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Ivor Kenny


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#2399894 in eBooks 2014-01-15 2014-01-15 File Name: B00I5MD1ME | File size: 54.Mb

Ivor Kenny : Can You Manage? before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Can You Manage?:

“You’ve written nine or ten books”, a friend said to Ivor Kenny. “Any chance you could put

them through a mangle and squeeze out some of the lessons you've learned? Put them in a short book a manager can read and think about on a transatlantic flight." He has tried to distil into a slim volume lessons learned working with managers for 40 years — 20 in the Irish Management Institute, where he became familiar with theory, and 20 in UCD where I work with managers in international companies. He has plundered earlier books and added new material, about half-and-half. The point of the book is that, since few things are black and white, clear-cut, either/or, we have to manage in a way that accepts the existence of contradictory phenomena without trying to resolve them. His hope is that it can be a reminder, timely or otherwise, that brings to the surface thoughts buried under the press of events. The lessons include: Why do some businesses give the impression that they hate the customer? Is it because people are in the wrong jobs? The secret of efficiency is enthusiasm. Compulsion doesn't work. A macho manager goes like a bull at a gate. Avoid using a sledgehammer when a feather will do, but keep the hammer handy. Management by slogan is good only for pub-talk. True humility is knowing yourself and the effect of your actions on others. Leadership is a combination of character (who you are) and Competence (what you can do). A good boss is tough but fair. A leader who has sorted out his inner conflicts will convey a sense of optimism and hope. Cheer up. Strategy is the step by step removal of removable constraints. Does our lack of enthusiasm for strategy come from the fact that the future is unpredictable or that we are simply going about strategy the wrong way? The essence of strategy is to build an arsenal of capabilities to meet whatever the future throws at us. Budgets are coffins. One of the greatest barriers to change is lack of cohesion in the top team. People do not resist change. They resist loss. It's not what's ahead — today is the golden time.