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01

MANAGEMENT CRAFT · EPISODE 01

The title is given.
The craft is not.

Management rests on personality and on craft. Only one of the two is treated as learnable.

SWIPE →

THE PREMISE

Good management rests on two things.

One is personality and natural talent. Charisma, ease with people, an instinct for the right word at the right moment. Some of it can be developed; much of it is simply there.

The other is craft. A defined set of things a manager must know how to do.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THEM

Personality shapes how the craft lands.
Craft determines whether there is anything to land.

THE IMBALANCE

One of the two is consistently underestimated.

Personality is visible. It shows in a room, in an interview, in the first month. Craft is not.

It shows in whether the targets were met, whether the numbers held, whether goals were clear enough to act on, whether the team is stronger a year later.

> **WHAT FOLLOWS FROM THAT**
>
> **Personality is what gets noticed. Craft is what gets assumed.**

WHAT CRAFT MEANS

Craft is specific, and it is learnable.

It is not one ability. It is several distinct areas of work, and a manager is expected to hold all of them at once.

Setting a direction for your function that serves the business. Assuring an outcome, you are accountable for. Controlling your numbers. Making measures drive results. Building and carrying the people who deliver.

WHY THAT MATTERS

None of that is inspiration. All of it can be taught, practised and improved.

THE PROMOTION MOMENT

The title is the beginning of the learning curve, not the end of it.

Promotion is often received as an arrival, conclusion that the work is done, and the standard has been met.

It is the opposite. From that day, two things sit on the desk permanently: results the business is counting on, and people whose working lives now run through your decisions.

THE PART RARELY MENTIONED

Neither of those was part of the job that earned the promotion.

THE SKEW

Almost no one is even across all of it.

Managers rarely fail outright. They are lopsided — strong in some of those areas, thin in others, and often unaware which is which.

The direction is usually predictable. A manager from a technical function tends to be strong on numbers and lighter on people. For those from a people-facing function, the reverse is true — they often thin on the numbers that decide whether the function sustains the next budget round.

> **AND IT DOES NOT SELF-CORRECT**
>
> **Experience does not fix this on its own. It usually deepens it.**

THE QUESTION

Two ways to look at the same gap.

One is organisational. Do we prepare people properly before we hold them accountable for results — and for the people delivering them?

The other is personal. How much time does a manager actually invest in the craft itself — not in the technical work they already know, but in what the role now demands?

THE TIME EXISTS

It sits in every interval between one role and the next.

THE TAKEAWAY

Ambition puts you in the role.
Craft is what carries it.

The role comes with two weights. Results the business needs delivered, consistently and not just once. And accountability for people — you will shape their working lives, deal with their problems, and sometimes be the cause of them. Both have to be faced head-on. Neither is ever finished. There is always a gap between where performance is and where it could be — and closing it is the management craft.

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