

Reading and Reflecting – with ‘Meet the Managers’

Special studies – for the future ¹

by Tom Taylor

A project manager from UK

This is the last in the current Series of “Meet the Managers”. We hope they have covered some themes that may be of interest to Aspiring Managers sooner or later to fit in with their teeth cleaning and other bedtime rituals. Best wishes.

No.6 – Special studies – for the future



It was a hot day. (All together now) PHEW!

The two junior Managers decided to go indoors and ask Daddy Manager and Mummy Manager which specialist subjects they should select to study after they had completed their time at school.

Mummy Manager recommended studying management. She had found that her undergraduate course on management, her post-graduate research about management and her various theses on management had helped her understand the finer points of management.



Daddy Manager liked the idea of the art, science and practice of management – but felt it was best collected by experience. Also that studying to be a manager was over-rated compared with going and being a manager.

The junior Managers left the room. The day felt hotter. The decisions on subjects were difficult enough. Now they had key stakeholders with different requirements. This is not convenient. But is not unusual.

The junior Managers thought about running away and joining the army – or the circus. They both involve lots of management – but different sorts.

The junior Managers thought of one doing science and the other doing arts with both doing sports, or being in an orchestra or a band, or getting a part time job. This would involve self-discipline and lots of management.



They then decided to ask the advice of their teachers at school. The teachers said it would be several years before they need to make such choices, and they should just

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concentrate on their reading, writing and communication skills; plus coding for computers.

The junior Managers went home, had their tea, a bath, story time and then went to bed. The junior Managers were relieved.



The senior Managers and the teachers continued to discuss the educational options for the junior Managers – as always.

There are many ways to choose and navigate careers and interests across a lifetime. It helps if one is suitably, relevantly qualified by topic and grade.

Bye Bye everyone. Sleep tight. Study well.

Some questions for Aspiring Managers to consider:

1. Who is looking after your career?
2. Do you think management is mainly art or mainly science?
3. Do you think that management is consolidated through study, research or experience?
4. What is going to be your management speciality?

Tip for the story teller:

Speak clearly. Speak slowly. Engage with the audience.

Tom Taylor is the author of the “Meet the Managers” collection and is known as:

- A popular, confident and energetic speaker and broadcaster,
- A prolific author and publisher on innovative business and original management issues,
- An experienced and enthusiastic lecturer and course leader,
- And an award-winning, highly experienced manager of projects, advisor and consultant.

The illustrations are by Rob Dee, a talented designer and illustrator from UK.

A little more about the Author



Tom Taylor

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Tom Taylor is Principal with Dashdot and joint founding director of Buro Four in the United Kingdom. For many years, he has been a central figure in the Association for Project Management (APM) in the UK as former APM president, vice-president, Chair and London Branch. Via APM he has achieved Chartered Project Professional (ChPP), Registered Project Professional (RPP), an Honorary Fellowship, the inaugural President’s Medal from Professor Martin Barnes and APM’s prestigious Sir Monty Finneston Award for lifetime achievement. Visit www.apm.org.uk

Tom’s professional career so far has been in property and construction in UK in front line roles – from theatres to manufacturing, from residential to harbour works – significant to less so – with contractors, designers and as a consultant – as employer, employee and entrepreneur - within major organisations and “all-on-my-own” – prize winning and mundane. It’s been rewarding and enjoyable – so far.

He is an advisor on projects, programmes, enterprises and business, as principal at Dashdot – a consultancy and publishing vehicle – please go to www.dashdot.co.uk

He is a joint founder from 1985 and occasional advisor with Buro Four – an eminent project management outfit based in UK - please go to www.burofour.com

Tom has been a guest lecturer at several universities, a previous Visiting Professor at Salford University and an external examiner at UCL.

Tom is a supporter of Membership Associations (MAs) of International Project Management Association (IPMA), Young Crews - and their events. Visit www.ipma.org

Tom attends, speaks and hosts PM events in UK and round the world. He holds honorary positions with project management associations in Finland, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Portugal, Spain and UK plus with IPMA.

“Continuing to be involved in front line projects and the journey of the project management community, over the last fifty years or so, has certainly been fascinating, rewarding and

enjoyable – as a bystander, passenger, navigator and driver. Changing technologies and surprising opportunities have had significant impact for me, and on me. However, it is people, the colleagues, who are most important – with our collective commitment, common purpose and good humour. I have been very fortunate indeed in that aspect. Approaching my likely career midpoint, I am looking forward to more good projects, with good people, with good humour.”

A current personal profile of Tom is available at www.tomtaylor.info and he may be contacted at tomtaylor@dashdot.co.uk