TEST 3 PAPER 1: READING Part 2 (questions 9-15)

Part 2

You are going to read an article about what makes a good manager. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A-H** the one which fits each gap (**9-15**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Being a Good Manager

Being a good manager of people requires excellent communication and interpersonal skills. All people are different and in a working environment there will always be a great mix of personalities and skills. **[9]** Like with everything in life though, experience brings knowledge and in my many years as both an employee and a manager in various charity organisations I have come to recognise the qualities and skills which make an efficient manager.

I've worked with lots of different people in the past and I think I have experienced all sorts of different types of manager. There are those who are very controlling and always telling you what to do while at the other extreme there are others who are nowhere to be seen. **[10]** I think it's important to let people work on their own and not interfere too much; ideally you want to promote assertiveness and self-confidence in your workers'and if you are always watching over them and checking up on them they will not develop these skills. At the same time it is not helpful to leave your workers completely alone. The manager is there to oversee things and make sure everything runs smoothly, if employees have a problem or need help they should always be able to ask for it, and the manager should be able to provide it. A line manager who is not available to staff when they need them is of no use at all.

To be an effective manager I think it is important to be optimistic and able to instil a positive attitude in the workforce; the worst kind of manager is one who allows or even encourages a bad feeling in the workplace. **[11]** As a result we all lacked confidence in the whole organisation and the office became a very negative environment to work in. It's a manager's responsibility to keep workers spirits high and create a pleasant atmosphere. Having a naturally optimistic and friendly personality helps.

The best types of managers are those who can accept the responsibility they have been given. If something goes wrong a good manager will take the blame; they are responsible for the team and if the team, or any individual within it, is not performing well then it is ultimately the manager's fault. **[12]** They must also then do all they can to solve any unsatisfactory situations and deal with dissatisfaction from higher up in the organisation on the team's behalf.

One thing which managers often do not do enough is give praise. Praise is a very effective management tool and should be exploited as much as possible. **[13]** Managers who give a lot of praise are also in a much better situation to criticise when work is not of a satisfactory standard. It is important that employees receive positive as well as negative feedback on their performance; the more feedback there is the more aware workers will be of what is expected of them and positive feedback helps increase motivation. Connected to this last point is the ability to judge on merit. Managers must be able to separate their personal feelings for individuals from their assessment of their work. It is really important to see team members' actions objectively. Any feelings of favouritism or discrimination can be very harmful to the team.

Managers need to be able to recognise the strengths and weaknesses of their employees and use them appropriately. This includes recognising their own strengths and weaknesses. ⟨14⟩ Managers need to be flexible in their approach to assigning work so that tasks are assigned to those best suited to doing them. I have worked for an organisation where work was given to individuals based on the time of the day they were available to work rather than their personal expertise; this not only resulted in the jobs not being done well, and therefore reduced efficiency, but also great dissatisfaction among workers and clients. For example, someone with excellent computer skills but poor public speaking skills should not be asked to go into schools and universities to give presentations. At the same time it is essential to share knowledge and experience so that the team as a whole develop existing skills and individuals learn new ones. ⟨15⟩ As

the manager learns new skills and gains useful information it is important that they share it with the team. The manager should not be doing tasks which could be done equally well by someone less qualified than themselves. Where possible managers should delegate and occupy themselves with higher level activities. However, it is also important that in times of crisis or when the team is exceptionally busy, the manager should not feel themselves too important to join in and do whatever job is necessary to help the situation.

Finally, empathy is an enormously important quality when working as a manager of people. The basic rule of 'treat others as you would expect others to treat you' is fundamental. It's important to try to put yourself in your colleagues' situation and try and appreciate how they are feeling and then act accordingly.

A	This includes the manager passing on what they know.	**E**	In the past I have worked in an office where my line manager was constantly complaining about and criticising the directors of the company.
B	They should never promise anything that is not possible as this will lead to disappointment and undermine confidence in the company.	**F**	Managers should look for examples of good work and congratulate workers accordingly.
C	Now that I work as a manager myself I try to be neither too controlling nor too distant.	**G**	Managers choose and develop their team and so must accept respon-sibility for the bad as well as the good results of their efforts.
D	Efficiently managing a team of people is no easy task and there will be many challenging moments.	**H**	An efficient team makes the most of all the skills different individuals bring to it.