

Skills for New Managers
Morey Stettner
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Discussion Guide

Training new managers can be one of the toughest jobs—or one of the most enjoyable and rewarding. The difference depends in large part on the trainer’s approach.

These are people who have recently assumed new responsibilities, so they may be very sensitive to any concerns about possible deficiencies. A trainer who does not show an understanding of this psychological fact can face huge challenges. However, since the new responsibilities include training and motivating, the managers that you have to help develop are really your peers. If you treat them in that way, as fellow travelers in training and motivation, you can truly enjoy the experience and benefit from it.

The friendly, person-to-person style of *Skills for New Managers* is ideal for training managers, because it fits with the collegial environment that new managers should be developing with their new peers. The short chapters of this book provide practical information and suggestions, with a minimum of theory, so it’s just right for training people who are already engaged in managing.

The author, Morey Stettner, worked to make this book a textual mentor for the new manager. The following discussion guide is intended to help trainers help managers get the most out of this “mentor.” It recommends ways for trainers to use *Skills for New Managers* to help those new to managerial responsibilities develop their potential.

Chapter 1. The Successful New Manager

This chapter helps the reader develop a model of the successful manager. This becomes the template for the chapters that follow. Once a manager knows what kinds of traits, skills, and behaviors will allow him or her to manage more effectively, it's easier to know what to do to excel.

The chapter begins with a short exercise (p. 2) that leads the reader to think about what his or her favorite manager did that made him or her effective. You could have participants complete the exercise individually, then share their answers. The results would show that there is no one "perfect" way to be an effective manager, that managers can be effective in various ways.

A good follow-up question for discussion might be "By what single behavior or in what specific situation can we best judge a manager to be successful?" Again, the diversity of answers in most groups should show that every new manager must find what works best for him or her.

This exercise and any ensuing discussion lead naturally to the next section of this chapter (pp. 4-5)—a trio of quick tests that have the reader rating his or her leadership, in terms of patience, communication skills, and ethics.

You could build upon this exercise by asking participants to list other traits or behaviors that are important for a leader. To work with this list of traits and behaviors, you might ask participants to answer the following question: "Which one trait or behavior best shows an effective leader?" The differences of perspective and opinion that are likely to surface in a discussion of this question should help new managers understand that every one of them can be an effective leader in a different way.

But to be a successful manager and effective leader, a person must articulate a credo. The book explains this term and offers examples, then invites the reader to draft a personal management credo (pp. 6-8). Since a credo should be a very individual creation, it's probably best not to discuss the credos. However, you could prepare to augment this section of the book by gathering in advance other examples of management credos from friends and associates. Any discussion of these examples should focus on how well they express personal beliefs, goals, and commitments—not on the specific beliefs, goals, and commitments.

The next section of Chapter 1 explores the feelings and assumptions that may cause problems for new managers (pp. 8-14). You could invite the new managers to share some of the "surprises" they've experienced in their new role; some may be unique, but it's likely that some will be common to most or even all of the new managers in any group. (If the participants are from the same company, remind them not to use names or other details.) Sharing their experiences can be difficult for new managers, at least at the start, so you should be prepared to describe what other managers have shared with you. The point here is to discuss the feelings and assumptions that can keep new managers from being more effective.

One common experience is that it may often not be the best strategy to use authority to get staff members to do things. The book discusses this point and suggests ways to communicate objectives and instructions (pp. 10-11). A good way to build upon this part of the book would be to create scenarios in which exercising authority requires tact and discretion, then ask participants to suggest ways to communicate to employees.

Chapter 1 ends with a checklist of important points covered in the chapter. You may want to invite participants to mention other points that they consider important. This is a good way to end your coverage of each of the 12 chapters.

Chapter 2. Piercing Six Myths of Management

Chapter 2 examines and disproves some of the most prevalent myths of managing people, faulty assumptions that can cause problems for new managers:

- You must call *all* the shots.
- You can't trust anyone.
- You must remain objective at all times.
- You must defend your staff.
- You cannot back down.
- You're the best teacher.

The chapter provides examples of the effects of these myths. You might ask participants to volunteer examples from their personal experiences, either as managers or with managers from their past. (If the participants are from the same company, remind them not to use names or other details.)

As a natural follow-up to build on this discussion, you could ask participants to suggest other myths to add to this list of six. Then, you close this chapter by getting the participants to convert these myths into guidelines. The most likely conversions would be along the follow lines:

- You do not need to call *all* the shots.
- You can trust people.
- You do not need to remain objective at all times.
- You do not need to defend your staff.
- You can back down.
- You're not the best teacher.

Depending on your participants and the time, you might prod them to go beyond the simple reversals, to be more creative and positive: e.g., you should allow your employees to call the shots whenever possible, you can usually trust people if they understand what's expected, you can be subjective as long as you're fair.

The point here is to encourage new managers to free themselves from the myths and to develop them into guidelines that help them manage better.

Chapter 3. How to Build Momentum in a New Job

The purpose of Chapter 3 is to help new managers gain confidence, impress others, and establish momentum during their first few months.

The chapter begins by returning to the management credo that participants created in Chapter 1 and showing how applying that credo develops consistency. A credo is personal, so you should be sensitive here.

You might ask for a volunteer to share his or her credo to use as an example, but you should be prepared to take one of the credos that you got from friends and associates. Post the credo on a board or a wall. Then ask participants to suggest a problematic scenario. For each scenario, encourage the participants to suggest ways of dealing with the situation in accordance with the posted credo.

As an alternative exercise or to follow up on this discussion, you could ask the participants to each take five minutes to consider their own credos and write out a brief description of how they would handle each of the situations. Emphasize that they should be consistent with their credo.

Chapter 3 next covers a crucial test for many new managers—the first meeting. Since it's very likely that some, many, or all of the managers in your training group have already held their first meeting, a good exercise is to ask them to share their experiences.

Here are a few basic questions to guide the discussion:

- What mistakes did they make?
- How did they recover?
- What damage resulted?
- How have they worked since that meeting to repair the damage?
- How have they changed their approach to running meetings as a result of that first experience?

Encourage the other managers to help identify possible damages and to propose alternative remedies and approaches. The focus should be on working together to solve problems arising from early meetings with staff.

The chapter then moves to “quick wins” (pp. 33-35), areas where new managers should devote attention, to get positive results from the start. Since solving problems begins with identifying them, you might ask participants to describe how they worked with their staff members to identify the most important problems. If any of the problems seem common to enough of the participants in your group, you might expand the discussion to consider ways in which the participants have attempted to solve the problems.

What follows logically here is the matter of “input channels” (pp. 35-38). The chapter outlines several ways for the new manager to get ongoing input from staff members. You could ask each participant in the group to explain the others how he or she is developing input channels. Then,

follow up on each explanation by asking about the results. What sorts of input have come through the channels? Reports of problems? Positive comments? Only major concerns? Relative to processes and procedures only? Or also comments about individual workers?

After each of the participants has talked about his or her input channels (and all should get involved in this exercise!), you can open up the discussion for suggestions of ways to improve input channels. You might want to ask the managers how they react to the input to encourage that staff members will continue to communicate. You can also ask how their favorite managers from the past encouraged input—and then maybe end by asking what their least favorite managers did that blocked the input channels.

Chapter 3 closes with the potentially disconcerting question, “Are you ready for anything?” You might invite the new managers to share ways in which they’ve identified possible crisis situations, with their fellow managers and/or staff members, and considered ways to avert major problems or to deal with them. The focus should not be on the specific situations or actions, but rather on how they open up discussions that might make people uncomfortable.

Chapter 4. Managing to Listen

Chapter 4 covers an essential area of communication skills—listening. It begins with a short checklist to help participants reveal their trouble spots in this area.

Don't embarrass anybody by asking about the results of this self-diagnosis. A better approach would be to take each of the seven items on the list, one by one, and apply it to yourself and ask how that trouble spot might hurt your efforts to take the steps discussed in Chapter 3—act in accordance with their credo, run meetings, open input channels, and explore readiness for crisis situations. For example, "I often interrupt people who repeat themselves. What problems should I expect when I'm running meetings?"

It's not necessary to cover every step or every trouble spot. Also, the point is to help participants realize that listening skills are essential, not to come up with strategies—at least not yet.

The next section in Chapter 4 covers "the power of silence" and learning through listening (pp. 44-47). You might want to help support the lessons in this section with some role-play. Start by playing an employee; ask for a volunteer to play your manager. Then, start talking—about a problem, about a request, about another employee Your manager should listen and ask questions, but may need a little help. If so, invite the other participants to suggest questions to ask you (the employee). It may even be possible to start with a volunteer in the role of the employee.

This exercise leads logically into the next section of this chapter, the three steps of listening (pp. 47-51): interpreting, assessing, and responding. What communication problems arose during the role-plays? How could the manager have minimized these problems by following these three steps?

At this point you may want to return to the manager-employee role-play, but this time ask the other participants to comment after each segment of the verbal exchange. Here are some questions to guide the reactions:

- Did the manager make sure that he or she was interpreting the employee's words correctly?
- Did the manager avoid the "rush to judgment"?
- How did the manager respond? Did he or she ask questions for clarification or further information?
- What nonverbal reactions by the manager affected the exchange? How? Which reactions could hurt communication? What might he or she try to improve communication?

The book next makes the point that the worst reaction, in terms of hurting communication, is defensiveness. A manager should avoid becoming or even appearing defensive and should avoid causing others to become defensive. That's tough, so you'll probably want to discuss some tactics and then to provide a chance to practice.

You might start by posing a scenario or role-playing an employee with a problem (a complaint, a criticism, a challenging question). Then, ask participants to suggest ways of dealing with the employee. For each suggestion, ask the others to consider two questions:

- Does the behavior seem at all defensive?
- Is the behavior likely to cause the employee to become defensive?

You can ask the participants to signal their judgment: when you point to the manager or the employee, they should raise their hands to the extent that the manager seems defensive or the employee is likely to become defensive: hand not up, up a little, halfway up, all the way. This technique of using silent signals allows the participants to better focus on the role-play and for the manager to adjust his or her behavior according to the reaction of the “jury of peers.”

The final section of Chapter 4 (pp. 53-54) explores body language, describing some expressions and gestures to avoid and some behaviors to cultivate.

A good way to follow up on this section is to ask participants to mention expressions and gestures that they’ve found problematic. List these on a board or chart. For each expression or gesture, ask participants to share how it makes them feel and how they might naturally react to it. In essence, why should managers avoid these expressions and gestures?

Finally, expand the discussion into behavior modification. For each expression or gesture on the list, ask the participants how they would try to avoid the behavior. Remind them of the technique used by actors: avoid a bad behavior by focusing on a good or at least neutral behavior. You might offer a few suggestions to show how this approach works: a person with wandering eyes should focus on establishing and maintaining eye contact, a person with hyperactive hands might learn to place them flat on the desk or to fold them loosely, and so forth. (You’ve probably picked up a few of these techniques in developing your style of working with individuals and groups.)

Encourage the participants to take notes. Suggest that they may even want to prepare a short “script” to keep handy but hidden from others, a short list of good behaviors that will remind them how to avoid bad expressions and gestures when somebody drops by: “put down pen, do eye contact, place hands down on desk” In short, whatever each of them needs to do to avoid doing what comes naturally.

Chapter 5. Speak Like a Leader

Chapter 5 moves from listening to talking. Since all of your new managers have been talking since they were very young, it's essential to start by making them aware of what they do naturally. The first exercise in this chapter is a reality check of their speaking skills, based on four aspects: volume, tempo, inflection, and clarity.

This exercise is likely to work best with groups of six to ten people, so you may need to divide your participants into circles, if your meeting space is large enough to allow for members of each group to speak normally without bothering the other groups and to listen attentively without interference. If this is difficult or impossible, there are ways to adapt the exercise to larger groups.

If you use small groups, provide each group with score sheets, one for each member. The score sheets should consist of a matrix, with four columns marked Volume-Tempo-Inflection-Clarity and enough rows to allow for the number of members in the group. Then, the members of that group take turns talking. The speaker should talk for two to three minutes, perhaps explaining how to do a business task, and the others should judge the speaker on each of the four points, from 1 (lowest) to 10 (highest). After all have taken a turn, each should then poll the others for his or her ratings. It's certainly not scientific, but the exercise provides each participant with a fairly good idea of how he or she comes across to others.

If you work with the large group, you can ask each participant to stand and address the others. After he or she has talked for one minute or so, ask for a show of fingers (1 through 5) for each of the points and then roughly gauge the ratings: "Volume? Hmmm ... It looks like mostly 3's and 4's on that one. Tempo? OK, something of a spread there, with a lot of 2's, 3's, and 4's. Inflection? Ah, good, mainly 5's, with some 4's. Clarity? Again, pretty good, 4's and 5's." Not very precise, but a fairly quick and easy way for each of your new managers to find out how he or she speaks.

An exercise of this sort, especially in a large group but also in smaller groups, can be tough on the ego. With this in mind, you may want to use yourself as an example, several times. Just vary your volume, tempo, inflection, and clarity for each example. This introduction to the exercise also helps the participants become accustomed to the four points and the rating scale.

After covering the basics of speaking, Chapter 5 presents the fine art of "packaging your points." Here's a quick little exercise to help participants get some immediate practice. Announce that each of them is going to return to the office and hold a brief meeting to inform his or her staff about this training session. Ask them to write out a brief intro to the presentation that they would give—several lines, no more than 100 words or so. Allow them a few minutes to draft the introduction. Then call upon several participants, one at a time, to read their introductions. Elicit reactions from their peers. Did the introduction properly prepare for the presentation? Did it sum up the essence of the training session with power?

Save those introductions as you move along to the next section of this chapter (pp. 62-64), three pages on pruning away fluff. Choose several participants who didn't read their introductions in

the first exercise and have them read them now. Ask their peers to listen for anything that reduces the force and clarity of the message—particularly unnecessary qualifiers, repetitions, rambling—and to take notes. Then, after each introduction is read, ask for comments. Try not to let the discussion get into details and debates; the purpose of this exercise is to show that managers should work at packaging their points appropriately.

The next section of Chapter 5 deals with the importance of asking the right questions right (pp. 64-66). This skill is difficult to practice in a training session, since it's usually harder for managers to ask the right questions right with their bosses or members of their staff than with their peers—usually. In a training group of peers with a comfortable atmosphere, it's difficult to simulate the dynamics that tend to cause problems.

Even if you cannot provide proper practice, you can perhaps provoke some perspectives through a role-play. You'll choose several participants (one at a time) to play a manager, you will play an employee, and the other participants will play jury of peers. Ask a participant to stand and read his or her introduction to you. You ask questions, either after the introduction or during it, interrupting. The other participants will judge your question—with thumbs up if you ask a good question appropriately or thumbs down if not or shrug if it's borderline or they aren't sure. Follow up on their judgments by asking about what worked well and what did not work.

Then, after you've done that role-play several times, change the roles slightly. Continue to choose participants to read their introductions, but instruct the other participants to ask questions. After a few questions, stop and invite them to give their reactions to the questions. Again, what worked well and what did not work? Judge the questions by their focus, their wording, and the tone.

Chapter 5 closes with several points about connecting with words (pp. 67-69). Here's a good exercise to help new managers begin to internalize these points. Prepare in advance of the session a half-dozen to a dozen one- or two-sentence comments along the lines of the bad examples given in the book. Read one of your comments, then ask participants two questions:

- How might the other person react to this comment? Why?
- How could you rephrase this comment to better connect with the other person? Why would the rephrased comment work better?

Then, encourage discussion about the comments. The value of this exercise is less in developing the ability to rephrase a faulty comment than in becoming more aware of what works better. After all, it's better to avoid causing problems than to get really good at repairing the damage.

Chapter 6. The Art of Motivation

Managers must depend more and more on motivation, on knowing what motivates the people around them and applying what they know. Unfortunately, many new managers stumble in this area.

Chapter 6 begins with a discussion of recognizing the “six hot buttons”—attainment, power, belonging, independence, respect, and equity—and finding ways to press them (pp. pp. 71-76). It’s important that participants understand these six motivators, so a general discussion might be the best exercise.

To focus your discussion, you might want to analyze people with whom most or all of your managers will be at least somewhat familiar. Prepare in advance by compiling lists of celebrities in the headlines and characters in movies and on TV. (You might avoid politicians or you could provoke some hot digressions.) Then, read a name and ask for participants to raise their hands if they’re familiar with the celebrity or character. When you reach a name that gets a majority of hands, use that person as your focus, guiding the discussion with questions such as the following:

- Which of the six hot buttons would work best with this person?
- What evidence points to this motivation button?
- How would you get this person to do something?

It’s not the diagnosis that matters here but the analytical process. In fact, participants may not agree; so much the better! They should cite the reasons behind their conclusions, because it’s important to develop the ability to pick up on details that reveal motivation. Don’t let the discussions go too long on identifying the hot button or they can slip into psychological nitpicking. Once there’s consensus on the particular button for a person, guide the discussion to strategies, ways to convert the knowledge into action.

Chapter 6 then cites a motivator that is almost universal—knowledge (pp. 79-81). You could ask participants the following question, one by one: What knowledge could you share with the members of your staff that might motivate them? Put the answers up for display. Try to word them generally; for example, for “Provide the monthly widget sales figures” you might write, “Provide periodic sales figures,” or for “Take them over to the telemarketing area to experience the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat” you might put “Tour another division to better understand their activities.”

The chapter ends with a brief consideration of ways to motivate people who are “unmotivatable” (pp.81-83). A good exercise here is to take on case studies. Ask if any of the new managers has ever encountered someone who seemed impossible to motivate. Emphasize that the subject can be from the past as well as from the present. Ask the volunteer to describe the person (in the present, for greater realism), avoiding any details that might allow anybody to identify the person. Then encourage a free discussion: What makes this person tick? Participants should ask exploratory questions of the volunteer and provide the thinking behind the strategies that they suggest. The objective is not to come up with a solution, since it would be difficult to judge and perhaps too late to apply, but rather to pick up on any indications of a hot button.

Chapter 7. Dishing Out Criticism

New managers usually want their people to like them, so they're usually very uncomfortable about criticizing anybody—and sometimes allow minor difficulties to grow into big problems. This chapter shows that the key to criticizing employees is helping them realize for themselves how their performance can improve.

The first point is that managers should focus on performance and stay away from personality. A useful exercise is to present examples for participants to judge and discuss. You can prepare a dozen short, critical comments that a manager might make that would be good (performance) or bad (personality) or somewhere between. For example:

- Lately I've noticed that you've been getting into arguments more easily.
- Are you an imbecile or are you just too lazy to do a good job?
- I'm concerned that it seems to take you longer than usual to assemble your line of widgets.
- You're a very friendly person—and friendly people usually don't make their deliveries on schedule.
- Your sales figures have declined over the past quarter. Are you having problems at home?
- Why did you do that? Are you trying to get on my bad side?

Don't expect the new managers to agree on their judgments of all of the comments. The purpose is to encourage them to recognize that involving personality makes a criticism harder to take and generally less effective.

The second point is to avoid generalizations and instead deal with a specific behavior, activity, or event. You could use a similar exercise here, giving some examples of criticism for participants to judge and discuss, such as the following:

- It seems that you're usually looking for the easy way to do your job.
- Your report on the Harkins project wasn't up to your usual level.
- Do I always have to check up on you?
- Maybe marketing is not the best area for you.
- How many times have I noticed you gazing off into space?
- The managers told me that they've never heard a presentation as muddled as the one you gave on the new widgetron yesterday.

Provide some examples on which most or all of the new managers can agree and some that are likely to provoke discussion. Whether a critical comment is effective or results in more damage than improvement often depends on perspective—a variable to which managers should be very sensitive.

Some of the examples that you use in these two exercises can also be used to follow up on the section in this chapter on the distinction between description and inference (pp. 88-91). If the managers agree that a critical comment goes beyond description, ask them how they would

improve upon it. Post their suggestions on the board or other display, leaving ample room below or to the right of each entry, and leave them there for the next segment of the session.

To practice the next skill presented in Chapter 7, expressing criticism as a question (pp. 91-93), ask participants to form a question to follow up on each of the descriptions that they developed in the previous exercise. This exercise can be more effective if you have them take a few moments to write out their questions, then open up the discussion. Add their suggestions to the descriptions that are on display. Some descriptions may have more than one follow-up question; in fact, you want to encourage divergent thinking here.

You can use a similar approach to help your new managers work with the next point in this chapter, connecting the past to the future through suggestions for improvement (pp. pp. 94-95). Take the posted description-question chains and ask for one or more suggestions for improvement to complete each of the chains. The display may become a little crowded, but the participants will develop an awareness of the psychology and power of the description-question-suggestion strategy and they will realize that there are many ways to phrase criticism to make it effective.

Chapter 7 closes with five types of criticism that managers should avoid (pp. 95-98). You might want to simply ask participants to share examples of these “faulty five” from their pasts. This discussion helps show how dangerous these types of criticism can be and may allow for a few groans and laughs to end the session.

Chapter 8. Discipline That Pays Off

Disciplining employees is difficult, both because it usually causes emotional strain and because it often involves a series of actions, each requiring discretion, sensitivity, and a sense of timing.

Perhaps the best way to apply the advice in Chapter 8 is through extended role -plays. Ask for two volunteers to act as manager and employee in a disciplinary meeting. Interrupt the role-play after each step to point out how the players are handling the situation and/or ask for comments from “the jury.” If a participant finds fault with any aspect of the role-play, encourage him or her to suggest a better way to handle it.

This exercise is the most difficult so far—for the new managers and for you. It’s less structured, more individualized. But that’s natural, considering the subject covered in this chapter. You may need to vigorously encourage your new managers to comment on the role-play. Since new managers tend to feel uncomfortable being critical about their peers, remind them that this exercise also allows them further opportunity to practice the skills covered in the preceding chapter.

Chapter 9. The Organized Manager

This chapter begins with a quick diagnosis of time management. After the participants have marked each of the items, read through the items one by one and ask for a show of hands on the ratings: “Meals. OK. How many put 1? Ah, five of you. How many 2’s? Ah, three.” And so forth for each of the ten items listed. (If your group of new managers is small, you might ask in clusters of ratings: “Deadlines. How many put down 1, 2, or 3? OK. Now, who has 4, 5, 6, or 7?”)

This quick survey of results allows each new manager to assess himself or herself in terms of this group of peers. Then, you expand to allow for some peer assistance. For each item on the list, ask again who scored 8, 9, or 10. Ask these people if they have any secrets to share or tips to offer. It’s a fishing trip, so you may not get something useful for each area on the list, but even one or two ideas might be worth the time spent on this exercise. Also, this exercise should show your new managers that they can learn from other managers, that they should seek out their peers regularly.

This exercise sets a pattern for covering the rest of Chapter 9. For the section on finding and guarding “optimal time” (pp. 117-118), you could ask participants to share what they do to avoid interruptions and distractions during “their time.” To follow up on the advice to make to-do lists (p. 119), you could ask participants who already are keeping lists how they’re doing it and what the results have been. (New managers can learn from the failures of their peers as well as from their successes!) After the paragraph on taking a break (p. 119), you can ask for suggestions from the group. For the section on fulfilling promises (p. 120), you could ask how participants follow through and avoid procrastinating.

A big section of this chapter is devoted to time wasters (pp. 120-124). Here again you might want to encourage the new managers to share their experiences. What other activities have been wasting their time? How do they deal with these activities? And how do they make the most of any “down time”?

For the section on showcasing organizational skills (pp. 124-126), you could ask your new managers for instances in which they’ve used any of the five suggestions offered in the book. Encourage participants to jot down any examples that might work for them in their specific situation. Then, expand the discussion to other ways of showcasing their skills or achievements.

The chapter ends with a section on meetings (pp. 126-128), which can be considered a microcosm of managerial talents. A good way to build on this short section would be to develop a list of the biggest problems that your new managers have faced with meetings. (A simple version of the nominal group technique might work best here.) Then, start with the biggest problem and ask for ways that your new managers have dealt with the problem more or less successfully. Again, encourage participants to jot down any techniques that might work for them. Work down through the list as far as possible within the time available. If time is short, you might want to limit discussion of each problem to three or four suggestions, to allow the group to deal with more problems. On the other hand, if several problems are major for many or all of your managers, you should devote sufficient time to each of them.

Chapter 10. The Right Way to Delegate

It's a rare manager who can delegate easily from the start. As with many other behaviors, it often depends on proper motivation. In other words, the first exercise for Chapter 10 should focus on making your new managers more aware of how much time they're wasting doing tasks that they should be delegating.

You could ask participants to think for a few moments about what they do in an "average" day or an "average" week. Then, tell them to select the most routine task—the one that demands the least thought, deliberation, discretion, or other managerial skills—and estimate the time they put into that task every week. Ask around the room for the amount of time participants have calculated, to get a range and some extremes. Jot these on the board or other display. Then, do the math for a year, multiplying the figures by 50. (It's close enough to 52 and the math is easier: just divide the figure by 2 and add two zeros or decimal places.) Do enough of these calculations for participants to recognize the enormity of time wasted.

The next section of this chapter is on giving good directions in delegating a task (pp. 132 -134). It's unrealistic to practice delegation in a training session, because the participants may not know much about the task that any of them might need to delegate or the environment in which they would be working. However, you can create an approximation through the following role-play. You choose one of your new managers to play himself or herself and you play the part of a temp, a knowledgeable worker assigned short-term to cover for an absent employee. You ask the volunteer to select one of his or her routine tasks and delegate it to "the temp." Play the role straight, asking questions for clarification. After several minutes, stop and open up a discussion. Here are some basic questions to start off:

- How well did the manager delegate the task?
- Were there any problems? Why?
- How could the manager have handled it better?

Depending on the specific task being delegated in this exercise, you might ask about instructions, standards, deadlines, verifications, and other aspects that delegation might entail. You could ask questions in terms of the mistakes outlined on pp. 133-134 and the suggestion in the sidebar on p. 133.

Since this exercise covers the heart of Chapter 10 and uses specific tasks, it's probably best to do the role-play at least a half-dozen times, choosing managers from a range of industries or, within a single organization, various divisions.

The next section in this chapter (pp. 134-137) covers the question of choosing employees when delegating. Since this involves specific individuals and their personalities, it doesn't lead well into an exercise. However, you could start a short discussion by asking your new managers to name qualities or conditions that a manager may want to consider when choosing employees for tasks. List these on the board or other display.

Then, when the group has listed at least a dozen qualities or conditions, move to the next phase. Take one of the tasks delegated to the temp in the earlier exercise and ask which qualities or conditions would be the most important considerations when delegating that specific task. Do the same with the other tasks from the earlier exercise.

The next section in Chapter 10 is about what happens when delegation fails (pp. 137-139). For practice, you can use the same tasks. Ask the participants, "What would you consider a failure?" The obvious answer would be that the employee doesn't do the task. But other answers might cover such aspects as standards, deadlines, and interpersonal problems. Jot these answers on the board. Then, after the group has listed possible results, follow up by asking, for each of those results, "How would you deal with this failure?" The discussions could touch upon discipline, better instructions, closer supervision, greater emphasis on standards and/or deadlines, and so forth. But they could also lead to the realization that standards are unnecessarily high, that deadlines are too tight, that tasks can be handled in different ways, or that the manager should have chosen another employee.

Chapter 11. Managing the Boss

How necessary is this chapter? After all, managing the boss should be nothing new to your new managers, since they all reported to bosses before their big promotion. So, what's the big deal?

That's the question to open up this chapter for them: How is managing the boss now different from managing the boss in your previous positions? How are the expectations different? You might want to encourage them to be discreet and avoid giving details about their current bosses. (Discretion is an important trait for new managers to develop.)

List their answers on the board. Then, as you proceed through this chapter, return to that list and ask for additions.

The section on personalities (pp. 147-151) should provoke a lively discussion. Ask for a show of hands for each of the four types. In many groups, there will be managers who can't or won't take one of these labels. That's good: then you can transition into a discussion of the damage that can result when we apply labels to anyone, managers or employees.

Chapter 12. Cultivating a Network

Some of the new managers in your group really won't need this chapter; for others, it may be the most important.

A good exercise to practice the material at the start (pp. 156-159) is to turn the training session into a mingle. Instruct the participants to move around the group, introducing themselves to one person at a time and chatting with him or her for a few moments. The purpose is to learn a little about the other person. Then, when you clap your hands or blow a whistle or call out, "Change!" every participant moves on to someone else. Do the "managerial mingle" for four or five rounds.

Then, ask the participants to sit down and write out a contact sheet for each of their four or five encounters, jotting down for each person met the following information: name, position, company, specific topics discussed, and any other details.

Allow them sufficient time; then survey the results. How many were able to remember all four or five names completely and with confidence? (You can't take the time to check for accuracy.) How many were able to remember position titles and companies names for all four or five contacts? How many remembered at least one specific topic from each encounter?

Depending on the results and the time available, you may want to try another series of four or five encounters, followed again by filling out a contact sheet for each person met. With practice, your new managers should network more effectively, gather and remember more information, and do it all more naturally.

The next section of Chapter 10, "Who Knows About You?" (pp. 161-162), raises an important question. Open the question into a discussion. Which of your new managers have been actively promoting themselves? What results have they gotten? What else do they intend to try? What could the others try? How could they expand their networks?

Encourage the participants to take notes. Then suggest that each of them develop those notes into an action plan and schedule activities to promote themselves and to network. That exercise will bridge beyond the books and your training schedule back into their worlds.