

Managing People is Work!

by Gary Tomlinson

“Learning from the school of hard knocks can be very informing, but often the tuition is too high! We should learn from other people’s experiences.” The purpose of this column is to share great business wisdom from the experiences of authors like Jim Collins, Michael Gerber, Gary Harpst, Michael LeBoeuf, Ron Willingham, Stephen M.R. Covey and others. Because when you combine great business education with your own business experiences the outcome you’ll receive is far greater than the sum of its parts.

The wisdom of Frank McNair’s new book *The Golden Rules for Managers* has been chosen to share with you this week. I’ve read dozens of books on leadership and motivation. McNair’s book has resonated with me more than most because it has the most common sense and is the easiest to execute. McNair has a gift for distilling profound management wisdom into memorable and often humorous language. Managers, at all levels who read his book, will come away with a treasure chest of practical advice on how to be more successful.

“*Management* is now, as it always has been, the judicious application of human, financial and material resources against the challenges of producing and delivering a product or service in a way that the customers feel well served and the business makes a profit. It is as simple (and as difficult) as that.”

McNair’s book is all about aphorisms and sayings and pithy summing-ups that capture essential truths about life in the managerial world. Each of his sayings represents a thread woven together in a tapestry called management. McNair hopes the reader will apply these maxims against their own experience and the circumstances they confront, and to exact from the confrontation the wisdom that most fully applies to the circumstances they confront.

The Golden Rules for Managers is broken into ten chapters. The subjects range from *Vision and Planning* to *Motivation* to *Expectations* to *Coaching* to *Feedback and Performance Management* to *Rewards and Consequences* to *Relationship Management* to *Self-Management* to *Leadership* and ending with *Shaping Your Management Philosophy*. Each chapter contains ten to twelve maxims that help the reader learn, understand and remember.

Some of my favorite maxims are:

- People will respect what you expect if you inspect.
- Don’t confuse motion with progress.
- Positive feedback encourages behavior – developmental feedback extinguishes behavior.

- Ignoring improvement in performance will extinguish it – ignoring slippage in performance will encourage it.
- When expectations and reality are not equal, stress is created.
- It is easier to act yourself into a new way of thinking than to think your way into a new way of acting.
- Problems live in the past; Solutions live in the future.
- Those lead best who serve the most.
- It's not what we don't know that gets us in trouble – it's what we don't do.

My favorite maxim is **Managing People is Work!** How often have we heard or even said ourselves; “I have too much work to manage people.” McNair says that managers must “realize that managing people is work. It takes time, but done well, it will yield far more productive outcomes than you could ever generate alone.”

Because managing people is work, I give you permission to take the time out of your busy schedule to read my book report on Frank McNair's *The Golden Rules for Managers*. You can download this book report by going to www.gary-tomlinson.com and clicking on “Book Reports.”

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