time to spend on Quadrant 2 (Important and Not urgent) activities.
	Discuss how they would benefit from this.
15 mins	EXERCISE: HOW TO MAKE QUANTUM LEAP IMPROVEMENTS
ОН	Using the Overhead "How to Make Quantum Leap Improvements" review the learning cycle with participants.
	Ask the participants to complete this exercise in their workbooks individually and in pairs.
25 mins	EXERCISE: AVOIDING MONDAYITIS
	Ask the group to tick in their workbooks those characteristics which they believe apply to them or their work group. (approx. 5 minutes)

TIME TOPIC

OH

Divide the group in half. Ask the group on the left hand side of the room to discuss what they ticked for things they dislike about work and then brainstorm at lease 10 actions they personally can take to remove or reduce some of these things.

Ask the group on the right to discuss what they ticked for things they like about work and then brainstorm at least 10 actions they personally can take to increase some of these things or include others that they didn't tick.

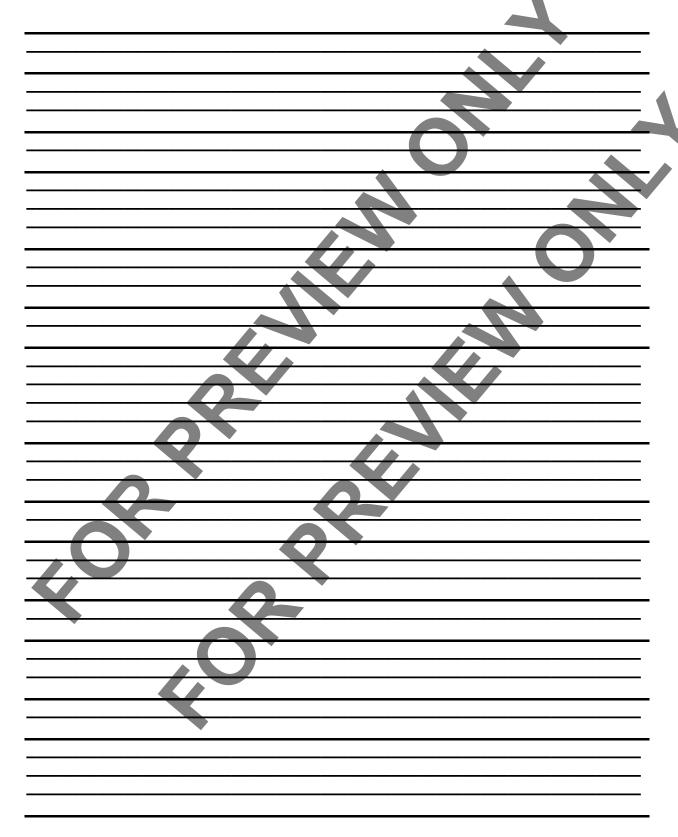
Allow each group 3 minutes to present their ideas to the other group.

Using OH 22 and 23, recap on the main points brought out by each group and those which may not have been included.

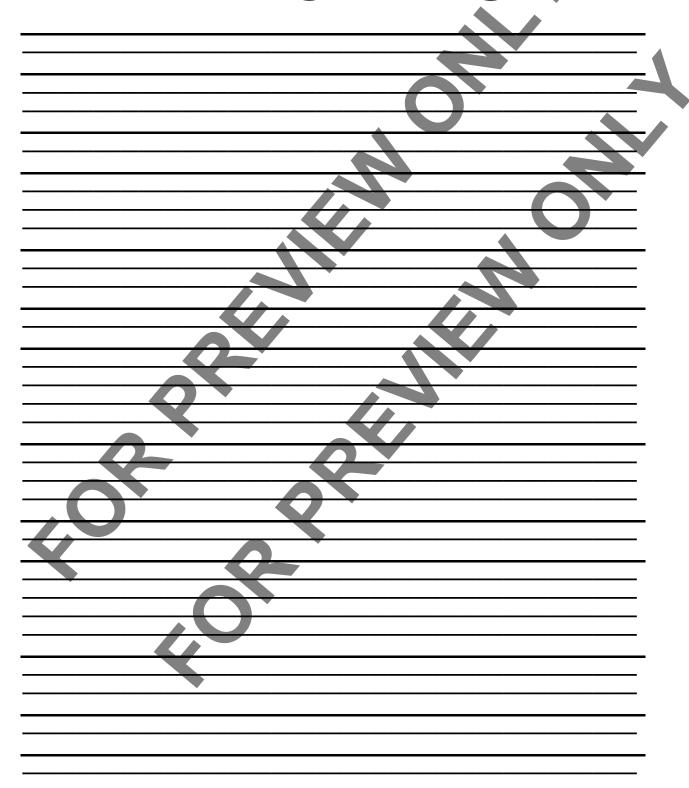
NOTES



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NOTES



Appendix 1

Time Management

Matrix

Quadrant 1
URGENT AND
IMPORTANT

Quadrant 1
IMPORTANT
BUT NOT
URGENT

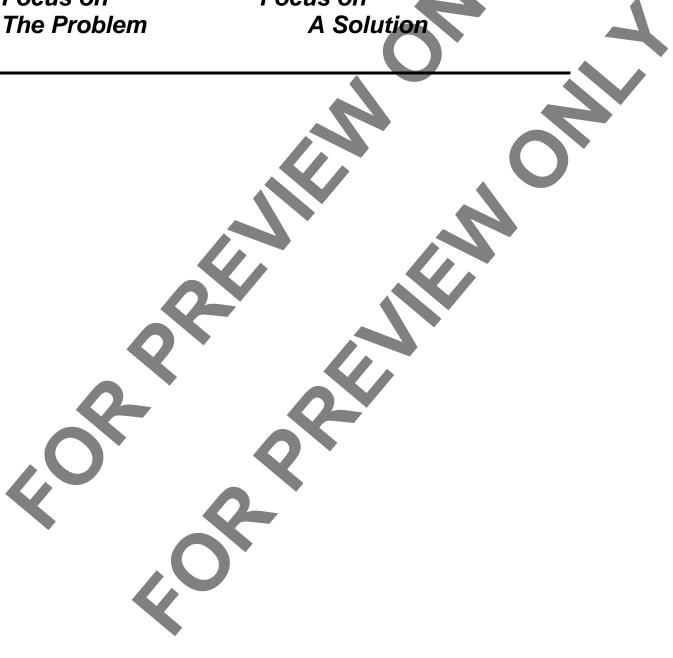
Quadrant 1
URGENT
BUT NOT
IMPORTANT

Quadrant 1
NOT IMPORTANT

Appendix 2

Focus on

Focus on



Appendix 3

Quadrant 1
URGENT AND

Urgent/Reactive

IMPORTANT

Quadrant 2
IMPORTANT
BUT NOT
URGENT

Not Urgent/Proactive

Not Important

Important

Quadrant 3
URGENT
BUT NOT
IMPORTANT

Quadrant 4
NOT IMPORTANT

Appendix 4



MASTERS

EWHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO

IS GET THAT

SMALL

COMPANY SOUL

INSIDE OUR

BIG

COMPANY BODY 3

JACK WELCH CHAIRPERSON, GENERAL ELECTRIC, USA

OH1

SHARE THE LOAD



EBRAINS ARE IN. HEAVY LIFTING

IS OUT.

ОН3

Tom Peters

THE TROUBLE

WITH GOOD

IDEAS IS THEY

CAN EASILY

F

FLAT

OH 4

BRING ME

SOLUTIONS,

NOT JUST

PROBLEMS.

THE QUESTION IS:



INVOLVE

BELIEVE THE TEAM IS INTELLIGENT

INDEPENDENCE
AND
FREE THINKING



EMPOWER

STAFF TO MAKE DECISIONS

ELIMINATE DOUBLING UP

LET PEOPLE

GROW

OH8

PRIORITISE

DELEGATE

Quadrant 1

URGENT AND IMPORTANT

Quadrant 2

IMPORTANT BUT NOT URGENT

Quadrant 3

URGENT BUT NOT IMPORTANT

Quadrant 4

NOT IMPORTANT

OH9

ETHE THINGS WHICH MATTER MOST

SHOULD NEVER BE AT

THE MERCY OF

THE THINGS

WHICH MATTER

LEAST. 3

GOETHE

OH10

THE MOST

IMPORTANT TASKS ARE

PEOPLE

PLANNING

OH11

DON'T IGNORE THE IMPORTANT TASKS BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT (YET) LIBGENT!

OUR JOBS ARE ABOUT

TODAY

<u>AND</u>

TOMORROW

SHARE

INFORMATION

INFORMATION

WORK SHOULD

BE MORE FUN

THAN FUN

THE \$EVEN MO\$T EXPENSIVE WORDS IN ANY ORGANISATION:

"BUTWE'VE
ALWAY\$ DONE
IT THAT WAY"

CAN WE DO IT **SMALL STEP IMPROVEMENT CAN S**STE PROVEMENTS

POST MORTEMS

CURE

MONDAYITIS

R.I.P.

HOW TO MAKE

QUANTUM LEAP

IMPROVEMENTS

EXPERIENCE

PLAN TO IMPROVE

REVIEW

DRAW CONCLUSIONS

OH19

DON'T BE CONTENT

THE ONLY WAY TO

ACHIEVE MORE

WITH LESS

IS TO GET BETTER

DAY BY DAY

BOTH AS A TEAM

AND PERSONALLY

CREATE A PERSONALITY AND TEAM CULTURE

MAKE PEOPLE FEEL
THEY BELONG TO
SOMETHING SPECIAL

RECOGNITON

CLEAR GOALS

MAKE PEOPLE FEEL VALUED

SHARE INFORMATION



WHAT PEOPLE

HATE ABOUT

WORK

red tap and bureaucracy
conflict
criticism and blame
lack of success
lack of focus
unrealistic goals and deadlines
feeling powerless and unimportant
boring, repetitive work
"fighting a losing battle" syndrome

WHAT MAKES PEOPLE HAPPY TO COME TO

clear goals
recognition
information – knowing the "big picture"
learning
feeling of contributing and being important
progressing

