Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development

Professional Development Scheme

Core Management

Managing People

November 2007

12 November 2007   09:50-12:00 hrs

Time allowed - Two hours and ten minutes
(including ten minutes' reading time).

Answer TWO questions in Section A and SEVEN of the ten questions in Section B.

Please write clearly and legibly.

Questions may be answered in any order.

Equal marks are allocated to each section of the paper.
Within Section B equal marks are allocated to each question.

If a question includes reference to 'your organisation', this may be interpreted as covering any organisation with which you are familiar.

You will fail the examination if:

- **you fail to answer seven questions in Section B and/or**
- **you achieve less than 40 per cent in any section.**

Managing People

EXAMINER'S REPORT

November 2007

SECTION A

Answer ANY TWO questions in this section.

1. **Read the following material and answer questions (a) and (b) below.**

   At the CIPD's 2006 annual conference, Richard Reeves outlined a "new work charter" to improve happiness at work. It comprises five elements:

   (i) *Autonomy* – offering employees greater power at work

   (ii) *Community* – partaking in social activities at the workplace

   (iii) *Purpose* – understanding how their jobs fits into the bigger picture

   (iv) *Learning* – developing new knowledge

   (v) *Voice* – feeling involved

   (a) To what extent does this "work charter" say anything new, or is it a case of 'old wine in new bottles'? Why should employers be interested in improving the happiness of their employees?

   (b) How far are these five elements present in your own organisation? Assuming the five elements are desirable, what more needs to be done, and by whom?

2. **Read the following material, adapted from two articles by Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones ("The lizard kings", *People Management*, 26 January 2006, and "Lead your way", *Management Today*, February 2006), and answer questions (a) and (b) below.**

   Goffee and Jones advocate a model of "authentic leadership" which involves three behavioural principles:

   (i) *Authentic leaders do what they say* – and practise what they preach;

   (ii) *Authentic leadership is coherent* – despite the need to play different roles at different times to different audiences, authentic leaders display a "real self" that holds these separate performances together; and

   (iii) *Authentic leadership necessitates a kind of comfort with self* – to be a more effective leader, you must be skilled at "being yourself".

   They also suggest that "Leadership is not just about results, yet we have become too concerned with the ends – sometimes at the cost of neglecting the means … The obsession with results is a contemporary conceit and is partly responsible for eroding the moral dimension of leadership."

(a)   Critically review the concept of 'authentic leadership' constructed by Goffee and Jones, and contrast it with any models of leadership with which you are familiar.

(b)   How far do you agree with the suggestion that an obsession with the results of leadership may have contributed to an erosion of its moral dimension?   Give reasons for your views.

In both answers credit will be given for the inclusion of suitable references and also for examples of leadership in action with which you are familiar from your own work experiences or elsewhere.

3.   **Read the following material and answer questions (a) and (b) below.**

The latest Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS), 2004, shows that employee work satisfaction in large companies stands at 69%, in medium-sized companies it rises to 75% but in the smallest firms it reaches 79%.   According to Professor David Storey of Warwick Business School: "In small firms people are paid less, their benefits are less and their work-based health and safety is less, but still they are happier.   We think there's now a pretty robust relationship between measures of workforce happiness and size."

(a)   Why might this be the case?   What other evidence supports or refutes the view that there is an inverse connection between workforce happiness and organisational size?

(b)   What positive steps could larger organisations realistically take in order to create for their workforces the kind of positive climates typically found in small firms?   If possible, illustrate your answer here with examples to show such initiatives in action.

For each of the above questions, approximately equal amounts of time should be allocated to sub-questions (a) and (b).

PLEASE TURN OVER

SECTION B

Answer SEVEN of the ten questions in this section. To communicate your answers more clearly you may use whatever methods you wish, for example diagrams, flowcharts, bullet points, so long as you provide an explanation of each.

You should assume that you have just arrived at your work station and switched on your PC.   The following ten email messages appear on your screen.   You are required to indicate the content of your response to any seven of them; the manner of your response (whether it would be via an email, face-to-face conversation, phone call, etc) is not relevant.

1.   **From one of your colleagues:**   In a recent *People Management* article ("Variety performance" by Rima Evans, 23 November 2006), Dianah Worman, the CIPD's adviser on diversity, says that difference should be celebrated "since everyone is unique" and "everyone can make a contribution".   I'm puzzled.   If everyone is unique, how is it then possible to generalise about the factors that motivate or demotivate people at work?

2.   **From a national newspaper:**   We're planning a forum about customer service, and would appreciate your views on one of the questions that the forum members will explore.   Generally speaking, customers across all sectors are becoming more aspirational, more critical, more demanding, more prone to complain, and more likely to threaten or even resort to litigation when aggrieved.   What are the implications for the management and leadership of the people who have to interact directly with customers?

3.   **From the HR Manager:**   I went to a dinner the other night where the speaker was Niall Fitzgerald, former Chief Executive of Unilever and now Chairman of Reuters.   His subject was "Five Ways to Kill a Business".   It occurs to me that tackling our own performance issues from this perspective could be quite useful, so can you please:

    (a)   List five ways to kill a business (so far as the management of people is concerned), giving succinct reasons for your selection; and

    (b)   Comment on the extent to which you see any of these five factors present in our organisation.

4.   **From the Communications Manager:**   Because of my background, I'm pedantic about the meanings of words.   Recently I've seen quite a lot of organisations claiming to be 'world-class'. Are you able to tell me what the term means, and whether in fact it simply signifies that the organisations deploy a 'best practice' approach to people management?

5.   **From a research officer at a professional body:**   Not long ago it was being suggested that first-line management roles in organisations would eventually disappear, because of delayering and an increasing reliance on self-managed teams. As a contributor to our research report on this issue, tell us whether this prediction is being fulfilled (a) for organisations in general, and (b) for your own organisation in particular. It would help us greatly if you could give reasons for your response.

6.   **From a software company:**   We conducted a survey last year among 2800 employees, and found that more than a third claimed they have no loyalty towards their employer.   The top three reasons for this state of affairs were "I don't earn enough money", "I'm bored with my job" and "The work I do isn't appreciated".   We now want to take this further, and would appreciate your brief response to these two questions:

   (a)   To what extent do they reflect the attitudes of people in your own organisation?

   (b)   What changes in your organisation's people-management practice are suggested as a result?

7.   **From a colleague in another organisation:**   At our conference the other day we had a presentation by a major sports 'personality'.   It was very inspirational, but I was struck by the comments of Richard Reeves (*Management Today*, April 2006) after he had heard Ellen MacArthur: "Her stories are fascinating.   But the necessary ingredients of her success – stoicism, obsession, very high pain and boredom thresholds, and a solitary nature – are diametrically opposed to those of a successful business leader."   So what do you think: can managers genuinely learn from sports personalities?

8.   **From a trusted friend:** "I know I'm capable of doing a more senior job, but I've been told I've been blocked for promotion because I'm too forthright in my views and 'don't take people with me'.   What do you advise?" *Analyse your friend's situation and provide some constructive guidance, reinforced with some convincing evidence.*

9.   **From your local CIPD branch:**   We plan to organise a debate one evening around the claim by Nic Greenfield, acting director-general of workforce at the Department of Health, that running the National Health Service is "not like Tesco, where you have a head office and lots of stores and can tell them to sell beans at 40p a can."   Of course, you may not know anything in detail about either of these organisations, but are there any good reasons why the people-management practices found in a highly successful private sector business could not be applied with equal success in a public sector organisation?

10.   **From a senior executive in your own organisation**:   I went to a conference recently and heard one of the speakers singing the praises of a "learning culture".   I'd like to know more, so please tell me (a) what the characteristics are of an organisation that seeks to develop a "learning culture", and (b) why it might be worthwhile for them to do so.

END OF EXAMINATION

Managing People

EXAMINER'S REPORT

November 2007

Introduction

November 2007		
Grade	**Number**	**Percentage of total** (to 1 decimal point)
Distinction	-	-
Merit	03	13.6%
Pass	09	40.9%
Marginal fail	-	-
Fail	10	45.5%
Total	**22**	**100%**

The figures shown are simply calculations based on the number of candidates sitting the examination in November 2007, whether for the first or a subsequent time, and are for interest only. They are not to be confused with the statistics produced by CIPD headquarters, which are based on the performance of candidates sitting the examination for the first time. It is from these figures that the national average pass rates are calculated.

This is the way the Managing People domain ends: not with a bang but a whimper, not with a superlative, climactic pass rate dramatically swamping everything that has gone before, but with a pass rate of no more than 54.5%, a total absence of any Marginal Fail candidates whose condonement during the final moderation process could have pushed up the pass level to something more respectable, and a group of 10 (out of a total entry of 22) who still could not manage to meet the CIPD's standards.

We shouldn't forget, either, that virtually everyone presenting scripts in this subject for November 2007 had already attempted it on at least one earlier occasion. Some of these, doubtless, will have sought and received personalised feedback about their weaknesses from the Examiner (via the CIPD's student support services), plus a detailed list of recommendations that, when implemented, should have guaranteed success in the future. Even without such feedback, everyone failing the examination could (and should) have read the relevant report about the performance of their cohort and drawn the lessons therefrom in order to inform their practice and remedial revision next time round. There is really no substantive excuse, therefore, for a failure rate of 45.5%. I am forced to conclude that there are individuals entering this examination who should not have done so, either because they are inadequately prepared, or because they lack the motivation and discipline to undertake the necessary preparation, or because they've been inadequately taught, or because they lack the fundamental capabilities required to enable them to satisfy the CIPD's requirements. If you are one of those who has failed Managing People for this final time, despite having taken the examination once or twice before, read the previous sentence and reflect on which of the causes for failure apply to you. If you can answer that question honestly, then you are already halfway to performance improvement as you transfer to the new Core Leadership and Management stream.

Section A

Responses to the questions in Section A were only given pass marks if:

> they clearly did address each of the required issues specified in the brief

and

> the answer material was presented systematically.

Where recommendations were sought, it was expected that they would be provided, and that they would be sufficiently meaningful to enable the visualised addressee to know what was being advocated, and why.

All Section A questions qualified for 50 marks, with 25 marks available for sub-question (a) and 25 for sub-question (b).

Question 1

When addressing sub-question (a), candidates should have referred to other theories of motivation at work, and should not have relied extensively (or at all) on Maslow's hierarchy of needs as evidence of anything.   In the view of the examiners, Reeves is not saying anything new, but has simply pulled together observations from a variety of discrete sources. However, this was not a judgment which was applied dictatorially to the scripts that attempted Question 1. On the contrary, arguments of any kind were viewed as convincing, provided that some evidence was given to support whatever standpoint was being pursued.   Generous credit was given for references to any of the models for High Performance Working, and for the inclusion of citations from Hackman's work on the principles of job design.

No credit was awarded for statements that were not supported by any evidence at all, or for statements that were inscrutable.   Thus one person wrote, "The Buddhist community believe that to be happy at home leads to being happy at work, but I see no reason why the converse should not also be true."   The precise nature of this "converse" was not explored, so we are left to speculate on various possibilities:

- Does unhappiness at home lead to unhappiness at work?
- Does happiness at work lead to happiness at home?
- Does unhappiness at work lead to unhappiness at home?

There is no clear-cut, unequivocal response for any of these questions, and in any case it would be entirely legitimate to conclude that the views of the "Buddhist community" (even assuming they are being accurately reflected here) are an instance of wishful thinking rather than one of empirical fact.

As an example of inscrutability, I choose to pick out the observation that "Hertzberg [sic] talked about [sic] motivation theory which encouraged people to be more motivated, thus happier at work."   Can it really be the case that "motivation

theory" by itself encourages people to be more motivated?   No it does not, and the sentence by itself makes no sense at all.

What both these cases demonstrate is the need for candidates to find time within the examination to read through their answers to ensure that what they are saying makes sense, can be justified and is reinforced by authoritative evidence.   Better still, candidates should think through their answers before committing pen to paper in the first place.

The final point worth emphasising about the responses to Question 1 (and it's a point which also applies to all other questions in the examination) is that

- If recommendations are requested, then some (at least one) should be provided,
- These recommendations should be specifically actionable and meaningful, not merely pious platitudes
- All recommendations should be supplemented by at least a sentence of justifying explanation.

One person addressing Question 1, sub-question (b), wrote very favourably about his/her company's leadership - "we have a vision, offer opportunities to develop and have excellent people management policies" – but then undermined their material by producing nothing more than a vague exhortation that there should be "some development in the areas of how to manage and implement the changes".   Even the "excellent people management policies" were not described, and no clues were offered about the ways in which the business could manage and implement "the changes" (there had been no previous mention of changes, by the way).   So, at most, one mark was awarded for thoughts that were close to idle gossip than to anything substantive.

Question 2

Among the more difficult aspects of this question was the Goffee/Jones notion that authentic leaders are allowed to "play different roles at different times to different audiences", yet still (not always simultaneously) display a "real self".   This suggests an intriguing paradox that candidates were expected to confront and investigate – yet in practice few did so.

In effect there were four propositions advanced by Goffee and Jones which required some form of evaluation: the three listed in the question itself (that "authentic leaders do what they say", "authentic leadership is coherent" and "authentic leadership necessitates a kind of comfort with self") plus the more generalised claim that current discussions about leadership are obsessed with results and say too little about the means through which the results are accomplished.   Relevant support for Goffee and Jones could have been presented through the published work of Jim Collins – see *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make The Leap – And Others Don't* (2001) and *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies* (2004), plus articles in *People Management* (consult the *People Management* archive on the

CIPD website); other appropriate sources could have included Adair, Reddin and Blake/Mouton, provided that answers continued to discuss leadership rather than styles of leadership.

Question 3

The figures suggest that there is not a huge difference between employee work satisfaction in small versus large organisations, and to measure the importance of this difference we would really need to know about productivity, profitability, labour turnover in a variety of businesses classified by size rather than by technology, geographical focus, service/product sector(s) and so forth. However, people working for smaller organisations may be happier for a variety of reasons:

- They are closer to those who run the enterprise (and smaller companies have fewer rungs in the corporate ladder – they may not even have any conspicuously visible rungs at all).

- Because of their proximity to the leadership of the organisation, they may have more access to information about the company's performance, its prospects and its strategies.

- It is easier for those who run the enterprise to supply strong, coherent and personalised leadership and thus to generate loyalty from its employees.

- In a smaller organisation, employees can typically exercise more autonomy (and 'discretionary behaviour') because the business does not yet need to create the sort of centralised rules that will eventually turn it into a bureaucracy.

- Individuals can sense a closer, more direct relationship between their own performance/contribution and the success of the enterprise.

Larger organisations can create a similarly entrepreneurial climate if they provide more autonomy for subsidiary parts of the operation, if they require managers to demonstrate positive interpersonal leadership skills, and if they encourage 'discretionary behaviour' by individuals (through the way in which job definitions are written – preferably as accountability and output profiles – and also through the reward/recognition system). Examples include Timpsons, Kwik-Fit and the John Lewis Partnership (the latter through its expectation that outward-facing employees will seek out opportunities to function, in effect, as 'Thinking Performers', by conducting "random acts of kindness" for customers).

Separate research looking at 4500 private-sector employment tribunal cases has found that large companies are twice as likely to face a tribunal claim than small firms. Yet in principle one might expect that large companies would find it easier to satisfy the obligations of employment law, if only because they are more likely to have established procedures, rules, systems and processes. Of course, life isn't that simple, and in practice creating a comprehensive rule-book simply creates, in urn, more opportunities for things to go wrong.

Section B

A 'good' Section B answer should contain at least some of the following ingredients, whether specifically requested or not:.

(1) A demonstrated grasp of the accepted knowledge related to the question's subject-matter.

(2) Some evaluation and critique of that knowledge, if applicable (bearing in mind that most so-called 'knowledge' in the HR and people-management arena is open to at least some challenge).

(3) A minimum of one reference to or citation from a worthwhile third-party source, which could be the principal recommended textbook or a relevant article from *People Management*.

(4) Evidence from named organisational exemplars (sometimes the candidate's own), explaining precisely why such organisations have been mentioned.

(5) Brief yet clear-cut and incisive proposals for action or recommendations.

(6) A systematic presentation of the answer material so that its arguments are reader-friendly.

It is understood that not all Section B questions lend themselves to this apparently rigid formula. Nevertheless this is the paradigm against which Section B responses are measured, unless circumstances suggest otherwise.

Certainly one of the most common and typical mistakes by students needs again to be highlighted. This is the tendency to provide Section B answers that consist of little more than unadorned bullet points. Responding to Question 9 (about the reasons why people management practices could not be applied in a public-sector organisation), one person listed the following:

(1) "Requirements of the customer"
(2) "Budget issues"
(3) "Ethical issues"
(4) "Structure of the organisation"

None of these was explained – and so none earned any marks.

Question 1

Students are fond of claiming that everyone is different – whilst often proceeding to quote approvingly from such comprehensive generalisations as Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It is of course true that superficially everyone is different, but it is equally true that on another dimension everyone (or nearly everyone) is the same. The key is to build on the valid hypotheses which can be advanced about the majority of employees in a work-based organisation; that is, that most want to do a good job, most respond to praise, positive feedback and recognition, most value the

opportunity to become involved in decision-making that affects them, and most have other non-work priorities that cause them to seek a productive work-life balance.

If there were truly no basis upon which it were possible to generalise about, say, the motivation of people at work, then there would be no 'Managing People' examination and, going further, no HRM body of knowledge and no HR profession – simply because every policy, every strategy, every decision, would have to be based on the impulses of the moment. In practice, research has established that in general people at work exhibit similar characteristics, similar values and similar preferences. It then becomes possible to predict with reasonable accuracy how people – both in the mass and as individuals – will react to specific changes, incentives and corporate initiatives. We can then know in advance which techniques for managing and leading people are likely to be more effective than others. At the same time, we cannot know these things for certain, because our generalisations don't apply to everyone, and unusual contingencies may affect their attitudes and behaviours: so nothing works all the time. The fact that nothing works all the time, however, does not entitle us to conclude that nothing works on the majority of occasions.

A major difficulty with several treatments was the naïve acceptance given to Maslow, and the frankly ludicrous conclusions drawn from some reflections about Maslow's views. "It illustrates," began one answer, "that people all have these five needs in some way or another, there can be differences from each individual. This is apparent by people suiting different kinds of jobs, such as a person motivated by money taking a job in sales, opposed to a person motivated by making a difference, working as a nurse." Such material is outrageously simplistic, misleading, and completely wrong. The idea that people in sales are motivated principally or solely by money is false, and the notion that if someone wants to make a difference they should gravitate to nursing is equally nonsensical.

Question 2

The general proposition forming the basis for Question 2 should not have been challenged, and wasn't, though it is clearly more pertinent for some customers in some sectors than for other customers or sectors. In general, for instance, older customers are more docile, and younger customers more amoral; customers for the financial services sector are more prone to complain than the customers of local authorities.

Leaving such technicalities to one side, the examiners expected at least some of the following considerations to be explored in competent responses for this question.

- Those dealing directly with customers must be carefully recruited, selected and trained, with concern in the first instance for their customer-facing attitudes ('select for attitude, train for skill' is a familiar mantra in this kind of situation). Gone are the days when it was thought permissible to put more or less anyone in front of customers simply because they were available.

- Customer-facing employees must be careful not to commit their employer to unfortunate precedents – yet at the same time they need increasingly to be given more autonomy to empathise with customers and to resolve customer issues on a 'one stop shop' basis.

- Script-based customer processes are gradually being withdrawn, since the impersonal, robotic nature of these scripts is a frequent cause of customer complaints.   The example of Lloyds TSB is appropriate. They abandoned scripts in 2006 (interestingly, their Indian call-centre staff have never used scripts).

- The leaders of people dealing directly with customers should become more focused on results/outputs than on process compliance and on such 'efficiency' measures as call duration.   Ultimately, the only performance index which matters is the perception of the customer about the quality of the service transaction and the functionality of the service resolution – and these depend on service professionalism rather than adherence to predetermined routines.

Question 3

Question 3 involved two sub-questions, with up to ten marks for each.   Given that those opting for Question 3 were expected to list five ways to kill a business, they could have been awarded two marks for each, provided (and this was an important proviso) that their proposals were each supported by at least a sentence of accompanying explanation.   Moreover, given that this is an examination entitled 'Managing People', it should have been understood that the five ways to kill a business should have had a people-management thrust to them; for example, "recruit and select according to a simplistic 'hands wanted' principle", "do not train staff", or "punish anyone who deviates from their job description".

Among the suggestions actually advanced by Niall Fitzgerald were the following (though the title of his speech was 'Five Ways to Kill a Business', he identified more than 30):

- "Be a hero chief executive.   Take all the glory.   Leave no room for talent."

- "Keep reminding your customers how privileged they are."

- "Stick to a proven fomula.   Assume infallibility."

- "Accept no blame.   Listen only to those who reinforce your prejudices."

- "Fall in love with administration and bureaucracy."

- "Fill the company's time with meetings."

- "Be afraid of the future.   It's uncomfortable and will show the world how little you really know."

- "Stop being curious."

- "Dismiss diversity of style."

- "Suspend the company's ethics policy" (or don't have one in the first place).

Come to think of it, virtually all the above apply to individuals as well as to organisations.

Some of the possibilities advanced by those tackling Question 3 were very insightful – indeed, almost any ideas symptomatic of 'low performance working' (the opposite of High Performance Working) would have been considered appropriate by the examiners, including these:

- "Rewards confined to basic salary and not total reward approach";

- "Do not place any emphasis on customer care";

- "Control and coerce your employees";

- "Don't inform your employees of what is happening in the organisation";

- "Don't ask them for their views";

- "Don't provide staff with opportunities to develop".

Question 4

Any organisation simply applying the concepts associated with 'best practice' will not be 'world-class', if only because 'best practice' implies a strong adherence to procedural and process conformity, with an emphasis on legal/ethical compliance and the standardisation of policies and practices based on what passes for accepted wisdom at any given point in time.   It's worth noting, almost in parentheses, that what constitutes 'best practice' in one era – say, the age of scientific management, or the decade of human relations – is quite different from 'best practice' in the noughties.   Even worse, the 'best practice' of the past is now routinely denigrated and dismissed.

'World-class' organisations, by contrast, are exceptional in some way, often highly innovative, prone to adopt a 'what works' approach, extremely customer-centric, and focused on added-value outputs both for the business as a whole and also its employees.   Examples of businesses acknowledged to be 'world-class' include Tesco, Shangri-La Hotels, Singapore Airlines, Pret A Manger, Lakeland, Lands End Clothing and First Direct – but these are not the only examples which could have been cited by students addressing Question 4.

An important point to make is that the epithet 'world-class' cannot legitimately be ascribed by organisations to themselves, because it only customers who determine whether one of their suppliers is 'world-class'.

Question 5

Up to twelve marks were available for a discussion about the extent to which it is actually the case that first-line managers are disappearing, with the remaining eight marks allocated for a dispassionate review of the situation in the student's own business. Unfortunately Question 5 turned out to be relatively unpopular, and (to my surprise) generated some very unsatisfactory commentaries in response to the 'own organisation' part of the proceedings. Surely it cannot be so difficult for individuals to describe the role of first-line managers (whether described as team leaders or supervisors) in their own organisations, and assess whether their importance (and number) is increasing or declining. Yet evidently it is very difficult, and I am forced to conclude that its difficulty stems from the fact that some of those taking the 'Managing People' examination pay little attention to what is going on around them in other parts of their employer's operation, especially if whatever is going on does not directly concern them.

Some evidence, especially from a recent article in the *Journal of Management Studies* (featuring in an earlier 'Managing People' examination), shows that first-line managers continue to be very important. In some instances they are now being given more responsibilities of a genuinely managerial nature (for example, for absence control and performance issues), and supervisory positions are being used as a career step rather than as a self-contained, NCO-type role with no further advancement potential.

Question 6

The most pertinent previous research that could have been cited in this answer is the work by Marcus Buckingham ("What a waste", *People Management*, October 2001), using the Gallup Q12 diagnostic instrument. The (Europe-wide) results of this investigation showed that fewer than 20% of employees, across a large sample, are 'actively engaged' with their employers. Other studies don't necessarily replicate this outcome in detail, but certainly do suggest that there are many organisations whose employees exhibit a largely instrumental orientation to their work.

Question 7

Question 7 supplied plenty of opportunities for the advocacy of alternative views, and competent candidates should have considered at least some of these dimensions of the topic.

- Reeves (the author quoted in the question's stem) says that "stoicism, obsession, very high pain and boredom thresholds, and a solitary nature"

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are "diametrically opposed to those of a successful business leader." Is this really the case?

- How far do the experiences of a sports 'personality' reflect those of managers and employees in organisations? To what extent are the connections (if they exist) self-explanatory and obvious, or are the lessons difficult to draw? And if the latter, is it not possible that actually there are few connections?

- The case of Ellen MacArthur may be different because her example does not involve teamwork, but what if the sports 'personality' is a soccer team captain, or a (former) team coach?

Question 8

The issue here is the extent to which being "forthright" is sufficient to prevent an individual from receiving career advancement. The answer (however much one may regret it as a matter of principle) is likely to be in the affirmative, especially if

- being "forthright" means that the individual has alienated more senior and influential people in the organisation

and

- the position to which the individual may be moved is one in which the motivation of others is a crucial factor for success.

Being "forthright" may seem a desirable attribute in theory, but in practice those on the receiving end of direct, unambiguous and unequivocal messages can implicitly reject what they see as criticism of themselves. Supporting evidence for this line of argument may be taken from research into performance appraisal, leading to the view that appraisal is more effective when undertaken interactively by encouraging self-assessment), and also by Goleman's work on 'social intelligence'.

Some other considerations that could have been brought out within competent answers to Question 8 include the following.

- A dictatorial style of behaviour is only sustainable if you have absolute power and if your employees have no choice (for example, as in a slavery system, or in a labour market where jobs are very scarce relative to the demand for them).

- To bring people with you (that is, to become a leader), you must listen to them, understand their point of view and take account of their emotional as well as their rational underpinning of the situation.

- Bringing people with you also involves finding the triggers that inspire and motivate others – many of whom may differ from you in temperament, values, philosophy and attitudes.

- Bringing others with you necessitates a move from behaviour based on the need to achieve a personal victory (that is, making your argument prevail), towards behaviour predicated on the obligation to achieve an organisational victory (together we made the best decision for the business).

Question 9

Candidates selecting Question 9 were not expected to become bogged down in specific comparisons between the NHS and Tesco. The broader problem was concerned with the feasibility of transferring people-management practices from one sector to another, and here some of the relevant factors that could have been explored are the following.

- The reluctance to learn from another sector may be nothing more than disguised resistance to change, coupled with a degree of corporate arrogance;

- Some (in an organisation which is being exhorted to learn from superior experiences elsewhere) may convince themselves that the people working in their business have different motivational patterns. They may even want to suggest that their people are 'unique'.

- It had been claimed that Tesco can simply tell its stores what to do (for example, "sell beans at 40p a can"), whereas the NHS can't do the same with its Trusts. In practice this supposed contrast is a drastic over-simplification of a complicated reality. True, Tesco's head office function autocratically. If you need evidence for this, you should consult *Bringing Policies to Life: The Vital Role of Front Line Managers in People Management* by Sue Hutchinson and John Purcell (CIPD, 2003, p. 19), where the point is made that "Tesco is a highly centralised organisation with standardised policies, procedures and processes, and each store is governed by the company routine handbook which provides detailed information on how every task is to be performed". On the other hand, Hutchinson and Purcell also explore the considerable amount of discretion exercised by the better first-line managers in Tesco. In the NHS, too, the amount of central control is enormous – probably much too dominating to be effective, especially when it is articulated through a mass of procedural rules and a multiplicity of performance targets.

The view of the examiners is that the possibility of inter-sector transfer should be taken as very high until evidence is produced to the contrary. This contrasts with the view implicitly expressed by some others, namely, that the possibility of inter-sector transfer is low, until evidence is produced to the contrary. It depends whether you think that an accused person is innocent until proven guilty, or guilty until proven innocent.

Question 10

There were two parts to this question, with up to ten marks for each. In each case, credit of up to four marks per sub-question were available for the inclusion of examples of organisations that could (convincingly) be described as 'learning cultures', or for references to relevant research or literature sources about the nature of a 'learning culture'.

Conclusion

I am sorry that we could not justify a 100% pass rate for this final 'Managing People' cohort, but I am equally sorry that some individuals continue to enter the examination whilst being totally unprepared.

'Managing People' has performed a useful contribution by heralding the arrival of its successor, 'Managing and Leading People' which not only has a much stronger emphasis on leadership, as its title suggest, but which also focuses on High Performance Working (HPW) and the contribution of people to creating an HPW culture.

Ted Johns
Examiner