

## **Examples of the kinds of people who benefit from the Skills with People course**

These examples may help you identify a training need of your own, or they may remind you of someone else who might benefit:-

### **1. Successful manager with no specific training need other than a wish to understand better her effect on others and sharpen up her skills in preparation for a more challenging role**

Manager on the fast track - loved developing her skills and hungry for feedback. She was keen to know how she came across and also to hone up her emotional intelligence in preparation for a new and more challenging role. She wanted to know what it felt like to be managed by her, to negotiate with her, to criticise her, to disagree with her, to be in meetings run by her. On the course she discovered that although she had no overriding specific management training need her ability to handle difficult situations could be significantly enhanced by sharpening up her assertiveness and showing more empathy.

### **2. Successful by his own efforts but not delegating or developing others**

Young managing director, better at solving problems than anyone else in his team, but the more he solved the longer was the queue at his door - people were too dependent on him. He needed to stop being a compulsive problem-solver and start delegating and coaching. He had to shift the focus of his attention from solving it himself to finding out what was stopping them solve it. His management training need was to learn an entirely different way of listening.

### **3. Technically very sound but lacking persuasive skills**

Chief engineer on a large site. Had difficulty winning directors' support for his ideas - didn't know how to persuade others without getting into arguments. The more he argued the less receptive they became. He had to learn to stop arguing when people resisted, listen patiently, appreciate what was bothering them, reassure them, and not press his case until he had opened their minds - in other words, use more empathy. His management training need was to learn to use more emotional intelligence.

### **4. Flying high but not creating rapport and unintentionally creating a tense atmosphere in her team**

Senior executive, earmarked for the board, task oriented, analytical, always logical - secretly sensitive to atmosphere but uncomfortable when feelings were openly displayed. She knew she wasn't getting the best out of her team and that some of them were unhappy, but she didn't know how to tackle it. They needed her to tell them when she felt good or bad about their performance instead of leaving them guessing, and to show more interest in their feelings instead of seeming not to care. Her main management training need was to develop her emotional intelligence.

### **5. A very positive attitude masquerading as a negative one**

Rather gruff engineer who loved his job. He enjoyed helping people who came to him with requests for help - though he rarely showed it. Instead he would frown as he thought aloud about the difficulties he was going to have to overcome in order to solve the problem. To most people this gave the totally false signal that he was unwilling or unable to help. They needed to hear him say he was keen to help and confident he could deal with the request. His management training need was to learn how to create much better mutual understanding, to become more emotionally intelligent.

### **6. Career going well in spite of not being very assertive**

Manager in R & D, highly regarded, soon to be promoted, wanted to brush up his skills. Didn't like having to be firm with or critical of people. He was so aware of the risk of undermining them that he sometimes failed to do justice to the issue he wanted to raise. He needed to learn how to be firm but fair, strong on the issue without attacking or undermining the person. His management training need was to learn to be assertive without being aggressive.

### **7. Forceful communicator who created friction**

Marketing director aiming to bring about a change of outlook in the company. She would argue her case and then get impatient if people didn't see reason. The way she argued made them feel attacked. Her management training need was to learn to stop saying "Yes, but" and listen with empathy to their concerns - in other words, change her approach from an adversarial one to a more emotionally intelligent one leading to mutual respect and understanding.

### **8. Well intentioned manager who was demoralising his team**

Sales manager with reputation for inflexibility and intolerance - having difficulty retaining members of his team. He was modelling himself on the authoritarian style of his first manager as a young man. His management training need was to learn to listen with an open mind, criticise constructively and coach staff when they needed help or raised concerns or objections.

### **9. Respected specialist who was too quiet in meetings**

Accountant who was good at her job but lacked confidence at meetings - afraid people would be offended if she expressed her feelings and concerns. Her management training need was to learn how to talk frankly in meetings without being aggressive - in other words, how to be assertive.

### **10. Very logical person who didn't create enough rapport**

IT manager, clever but "a bit of a cold fish". When approached with a request he would say little and ask searching questions. It shocked him to find that he made people wary because he seemed to be contemptuous. His management training need was to learn how to be more supportive and to show more understanding of people's feelings - to be more emotionally intelligent.

### **11. Lots of energy and ideas but little attention for his clients**

Capable accountant with plenty of energy and ideas, talked a great deal but didn't listen. He was losing clients because they had no confidence he appreciated their needs. He needed to learn to slow down, lay his own thoughts aside, and listen.

### **12. Enormous enthusiasm but little sensitivity**

Extremely task oriented manager with a reputation for being "on a short fuse". When thwarted she would brush people aside in an apparently arrogant manner. So serious were the complaints about her that her job was in jeopardy. Her management training need was to learn how to let off steam without being aggressive, and how to show she was aware of the feelings and needs of others, in other words, show more emotional intelligence.

### **13. Couldn't communicate with non-technical people**

Electronics engineer on an advanced project, enormously enthusiastic about the project, but would get frustrated and be discouraged at meetings with production and marketing colleagues who had difficulty grasping his ideas. They said he was blinding them with science. His management training need was to learn how switch his mind from the detail of his project, tune in to their concerns and talk in their terms.

### **14. Diligent, reliable project leader who hated dealing with difficult or aggressive people**

He often needed cooperation from people in other departments over whom he had no direct authority, who were sometimes were difficult to handle. When his first approach failed he would ask his manager to intervene. His manager was concerned because he needed the project leader to stand on his own two feet and not keep asking for help. The project leader's management training need was to learn how to be more assertive and be getting cooperation from difficult or aggressive people.

### **15. Wanted to allow his people to have their say, but his meetings got out of hand**

In his efforts to avoid acting like an autocrat this manager allowed arguments to develop between members of his department at meetings. His hope was that good sense and reason would prevail in the end. But his people were frustrated at the time being wasted. His management training need was to learn how to keep a tighter hold of the reigns in meetings, how to resolve conflict and disagreement between members, and how to assert his managerial authority when he had to make a decision.