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Managing Up: Relationship Building Between Middle Management and Top Management

Michael J. Austin, PhD

Middle management personnel in human service agencies frequently complain about the difficulties encountered in working with their bosses. These challenges are usually identified in workshops or training sessions when middle managers feel free enough to share and open enough to learn that others may be experiencing similar frustrations. Agency executives or top managers also experience difficulties in relating effectively to their middle-management staff. Some top managers feel threatened by their talented middle managers and sometimes fear that they are in competition with one another for the top job in the organization. In other cases, gender differences may be the major theme whereby male executives are threatened by assertive female program managers or female executives are threatened by assertive male program managers. Whatever the causes, more light needs to be shed on the process of relationship building between middle managers and top managers. This analysis includes the concept of "managing up," highlights from relevant management, and strategies for building and maintaining effective managerial relationships.

The environmental changes inside and outside human service organizations over the past decade have created new pressures on management personnel (Austin, 1984). Organizational survival has been a dominant theme and renewed attention to organizational cultures has been one of the by-products of reorganized agencies. Some organizations have experienced significant retrenchment while others have grown rapidly. The changes in funding patterns

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along with the pressures for accountability and the introduction of computer-based management information systems have created considerable stress on managerial relationships.

The relationship between top management and middle management has suffered greatly under the strains of guiding human service organizations through turbulent times. The most obvious strain results from the fact that as organizations grew during the 1960s and 1970s, the personnel and internal management problems could be "papered over" with new funding for program expansion. Problem employees and weak operation systems could be ignored or transferred to new programs in a period of growth. With the advent of cutbacks and reorganization of the 1980s, these old problems required attention by both top and middle management. Agency personnel were asked to do more with less, resulting in more strain on management. Programs and agencies were being merged. Old staff were leaving through the agency's front door as new staff were entering through the back door. New lay leaders were appearing on agency boards and county commissions demanding more attention to the "bottom line." The missions of the agencies were changing and strategic planning was the new route to survival. While these changes added new demands and strains to managerial relationships, agency personnel, "whip-lashed" by change, were calling for increased efforts to humanize the workplace. Managers were confronted with the tension of attending to the culture of the organization at the same time that changing community needs required attention. All of these factors put a strain on excellent relations between top management and middle management and forced major disruptions in those organizations where the relationships were not strong. Middle managers were preoccupied with their own program responsibilities, ignoring the need for teamwork with colleagues and top management. Top management was consumed with both organizational survival and program expansion under the intense scrutiny of "bottom line" board members and funding sources. In this context, the one aspect of relationship building between top management and middle-management that merits analysis is the process of managing up.

MANAGING UP

Most of the literature on supervisory management in the human services (Kadushin, 1985; Middleman & Rhodes, 1985; Austin, 1981) tends to emphasize the managing of several staff members or

managing down. Very little attention has been given to managing up. The closest activity to managing up is the process of advocating for staff which derives its momentum from the process of managing down. The concept of managing up is based on the premise that helping your boss or director do his or her job is one method for gaining help in carrying out the middle-management job.

When middle managers first consider the concept of managing up, there is a tendency to resist it by saying, "Why should I be doing part of my boss's job? If they want to pay me as much as my boss, I'll consider it." While this may be a normal reaction, it tends to overlook the considerable interdependency of managerial work existing between top management and middle management. The sharing of work is an essential ingredient of successful agency management. However, in defense of the middle manager, it is clear that if the top manager's work performance is deteriorating, there is a legitimate concern about the cost of supporting a weak or incompetent director. The middle manager may even be doing the agency a disservice to the extent that the executive director's incompetence is obscured.

For the purpose of this analysis, "managing up" is defined in terms of the following components:

1. Advocating for the needs of subordinates in relationship to career development, meritorious performance, environmental needs such as space to work, and social needs in terms of work climate.
2. Influencing agency policy by proposing changes in the way in which the organization functions (e.g., travel policies, intake policies, personnel policies, etc.).
3. Influencing agency program development by proposing new program directions and identifying implementation strategies.
4. Influencing agency leadership and providing constructive feedback by analyzing:
 - a. the organizational climate with respect to improving inter-unit communications and team-building;
 - b. the impact of the executive's management style and actions on staff;
 - c. the need for recognition of outstanding staff work;
 - d. the changing nature of work life in order to foster maximum creativity and participation.

5. Enhancing top management's capacity to receive and utilize input from middle managers who seek to manage up and middle managers' capacity to view the managing up process as enhancing their career development (e.g., working to improve relationships rather than simply seeking other employment).

These five components of managing up are based on the assumption that "helping the boss to do good" is a shared responsibility between the middle manager and the top manager. While the relationship between top management and middle management includes a wide range of issues, this paper focuses primarily on the process of managing up.

Some may argue that this working definition of managing up is nothing new. Effective middle managers and top managers engage in relationship building processes which enhance advocating for subordinates, new policies, and/or new programs. The argument suggested in this analysis is that during times of significant change inside and outside human service organizations, it is less likely that the relationship building and maintenance process will sufficiently address the fourth and fifth components of the working definition of managing up—namely, influencing agency leadership through constructive feedback and the capacity to receive and utilize such feedback. It is this perspective which leads to a closer assessment of the assumptions underlying the process of managing up.

Managing up is based on the assumption that middle managers continually seek to understand the cross pressures and role strains experienced by top managers. This may be an unrealistic expectation for someone new to the middle management role. However, managing up is based on a set of important perceptions of the top manager, namely that the agency director is a human being who makes mistakes like all of us, who may have significant limitations as well as strengths, who has a managerial style which needs to be accurately assessed by middle managers, who needs to be recognized and appreciated as much as anyone else in the organization, and who needs regular feedback (positive and negative) from his or her middle managers.

Realistic perceptions of the top manager need to be balanced with realistic recognition of some of the blinders worn by middle managers. Middle managers need to guard against viewing the agency director as a source of paternal or maternal approval or seeing hostility among middle managers as a form of sibling rivalry for recog-

dition by top management. In a similar manner, it is important to assess to what extent middle managers deny the need for assistance from top managers or the extent to which executive directors can serve as mentors for middle managers. These issues can provide a base for assessing the middle manager's expectations about the relationship with top management. The following are a few examples of the managing up process:

1. By helping the boss recognize that I'm a good professional, I gain the necessary freedom to do my job and the boss can be assured that my responsibilities will be addressed.
2. My boss can be very compulsive by dropping into my office many times in one day. So I help him to see that he is keeping me from doing my job by using humor or telling him with a big smile to get out of my office.
3. My boss presents himself in such a way that one is not always sure about what he is thinking. So I accommodate to his style by being more assertive and nurturing in order to help him be more expressive.
4. I've spent the past two years promoting the idea that our organization needs an in-house staff development program by soliciting the ideas of others and reminding my boss of the importance of orienting, updating, and upgrading staff.
5. When my salary as a female senior manager lagged significantly behind my male counterparts, it was necessary for me to advocate for myself and educate my boss. This was a scary but necessary component of our managerial relationship.
6. While I have a difficult time saying "no" to anyone on my staff, it is even more difficult for me to say "no" to my boss. And yet, if I don't set realistic limits for my broad area of responsibility, who will? As I set limits, my boss gains greater understanding of my strengths and areas for improvement.

In contrast to middle managers, top managers have their own worries and dilemmas related to receiving input from subordinates who seek to manage up. Prior experiences in receiving input from subordinates clearly affect one's receptivity to feedback. If the experiences have been more positive than negative, then the managing up process might be well received. However, if the superior has been "burned" in the past, is currently feeling vulnerable, or is unwilling to address his or her "blind spots," the process will prob-

ably not be well received. Some top managers may already feel sufficiently receptive to input from staff and lay leaders based on clear and established norms related to receiving feedback and engaging in self-disclosure. By contrast, other top managers may experience considerable isolation and loneliness which can serve as obstacles to being receptive to the process of managing up. Such experiences may also relate to the size of the organization whereby top managers in small organizations feel overloaded by the range of issues needing attention or those in large organizations confronted by very complex issues. Organizational size may be a significant factor influencing the process of managing up.

It is also important to recognize individual differences as the top manager seeks to answer such questions as:

1. Who can I take feedback from?
2. Whose feedback do I truly value over time?
3. Which subordinates need more "strokes" in order to create a comfortable climate for managing up?
4. Which subordinates bring out the worst in me?
5. How does my assessment of a subordinate's capabilities affect my ability to receive input from the managing up process?
6. How threatened do I feel by some of my middle managers?
7. How much time do I want to invest in receiving input from the managing up process?

These are important questions for the top manager who seeks to be receptive and supportive of the subordinate who attempts to manage up.

Each side of the managerial relationship brings a personal history to the work site. Understanding the history of the top manager is as important as understanding the history of the middle manager. Top management may expect middle managers to act and respond in a certain manner based upon the top manager's prior experience (e.g., ability to tolerate ambiguity or delayed gratification, ability to adapt to change, or the ability to put others at ease). Similarly, middle managers bring their own personal history to the work site where they may expect top management to remember important details or to engage in open disagreements without jeopardizing the working relationship. Personal history is also affected by gender differences. To what extent does the entry of women into the managerial domain affect interpersonal communications and relationship

building? How does sex role socialization during childhood affect the way in which female and male managers experience intimidation by one another? These difficult questions may require years of exploration to arrive at answers which help to clarify the working relationships among managers. However, the limited literature cited in the next section can help shape the direction of this exploration.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE LITERATURE

The highlights from the literature were selected on the basis of their contribution to informing the managing up process. The selected concepts either help to explain barriers to the process or identify facilitators to the process.

Most of the literature relevant to managerial relationship building can be found in the management and behavioral sciences. The four key concepts selected for assessment are power sharing, intimidation rituals, shared madness, and communication styles. The concepts of intimidation rituals and shared madness refer to barriers while power sharing and communication styles refer to facilitators. The selective citations from the literature reflect an effort to illustrate the richness of the four concepts in increasing our understanding of managerial relationship building. It is assumed that competent managers at any level of the organization will recognize the uses and misuses of the four concepts.

Power Sharing

Kaplan, Drath, and Kofodimos (1984) have noted that the power of top management can block or restrict the upward flow of criticism. They noted that the top executive's demeanor or bearing can impede feedback. Such a demeanor may include fostering a personal aura of power, monopolizing conversation, using fear tactics, and/or operating with an abrasive style. They also observed that the top executive's impact on people or the degree to which he or she personifies the organization can block feedback. This dynamic can be seen in the way the top executive may engage in distancing relationships or the way in which middle managers only tell the top executive what he or she wants to hear. In a similar fashion, the top executive may participate in structuring the organization in such a way as to guarantee his or her own isolation. Pyramid structures

tend to place those at the top in positions whereby they are in contact with fewer and fewer people. While the isolation may or may not be structural, it is also possible to insulate oneself whereby others, especially middle managers, conspire to protect the top executive from everyday organizational demands.

In order to lift the restrictions and impediments to receiving feedback and criticism, Kaplan et al. (1984) identified action steps for executives interested in power sharing and open communications. The steps are grouped into three categories, namely what the organization can do, what middle managers can do, and what the executive can do. First of all, organizations can de-emphasize power differences by making executive offices less flashy and less isolated from others in order to increase accessibility. Organizations can also mandate the application of performance appraisals to all levels of the organization, including the executive. Involving board members in assessing one or more units of the organization on an annual basis is another method of demonstrating the agency's commitment to self-assessment. Secondly, middle managers can also play a significant role in establishing methods for generating constructive feedback to executives. For example, the use of outside consultants may be helpful in giving sensitive feedback to executives. Thirdly, executives can do a great deal to foster feedback by rewarding middle managers who speak out and reflect an attitude of openness. The key ingredient appears to be the executive's awareness of the restrictions on criticism inherent in exercising power. If there is awareness, executives can demonstrate through word and action that they are really interested in feedback and thereby actively seek it out.

Intimidation Rituals

The second major organizing concept involves intimidation rituals. O'Day (1974) identified four major phases of intimidation which have been adapted to reflect how executives might deal with reform-minded middle managers. Intimidation rituals are used to control others while carefully seeking to manage an image of reasonableness. Intimidation rituals are usually used to respond to a perceived threat, such as accusations about inadequate actions followed by suggested corrections, a moral challenge revealing the executive's strength or weakness of commitment to the organization, or a challenge to the ability of the executive to maintain order

in the organization. The four major phases of intimidation are: (1) nullification, (2) isolation, (3) defamation, and (4) expulsion. The first two phases are indirect and the last two are direct.

Nullification is basically a discounting strategy used to convince subordinates that their ideas are unrealistic and misguided. The explicit message is "you don't know what you're talking about but we'll look into the matter." The process involves blocking the ideas of middle managers by reaffirming the collective wisdom of the organization and thereby avoiding personal responsibility. As O'Day (1974) notes:

Repeated exposure to the nullification ritual (the "beating your head against the wall" phenomenon) is expected to convince any sane organizational member that a reformist voice or presence is unwelcome. He/she is expected to take the hint and stop pestering superiors with misguided opinions. (p. 376)

The second phase of indirect intimidation is isolation. This involves being separated out from others in order to reduce the impact on the organization and make it difficult for the subordinate to mobilize support. This action is taken under the guise of protecting the organization and usually involves a show of force from the top. The major action steps include closing off communication links, restricting freedom of movement, and reducing the allocations of organizational resources. If these steps do not work, middle managers can be transferred to less visible positions. Another strategy involves a systematic unresponsiveness to the subordinate's criticism or suggestions. As O'Day (1974) notes:

This lack of response is meant to convince the reformer of the invalidity of his/her position, but if he/she presses his/her right to be heard, it may be used to create a feeling of such impotence that the reformer overreacts in order to elicit a response from his/her superiors. This overreaction may then be used to demonstrate the reformer's psychological imperfections. (p. 376)

The third major phase of intimidation involves defamation by impugning the subordinate's character and motives. Distorted events or fabricated instances of misconduct can be used to intimidate the subordinate and others in the organization. This direct form of intimidation seeks to blackmail the subordinate by suggesting

questionable motives, underlying psychopathology, and/or gross incompetence. The goal is to focus attention away from the executive and onto the subordinate by casting doubt on motives, intentions, and personality. As O'Day (1974) notes:

The superiors hope that by threatening to destroy the reformer's reputation and his/her character, he/she will retreat into silence and passivity or leave the organization for greener pastures; if however, the reformer continues his/her efforts, superiors have laid the groundwork for expulsion. (p. 378)

The fourth and final phase of intimidation is expulsion. This phase is used when nullification, isolation, and defamation have not been successful strategies in forcing voluntary withdrawal from the organization. An expulsion or official dismissal serves as a warning to others in the organization. Expulsion is a verdict of unfitness and seeks to support the contention that the subordinate is immoral or irrational. There is a keen interest in avoiding formal dismissal proceedings in order to avoid the implication that the organization has failed and that top management was unable to maintain order.

While the discussion has focused on the intimidation process used by top management, it should also be noted that these same phases of intimidation can be used by middle managers in dealing with subordinates. The primary factor seems to be the ability to exercise or exert power over others. Up to this point, the issues of power sharing and intimidation appear to be important themes in seeking an understanding of the relationship between middle management and top management. The next two concepts relate to shared madness and communication styles.

Shared Madness

Kets de Vries (1979) studied emotionally charged superior-subordinate relationships among top managers and noted the potential for shared madness to emerge and impair the ability of both managers to see things realistically. The shared madness resulted from "closed communities" whereby both managers lose touch with the reality of the organization's environment, to the detriment of all members of the organization.

The process of shared madness involves "contagious irrational behavior patterns" which unfold in a number of ways. Here are some of the steps:

1. The top manager is under considerable strain and a preoccupation with power and control leads to gradual loss of ability to view accurately the organization's reality.
2. Middle managers are often dependent upon the top manager for support and the interdependence between them increases significantly during times of stress.
3. Some event triggers the top executive who becomes preoccupied with some delusory ideas (not always conscious) such as the fear that subordinates are taking advantage of him or her.
4. The top executive develops a certain amount of hostility but feels guilty as a result of the attachments displayed by middle managers which fulfill the executive's dependency needs.
5. The top executive is extremely reluctant to give up his/her relationships with middle managers, sometimes the only close relationships.
6. In order to defend against the emerging hostility toward middle managers, the executive begins to attribute the hostility to people other than immediate subordinates.
7. The top executive needs the support of middle managers and induces them to share his/her delusory ideas and actions.
8. If the middle manager resists, the top executive becomes overly hostile and includes the middle manager in "the other camp."
9. The middle manager's anxiety rises over choosing between the wrath of the top executive and the loss of reality.
10. Frequently middle managers solve this double-bind situation by giving into the ultimatum from the top executive in order to satisfy their own dependency needs and to deflect the hostility of the top executive. The cycle of the contagious irrational behavior pattern is now complete and shared madness results.

According to Kets de Vries (1979), shared madness can be prevented by recognizing individual and organizational symptoms. First, it is important to look for certain personality characteristics. For example, executives who possess considerable personal charm and seductiveness may be covering up attitudes of conceit, arrogance, and self-righteousness. Such managers can be prone to shared madness and may find it difficult to alter their ideas and then actions. Second, the organization's culture and operating proce-

dures may contain the seeds for shared madness. For example, unusual selection and promotion procedures which reflect the top executive's idiosyncrasies, unsystematic decision-making, erratic information systems, excessive control, high turnover of managers, frequently changed organizational goals, and extreme secrecy are all danger signs in the organization's culture.

Kets de Vries (1979) identifies four steps for taking corrective action. First, it is important to establish trusting relationships in order to create the climate where the top executive can entertain the possibility that his/her assumptions about the organizational environment are invalid. Second, it is necessary to monitor one's own susceptibilities to shared madness by periodically taking a critical look at one's own values, actions, and interpersonal relationships with the assistance of someone outside the organization. Third, it is possible to solicit help from interested parties outside the organization who have a vested interest in the organization (e.g., funding sources, board of directors, consumers, etc.) and possess a countervailing source of power. And fourth, executives can modify the work climate and structure by supporting middle managers who display individual responsibility and independence of mind. Contagious irrational behaviors are usually blocked in an organizational climate which fosters mutual collaboration, delegation, open conflict resolution, and respect for individuality.

Communication Styles

The dynamics of shared madness can also be prevented by paying attention to the communication process between the top executive and middle managers. Gabarro and Kotter (1980) suggest that the communication process needs to be managed. They observe that the executive-subordinate relationship can be misunderstood if the mutual dependence between two fallible human beings is not recognized. Subordinates frequently fail to see how the executive needs help and cooperation in order to do his/her job effectively. Acquiring a thorough understanding of each other's strengths, weaknesses, work styles, and needs can contribute to the development and management of a healthy working relationship. A thorough understanding includes seeking to clarify goals and objectives (i.e., not making assumptions about them), gaining an understanding of the cross-pressures being experienced by both parties in order to handle multiple agendas, and acquiring sensitivity to each other's

work styles (e.g., organized and formal versus informal and intuitive).

Gabarro and Kotter suggest that understanding self is a key ingredient in fostering effective managerial relationships. From the middle manager's perspective, there are several critical questions which needed to be addressed periodically:

1. What is it about your personality and work style (in addition to strengths and areas for improvement) which facilitates and impedes working with the executive?
2. What is your predisposition toward your own dependence upon the executive such as subordinating feelings (anger and frustration) or resenting the executive's authority?
3. To what extent are you a "counterdependent" middle manager who has difficulty with an authoritarian or directive executive who subtly becomes the enemy, senses your latent hostility, begins to lose trust in your judgment, and behaves less openly?
4. To what extent are you an "overdependent" manager who swallows anger, avoids disagreements, compliantly denies anger, and sees the executive as the "all wise parent who should know best"?

Clearly both the "counterdependent" and the "overdependent" middle manager hold unrealistic views of the executive. However, middle managers may reflect aspects of both as they experience executives whose own time pressures and concerns are at odds with the middle manager's needs.

Gabarro and Kotter identified two key communication issues as they sought to clarify the ingredients of compatible work styles. They focused on the ability of the middle manager to adjust to the executive's work styles by assessing whether or not the boss is a reader or a listener. Readers prefer to review written information and reports in advance of discussions in order to study and prepare. Listeners prefer to talk about ideas first and then review them again in written form. Similarly, middle managers need to assess whether or not they are working for a high involvement executive or a delegating executive. High involvement executives like to "touch base" with middle managers on an ad hoc basis in order to be involved in decisions or problems as they arise. Delegating execu-

tives do not want to be involved and expect middle managers to come to them with problems and inform them of important changes.

While the emphasis has been on the work style of the executive, the middle manager also needs to assess his/her own work style in terms of reading/listening and involving/delegating. Since it takes "two to tango," an assessment of the styles of both the executive and the middle manager provide a foundation for seeking accommodation and adjustments needed to build and maintain an effective managerial relationship.

Based on the assessments related to reading and listening as well as involving and delegating, the middle manager can increase effective communications by checking expectations and information flow. Middle managers can get into trouble quickly if they assume that their executives' expectations are clear or that the middle managers' expectations are clear to the executives. Middle managers need to continually clarify with the executive the types of problems about which the executive expects to be informed and when information sharing should take place. By initiating an ongoing series of informal discussions, the middle manager can check specific expectations about when projects are to be completed as well as the nature of interim reports. At the same time, middle managers can check the flow of information to the executive. It is common for the executive to need more information than the middle manager would naturally supply or for the middle manager to assume that the executive knows more than may be the case. Regular informal discussions provide the middle manager with an opportunity to display dependability and honesty while seeking to make the best use of the executive's time and not reducing the middle manager's credibility by raising relatively trivial issues.

STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING AND MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

In the previous section, the four concepts of power sharing, intimidation rituals, shared madness, and communication styles were selected to provide perspectives on managing up. By way of conclusion, there are at least three strategies which could serve as tools for guiding the process of managing up: (1) redefining the job description; (2) engaging in ongoing self-assessment; and (3) analyzing and changing organizations. These three strategies are based on the premise that managing up is enhanced when job responsibilities

are clearly articulated, that intimidation and shared madness are reduced when there is an active process of self-assessment, and that effective oversharing and communications are increased when there is an ongoing process of organizational analysis and change.

The updating of managerial job descriptions is an essential strategy in building and maintaining effective managerial relations. Current and relevant job descriptions include the specification of major responsibility areas, along with the specification of task statements representing major action sequences under each responsibility area (Austin, 1981). Most managerial job descriptions include responsibility areas related to planning, budgeting, program development, program coordination, and staff supervision. However, rarely do we include the responsibility area of managing up. It is estimated that an effective relationship between top management and middle management requires the minimum investment of 10% to 20% of the middle manager's total job responsibility in the area of managing up. For some, this may appear to be too high an investment. If the function of managing up is institutionalized into the culture of the organization, the responsibility for managing up needs to be reflected in managerial job descriptions. Once the function is in the job description, it can be assessed annually by both parties as one of many topics in the annual performance evaluation conference.

The second strategy for managing up involves regular managerial self-assessment. The process of self-assessment needed to improve managerial relationships has its parallel in the practitioner-client relationship. Practitioners engage in ongoing self-assessment related to the effectiveness of their helping relationship. Managers also need to devote time to assessing their managerial relationships. In so doing, it should be possible to enhance the process of managing up by improving communications, increasing power sharing, reducing intimidation, and neutralizing shared madness.

If executives and middle managers are committed to the principles of organizational excellence related to promoting creativity and leadership, identifying productivity through people, and promoting the agency's central values and philosophy (Peters & Waterman, 1983), then periodic self-assessment becomes essential. Similarly, if there is a mutual desire to prevent the emergence of intimidation rituals and shared madness, then self-assessment is critical. The self-assessment process can take place at the level of the individual, the group, and/or the organization in terms of career development.

Self-assessment on an individual basis can take the form of self-

talk in which the manager cognitively processes his/her reactions and impressions of the work situation. Tools to facilitate this process have been developed by Gendlin (1981) as part of a self-help strategy to assist individuals with the activity of focusing. Gendlin's framework includes six steps: (1) clearing a space; (2) identifying a felt sense about a worry or concern; (3) finding a label for that concern; (4) resonating about the appropriateness of the label; (5) asking questions about the nature of the concern; and (6) being open enough to develop answers to those questions.

Self-assessment on a group basis can be facilitated by joining a professional support group composed of other managers in similar or different organizational settings. Such groups can be valuable in gaining a perspective on one's own work as well as a comparative view of others in similar and/or different situations.

Career development is the third approach to self-assessment and is based on active participation in structured learning experiences (e.g., workshops, conferences, courses, etc.). For experienced managers, this form of self-assessment involves planning and risk-taking. The planning relates to the recognition that upgrading one's skills and knowledge requires the recognition of the value of such activities and the searching out of relevant conferences, workshops, or university continuing education opportunities. The risk-taking relates to actually attending structured learning programs (e.g., not avoiding them due to the press of work) and actively participating in such programs by sharing one's own trials and tribulations in carrying out managerial work. The rewards for planning and risk-taking usually far outweigh the lost work time and fears of self-disclosure.

The third and final strategy for managing up relates to the ongoing process of analyzing the structure and culture of the organization and using the tools of planned change. The analysis phase is greatly facilitated by engaging in a planful program of reading about leadership (Bennis & Namus, 1985) and organizational assessment (Morgan, 1986). Over the past decade there has been a flood of literature on Japanese management techniques, quality circles, organizational excellence, entrepreneurship, organizational culture, organizational change agents, and autobiographies by successful managers. The increased volume of books and articles on managerial work provides a foundation for all managers to read about other managers and organizations and thereby compare organizational experiences and managerial methods with their own organizations.

While the technology of organization change is described in an ever-expanding literature, Resnick and Patti (1980) have identified the critical phases of planned change for those seeking change inside human service organizations. Similarly, Holloway and Brager (1985) have identified a series of political strategies useful in promoting organizational change. Since all managers are, by definition, students of organizational life and managerial practices, it seems essential that lifelong learning related to analysis and action serves as the foundation for effectively managing up.

In summary, this analysis represents a beginning attempt to define managing up within the context of organizational excellence. Key organizing concepts related to power sharing, intimidation rituals, shared madness, and communication styles highlight some of the knowledge relevant to managing up. Three strategies for engaging in the practice of managing up were identified. These included redesigning job descriptions, routinely engaging in self-assessment, and maintaining an ongoing agenda of organizational analysis and change. The "bottom line" for the managing up process can be captured in a simple question, "How many times over the past year did you recognize and compliment your superior on a job well done?"

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