

INTERVIEW WITH JOHAN POOLMAN – DEVELOPER OF THE PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR SUPERVISORS (MINDSET)

1. What motivated you to develop the Practical Management Program for Supervisors? Please give us short background.

In my early career, while working for a large IT company, I had the privilege of attending a number of developmental training courses such as Conflict Resolution and Lateral Thinking. These courses were a complete eye-opener – it made me aware of my own untapped potential, and it made me realize that there are a wealth of techniques and knowledge that I could tap into if I wanted to become a more effective and results driven manager. It was a lifechanging experience.

When I started to build my own companies later in my career, I frequently had to deal with hugely talented engineers that simply could not make the transition from hands-on engineering to managing a team of specialists – they lacked self-confidence as managers, could not connect or relate to their team members, didn't know how to delegate, had no clue what leadership entails, and more.

It's only when I tried to find a suitable training course that could jumpstart these new managers that I discovered that other companies have the same problem: there are plenty of management development programs and training courses for middle and top management available, but nothing that holistically addresses the needs of 1st line managers. It is simply not practical or affordable to send a junior manager on all the training courses that are required to become an effective manager; what do you include or leave out – leadership, emotional intelligence, time management, planning? So I started to work on my own training course – researching the relevant topics, reading hundreds of articles and books, collating information, experimenting with different techniques – until I had what I deemed as the ideal combination of practical, analytical and theoretical content which could be combined into a single, integrated training course.

2. How long did it take you to develop the whole program?

It took more than 8 years of part-time research and experimentation to collate and process the necessary source material, and 2 years of fulltime work to develop and refine the subject matter into practical, step-by-step modules that effectively address the people-skills and managerial competencies of 1st line managers.

3. What makes the Practical Management Program for Supervisors unique when compared to the rest of the programs in the market?

The Practical Management Program is to my knowledge the only supervisory training program that covers all the managerial competencies and peopleskills dimensions necessary to be an effective 1st line manager. It uses emotional intelligence as the foundation and common thread that ties inspirational leadership and effective managerial practices together. It is also the only training course that effectively synthesizes the wealth of theory and techniques into practical, step-by-step instructions that can be summarised in a handy pocket guide and presented in an integrated 4-day training course.

4. Give a brief explanation on each of the areas addressed during the course:

- a. People skills - deals with the self-mastery and interpersonal skills necessary to effectively understand and manage your relationship with others in your team;
- b. Managerial skills - covers the managerial skills necessary to be a results-driven manager, such as time management, delegation and decision making;

- c. Leadership skills - will help the 1st line manager to lead and inspire their teams to operate at peak performance;
- d. Functional skills - deals with the basic managerial functions such as planning, human resources and more.

5. Explain the assessments and the value that they add?

The Practical Management Program for Supervisors is not only about learning new techniques, but also about getting to know yourself better, particularly from a developmental point of view. During the training course, innovative use is made of computerised assessments that cover dimensions as diverse as self-awareness and communication skills to leadership profiles and planning skills. These assessments serve not only as a means to learn more about yourself, but also as a means to track your progress during the course of the training program.

6. Any additional comments that you would like to add?

The Practical Management Program for Supervisors is much more than a crash course in management techniques – it is a life-changing experience that will light the first-time manager' fire and that will help them to unlock and realise their full potential as effective managers.