

Taking Time to Think – What does next year hold?

The start of a new business year is a great time for people to reflect on what they are doing and to question why and how they are doing it. As business leaders, we all know the benefits of critically appraising ourselves **and** asking questions of the people that we lead.

At Step System, to help people to focus on being effective, we ask them to explore the nuances of their job. Our intention is to help them understand what it is that sets them apart and to help them to discover what they need to do in order to leverage performance and raise their game in the coming year.

However, we have noticed that when we ask: “What is your job about?”, many people simply offer their job title by way of explanation. “I am a...” which leaves us better informed, but none the wiser!

This superficial response may also hold a clue as to just how valuable an asset this colleague is likely to be over the next 12 months. As the business norm (compared to 20 plus years ago) is for people to move more readily from employer to employer, some employees may be operating on a mixed agenda – focused *less* on the hard realities and challenges that the business requires them to address and *more* on how they need to position themselves, in order to get their next promotion or job.

We want to help people to understand that we are less interested in job titles, (what people are called) and more interested in what they are engaged with, what they hold to be important and on them being able to quantify and verbalise the tangible inputs and outputs that they need to work on in order to contribute to the business that they are in *right now*.

This conversation helps us to drill down on their levels of intellectual engagement, their motivation and the extent to which they are aligned to the most current business imperatives.

From this we can also help them to understand more accurately what it is that they **do currently** that is helping them to be successful and understand what they need to **Stop** doing, as well as defining what they must **Start** doing, if they are to grow and develop.

As you start the new business year, you may have the **same** team members, with the **same** job titles, earning the **same** money...

...but they are undoubtedly working in a **changing** business environment, with a **different** business focus and with **different** challenges.



Do your colleagues understand that they are the **same people**, but with a **different job** and that doing **‘more of the same’** is simply **not going to cut it** in the coming year?

How can **you** help them to come to terms with and then proactively address the challenges that they will face over the next 12 months and beyond?

Looking forward to Next Year

Taking Time to Think – The KASE* Model

I always find the holidays a great time to reflect on things. Backpacking in the mountains with friends we spent time one afternoon inventing business models. Driven slightly crazy by the high intake of Swiss Cheese(!) a German friend, who works for an American Conglomerate in Switzerland offered the KASE* model.

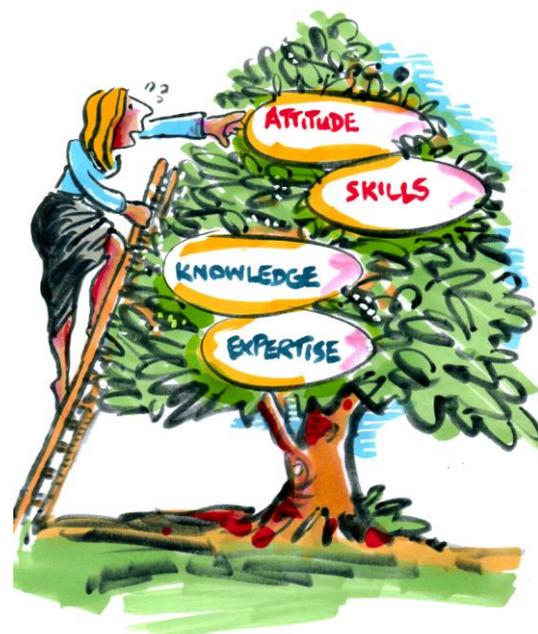
Thinking about his own team, he observed that people tend to be recruited (especially if this responsibility is devolved to a third party) based on their knowledge and experience: “Are you qualified?” “Who have you worked for?” “What have you been involved in delivering previously?”

However, most of the challenges that he faces as a business leader have to do with people’s attitudes – their preferences, prejudices and their willingness (or otherwise) to engage, **and** with their skills – what they can turn their hand to, their forte or niche expertise within a particular discipline or team environment.

K nowledge	What they are qualified in; what they have learnt
A ttitude	How they behave; how they approach challenges, people and tasks
S kills	What they can do; what they contribute; how they collaborate
E xperience	Where they have been; what they have seen and been involved in

Knowledge and Expertise are easy to measure and check.

Unfortunately, it is harder and demands more time to discover an individual’s **Attitude and Skills** – but it is worth it because, of course, these things are key business differentiators.



*Käse is German for Cheese.

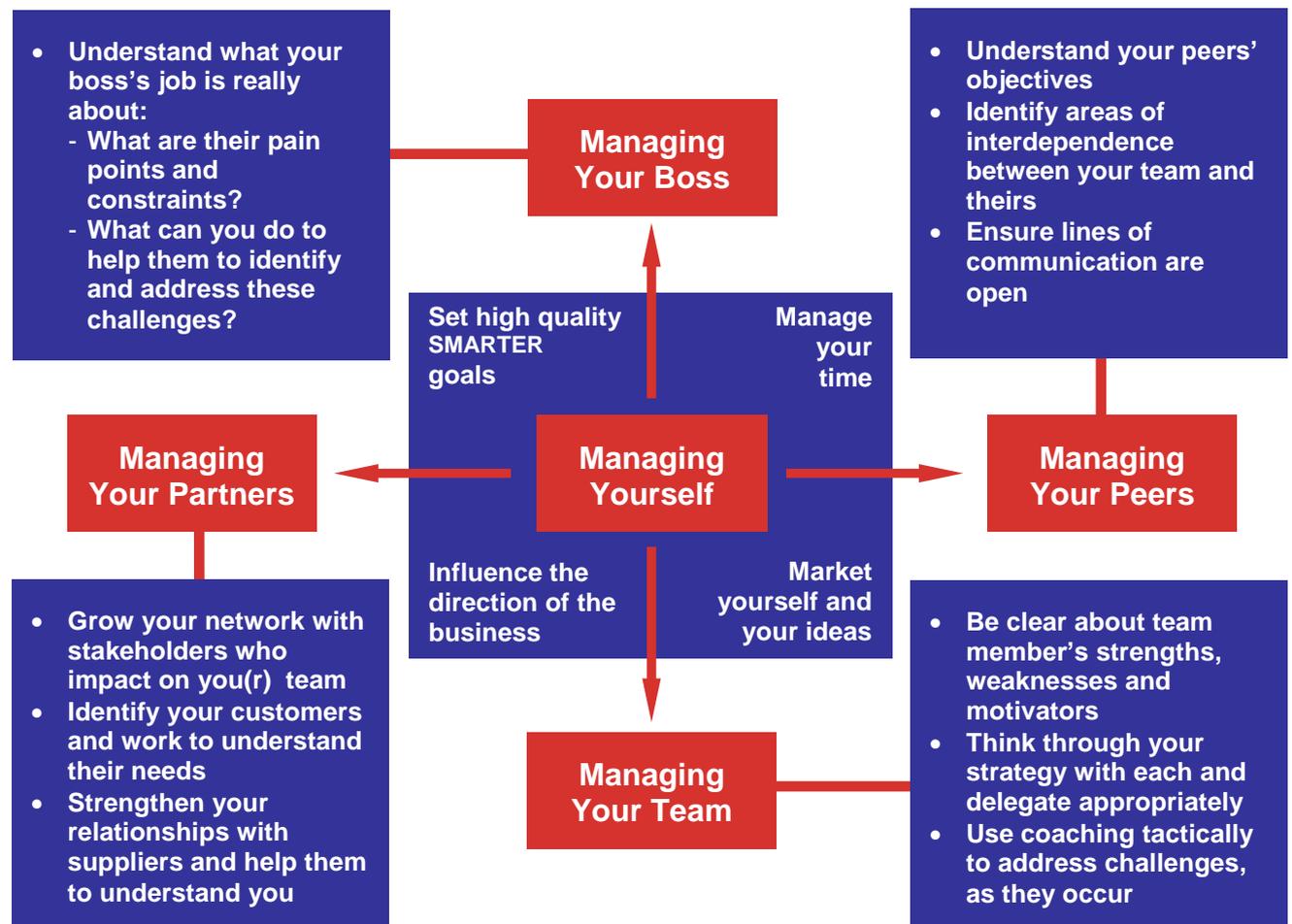
Looking forward to Next Year

Taking Time to Think – Meerkat Management

Traditional management thinking focuses on managing downwards. At Step System, we take a much more holistic approach, because we understand that skilled managers need to be 'savvy' and able to get their 'head above the parapet' – rather like a Meerkat. The process must begin by taking a hard look at ourselves and thinking about our own development, before focusing on the other areas that we can influence and which will help us to navigate in an ever more complex business environment.



SYSTEMS FOR SUCCESS – HELPING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS ACHIEVE THEIR OWN DEFINITION OF SUCCESS



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Step System creates and supplies coaching and training interventions, supported by blended learning and focused publications, delivering success in the areas of personal, team and organisational development.

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