



Paper PM04

Personnel Manager -Be the owner of checks and balances

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ABSTRACT

Personnel manager has a dual responsibility – align and achieve organizations goals and objectives and enable the team to achieve its goal to be successful. Key attributes that influences the team dynamics are transparency, respect, communication, timely feedback and motivation to name a few. These attributes need to be tuned to ensure maximum synergies with minimal disruption in ways of working. Management style needs to be customized to adapt to an individual's personality. ERG theory and SWOT analysis are some of the proven techniques used to manage the teams successfully. The manager needs to manage a diverse workforce and at the same time follow a balanced team management approach to be successful. This paper is an attempt to shed some light on customized techniques used as per the personality variations within team.

INTRODUCTION

What is Personnel Management?

Personnel Management has many definitions and we can aptly describe it in below words: Personnel management is that field of management which is concerned with the planning, organizing, directing and controlling various operative functions of procurement, development, maintenance and utilization of resources in such a way that objectives of company, those of personnel at all levels and those of community are achieved.

Why is it important?

Talent development is a win-win situation for the employee as well as the employer, and managers wield large control over the identification, development, and promotion of talented professionals in their teams. Often, the next generation of managers emerges from these teams.

One of the most important relationships for any company is the one between a manager and an employee. By developing the employee, the team understands how its action affect the productivity of the entire unit. When employees take a personnel interest in the productivity of their team it helps in the overall growth of the organisation.

Below are few of the qualities that a Personnel Manager should possess while managing the team –

- **Time Management and Planning Skills:** One should know how to best utilize the time of self as well of the team. For a project managing time, flagging issues well in advance and planning the entire project to meet the milestone is very critical.
- **Financial Management Skills:** Keeping the team happy at the same time cost saving to meet the organization's goals needs financial planning and one needs to be smart at it.
- **Communication Skills:** A good manger should be a great orator who can motivate the team and channelize his ideas. He should also have good written skills.
- **Organizational Skills:** Arranging and organizing the team to best of their strengths and tracking of data regularly. Being able to retrieve any information when required is a sign of good organization skills.
- **Continued Self-Development Skills:** Self learning and team learning should be a continuous process as it helps enhance capability and knowledge.
- **Transparency:** Being transparent means giving clarity or answering the questions of the team to best of your knowledge. Any organizational changes or project changes or policy updates must be communicated



clearly, and the queries need to be addressed upfront.

- **Respect for Individual:** We as an individual have a self-respect and no one has the right to demoralize it, a manager should understand that each member is different and has unique personalities. Each team member irrespective of age or experience or knowledge should be treated with respect.
- **Timely feedback:** Feedbacks from time to time are important and helps team to improve on it.
- **Trust:** Manager should trust the team members and earn their trust only then the team will be successful.
- **Collaboration and Motivation:** Collaborating with the team and getting the work done is an art. Motivation of each team member to enhance their qualities and improve over their grey areas.
- **Unbiased Decision Making:** A Manager looks at a broader level and cannot be biased, a good manager needs to be fair with each team member.
- **Emotional Quotient:** This is a great quality that a manager should possess. It is said that a team works for their Manager and that stands true only if the team feels connected to their manager to share personal and emotional issues. As a manager one should provide flexibility to the team member so that they are available for the team whenever it is required.
- **Problem Solving:** A manager should know how to solve the issues with a win-win situation for all. For solving a problem, we can use the **SAMA** method which stands for **Situation Awareness Means Action**. In this we need to first understand the problem statement or the situation, analyze the problem i.e. be aware of the situation, find the facts and figures. Next step is to find different means or solutions to the issue i.e. checking for possibilities to resolve the issue at hand. After this the last step is to take appropriate action that means selecting the best solution from the previous step and implementing the same. **Design thinking** is another method of problem solving. In design thinking the focus is on the problem statement and how best we can achieve it, identifying the issue for a problem statement which will eventually lead to many solutions to the problem statement. In design thinking we back track the process of finding ideas for improvement or solving a problem. This is a very effective technique and is also acts as a team building activity. It is a continuous process and is considered as a problem-solving framework.

Let us now look at a case study which will give us an idea how the various techniques can be implemented while managing the team:

Case Study 1:

Sam is a new Manager and he has 10 team members reporting into him. David is one among them and has a family problem to address at home, but he is also working on a critical project for which due date is nearing. But David is not able to focus on his work and needs to take time off. Sam has a situation to manage.

How should Sam solve this problem?

Situation: David needs leaves while on critical project.

Awareness: Sam needs to first understand the current status of the project. What is completed and what is pending from David's assignments.

Means: There are quite a few reports pending. Sam will have to check the resourcing first and find out if those can be reassigned. Talk with the client if the timelines can be negotiated.

Action: Reassign it to Ralf who has just come back from his vacation and has nothing assigned, this will manage the timelines and he does not have to go back to client. He arranges a meeting for transition of work between David and Ralf and tells David to be available on call just in case if Ralf has any queries. Thus, in this way Sam manages to get the work done on time with quality and David can also have his time off with family and maintain his work life balance.

This is a great example of managing a team using problem solving technique, providing the team flexibility and at the same time achieving the clients trust to perform in any odds.

CHALLENGES FACED AND TECHNIQUES TO SOLVE THEM



What are the challenges a Personnel Manager face?

There are many challenges for a manager as the team consists of variety of individuals. The main role is helping the team achieve their goals while meeting the organizational goals.

As a Manager we need to set **Specific Measurable Attainable Realistic Timely (SMART)** goals for the team. Techniques like SWOT needs to be applied and revisited timely and we also need to use the ERG theory effectively to motivate the team.

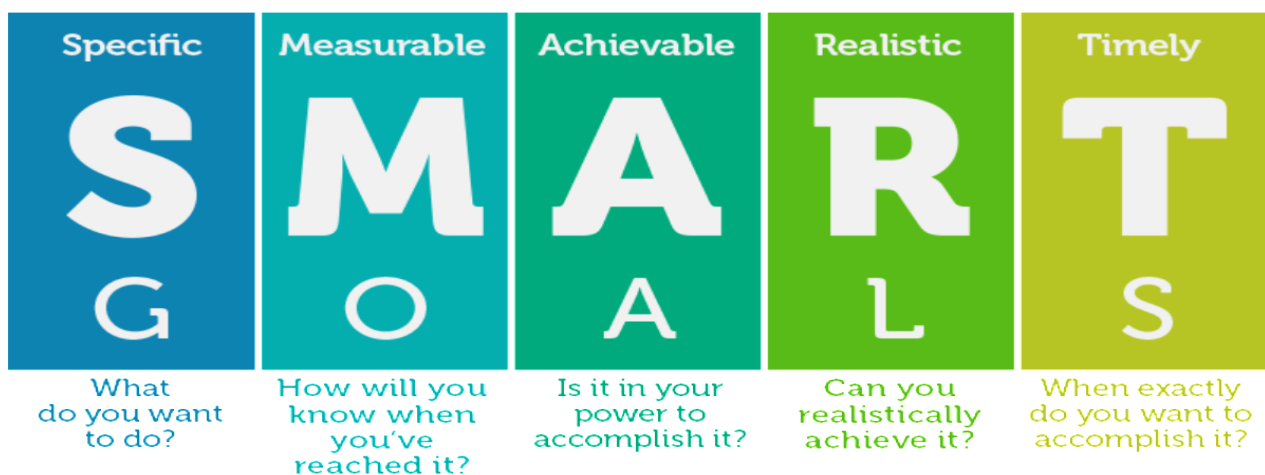
Motivation is important to:

- Put human resources into action
- Improves level of efficiency of employees
- Leads to achievement of organisational goals
- Builds friendly relationship
- Leads to stability of work force

What are **SMART** goals?

We should help the team set goals which are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.

The below diagram perfectly explains the SMART goal.



What is **SWOT** analysis?

SWOT analysis is done to identify the strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats in a team.

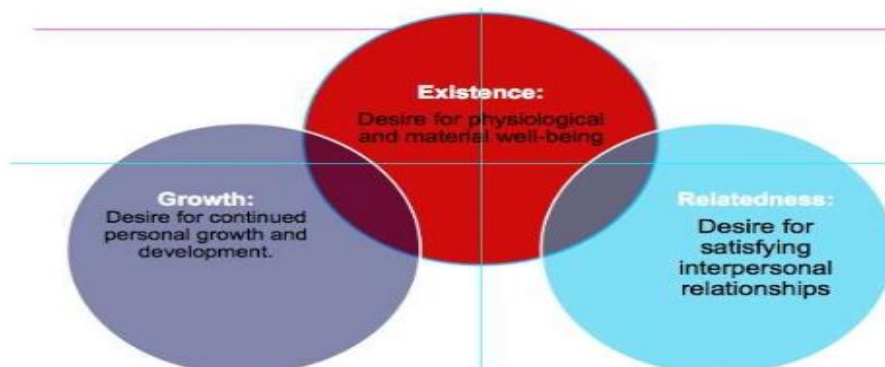
Here are few tips for the SWOT analysis:

- use a SWOT analysis to distinguish between where you are now and where you wish to be
- be realistic about your strengths and weaknesses
- be specific — only include key points and issues
- relate strengths and weaknesses to critical success factors
- always aim to state strengths and weaknesses in competitive



What is **ERG** theory?

ERG Theory states that at a given point of time, more than one need may be operational. ERG theory is a theory in psychology proposed by Clayton Alderfer. Alderfer further developed Maslow's hierarchy of needs by categorizing the hierarchy into his ERG theory (Existence, Relatedness and Growth).



The ERG Theory also shows that if the fulfillment of a higher-level need is subdued, there is an increase in desire for satisfying a lower-level need.





A first-time manager can have many challenges, listed below are few of them –

1. **Effective Communication with Your Employees:** As a new manager, it's important for you to understand the communication dynamics of your team so that you can optimize the strengths and find ways to improve any weaker areas. Every team is different and learning the communication styles that work best for your team will really strengthen how you work together.

Pro Tip: Always keep yourself available for your team if they have any points for discussion. Team should feel that the manager cares for them.

2. **Shifting Your Mindset Along with Your New Role:** Your focus is on helping others accomplish their tasks. Being a leader to achieve this you need to work on your approach. It's your responsibility to oversee and guide your team, and this will involve developing your soft skills. Listen and pay attention to the needs of your employees to help them achieve the collective goals of your team. Becoming a leader is a learning process, and you will learn the most from the experience you gain as you go along.

Pro Tip: Monthly one-on-ones and team meetings are a great way to make sure you and your employees are on the same page.

3. **Shifting from Coworker to Boss:** Remember that even though you're a manager, you're still a member of the team that you're leading. Your role on the team is to support your employees and ensure that they have everything they need to succeed. Management is a two-way street, and the success of your team is as dependent on you as yours is on them.

Pro Tip: Address the team as one unit and be open for any kind of suggestions. Establish your role as "leader" rather than "boss" from the start.

4. **Managing Your Time:** Balancing your own tasks while overseeing your team can be difficult but remember that your team should always be a priority. You should strive to be as available to your team as possible, but it's also important that you set aside time to dedicate to your individual responsibilities.

Pro Tip: Book times in your calendar specifically for your own tasks, and let your team know in advance that you won't be available during those times.

5. **Setting Clear Goals and Expectations/Feedbacks:** One of your main tasks as a new manager is to guide and motivate the employees in your team. Part of that is making sure that your employees have clear directions and common goals. Employees who strongly agree they can link their goals to the organization's goals are more likely to be engaged. Objectives and Key Results are great to align everyone on your team because the "key results" set expectations very clearly. Both employees and managers will have measurable results, making it easier to tell if they have achieved their goals. Feedback is important and how you provide it is more important. Feedbacks should be timely and realistic. Employees need to be educated that feedbacks are for their personal development and growth and should be taken positively.

Pro Tip: Meet with your team to set Objectives and Key Results so that everyone is working towards the same outcome. During the 1-1 connects feedbacks should be provided monthly on the progress and improvement areas. Positives should be highlighted and even the areas of improvement be explained with instances. Planning plays a vital role in the success of being a manager.

6. **Encouraging Productivity:** As a manager, a key to your success is to make your team as productive as possible. This can be a challenge because each team member may have different needs and work in different ways. Some people like working later, some earlier, some people like being given specific instructions, some people like to have more autonomy. It's important for you to create an environment that's good for everyone. Try to find out what works best and adjust accordingly.

Pro Tip: Have short daily meetings where everyone presents their tasks for the day to the team. This will help your employees set their focus for the day and see how everyone else's tasks fit into the broader goals of the team.

7. **Hiring for Your Team:** It's important that you look at possible candidates from an all-encompassing perspective. Culture fit is as important as experience. Look at your candidates as unique and dynamic



individuals and think about what they'll bring to the team beyond their skill set. A candidate should be judged based on 3 qualities, Intelligence +Smart +Integrity however if the third quality is missing then the first two add no value.

Pro Tip: A great way to hire someone is by doing a work sample test where you give them a small project to see how well they perform, communicate and interact.

8. **Training and Development:** Training and development play a vital role for an employee as well as the Manager. An employee has the zeal to learn and grow only if he is motivated and has that hunger for learning new.

Pro Tip: Do plan a training and development plan for the team as well as individual team member and act upon it. This brings a feeling of belonging among the employees.

9. **Managing the millennials:** Millennials require a different approach to handle as they have a different approach to everything. They need everything quick and fast, want to be appreciated for all and are more connected to social media.

Pro Tip: Millennials should be made aware of the rules of the organization and should be trained for their oral and written communication in the corporate. Provide clear communication on what happens and when, and what must be achieved by when.

10. **Asking for Help:** You might feel pressure to have all the answers in your new managerial role, but it's okay if you don't. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Ask HR about training that you might not know about or expensing training courses online. Seek out opportunities that can help you and your team succeed.

Pro Tip: Find a mentor, most of the time it is on job training.

Look for someone with experience as a manager and pick their brain. Do review your actions for a particular scenario to handle it better next time.

DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES IN THE TEAM

A team consists of different variety of personalities and personnel Management provides that exposure to the Manager.

A person can be difficult due to-

- Unpleasant past experiences that they bring to work
- Current stress either at home or at work
- Significant personality differences between the team and this person
- Lack of motivation

As a manager you will need to identify the disruptive behavior, understand the team dynamics and the reactions of the team and lastly address the issue with honesty and tact.

Why people become difficult?

There are many reasons that a person goes from being a productive team member to a difficult one.

Here are some common reasons:

- They have reached the limit of their capabilities which leads to frustration for them.
- They become unmotivated or disengaged and tend to withdraw from the team. This can happen with high performers who are not being given additional responsibility.
- They are distracted by personal reasons and lose focus.
- They find the role too challenging or not challenging enough which leads to a loss of motivation.
- Different people express themselves in different ways and it is important to be able to manage each of these types effectively.



There are various personalities but here we will discuss about the seven types of difficult team members -

- The Disinterested Lazy – lacks enthusiasm, is lazy and likes to just tide things over
- The Dumper – likes to delegate their tasks to other team members and focus on what they like to do.
- The Complainer – is almost impossible to please and loves to complain about everything.
- The Aggressive one – uses his or her aggression to bully, intimidate and order peers around.
- The control freak – is competitive and always wants to win and have the final say in situations.
- The non-inclusive – do not want to be part of the team, just like to do the assigned tasks and not work as a team player.

The Blamer – likes to blame other people, finds faults in others and defends oneself as much as possible

Now let's look at another example-

Case Study 2:

Naina is a Manager, she has been rolled on to a project where most of the team members are seniors in terms of their experience in the organization. However due to her caliber she has been promoted and now has to manage them. She has great communication skills and people connect so she could easily gel with the team in a very short time. However, there is an individual named Satish who is a tenured resource and is expecting his promotion. He has been an average performer and it has been observed that he does not take much interest in the team. He looks like a difficult person to manage. Naina must manage him as well as get the work done. What do you think Naina should do?

Naina first set up a 1-1 meeting with Satish to understand his discontent. He thinks that other team members are not to the par with him. She did explain him the criteria for promotion and gave him a feedback which was never provided to him. She used the SMART technique to set his goals which can be visited from time to time to check the progress. Naina tried to give him a clear expectation at his level and seniority. Satish did understand his flaws and started working towards his goals. To build a relation with the team Naina also gave him an independent project with juniors where they can collaborate as a team.

This is an example of great communication, transparency, flexibility and leading the team by example.

Here are some ways to deal with the seven difficult types of people that we met earlier:

- The Disinterested Lazy —Give them feedback, find out what motivates them and set goals to challenge them.
- The dumper— Give feedback, make their role and responsibilities clear and teach them how to delegate effectively.
- The Complainer —Give feedback, encourage them to look on the bright side or to see both the pros and cons. Help them move forward.
- The Aggressive one —Start with feedback, be assertive with them and not aggressive, don't argue with them instead ask questions and look for common ground.
- The control freak —Tell them what impact their behavior has on the team, put things in writing and don't play their game, they will have objections, anticipate them and handle them accordingly. Give them limited controls so that their attitude does not affect others.
- The non-inclusive—Give them feedback and do not elevate them above the rest of the team, encourage them to work in teams and share praise and criticism equally. They need to get involved with the team more and more hence assigning a task along with the junior team member which requires extensive collaboration.
- The Blamer —Start with feedback, build their confidence up and encourage them to look at things objectively and be constructive when reviewing others. Assign them the owners of the tasks so that they take the accountability.

As a Manager we need to understand that all the activities cannot be completed by them individually, they need the teams support to accomplish the same:



Delegation

An effective manager is humble enough to know that he can't do everything and needs to trust his members so that he can delegate the tasks to the proper person. He also understands the value of synergy and that the product of the whole is a lot better than the total output of each member working separately from one another. Learn about the skills and expertise of every member so that you can delegate the tasks appropriately.

Motivation

Be positive in the way you approach them. Realize that they all have the skills needed to do their job. They just need encouragement, affirmation, and reminder to make them believe that they can do the job well.

Development

It is the manager's responsibility to develop their skills by assigning them tasks that are challenging and at the same time, they can give them the opportunities to harness their skills. Feedback that is given regularly and constructively can help team members improve their skills.

Communication

This is one of the most essential skills that team managers need to learn and to impart not only to his team members but also to people outside of his team. It is necessary that you know how to run effective meetings and have brainstorming and facilitating skills. You also need to become an active listener when the need arises.

Discipline

Managing discipline with your team members is another team management skill that must not be taken for granted. From time to time, conflicts arise because each member has his own beliefs and attitude that are not compatible with others.

CONCLUSION

Personnel Management is an art which each Manager must work and modify as per their team members and scenario's that they encounter. It cannot be taught but it's a self-learning process by applying the various techniques available and keep improving the team as well as oneself.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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