

Introduction

“We’re getting slammed, and every year I swear we’ll be better prepared,” the exhausted manager said. “But every year is the same, and I end up getting sick in bed.” Sam took a swig from his can of Red Bull. He had dark rings under his eyes and the weight of the world on his shoulders.

This was earlier this year, the manager was a new student, and we’d just met. He was telling me about his business. It was their peak trading period, they were swamped, and his team wasn’t coping. We went on to chat about the organization and the causes of the difficulties he faced.

It was towards the end of our meeting that I noticed something about Sam had changed. His body language was now saying something very different from what it had an hour ago. Sure, he still looked tired, but his shoulders were no longer stooped. There was a light in his eyes and an energy in his voice.

Sam explained to me that he’d been doing this job for a long time, and he’d been doing it to the best of his ability, but now he realized how he could do better. He said he was going to implement some changes right away.

After our meeting, with this newfound hope, Sam took his first steps towards being a more effective manager. Instead of being controlled by his circumstances, Sam decided to act. He decided to take steps to deal with his situation in a proactive way. Somehow, in just one hour, I had been able to guide Sam to the threshold of a journey to be a better manager.

I believe this book will help all managers in their challenging roles. But, in particular, I’ve written *The Hour Guide to Management* for people like Sam and the workers who report to them. Managers, who, themselves, pressured and anxious due to a lack of time and knowledge, may unintentionally cause stress and unhappiness in the work-life of others.

It is common to find team members promoted into supervisory roles because of their solid technical skills. However, they are often put into these positions with little guidance in how to manage people. My job is as a workplace-based trainer. I use my management background and trainer experience to provide new and experienced managers with the skills and knowledge to better lead and manage teams.

Every day, I discuss with these students the issues they deal with in the workplace. Unfortunately, I often only have small windows of time available to provide guidance in sometimes complicated topics. In response, I developed easy-to-follow models that can be quickly explained. Methods that students can go and practice.

This book has evolved from this approach. It’s a simple guide on confidently managing people, with four key concepts you can start implementing right away. Most of the management books I read are big, and heavy with theory, but light on how to apply the principles on a day-to-day basis in the real world. This book is titled *The Hour Guide to Management* because it should take you about one hour to read and provide a clear, basic understanding of how to carry out the things you must do to be a good manager.

Where we live, apartment blocks are going up everywhere. It seems to take ages to excavate and prepare the substructures. But then, once they're in place, the buildings almost miraculously appear. This book provides the fundamentals of constructing your management ability. Just like with these multi-story buildings, you have to spend the time and effort preparing a solid base. But, once you have it, you'll be surprised just how naturally your management ability will appear and how effective and long-lasting it will be.

To assist in developing these strong foundations, I stress to my students that, to really understand the concepts, they need to be able to explain them to others. By doing this, they reinforce their own learning and pass on the knowledge they've gained, as I hope, after reading this book, you will do as well.

How Has It Been Determined This Book Will Take One Hour to Read?

Marc Brysbaert, from Ghent University, in his exhaustive 2019 study, came up with an average reading speed of a literate adult to be around 238 words per minute.¹ Therefore, if we multiply 60 minutes by 238 words, that gives us 14,280 words. Not including the notes section at the end of the text, this book consists of just over 14,000 words.