



Business Manager



**Hands-on-Academics
Business Manager**
by Career Solutions Publishing

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Making The Wheels Go Around

"I organize, plan, and steer a company's operations in a way that is best for the business. I can't please everyone all of the time, but if I do my job well, everyone benefits."

Business Manager

Career Information

What I do every day

As a business manager for a small company, I am the person who keeps an eye on all activities relating to the operation of the business. This includes coordinating budgets with the managers of all departments and alerting the other executives when we face financial difficulties. I also make sure we meet federal and state guidelines for hiring and firing, provide handicapped facilities, and perform other functions of a business. Sometimes, I set or negotiate salaries and contracts.

The best part of my job

I enjoy being in a position where I can solve problems. As a decision maker, I am able to directly influence the company's success. I also like the challenge of anticipating the company's needs, creating business plans and watching them work, and adjusting the plans when needed. To me, a business is like a living thing that needs attention. It changes every day and it requires innovative people to help it grow and succeed.

The worst part of my job

I feel like I am caught in the middle when the executives I work for want to introduce a new policy or program that the employees don't agree with. It's my job to make sure that employees comply with company policies, but it's not always easy or comfortable.

Business managers tend to have the following characteristics:

- √ Ability to handle multiple projects at the same time
- √ Excellent organizational skills
- √ Ability to adapt to changing situations
- √ Effective problem-solving skills
- √ Outstanding communication skills
- √ Self-confidence
- √ Excellent time management skills
- √ Positive attitude
- √ Ability to work well under pressure
- √ Patience and diplomacy

Education required:

Bachelor or masters degree in business administration

Suggested Courses:

Accounting, business law, computer applications, applied economics, marketing, business and consumer math, business communications, English, principles of business management, keyboarding

Career Information

What I need to know and be able to do

Business managers must be knowledgeable about finance, accounting, budgeting, and cost control procedures. It is important to be able to use computerized financial software and understand record keeping systems. Staying up-to-date with business trends helps business managers develop goals and create business strategies for a company's success. Communicating effectively with employees, customers, and executives is crucial.

A business manager is responsible for maintaining a cooperative work environment, motivating employees to be productive, and resolving conflicts. As a representative of the company, a business manager also must be able to work with people from different backgrounds and age groups at community events, business conferences, and meetings.

How I prepared for my job

After graduating from high school, I attended community college and received an associate's degree in business. I gained practical experience in the business world by interning at different companies in a variety of positions. After finishing my four-year program at a state university, I came to work with my current employer, where I received several promotions that led to my job as business manager.

How I could have prepared better

At least half of my time is spent communicating with people. If I am not speaking on the phone, I am in meetings with executives or employees or writing reports, letters, and e-mails. I'd like to receive more training in communications and negotiations. Most of the problems that occur in business are due to misunderstandings or poor communication.

Salary Range:
\$58,000-\$107,000

Related Jobs:
Accountant, budget analyst, management analyst, account executive, bank manager, operations manager

Occupational Outlook:
Faster than average through 2016 due to changing business conditions

Career Vocabulary



accounts payable - money the company owes; bills to be paid

accounts receivable - money customers owe the company

budget - a list of all planned expenses and revenues

customer service - a series of activities that enhance the level of customer satisfaction—the feeling that a customer has about a product or service

discrimination - treatment based on a category or characteristic rather than individual merit

disability - a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities

entrepreneur - a person who has possession of an enterprise, or venture, and assumes significant accountability for the inherent risks and the outcome

estimated budget - the amount of money a department or company believes it will need

financial report - formal records of the financial activities of a business

fiscal - another word for financial; financial responsibilities are often called fiscal responsibilities

lay off - the dismissing of employees for lack of work or other business reasons

marketing plan - a written document that details the necessary actions to introduce or show the importance of a product or service

personnel - employees

profit-and-loss statement - a financial statement that summarizes the revenues, costs and expenses incurred during a specific period of time - usually a fiscal quarter or year

revenue - the amount of money that a company actually receives during a specific period, including discounts and deductions for returned merchandise. It is the "top line" or "gross income" figure from which costs are subtracted to determine net income.

Small Business Administration - a United States government agency that provides support to small businesses.

Math



Singing the Budget Blues

Companies prepare strict budgets based on their projected revenue. A business manager watches the budget closely throughout the year to make sure no department overspends. Without close attention to how much money is coming in and going out, the company might spend more money than it makes, which could lead to bankruptcy, salary cuts, or layoffs.



Activity 1: The Money Pit

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Jive Recordings, the company where you work as business manager, is facing financial hardship because of competition from the Internet, MP3's, and Ipods. As business manager for Jive, you sent an e-mail three months ago asking the five department heads to submit their estimated budget requests for the new fiscal year. You asked each department head to determine the amount needed in each of four categories. Calculate the estimated budget for each department.

Sales and Marketing Department. This department advertises the release of each new CD. It is responsible for creating advertising campaigns that raise interest in a music CD before it is released.

Personnel	\$ 557,000
Supplies	\$ 120,300
Equipment	\$ 256,000
Postage	\$ 56,000

Estimated budget \$ _____

Production Department. This department makes the music CDs. It is responsible for recording the sound and for burning and packaging the CDs.

Personnel	\$ 300,000
Supplies	\$ 459,300
Equipment	\$ 854,760
Postage	\$ 350

Estimated budget \$ _____

Student's Name _____

Date _____



Math

Activity 1 (Continued)

Human Resources Department. This department is in charge of employees. It keeps records and handles employee health benefits, training, and disciplinary matters.

Personnel	\$ 250,000
Supplies	\$ 23,000
Equipment	\$ 11,360
Postage	\$ 3,500

Estimated budget \$_____

Distribution Department. This department gets the CD from the studio to the music store. It is responsible for transporting the CDs and placing them in stores.

Personnel	\$ 146,000
Supplies	\$ 36,800
Equipment	\$ 386,930
Postage	\$ 5,800

Estimated budget \$_____

Accounting Department. This department is in charge of the company's money. It handles all financial transactions such as payroll, accounts payable, and accounts receivable.

Personnel	\$ 468,500
Supplies	\$ 13,460
Equipment	\$ 29,800
Postage	\$ 4,500

Estimated budget \$_____

Student's Name

Date



Math



Activity 2: A Slice of the Money Pie

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Every department has expenses associated with its role in the company. Business managers allocate a percentage of resources to each department according to the costs the department incurs in carrying out its responsibilities.

As business manager, your understanding of the budget becomes clearer after you see the percentage allocations for each department. What percent of the total budget will be allocated to the departments if the estimates submitted are approved?

1. First, calculate the total estimated budget for all departments combined.

	Estimated budget
Sales and Marketing	_____
Production	_____
Human Resources	_____
Distribution	_____
Accounting	_____
Total estimated budget	_____

2. To calculate the percentage requested by each department, divide the department's estimate by the total estimated budget for all departments. Round to two decimals.

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Sales and Marketing}} \div \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Company's estimated budget}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Decimal}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Percent of budget}} \%$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Production}} \div \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Company's estimated budget}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Decimal}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Percent of budget}} \%$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Human Resources}} \div \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Company's estimated budget}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Decimal}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Percent of budget}} \%$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Distribution}} \div \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Company's estimated budget}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Decimal}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Percent of budget}} \%$$

$$\frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Accounting}} \div \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Company's estimated budget}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Decimal}} = \frac{\text{_____}}{\text{Percent of budget}} \%$$

Student's Name _____

Date _____



Math



Activity 3: Cash Crunch

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Jive Recording's cash crunch will require budget cuts in all departments during the next fiscal year. After reviewing this year's profit-and-loss statement and considering the effect of Internet competition, management has decided that each department must cut its estimated budget by 13%.

What is the final budget each department will receive in the new fiscal year? First, calculate the amount of the cut and then subtract this amount from the estimated budget that was submitted by each department in Activity 1.

1. Sales and Marketing Department

$$\frac{\text{Estimated budget}}{\text{Estimated budget}} \times \frac{\text{Percent of cut}}{\text{Percent of cut}} = \frac{\text{Amount of cut}}{\text{Amount of cut}} \quad \frac{\text{Final budget}}{\text{Final budget}}$$

2. Production Department

$$\frac{\text{Estimated budget}}{\text{Estimated budget}} \times \frac{\text{Percent of cut}}{\text{Percent of cut}} = \frac{\text{Amount of cut}}{\text{Amount of cut}} \quad \frac{\text{Final budget}}{\text{Final budget}}$$

3. Human Resources Department

$$\frac{\text{Estimated budget}}{\text{Estimated budget}} \times \frac{\text{Percent of cut}}{\text{Percent of cut}} = \frac{\text{Amount of cut}}{\text{Amount of cut}} \quad \frac{\text{Final budget}}{\text{Final budget}}$$

4. Distribution Department

$$\frac{\text{Estimated budget}}{\text{Estimated budget}} \times \frac{\text{Percent of cut}}{\text{Percent of cut}} = \frac{\text{Amount of cut}}{\text{Amount of cut}} \quad \frac{\text{Final budget}}{\text{Final budget}}$$

5. Accounting Department

$$\frac{\text{Estimated budget}}{\text{Estimated budget}} \times \frac{\text{Percent of cut}}{\text{Percent of cut}} = \frac{\text{Amount of cut}}{\text{Amount of cut}} \quad \frac{\text{Final budget}}{\text{Final budget}}$$

Student's Name _____

Date _____



Science



Gimme! Gimme!

Employees in every department come to the business manager with a wish list. Everyone requests the latest technology. "I want a new desktop computer with a flat screen LCD monitor!" "Our department needs a website." "I need a smart phone."

The business manager plays a crucial role in the purchase of technology for a company. Investing in technology is expensive, so, before your company makes a technology purchase, you must be sure it will pay off in one or more of the following ways:

- ◇ Improve customer service
- ◇ Help the company expand into new markets
- ◇ Improve communications and reduce costs
- ◇ Make the business more efficient
- ◇ Make employees more productive
- ◇ Increase profits

Here is a list of some of the technologies available to businesses.

Internet access - allows computer users to find information on the World Wide Web.

E-mail - provides a fast, inexpensive method of communication.

E-commerce website - allows a company to sell products and services and provide customer service on the Internet.

T3 line - an expensive, super high-speed fiber optic telephone connection that computers can use to send data and video. Typically used by big companies that send large documents, pictures, sounds, and databases.

Laptop computer - a portable, personal computer; good for people who travel for work.

Camera cell phone - allows employees, such as salespeople, to take photographs and deliver them over the telephone.

Video phone - allows callers to see the person they are talking to.

Global Positioning System (GPS) - a satellite tracking service. Companies that use cars and trucks for business can track the location, routes, and speed of their vehicles.

Video conferencing - a way for members of a company to hold a meeting with people in different locations. All can hear, see, and talk to other members of the meeting.

Science



Activity: Technical Wizard

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Keeping up with changes in technology is a challenge for business managers. Not only does technological change occur rapidly, but it can also be extremely expensive. Assume that at times during your career you are the business manager for the following companies. From the list on the previous page, select the technologies you believe would be useful for each company. Explain the reason why you would recommend investing in the technologies you chose. Add other technology not given in the list if you believe it would be helpful.

1. International Toys employs over 6,000 people in four different countries, including sales staff, designers, and manufacturers. The toy business is very competitive, so staying up-to-date with the newest toys on the market is important. Members of the company must be able to communicate with each other 24 hours a day in different time zones.

What types of technology would benefit the toy company?

Why?

Student's Name

Date



Science

Activity (Continued)

2. You are the business manager of a small chain of hotels in Vermont. Tourists visit Vermont to ski in the winter and watch the leaves change color in the fall. The chain's major concerns are staying on top of weather reports, attracting visitors, and booking reservations.

What types of technology do you believe would benefit the hotel chain?

Why?

3. You are the business manager of a national trucking company. The company's trucks deliver and pick up loads all over the country. The company's main concerns are delivering shipments on time, avoiding theft, and maintaining worker safety.

What types of technology are a good investment for the trucking company?

Why?

Student's Name _____

Date _____



Science

Activity (Continued)

4. You are the business manager for a book publisher. Writers, editors, and printers must send large documents to each other quickly and securely every day. The writers and marketing executives travel frequently in order to promote the sales of new books. They conduct interviews in bookstores and on television in five or six major cities every week.

What types of technology would benefit the publishing company?

Why?

5. The public relations firm where you work as business manager must get news about clients out quickly. The firm announces awards your clients win, recognitions they receive, television shows where their executives appear, and events they hold.

What types of technology do you believe would benefit the public relations firm?

Why?

Student's Name

Date





Related Websites

Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_commerce

E-commerce definition

Ecommerce Education

<http://www.ecommerceeducation.com/benefits-of-ecommerce.asp>

The benefits of e-commerce

CIOL

<http://www.ciol.com/content/enterprise/infrastructure/2003/10304091.asp>

Making the best use of laptops

USA Today

http://www.usatoday.com/money/industries/travel/2009-06-22-travel-technology-videoconference_N.htm

Videoconferencing helps companies cut travel costs

About

http://compnetworking.about.com/od/networkcables/f/t1_t3_lines.htm

What are T1 and T3 lines?

Tech Republic

http://articles.techrepublic.com.com/5100-10878_11-5034522.html

Business uses of GPS

Social Studies



Doing The Right Thing

What's a business manager to do? It's your job as business manager to maintain a discrimination-free workplace, and you and your company can be sued if you discriminate against employees. The U.S. Government has passed several laws to protect workers from discrimination related to these factors:

- ◇ Race
- ◇ Color
- ◇ Religion
- ◇ Pregnancy
- ◇ Childbirth
- ◇ National origin or ancestry
- ◇ Gender
- ◇ Age
- ◇ Disability

Here are some of the laws that protect employees from discrimination.

- ◇ The *Age Discrimination in Employment Act* protects workers who are 40 years of age or older. Employers cannot assume that people over 40 do not have the same abilities or cannot perform a job as well as a younger person on the basis of being “too old.”
- ◇ The *Americans with Disabilities Act* prohibits discrimination against disabled people who are qualified for a job. Employers must also provide "reasonable accommodation" for disabled employees. Reasonable accommodation may include making a building or an office accessible to persons with disabilities by adding ramps for wheelchairs and placing pull-up bars on the walls of bathrooms. Some companies solve the problem by placing disabled employees in offices on the first floor.
- ◇ The *Civil Rights Act of 1964* prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. A rule requiring employees to speak English on the job may violate the law unless an employer shows the requirement is necessary for conducting business.
- ◇ The *Pregnancy Discrimination Act* is an amendment to the Civil Rights Act. Employers must hold open a job for a pregnancy-related absence the same length of time jobs are held open for employees on sick or disability leave.

Social Studies



Activity: Hiring, Firing, Promoting, and Demoting

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

The rights of individuals and the goals of a company may appear to be in conflict when a personnel matter becomes controversial. A business manager must look at the big picture and make both legal and ethical decisions. Business managers can be held accountable if their company discriminates against employees. Do the situations below involve discrimination?

1. A business manager of an advertising company is reviewing two candidates for the position of account executive. The person who gets the promotion will meet with clients face to face. Marie, who is 59 years old, has worked for the company 22 years. She created some of the company's most successful ad campaigns. Barbara, 28, has been with the company three years. The manager promotes Barbara because he wants the company to have a youthful image with clients.

Did this business manager unfairly discriminate against Marie because of her age? Summarize your position.

2. A business manager of a retail catalog company interviews two candidates for the job of computer tech support specialist. One of the candidates, Geraldo, has three years experience in tech support, a college degree in computer science, and excellent references from his previous employer. Geraldo's legs are paralyzed from a car accident, and he has to use a wheelchair. Mark, the second candidate, has just graduated from college with a computer science degree, but he has no work experience. The business manager hires Mark because hiring Geraldo will require the company to build ramps in at least three different locations so that he can move around the office building.

Did this business manager unfairly discriminate against Geraldo because of his disability?

Student's Name _____

Date _____



Social Studies

Activity (Continued)

3. Anna, who came to the U.S. from another country, has asked to be promoted to a customer service position three times. She wants this promotion and needs a pay raise. The business manager likes Anna and is very happy with her work, but customers have complained that they cannot understand her when she speaks. The manager is afraid business will suffer if he promotes her to customer service.

Did this business manager unfairly discriminate because of Anna's national origin?

4. Ed has applied for a job at the Sunny Hill Day Care center. He has a college degree in early childhood education and helped raise his younger brothers and sisters. Sunny Hill takes care of children from the ages of six months to five years. The owner of Sunny Hill rejects Ed's application because she believes parents and children are more comfortable with female caregivers, especially in the case of the youngest children who must be held a lot and need diaper changes.

Did this business manager unfairly discriminate against Ed because of his gender?



Related Websites

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

<http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/qanda.html>

Federal laws prohibiting job discrimination

Gallup

<http://gmj.gallup.com/content/23164/Price-Age-Discrimination.aspx>

The price of age discrimination

Student's Name _____

Date _____



English/Communication



Delivering Bad News

Giving people bad news is one of the hardest things a business manager has to do. Sometimes the news is delivered verbally, or it may be delivered through a well-written letter that documents the facts for the legal protection of the company and the individual.

Writing confirmations of layoffs or firings, refusing employee requests and informing employees of poor company performance are examples of negative messages a business manager must write. A negative document should express the purpose, the action and the outcome in a direct, yet sensitive, way. The impact can be softened by using a supportive tone and positive wording.



Activity 1: Layoff Coming

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

P.J.'s Manufacturing is losing money. Sales have been so poor that P.J.'s has no choice but to lay off some employees. You have the difficult task of writing a letter telling employees about the situation. Decide which of the following sentences you will use in the first paragraph of your letter and write the paragraph on the next page.

1. Choose the best first sentence.
 - a. Our company has had to make a difficult personnel decision and I am writing to alert all P.J.'s employees.
 - b. You probably already know that P.J.'s is losing money.
 - c. I regret to announce that P.J.'s is in bad financial trouble.
2. What is the best second sentence?
 - a. I am sorry to have to tell you that we are going to be laying people off.
 - b. It's time for you to start looking for a job because we're going to be letting people go.
 - c. After reviewing all of the financial choices available to us, we have decided the only way for the company to remain profitable is to eliminate several jobs.

Student's Name _____

Date _____



English/Communication



Activity 2: Can You Hear Me Now?

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Listening is harder than most people realize because distractions, attitudes, and emotions get in the way. Being a good listener is one of the most needed skills for a successful business manager. Here are a few of the reasons why listening is such a powerful tool when dealing with employees.

- ◇ You get to know all employees better and learn how to work with them best.
- ◇ You pick up on dissatisfaction and conflicts so that you can catch trouble early.
- ◇ You build productive relationships by boosting each person's self-esteem and showing the person you are willing to listen, understand, and help.

How well do you listen? Place an "X" by each True or False to evaluate your listening skills. Look on the next page for scoring.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| ___ True ___ False | 1. I always look at the person talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 2. I judge what the person is saying by his appearance. |
| ___ True ___ False | 3. I let noises, telephone calls, and other people distract me while people are talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 4. I change the subject before a person finishes talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 5. I never interrupt the person talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 6. I often argue in my mind with what the person is saying while he is still talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 7. I pretend to be listening while thinking of other things. |
| ___ True ___ False | 8. I usually believe I already know what the speaker is going to say before she says it. |
| ___ True ___ False | 9. I never act or look bored while a person is talking. |
| ___ True ___ False | 10. I ignore what people say when they speak slowly, are hard to understand, or when I dislike them. |
| ___ True ___ False | 11. I am often impatient and want the person talking to get to the point. |
| ___ True ___ False | 12. I never judge the value of what the speaker has to say while she is talking. |

Student's Name _____

Date _____



English/Communication

Activity 2 (Continued)

An outstanding listener would mark 1, 5, 9, and 12 as True and the remaining numbers as False.

If you answered 11 or 12 correctly, you are an exceptional listener. This skill will add to your success.

If you answered 9 or 10 correctly, congratulations, business management may be a good career path for you.

If you answered 7 or 8 correctly, concentrate on improving your listening skills and you'll be surprised at how your relationships improve.

If you answered 0-6 correctly, start correcting one bad listening habit at a time. Try to catch yourself in each bad habit and see how quickly your relationships improve.

English/Communication



Activity 3: You Can Hear Me, But Are You Listening?

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Hearing is automatic—it's a physical activity—but listening takes effort. The good news is that listening can be learned by anyone who wants to improve. Here are some techniques that, with practice, will make you a better listener.

Restate. After the speaker has described a thought, feeling, or idea, repeat aloud, in your own words, what you believe the speaker said. Concentrate on the facts. For example:

"It sounds like what you're saying is ..."
"If I understand correctly, your idea is ..."
"I believe you're telling me...."

Check your understanding. After restating what the speaker has said, check whether you understand the speaker's meaning. Give the speaker the opportunity to correct a misunderstanding. For example:

"Am I reading the situation correctly?"
"Do I understand your point?"
"Are we in agreement about our positions?"

Encourage. Let the speaker know you are interested by responding to what he or she said. Do not agree or disagree.

"I'm interested in hearing more about what you're saying."
"I'd like to hear more of your thoughts."
"I see."

Be silent. If the speaker needs time to collect his or her ideas, practice staying silent for up to five seconds. Count silently if you need to.

Summarize. At the end of the conversation, organize and summarize the important parts.

"To summarize, we are agreeing that..."
"The conclusion we've reached is..."
"We'll move forward on this project by..."



English/Communication

Activity 3 (Continued)

How good a listener are you? Do you pay close attention, provide feedback, and ask questions, or do the speaker's words "go in one ear and out the other"?

Partner with a classmate and practice your listening techniques during a three-minute interview. Take turns being the speaker and the listener. You may use one of the topics shown below or choose your own topic.

- ◇ Career plans after graduating from high school
- ◇ Cafeteria food
- ◇ A social networking site
- ◇ Dating
- ◇ High school groups
- ◇ A topic of your choice

1. The speaker should begin by giving his or her opinion on the topic. The listener should ask the speaker open-ended questions that require more than a "yes" or "no" answer, such as, "What do you think about..." or "Can you give me an example of..."
2. After the interview, talk with your partner about both of your experiences during the interview. Discuss the following points and summarize your experience on the next page.

- ◇ What was hard?
- ◇ What was easy?
- ◇ What would you do differently next time?
- ◇ Does the speaker feel that the listener was paying attention and understood what was said? Why?
- ◇ Does the listener believe he or she stayed focused on the speaker? If not, what was the distraction?
- ◇ Did the listener have any habits that distracted the speaker?
- ◇ Do the partners feel like they know each other better?
- ◇ What did you both learn about yourselves?



In the News

Differences and Likenesses

Leadership and management are two constants in a business manager's work that can be learned from sources outside the business world. Some of these sources may appear to be unrelated to business, but look more closely and the connection becomes clear.



Activity: Play Ball!

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

The *Career Journal* published an article titled *What Business Managers Can Learn From Baseball*. The writers of the article visited the training camp of the Washington Wild Things to see what team-building skills could be learned from the sport of baseball. Here are the top five lessons the writers say baseball can teach business managers.

1. Select the right players.

The director of the Wild Things said, "Not everyone is a star. The 22 best players don't make the best team." It takes a mix of different talents to build a winning team.

2. Focus on the game.

The catcher said, "When you're standing in the outfield, you don't know whether there is one out, two outs, or what the count is." A good baseball manager watches the field action and signals players when they need to change strategies and refocus.

3. Use scores and stats to track performance.

The scoreboard provides an instant status report. "When I'm hitting, I go to the plate knowing where we are and what needs to be done," says a player. Managers at Alcoa aluminum company use big baseball-like scoreboards to keep company teams focused on important goals.

4. Enforce the rules of fair play.

In baseball, the umpire keeps the game moving and ejects players when necessary. A business manager should eject a team member who continues disruptive behavior.

5. Give plenty of feedback.

The Wild Things director says, "Certain players need a reprimand. Others need a pat on the back. Some players do best when left alone. As a coach, you need to know what to say and when to say it, or if to say it." A coach or manager can help a team member examine his or her errors and make required adjustments.

In the News

Activity (Continued)

What other lessons can a business manager learn from sports teams?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Student's Name

Date





Just for Fun

Let's Talk Business

Have you ever read a financial report? How about a business newspaper such as the *Wall Street Journal*? Do you need a dictionary just to get through one paragraph? Business managers need to understand many terms that aren't used in everyday conversation.



Activity: Matchup

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Just for fun, test your knowledge of business terms by matching them with their definitions. After you have matched a word with its definition, locate and circle it in the word search on the next page. Words in the search are written up and down, across, forwards, backwards, and diagonally.

asset	capital	debt	dividend	fiscal
inventory	liability	mortgage	merger	revenue

1. _____ A type of loan that is made using something of value, such as a house or property, as a pledge. If a person doesn't make payments on the loan, the property can be claimed by the individual or institution that made the loan.
2. _____ Money that is owed.
3. _____ Another word for financial. For example, companies file their taxes based on their profits and losses for one year. This could be called their "financial year," instead it is called this type of year.
4. _____ Any possession that has value.
5. _____ All of the income produced by a company.
6. _____ Joining two companies to form a new company.
7. _____ A financial obligation, such as payments that are owed; the opposite of asset.

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Just for Fun

Activity (Continued)

8. _____ Money or property that is invested in a company.
9. _____ A portion of a company's profit that is paid to owners of the company.
10. _____ Products or materials a company has available for sale.

S	T	F	I	S	C	A	L	I
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G	R	E	E	N	T	E	T	N
E	T	N	A	D	A	K	B	T
R	O	U	N	D	L	S	E	O
D	N	E	D	I	V	I	D	R
L	I	A	B	I	L	I	T	Y

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Entrepreneurial Problem-Solving



You Can't Do It All By Yourself

With a background in business and a unique idea, some business managers decide to go out on their own and start a business. Skills in managing people, finances, and projects, combined with creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit provide a winning combination for a small business owner.



Activity: Strategize

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Following are several situations that occur in small businesses. Which choice represents the best business decision? Place an “X” by your answer.

1. Michelle, the owner of a fashion design firm, comes into her office every day and faces a desk filled with post-it notes, printed e-mails, articles she wants to read, reports, and other items that need attention. She often becomes distracted.
 a. Michelle should work hard until each item on her desk is handled.
 b. Michelle should clear everything off her desk so she can improve her ability to focus.
 c. Michelle should prioritize the items on her desk and ignore anything that does not need immediate attention.
2. Juan's printing business has shops in four different locations. He cannot be in all the shops at the same time to oversee the work. Employee errors have been driving him crazy. He is losing customers and profits.
 a. Juan should start firing people who make too many errors. All employees will realize they can lose their jobs if they don't improve.
 b. Juan should train the employees to perform better. He should praise good work and motivate employees to take pride in their work.
 c. Juan should demand improvement and also discipline employees by depriving them of bonuses or raises.

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Entrepreneurial Problem-Solving

Activity (Continued)

3. Phillip's business has grown rapidly. He can no longer do everything himself. He hired Brenda to handle customer service phone calls. Brenda has excellent telephone etiquette and two years experience in customer service. Phillip listens to every call Brenda takes and always believes that he would have handled the call better. He spends just as much time listening to Brenda and correcting her as he did taking the calls himself.

- a. Phillip should train Brenda in everything he wants her to know about customer service calls, and then use his time for more valuable activities.
- b. Phillip should continue to listen to all of Brenda's calls but not correct her, criticize, or interfere.
- c. Phillip should keep correcting Brenda's customer service skills until he feels that she can do the job exactly as he did.

4. Tammy has ten employees working for her. Everyone gets along well and seems happy with their jobs, but Tammy is working harder than ever. She believes that she is the only one who really cares about the business. The employees chat about their personal lives and seem to have no interest in finding new customers or improving the way things are done.

- a. Tammy can tell the staff that everyone needs to bring in more customers or they will be replaced.
- b. Tammy can communicate how the employees will benefit by pursuing the company's goals. If employee efforts help grow the business, she may be able to pay higher salaries.
- c. Tammy can tell employees they are not allowed to waste time in personal conversations while they are working. The time they spend chatting could be used to accomplish more tasks so that Tammy doesn't have to work so hard.

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Related Websites

Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_business_management

Outline of business management

About

<http://management.about.com/cs/generalmanagement/a/Management101.htm>

Management 101

CEO Online

<http://www.ceonline.com.au/business/business-skills.shtml>

Business skills

Washington Post

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/06/17/AR2005061700446.html>

The mark of a good manager

Monster

http://greatboss.monster.ca/7704_en-CA_p1.asp

What makes a great boss?

David Maister

<http://davidmaister.com/articles/1/39/>

Tips on managing people

About

<http://management.about.com/cs/people/a/MngChng092302.htm>

Managing change: managing people's fear



Challenge: English/Communication

Go To Your Corners!

As a business manager, you may have to mediate serious disagreements between employees. It's been estimated that managers spend one quarter to one half of their time communicating to resolve conflicts.

One common conflict resolution strategy business managers use is called "problem solving." This strategy invites people on both sides of a conflict to meet with the manager to talk about the conflict and find an outcome that satisfies everyone. The goal is to view the conflict as a problem to be solved, not as a contest to be won.

With this technique, the business manager does not use his or her power to impose a solution on both sides. Instead, the business manager's role is to listen, improve communication, and help both sides find a win-win solution.

Here are some guidelines for resolving a conflict using the problem-solving strategy.

1. Attack the problem not the person.
 - ◇ Define the problem.
 - ◇ Explore each person's viewpoint.
 - ◇ Try to understand and respect each viewpoint without judging.
 - ◇ Use good communication skills, such as listening, restating, summarizing, and clarifying.
2. Concentrate on "interests" not "positions."
 - ◇ A "position" is what a person wants. For example: Mary's position is that she always wants to work the shift that leaves at 4:00 p.m. John's position is that he wants Mary to take turns with him and work the shift that leaves at 7:00 p.m. every other week.
 - ◇ An "interest" is why the person wants the result. For example, Mary wants to leave at 4:00 p.m. because she is scared to walk to her car alone in the dark. John wants to take turns so he can be home in time to have dinner with his young children. Interests usually involve a person's needs. It is easier to find solutions to interests than to find solutions to positions.

Challenge: English/Communication



Activity: Let the Problem-Solving Begin!

Click on the question mark to enter your answer.

Josh and Alexis, team members on the Hammond financial project, had a blow-up in a recent team meeting. They've been avoiding each other ever since. The tension is so bad that other team members avoid both of them.

Alexis is a new member on the team who has suggested excellent ideas for cutting costs and entering new markets. She accused Josh, the team leader, of deliberately ignoring her ideas and not giving her a chance to prove herself. She was furious when Josh finally used one of her ideas in a presentation and made it appear that the idea was his own. During the presentation Josh didn't mention her name and he always used the word "I" instead of "we".

As the manager who oversees the project, you call both Alexis and Josh into your office individually so they can present their cases to you.

Josh's point of view

Josh feels that Alexis' attack was unfair. He believes that the responsibility for the success of the project rests on him since he is the team leader. He believes Alexis doesn't think her ideas through well enough and that she hasn't been on the team long enough to be a valuable contributor. Josh also believes Alexis does not understand that all of the team members' ideas should be blended and shared. Alexis' name was written on the final report, as well as the names of all the other team members.

Josh's position: "Alexis should be removed from the team. She is inexperienced and disruptive. All she thinks about is herself."

Josh's interest: "I want this project to be a success so I can advance in the company. If the project fails, it will count against me because I am the team leader."

Alexis' point of view

Alexis wants more responsibility on the project. She is creative and energetic and anxious to have her ideas taken seriously. She feels Josh is deliberately keeping her from contributing because he wants to control the project by himself. She doesn't trust him to share credit with team members, especially herself.

Alexis' position: "Josh should not be team leader."

Alexis' interest: "I want this project to be a success so I can advance in the company. If my ideas are ignored or if I don't get credit for them, no one will notice how good I am at my job."

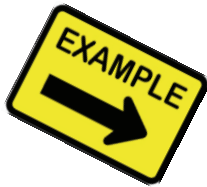
Challenge: English/Communication

Activity (Continued)

Alexis and Josh have agreed to meet together with you to try to resolve their problem. Form a team of three with two of your classmates and assign each person a role as Alexis, Josh, or the business manager. Use the guidelines for the problem-solving strategy and try to find a win-win solution to this conflict. Write a summary of the solution the team developed for Josh and Alexis' conflict.

Suggestions for the business manager:

1. *Communicate* - Ask Josh and Alexis to describe their feelings and viewpoints with each other using only "I" statements. They may not use "you" statements when talking. They may not interrupt each other, roll their eyes, or put the other down. It is important for both sides to be respectful.



Alexis:

"I believe that I should have more input," instead of
"You don't allow me to have any input."

Josh:

"I believe that credit for team members ideas should be shared,"
instead of "You don't like to share your ideas."

2. *Brainstorm* - Ask Josh and Alexis to come up with as many ideas as possible for solving the problem. Every idea that comes to mind should be expressed and written down. Don't discuss the ideas. Don't judge whether the ideas are good or bad.
3. *Find a fair solution* - Go through the ideas and choose one that is fair to both people. Try to keep emotions out of the problem-solving process.

Summary of solution chosen for Josh and Alexis' conflict

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Related Websites

University of Wisconsin

<http://www.ohrd.wisc.edu/onlinetraining/resolution/index.asp>
Conflict resolution recommendations, simulations, and exercises

About

http://humanresources.about.com/od/managementtips/a/conflict_solue.htm
Workplace conflict resolution: people management tips

The Leaders Institute

http://www.leadersinstitute.com/articles/ethical_conflict_resolution_tips.html
Ethical conflict resolution / anger management tips

Mind Tools

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_81.htm
Resolving conflict rationally and effectively

About

http://humanresources.about.com/od/conflictresolution/Conflict_Resolution_Conflict_Avoidance_and_Controversy_Management.htm
Conflict resolution, conflict avoidance, and controversy management

United Press International

http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Business_Daily/2009/02/02/Workplace-conflict-resolution-9-tips-for-managers/17666/
Workplace conflict resolution: 9 tips for managers