Chapter 5  Identifying
Training and Development
Needs

Management Style

Knowing more about yourself, your range of skills, the way you prefer to function both interpersonally and in teams, is essential in managing change and getting the best from the people you manage. This chapter includes exercises designed to help you assess your own behavioural style, and to give you an opportunity to develop a wider range of style. They might best be done as part of training or during 'time-out' with your own team.

Exercise 7: Management style

Consider the vexed question of parking spaces. You have three priority spaces to be allocated to the 24 staff of a day hospital for the elderly. You have managerial charge of this team and your brief is to give management an answer as soon as possible. Whose names are to be put on the three spaces? (Remember this exercise is intended to increase your flexibility of response.)

To do this exercise, you have to get all the team together and tackle the issue in a variety of styles.

1. Tell them what you have decided (autocratic).
2. List the rational arguments and, after discussion, take a vote for the best option (rationalist).
3. Facilitate the discussion around certain agreed key issues, letting feelings be displayed and the preferred team option emerge (facilitator).
Managing Change

These three styles may not all be as easy for you as each other. See which preferred style you adopt immediately and then try the others in turn. Invite feedback from the other team members on how they felt with your preferred styles, then adopt your less-preferred styles.

This exercise can be undertaken with a group of managers of the same level playing roles, or a multi-disciplinary team. The best outcome can be achieved if leaders choose to swap management styles and follow the rules for feedback given later in this chapter (p. 106).

This exercise is one simple example, very briefly described, which can be used to estimate and develop your own management styles. Many other exercises exist (see Margerison\(^1\) and MCB University Press\(^2\)), which can be useful in extending your repertoire.

The Self-assessment Tool

The self-assessment tool has been developed for managers in the Health Service so that they can learn about themselves and the way they are perceived by other people (see Exercise 8). It uses self-appraisal, as well as peer and 'boss' appraisal. It provides a rich way in which to develop your own plans to get the wide range of skills you need for different occasions and for various demands. Having a wide range of skills in your repertoire will give you greater flexibility and control, and a better chance to take advantage of change opportunities.

The tool is designed to be used by:

1. yourself and ideal self (as self-assessment)
2. peers (about you)
3. your boss (about you)
4. subordinates (about you).

1. Yourself

Rate yourself on the items listed, then rate your ideal self. This will give you the levels you feel you can aspire to, and it will also provide a discrepancy score; that is, the difference between