

## Chapter 14

# Managing Senior Professionals: An Insider's View

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Mary Goulding, a strategic business consultant, has managed professionals in many different capacities over the past 20 years. In this chapter, she applies this wealth of experience to managing smart people in general, but especially those in senior roles in organisations. This personal account provides real insights and practical advice on how to deal with four common types of smart – but difficult – performers.

### Introduction

I have partnered in business with them; I have sat on boards with them; I have managed them in my own company and in others' companies; I have coached them as owners of their own businesses; and I have interviewed workforces led by them. This chapter is about my experiences of managing smart professionals in senior technical and management roles.

I believe the key common factor with these professional, clever people is that they are often good at managing their work in their expert field but are poor at managing the business and poor at managing the people. They put such high value on their expert knowledge (which drives them to become expert in the first place) that they do not value managing people or putting appropriate systems and procedures in place to support the business. This can result in a lack of respect for those people in the organisation who are doing these perceived 'lowly' administrative or non-technical tasks, which in turn can cause friction, upset and disruption.

The irony is that these professional, clever people actually cannot excel alone. They need to feed off other people to thrive and survive. They most certainly need to be 'managed', perhaps without them even realising it.

This chapter describes four types of senior professionals (managing or technical directors), and how to manage them. These four types are drawn from my direct experiences of:

- Managing people as their managing director – where 'managing' is not about managing fixed tasks, but quite often is the management of technical people's insecurities in order to create an environment for them in which they can flourish and excel, enabling their expert knowledge and skills to be maximised for the good of the business.

- Managing people as a business consultant and coach – where ‘managing’ is about helping owners/managing directors to:
  - achieve their goals;
  - understand their strengths and weaknesses;
  - become aware of their blocking factors;
  - understand areas for learning and development;
  - develop their leadership and management style;
  - be more accountable; and
  - maximise their potential.

In the examples below, I have highlighted four frequently-encountered dysfunctional ‘types’, and suggested ways in which to improve their management ability:

- Type 1: The Busy MD – Efficient Individual, Ineffective Manager
- Type 2: The Controlling MD – Ineffective Individual, Ineffective Manager
- Type 3: The MD who Does Not Know How to be an MD
- Type 4: The (Technically) Clever Prima Donna

### **Type 1: The Busy MD – Efficient Individual, Ineffective Manager**

The Busy MD is excellent in his expert area, and his key focus is on winning and working on projects for clients. He is quick-thinking and tends to be impatient with staff who he perceives as being a number of steps behind him. His focus is on the project work staff are doing, rather than on the staff as people. For example, he would not bother with superficial talk about what staff did at the weekend or just asking them how they are doing over a cup of coffee. He perceives that giving staff this non-project oriented time is a waste of time! It does not achieve results. He wants staff to be busy, because that means they are completing more projects and making more money for the company.

Staff can therefore feel undervalued, not respected and even used, ignoring the human aspects.

It is either naïve or unduly idealistic to believe that staff, even technical staff, will work well in an emotional vacuum or can be relied upon to perform specified tasks in isolation, devoid of social or motivational needs.

In the cameo case below, I was asked to coach the MD, an excellent technical achiever who gave no consideration to anything but the task element of the work: this is akin to wanting only the harvest, without planting seeds.

#### **CAMEO CASE EXAMPLE 1: THE BUSY MD**

A successful company in business for over eight years with a staff of nearly 30 provided professional services to large corporate clients. The MD and all staff (except two) were professionals with specialised skills focused on delivering projects to clients.

The first thing I noticed when I visited this company (in my role as coach to the MD), was that I was not offered tea or coffee – either on

arrival or at any stage during my full morning session. This was the first indicator of the type of task culture within the company.

On getting a better understanding of the company, it became clear that:

- The MD was very task-oriented, and her motivation was to 'keep busy' doing as much work as possible for as many clients as possible.
- She said 'yes' to all work requests, regardless of resources. Staff would just have to work longer hours!
- Staff performance was only measured on delivery of projects to clients, and staff had to work overtime.
- The MD did not see value in the people-related or procedural side of leadership and management; therefore, her managers in turn always put such tasks to the bottom of their priority list.
- Staff turnover was very high, indicative of a resulting lack of commitment from employees.
- There was serious inefficiency due to a lack of proper management and processes.
- The MD did not have a vision for the business and had no long-term goals or strategy and, therefore, was unclear about the direction of the business.

No-one on the management team had management experience or training. The MD 'delegated' (as she thought) management tasks to members of the management team and then absolved herself of the responsibility. For example, she would ask them to 'hire in more resources', or 'furnish the visitors room' or 'write content for the website', but then she would land them with another project with a tight deadline that was 'top priority'.

She did not hold them accountable for these management tasks, but grumbled about them not being done. Of course, the management team were always too busy on projects to carry them out. They knew that once they were busy on projects, the MD would be happy. Why would they spend time working in areas that were not valued by the MD?

In turn, the MD found it difficult to manage challenging or difficult relationships and to deal with face-to-face confrontation, so she stuck her 'head in the sand' rather than challenging her managers and holding them accountable.

The MD was very keen to quickly put a solution in place so she could get on with her business, and suggested a manager with appropriate management experience be recruited who could manage all of these issues and get rid of the headaches they were causing her. The MD also believed that if she could get more staff, the management team would have more time to do management tasks, and many of her problems would be solved. Simply adding a new manager in this way would not change the fundamental problem, and would probably

confuse and compound matters by blurring the lines of authority and adding to overhead costs, as is now explained.

### **Managing the Busy MD**

In this case, the MD needed to understand what she would potentially lose if she did not address these crucial issues correctly. She needed to be challenged regarding her leadership and management of the business. A forum was required in which she would be held accountable, for example, to a board or advisory committee.

It was important for the MD to understand that this was a process which would involve a change in the culture of the company, and this change would have to come from the top (i.e. the MD). The MD struggled with her desire to get to the end point as quickly as possible – she didn't like a procedural approach, and didn't see the value in it. In her view, it was simply all about results.

The MD had to see the value in 'management' before her staff would see the importance of it. It was crucial that she recognise her leadership style and learn how to improve the leadership of her staff. She needed to see that this was not a 'quick fix' solution that wouldn't require her involvement or any change on her part. It was clear to me that if she had more staff, she would simply take on more project work, rather than allowing for 'management time', which would not be revenue-earning time. She also had to get 'buy in' from her management team before they would invest time in non-project related tasks. If a new manager was simply hired at this point and forced to work in isolation, without the full and proper support of both the MD and her management team, they would not succeed.

A number of strategy sessions were held with the MD and key members of the management team to collectively explore the vision, long-term goals, business offering and strategic objectives of the company. This process was also used to involve key people in the future development of the business and to help them understand key success factors and the part they could play moving forward to ensure success. This also helped to get buy-in from all concerned parties regarding the importance of people management and quality procedures, and to agree a solution that would have the mandate from all the key people.

The MD was challenged to:

- face up to her own limitations and weaknesses;
- understand her leadership style and specific areas for development and learning, to bring about better, improved leadership; and

- take overall responsibility for the culture and poor management within the company and learn ways to deal with it better.

She began to understand the importance of investing in people. She set up sub-committees for different aspects of the business, e.g. to run social events, to look at improving overall quality, and to enhance the office environment. She learned about the strategic planning process and how her organisational model fitted into this process, thereby allowing her to set long-term goals, strategic objectives and priorities for her business. She learned the importance of communication in business, and started one-to-one weekly meetings with key managers. She learned to gain control of her future, her company and her people, and she continues to develop her people, relationship-building and influencing skills. Additionally, she learned to involve the key people at senior management level in setting overall company objectives and taking responsibility for achieving them.

The result of all this was:

- a management team driving and managing the business collectively with a common agenda, rather than the MD on her own managing individual teams who were, in effect, competing against each other;
- accountability of each manager to a group;
- clearer direction and focus, which helped to set the right priorities;
- decisions being made by the group, and acted on quickly, rather than getting stuck in the communications bottleneck trying to access the Busy MD;
- less dependency on the MD;
- improved quality of work;
- a greater allocation of time by the management team for people management, which meant people were more effective, better trained, and learned from their mistakes;
- a better team spirit among the staff with more social interaction and fun;
- a greater sharing of knowledge and resources; and
- better communication between managers and staff.

### **Case Summary**

In summary, these changes resulted in a huge change in the culture and effectiveness of the company. Staff began to feel more involved and valued, and even had some fun! And the management team continued to progress and drive through management objectives and tasks despite the on-going tendency of the MD to keep 'busy' on projects!

## **Type 2: The Controlling MD – Ineffective Individual, Ineffective Manager**

The Controlling MD thinks people are trying to undermine him and that they do not respect him when, in reality, people are afraid of him. So, he ends up having ‘yes people’ working for him.

If someone challenges his thinking or disagrees with him, he is too insecure to deal with it. He thinks it is him as a person that is being criticised, and he gets emotional and upset, sometimes to the extent that he cannot speak and has to leave the room for fear of ‘losing it’. He just cannot seem to separate the issue at hand from the person presenting it.

Sometimes the Controlling MD can favour the underdog and ‘stick up for them’. However, if he thinks someone is getting too confident and taking initiative, he quickly beats them back down. He thinks that people should know their place, and they need to be put back in their box from time to time so that they always know who the ‘boss’ is.

The Controlling MD tends to have a poor communication style in that he does not convey clear messages. He ‘beats about the bush’, leaving room for different interpretations. He is not clear in his communication about what deliverables he wants, when he wants them, and who should do them. And, quite often, he thinks that he has said something to somebody when he has not – he has only thought it, and said it in his head! This leads to many frustrations and misunderstandings.

### **CAMEO CASE 2: THE CONTROLLING MD**

One such example of a controlling-type MD was in a company providing professional specialist contracting services, which had a core team based in the office, with a further 200 or so people working outside the office on client sites. Again, the MD was an expert and well-known in his field, but seemed to have huge difficulties delegating and getting key staff to take responsibility.

On reviewing the company, it became clear that the MD got upset very easily and took things personally. It was very difficult for staff to discuss or argue a point of view with him about any aspect of the business that differed from his own perspective, as he would perceive this as an attack on him personally. His immediate reaction would be: “Who do they think they are?” or “How dare they – why don’t they show me the respect I deserve?”

Poor communication was causing many problems. For example, at one meeting I attended, the MD was discussing a particular issue and gave a vague description about a possible solution, typically ‘beating about the bush’. People left the meeting not really knowing if there was an agreed course of action or whether any of them should be doing anything, and they were afraid to ask or to take initiative. So no-one did anything! Subsequently, the MD got very annoyed (and upset)

when he checked up so see the state of progress and realised that nothing had been done. His reaction was: "People don't listen to me; they don't do what I ask them to do, which implies they don't respect me." They are not reliable, and they will not take responsibility. Everyone has to be hand-held by me!" As a result, the MD believed he was the only one that could make things happen and that nothing proceeded without him. This, of course, is a nice reinforcement for him and makes him feel important and 'the boss'.

The truth of the matter is that he wants:

- to be in control;
- to be pulling all the strings;
- to start and stop things at his will, and without explanation;
- everything and every decision to go by him first; and
- to know about everything that is going on.

This is what gives him power and makes him the boss. So, he does not want someone else to start taking control, to start taking initiative, to start taking responsibility, because then he will feel he is losing control. He does not want anyone else to know the complete picture, but it is very difficult for his staff to make the right decisions if they don't know the complete picture.

All of this makes for a working environment in which people are fearful of:

- stepping out of line;
- saying anything that may cause upset; or
- taking any initiative or action without the approval of the MD.

People are walking on 'eggshells'. They do what they are told to do and nothing more. This is not an environment that encourages creativity, self-responsibility and self-development. It does not bring out the best in people. To the contrary, it causes people to operate out of fear and takes responsibility away from them, making them appear almost child-like and immature – a culture that, as always, comes from the top (i.e. from the MD). The MD, through his management style, is creating a self-fulfilling prophecy, inducing people into a state of dependency – a kind of "learned helplessness" – that reinforces the ego of the boss, and perpetuates itself.

### **Guidelines for Managing the Controlling MD**

To improve managerial effectiveness, this controlling type of MD needs instead to have independent advisors or external directors to guide and discipline him. These may be financial accountants, technical experts, management consultants, business advisors or business coaches. The advisors need to have the skills and experience to 'manage' this type



of individual, given his controlling style. Not every advisor is suited to this type of client. Curiously, in my experience, this type of MD is very good at sourcing the right type of advisors.

The MD will be more respectful of his advisors and listen to their views and perspectives. The advisors can act with maturity, responsibility, initiative and belief in his or her own abilities and decision-making skills without 'fear of the boss', unlike the staff. The MD respects this and can develop his management ability, with the help of his advisors. Also, he is paying for a service and expects to get a good return on it.

For those people working within the company, they need to stick by the rules, know their place at all times, be respectful and be prepared. They need to gather all the facts before a meeting with the MD, anticipate questions he may ask and be armed with the answers. Then they will gradually gain his respect and trust. Once they get this, the Controlling MD will show great loyalty, albeit he will still get upset.

In this case, I coached the MD by:

- giving him feedback from staff interviews about key issues from their perspective (which indirectly led to discussions around his leadership/management style);
- training him in how to manage managers;
- attending meetings and giving him feedback on his communication style and interaction with others, and teaching him better communication techniques; and
- role-playing with him on how to react in certain situations and how to deal with his emotional responses.

This resulted in him delegating specific areas of responsibility to key managers and allowing them to meet as a management team, without him being present, to agree actions and review progress. The MD received a status report subsequent to the meeting, at which point he then gave his input, giving key managers the opportunity to take more responsibility and start to think more for themselves (without the physical presence of the Controlling MD). They could openly discuss and argue points with each other and then propose possible solutions in writing. They could note areas where they required clarification from the MD, guidance regarding priorities and approval for taking action. The MD had time after reviewing the status report to decide on how he would react, rather than reacting impulsively (and emotionally) as he would do if he attended the meeting.

### **Controlling MD – Case Summary**

The MD became more aware of his style of communication and the impact it had on others. He began to better understand his thought



patterns and the resulting assumptions he made, which were leading him to behave in a certain way. He learned ways to stop these thought patterns and do a reality check, which in turn led to more effective behaviours.

Interestingly, the key managers moved from a situation where they constantly complained about the boss, to a situation where they were giving out about each other. As more responsibility began to shift to the key managers, some took greater responsibility on their shoulders than others, and this resulted in them watching each other carefully and taking under-performers to task – all part of learning to grow up, and of growing the company rather than stifling it under the suffocating control of the MD.

### **Type 3: The MD Who Does Not Know How to be an MD**

In many company start-ups, one individual has an idea for a product or a service in their expert area, whether it be a software product, an IT service, a medical product, or a professional service, such as engineering, architectural, etc. The individual's focus is on developing the product or service offering, but he has no knowledge or experience of what's involved in developing other aspects of the business. He tends to stay within his comfort zone, using his expert skills to further fine-tune his product or service before it is released to the world. In the meantime, no-one knows the product or service exists, no customers have been lined up, and there is no money to pay for additional resources or sales and marketing activities. In essence, there is no business plan. If he is lucky and gets some help along the way, he may start to build up a customer base and hire staff on the back of resulting revenues. However, some MDs continue to focus on development and delivery of the product or service, rather than on 'managing the business', and this causes the company to stall in its development.

#### **CAMEO CASE 3: THE MD WHO DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO BE AN MD**

One such client example of mine was a training company with 10 employees, providing health and safety training.

The MD was spending much of her time out of the office training the clients herself. This was her area of expertise and what she felt most comfortable doing. After a few sessions, it became clear that when the MD was in the office, she didn't know what to do. She didn't know how to manage her business, so she booked herself back out training clients again. This was difficult for her to admit; in fact, she hadn't quite realised that this was the case until we talked it through. It also became clear that she had personal goals which she wanted to align with the business.

### **Managing the MD Who doesn't Know How to be an MD**

I asked the MD to go through the following:

- a life-planning exercise, which she did with her partner to set life goals over an agreed timeframe;
- a business-planning exercise to set business goals that were aligned with her life goals;
- review her customer base/services and revenues to identify which customers were profitable to serve, and then to put an appropriate sales strategy in place;
- staff and management issues; and
- gaps in systems and procedures.

In addition, she worked with a financial advisor to understand her finances better and the management of her cash flow.

The MD learned about strategic thinking and the business-planning process. She learned about the different aspects of running a business, as well as acting in the role of MD. She learned how to integrate her personal goals with her business goals. She learned how to do a cost – benefit analysis and assess the value of her services and customers. She worked through her sales strategy and prepared a sales plan to achieve targets. She also learned how to manage her finances better. This all resulted in a well-thought out business plan, starting with a clear mission statement and ending with an action plan to achieve goals.

#### **Case Summary**

As a result, the MD now knew what she needed to do back in the office to manage her business more effectively. In other words, she now knew how to be an MD! She could clearly see the benefit of utilising her time to do this rather than booking herself out with clients yet again. She became a leader – steering the company in the right direction, and ensuring the right things were being done – and a manager – ensuring things were being done right. She employed more people to do the training she had been doing previously. She increased her revenues and profit, and she quickly started to achieve her personal goals as well.

#### **Type 4: The Clever Prima Donna**

I think we all know, or have had experience of, the Clever Prima Donna! I have managed a few in my time and describe below a 'typical' Prima Donna. This is the technical genius within the company, who has probably been with the company since it started, so is likely to be a director, but does not easily fit into the confines of the organisational structure that has necessarily developed as the company has grown.

*The Typical Prima Donna*

## The Clever Prima Donna:

- is an expert in his field;
- can get through a huge workload;
- can contribute hugely to a business (in fact, he can be the unique selling point (USP) of the business);
- can be very charming, positive and good fun; and
- can 'wow' customers with his knowledge and problem-solving skills.

The clever prima donna's technical knowledge can make the above contributions, if (and only if!) a number of factors are right. Despite delivering such huge benefits, if he allows his ego to dominate him, he can be a prima donna, being at times:

- disruptive;
- non-communicative;
- uncooperative and unreasonable;
- emotional;
- demanding;
- negative; and
- critical, finding problems and reasons why work cannot be done.

He can have a very strong presence and, so, his mood is very visible, seeping through the rest of the organisation. This means there can be great, up-beat, high days and terrible, down-beat, low days.

## The Clever Prima Donna:

- Needs a lot of managing, though he doesn't think so. As he is excellent at his job (from a task/project perspective), and he places little or no value on anything else, he doesn't see what has to be managed.
- Needs to feed off others in order to flourish. He cannot do it on his own. This 'feeding off' can take many forms, including 'dumping stuff' onto his manager – the prima donna never accepts responsibility. In his view, it is always someone else's fault! Unfortunately, this 'dumping' might satisfy the prima donna's need for attention but it leaves the manager with many problems to be solved. The manager can get drained by these emotional intrusions, while conversely the Prima Donna gets to feeling a lot better.
- Is respected and liked by his team (who can learn much from him). However, the Prima Donna is not respectful himself and does not follow rules. In fact, he enjoys breaking them. He quite often will not 'play ball' or will fail to turn up for a meeting without a reason – or apology. He either feels "it is just a waste of time" (for example, if the issue is an administration or people issue), or believes "no decisions will be made because the real decision maker is not there!" And sometimes he's right!
- Does not stick to reporting lines and boundaries. He will often decide to go directly to the MD, instead of his manager. Even if his manager is good with people, the Prima Donna will typically undermine him, and being very disruptive.

- Can get twisted views of situations (sometimes to suit his particular agenda). He can be paranoid and does not like to be left out of the loop. He can build a relatively minor issue up in his head to a much bigger issue, go totally off track with it, and then explode with rage. He also has a very strong sense of fairness and gets very upset if he perceives unfairness towards him or, indeed, towards a member of his team.
- Tends to storm into his manager's office and demand things which can be unreasonable or even whacky. This is usually as a result of some issue he has been worrying about since waking at 5am. He will arrive at his version of a solution to the problem (usually one which creates more problems than it solves!) and then demand that his needs be met. It can be easy to get caught up in a heated discussion about his demand or the viability of the solution, so here are some suggestions that I have found useful in dealing with the Prima Donna.

#### *Guidelines for Managing the Clever Prima Donna*

The only person that can manage the Prima Donna is the 'boss' (i.e. the MD), whose job it is, in as much as possible, to create and manage an environment in which the Prima Donna can flourish. This requires a lot of energy and is more about managing the Prima Donna's moods, concerns and insecurities, than about managing his work. If he is in the right frame of mind, then great work will follow. The key, as explained below, is to reduce, over time, the irrationality of the Prima Donna's behaviour by first defusing his attention-seeking outbursts and injecting balance into his demands.

1. **Empathic Listening** If the Prima Donna comes storming into your office, avoid any any temptation to arbitrarily dismiss him (or something similar)! Remember, you are the manager, and this is about you managing his insecurities – this is not a battle of egos. So, stay grounded. Avoid getting into a row about the solution/demand being made. Instead, allow him to 'let off steam' and give him space to say (or shout!) whatever is on his mind. You cannot reason with someone who is feeling emotional. So, stay with the emotions for a while; listen to him; let him know you understand how he is feeling by reflecting his feelings back to him. Stephen R. Covey refers to this as "empathic listening" and suggests that we "seek first to understand, then to be understood".

#### **EXAMPLE: THE PRIMA DONNA AND EMPATHIC LISTENING**

*Prima Donna:* "I've had it with this project; it sucks! I'm finished with it, so count me out."

*Manager:* "So, you're feeling frustrated about this project?"

*Prima Donna:* "Yes, I am; the deadlines are ridiculous. It's just a waste of time, and it's only going to get worse."

*Manager:* "You're worried it won't get finished on time, and it's not going to get any better?"

*Prima Donna:* "Yeah, we just don't have enough resources, and they keep changing the goalposts. It's completely impractical to expect us to work day and night for them."

*Manager:* "You feel it's unfair of them to change the scope of the project and still have it finished on time?"

*Prima Donna:* "Yes, it's totally out of order. If they change their requirements, they should get a new delivery date. And they should be charged more."

*Manager:* "They should get a new proposal based on their new requirements?"

*Prima Donna:* "Absolutely, and it should cater for an extra person on the project if we want to have a realistic delivery time."

*Manager:* "You need more people?"

The Prima Donna is now more logical and has worked through his emotions, so both he and the manager are looking at the problem from the same side and can look at finding the right solution.

2. **Problem-solving** After you have given him this room in which to vent his emotions (allowed him 'psychological air', so to speak), you can then start to problem solve and influence. Logic and emotion do not co-exist. If he responds logically, you can ask questions, give advice and seek a solution. If he responds emotionally, you go back to empathic listening, and stop probing. When you get to the problem-solving stage, you should backtrack to understand what the real issue or problem is, asking questions such as:
  - "OK, what exactly is the problem here; what are you concerned about?"
  - "How is it a problem for you? Or for others?"
  - "Why is it a problem?"

When the underlying issue is uncovered, it might simply be a misunderstanding or a miscommunication, and may just require clarification or re-assurance. If it is a real issue (as distinct to an issue that exists only in the Prima Donna's mind) then look at alternative solutions, e.g. "How can we solve this?" "What are the options?" "Is there another way?" "What exactly will be solved if we do this?"

3. **Regular One-to-one Communication** As his manager, you should have regular communication with the Prima Donna to:
  - keep his perspective on the right track;
  - let him air his concerns and get issues out in the open as soon as possible to nip them in the bud;
  - clarify misunderstandings;

- reassure him and calm his insecurities; and
- keep him in the loop.

You should explain important issues to the Prima Donna, ask for his input, and get him 'on side' for any resulting course of action, in advance of any group meetings. He will feel included, 'in the know', and will have a better understanding of the value attached to the issue and its importance to you, the MD. This will make for better co-operation, as and when required.

4. **Reduce Dependency** Though easier said than done, deducing the dependency on the Prima Donna may make him feel more insecure and, hence, more disruptive. You need him on side; you need to convince him of the benefits of training up members of his team. They may never be as good or as talented or as knowledgeable as the Prima Donna, but they can keep the show running, if needs be. This team should then be encouraged to document what they can, rather than keeping knowledge in their heads, thereby further reducing the dependency.

Finally, the clever Prima Donna is unpredictable, and just when you think everything is running smoothly, he may erupt again with yet another issue, or else go into non-communicative mode for no apparent reason. If this happens, it is important not to let him distract you from focusing on achieving the company's key objectives. You should not 'absorb' his negativity. If he is too disruptive or high maintenance, ask yourself, "Is he worth it?"

But remember, this Prima Donna is like a rough diamond. As his manager, you have to take the rough with the smooth. If you can manage the rough, and filter its impact as much as you can from the rest of the staff and the company, the brilliant gem will emerge and make your business uniquely shine and sparkle!

## **Conclusion**

Each of the types described here suffer from a limitation that can be lifted through awareness, education or emotional development. The Busy MD has a naive belief that talent will blossom without being nurtured, and must learn to accept that people will always have emotional needs. The Controlling MD operates with an insecure mindset, and contrives a 'learned helplessness' in staff, heaping pressure on the MD as well as feeding his weak ego. Such an MD can retreat from their need to control by progressively taking steps to delegate more. Adding independent advisors or external directors can add the necessary rigour to decisions by challenging the MD constructively. With the third type, the solution (management training) is relatively simple, and involves a shift in internal attitudes or behaviours.

Managing the Prima Donna is an art in itself, requiring patience and skill: further help can be found throughout this book, but special

