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- Tom Peters

# HENRY MINTZBERG MANAGING

## Managing

*Henry Mintzberg*

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## **Managing** Henry Mintzberg

A half century ago Peter Drucker put management on the map. Leadership has since pushed it off. Henry Mintzberg aims to restore management to its proper place: front and center. "We should be seeing managers as leaders." Mintzberg writes, "and leadership as management practiced well."

This landmark book draws on Mintzberg's observations of twenty-nine managers, in business, government, health care, and the social sector, working in settings ranging from a refugee camp to a symphony orchestra. What he saw--the pressures, the action, the nuances, the blending--compelled him to describe managing as a practice, not a science or a profession, learned primarily through experience and rooted in context. But context cannot be seen in the usual way. Factors such as national culture and level in hierarchy, even personal style, turn out to have less influence than we have traditionally thought. Mintzberg looks at how to deal with some of the inescapable conundrums of managing, such as, How can you get in deep when there is so much pressure to get things done? How can you manage it when you can't reliably measure it?

This book is vintage Mintzberg: iconoclastic, irreverent, carefully researched, myth-breaking. *Managing* may be the most revealing book yet written about what managers do, how they do it, and how they can do it better.

## **Managing Details**

Date : Published August 30th 2009 by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

ISBN : 9781576753408

Author : Henry Mintzberg

Format : Hardcover 306 pages

Genre : Business, Management, Nonfiction, Leadership, Science

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# From Reader Review Managing for online ebook

## Jessica says

Not the fastest-paced book I've ever read, but it made me think about some things in new ways (empowerment vs. collaboration) and helped me refine some ideas I'd been trying to work through.

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## Richard Newton says

I can't help but like this book. Mintzberg has original and helpful views on all sorts of aspects of management. He has an easy and engaging style of making sometimes quite profound points. But there is always a light hearted touch lurking below serious points. I have no doubt that this is an important book for anyone interested in management.

The main drawback is that this is written from the viewpoint of an academic studying management, rather than a practising manager. I have no problem with that in principle - but the sample size used to base his opinions is very small (a few days with a few managers). Any practising manager who has worked for several companies will have a significantly larger sample of experience to draw on. Nevertheless, he does draw many original insights which are counter to much of prevailing wisdom on management - and they are, in my opinion, right. Another advantage is the lack of US bias which so many management books suffer from. (I have no problem with using US examples, but not only US examples).

The book starts very well, although I do not think it holds attention all the way to the end.

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## Renato Willi says

Excelent for those who want to understand more about what do company managers do and the challenges of their jobs. Mintzberg separates analytically their activities, their way of acting (doing, linking, dealing, , the nature of their behavior (craft, science, art) and puts some very intelligent reflection for those who study management and for those who try to control management.

He also, as usual, questions the current MBA models for teaching management - something he disagrees that can be done.

I recommend it very much also for those who are already company managers and want to understand more about themselves and see their afflictions aren't unusual - they're not alone.

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## Ariannha says

Definitivamente aburrido, da muchos rodeos sin concretar, esto solo ocurre por proceso del lector.

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## **Craig says**

I enjoyed this book. Very original and loaded with intelligent insight. I had not previously read Mintzberg but am definitely now a fan of his. It gave me a fresh, empirically-based, view of what managing actually is. Mintzberg's goal in this book, it seems, was to strip back any pretenses and stylisations of what management is--and just portray it in its more raw form. And it is kind of reassuring and enlightening to see that it is pretty messy and varied! After studying a day in the life of about 30+ managers in various organisations across a few continents, Mintzberg attempts to draw some generic observations about what actually goes on--and a lot of it put my own job, and that of my manager, into an informative perspective for me. Top read!

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## **E says**

Scholarly report on managing

Managing, believes scholar Henry Mintzberg, is different from leading. To study which skills are essential to good management, Mintzberg spent an entire day one-on-one with 29 managers from different kinds of organizations and from different sectors – including banking, retail, filmmaking, government, nonprofits and healthcare. Mintzberg looked at managers who worked in the executive suites as well as on the front lines. He learned that although managers differ considerably in their activities, the skills they need are surprisingly similar. Although quite general and not entirely new, getAbstract recommends this comprehensive guide to managers, executive placement experts, consultants, students and others who wish to get back to basics and to develop the traits essential to becoming an effective, able manager.

To learn more about this book, check out the following Web page:

<http://www.getabstract.com/summary/10...>

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## **Jan-Maat says**

[ autobiographical digression follows (view spoiler) ]

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## **Cain S. says**

Terrible, shallow, book; perhaps, best summarised by a quote about management within the book:

"management is one damn think after another".

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## **Katrina Douglas says**

This book is based on Mintzberg's observations during a day spent individually with 29 managers across a range of sectors this is incredibly value as the book is steeped in management practice which makes it all the more relevant and relatable.

Mintzberg dispels many management myths and outlines clearly what managing is through a comprehensive description of management roles and a very useful model for managing.

It was very valuable to read this book whilst encountering many of the scenarios it describes. I wouldn't say this book was a highly enjoyable read, as it felt quite tedious at times, very much like an academic text. But it is a very valuable read and I may even go as far to say it is a necessary read for managers and aspiring managers, I definitely understand why it is the *Â~CMI Management Book of the Year 2010*.

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### **Jay Phipps says**

An academics opinion about managing - easy to criticize, harder to do. Like the restaurant or movie critic - full of opinions that aren't backed up with experience. No credibility if you ask me.

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### **Ilya Tsarev says**

Less practical than I thought. On the other hand, very detailed on the general knowledge about management.

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### **Ivana says**

Nikdy netreba veriť žiadnym škatuliam typológie. Mintzberg sa snaží o čo najplastickejší pohľad na prácu, ktorej hovoríme "managing". Na rozdiel od neužitatečných teoretických kníh, ktoré sú často bohužiať základnou literatúrou kurzov na ekonomikách o managemente, táto kniha sa snaží zachytiť život. A celkom sa jej to darí. Upratovanie do chlievikov a kategorizácie sú spojené so živými ľuďmi a konkrétnymi situáciami v organizáciách. A na záver upozornenie na pasce, ktoré prichádzajú s tým, že sa "managing" stane vašou hlavnou pracovnou náplňou.

Trochu neprijemné sú boldom vytlačené určité vety a pasáže. Má to pomôcť rýchločítaniu, ale v skutočnosti je to barlička pre pomalých čitateľov.

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### **André Gomes says**

Mintzberg goes beyond common sense about management, and his ideas came from studying different managers in different contexts.

Here are some of the Big Ideas I've found in the book:

#### **1. What is Management?**

Leadership and Managing are parts of the same thing are they shouldn't be separate. Leaders cannot delegate their management accountabilities. Management is not a science and it is not a profession.

Mintzberg sets out the stark reality of what managers do: 'the pressures of the job drive the manager to take on too much work, encourage interruption, respond quickly to every stimulus, seek the tangible and avoid the abstract, make decisions in small increments, and do everything abruptly'.

"No job is more vital to our society than that of the manager. It is the manager who determines whether our social institutions serve us well or whether they squander our talents and resources. It is time to strip away the folklore about managerial work, and time to study it realistically so that we can begin the difficult task of making significant improvements in its performance." (The Manager's Job: Folklore and Fact)

## 2. The 3 phases of management

- Information: Communicating and processing data to encourage people to take action.
- People: Helping other to make things happen.
- Action: Actually doing the work.

A good manager should be able to be in the 3 phases depending on the issue and situation.

## 3. The 13 conundrums

According to the author, conundrums are often expressed as questions, and managers face them often. Finding ways of reconciling the conundrums (they rarely can be resolved) is basic to managing. Those are the 13 conundrums:

### Thinking Conundrums

- \* The Syndrome of Superficiality: How to get in deep when there is so much pressure to get it done?
- \* The Predicament of Planning: How to plan, strategize, just plain think, let alone think ahead, in such a hectic job?
- \* The Labyrinth of Decomposition: Where to find synthesis in a world so decomposed by analysis?

### Information Conundrums

- \* The Quandary of Connecting: How to keep informed when managing by its own nature removes the manager from the very things being managed?
- \* The Dilemma of Delegating: How to delegate when so much of the relevant information is personal, oral, and often privileged?
- \* The Mysteries of Measuring: How to manage it when you can't rely on measuring it?

### People Conundrums

- \* The Enigma of Order: How to bring order to the work of others when the work of managing is itself so disorderly?
- \* The Paradox of Control: How to maintain the necessary state of controlled disorder when one's own manager is imposing order?
- \* The Clutch of Confidence: How to maintain a sufficient level of confidence without crossing over into arrogance?

### Action Conundrums

- \* The Ambiguity of Acting: How to act decisively in a complicated, nuanced world?
- \* The Riddle of Change: How to manage change when there is the need to maintain continuity?

### Overall Conundrums

- \* The Ultimate Conundrum: How can any manager possibly cope with all these conundrums concurrently?
- \* Mintzberg's Own Conundrum: How do I reconcile that fact that, while all of these conundrums can be

stated apart, they all seem to be the same?

Successful managers find ways of dealing with these conundrums.

#### References

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  - Interview with Mintzberg about the book: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVBPhC...>
  - Mintzberg on Managing: <http://lead2xl.com/mintzberg-on-manag...>
  - MBSportal: <http://www.mbsportal.bl.uk/taster/sub...>
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#### Ashley says

An interesting, if slightly contrarian view, of management. Mintzberg is a big advocate of using common sense and doesn't idealize management, like many business books tend to. Rather, as he often states throughout the book, it's just one damn thing after another.

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#### Jeff Scott says

<http://managingleadership.com/blog/20...>

This book is similar to Management of the Absurd and takes the same premise. Managers don't have a formal learning process, but learn on the job, and that job is always localized. There are many approaches to management and each one works in the particular environment, but finding the right approach in the right place is always tricky and always dependent upon the local environment.

This is a great book for new managers or potential managers. It looks at the real face of management, the day to day perspective. It can also help decide the type of manager you are, a sort of a What Color is your Parachute for management. More experienced managers can read this book and nod their heads in agreement and wouldn't provide any more information to them.

The core of the book is my favorite part, who goes into management. Typically, it is the type of person who likes to be busy and even though the nature of management is hectic and crazy, it attracts those type of people to it. It takes someone who enjoys working with non-sense and irrational thought and putting making a work product out of it. Even though a manager deals with crazy and irrational demands, they often thrive on it (workaholics sometimes), they also must be emotionally health and level headed to deal with the level stress that comes with it. They must find their center. Overall, an excellent book on management, highly recommended.

From the book:

"It is this dynamic balance that renders futile the teaching of management in a classroom, especially one role

or competency at a time. Even mastering all the competencies do not a competent manager make, because the key to this work is the blending of all of its aspects, into this dynamic balance. And that can only happen on the job, because no simulation I have ever seen in a classroom--case, game, in-basket exercise--comes remotely close to replicating the job itself." p. 96

Some realizations about middle management are what I have read from other books and online such as: Who is the Real Boss (from Fast Company <http://www.fastcompany.com/blog/grace...>), and the quote from this book:

"...middle managers are often "far better than most senior executives...at leveraging the informal network at a company that makes substantial, lasting change possible." p. 111

So in both cases, the boss sets the tone and direction, the real boss is the one that executes the idea, as in the blog post. So, in other words, as an executive, if you don't get your middle manager behind you, that person can make your plans sink very quickly.

Other passages:

Does management create the manager, or does the manager create the management?

"...is brevity, variety, and fragmentation forced on the managers, or do they choose this pattern in their work?

My answer is yes both times.

...they don't want to discourage the flow of information...

...managers are plagued by what they might do and what they must do...

...managers like action, not abstract or philosophy, but dealing in tangible issues or problems...

Talk is the technology of leadership--Jeanne Liedtka, Dresden School

...he must become his own director of central intelligence...Richard Neustradt

"The Managers's extensive use of such information helps to explain why they may be reluctant to delegate tasks. It is not as if they can hand a dossier over to someone; they must take the time to "dump memory" to tell that person what they know about the subject. But this could take so long that it may be easier just to do the task themselves--Damned by the Dilemma of Delegation. p. 28

Hence, managers seemed damned by the nature of their personal information system to a life of either overwork or frustration. In the first case, they do too many tasks themselves or else spend too much time disseminating oral information. In the second case, they have to look on as delegated tasks are performed inadequately, by the uninformed (relative to them). It is too common to witness people being blamed for failures that can be traced to their inadequate access to the information necessary to perform their delegated tasks. p. 175

...the frequency of requests... may be a good measure of the status a manager has established for him-herself, while the quantity of unsolicited material received may indicate the manager's success in building effective channels of communication.

The Manager's working roles:

Formal Authority and Status

Interpersonal roles: Figurehead, Leader, Liaison

Informational roles: Monitor, disseminator, spokesperson

Decisional Roles: Entrepreneur, Disturbance handler, Resource Allocation, Negotiator. p. 45



To become a manager is to become more dependent on others to get things done. p. 65

Every unit has to be protected, responsive, and aggressive, depending on the circumstances. p. 81

Strategies are not immaculately conceived in detached offices, so much is learned through tangible experience. p. 87

Managers off the ground don't learn and become dreadful strategists.

The more innovative the organization, the more likely are disturbances to occur unexpectedly. p. 85

Thinking is heavy, too much can wear a manager down, while acting is light, too much of that and a manager can't stay put. p. 87

When I think of the type of organization Mintzberg identifies, I imagine that running a library involves every aspect of this organization. A good manager has to be able to switch back and forth among these philosophies to keep the library centered. Circulation is like machine, librarians are like Professional, when something new is started, the Project kicks into play, the Missionary comes in since many go into libraries as something core to their being, something they are very passionate about, and political since libraries play a role in local government politics.

Types of organizations:

Entrepreneurial Organization: Centralized around a single leader who engages in considerable doing and dealing as well as strategic visioning.

Machine Organization: formally structured, with simple repetitive operating tasks (classic bureaucracy), its managers functioning in clearly delineated hierarchies of authority and engaging in a considerable amount of controlling.

The Professional Organization: comprising professionals who do the operating work largely on their own, while their managers focus more externally, on linking and dealing, to support and protect the professionals.

The Project Organization (Adhocracy): built around project teams of experts that innovate, while the senior managers engage in linking and dealing to secure the projects, and the project managers concentrate on leading for teamwork, doing for execution and linking to connect the different teams together.

Missionary Organization: dominated by a strong culture, with the managers emphasizing leading to enhance and sustain that culture.

Political Organization: Dominated by conflict, with the managers sometimes having to emphasize doing and dealing in the form of firefighting.

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