

# CHAPTER

# 1

## THE FUNDAMENTALS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

Management is the art of getting things done *with* and *through* other people. The bigger our aspirations, the more we need to work with others to achieve them.

But under many traditional management approaches, people are treated more like machine parts than, well, people. And this is no accident—many modern-day management practices have roots in U.S. slavery and worker exploitation.<sup>1</sup> They place profit and a narrow definition of *productivity* above all else—including the well-being and dignity of employees, the greater good of society, and the health of our planet.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic and the rise of Black Lives Matter and other movements for justice, we've seen some long-overdue pushback against this model. More people are reevaluating their priorities. Many are deciding that too much of their time and energy is spent at work.

People are also expecting better from their employers—as they should! Now, more than ever, especially in social justice spaces, people want employers to practice what

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<sup>1</sup> For more on this history, read Caitlin Rosenthal's *Accounting for Slavery: Masters and Management* (Harvard University Press, 2018). A good excerpt is here: [www.bostonreview.net/articles/caitlin-c-rosenthal-accounting-slavery-excerpt](http://www.bostonreview.net/articles/caitlin-c-rosenthal-accounting-slavery-excerpt)

they preach about equity, sustainability, and justice. Staff and managers alike want to be valued as human beings, not treated like cogs in a machine. We want to do purpose-driven work—*without* sacrificing living wages, good benefits, and reasonable hours for the sake of “doing what we love.” We want to build authentic connections with our colleagues. We want managers who believe in us and help us realize our potential.

At The Management Center (TMC), we believe that truly *effective* management means living up to these expectations—and getting important things done. This chapter covers our overall *approach* to management, the *dimensions* and *mindsets* of effective management, and some of the fundamental *tools* we use to practice it.

## OUR CONSPIRE-AND-ALIGN APPROACH TO MANAGEMENT

If managing is about getting things done with and through other people, most traditional approaches are almost all “through” and no “with.” Staff are treated like highly skilled automatons and are rarely consulted for their input.<sup>2</sup> This is often referred to as a *command-and-control* style of management.

The command-and-control approach is too inflexible and impersonal for those of us doing complex, human-centered work on systemic and social change. This kind of work thrives on collaboration, trial and error, and relationship-building—all of which a command-and-control approach stifles.

We take a different approach. We call it *conspire and align*. It means coming together with our team members for a collective purpose and getting on the same page about realizing that purpose. As managers, we view staff as partners—people we exercise power *with*, not over. We’re not drill sergeants barking orders; we’re in a team huddle, whispering plans and working out plays.

We chose the word *conspire* deliberately. For one thing, we believe folks working for justice, equity, and social change should be getting into “good trouble,” as the late U.S. House Representative John Lewis put it. We’re up to something—and that something usually involves trying to topple a status quo that doesn’t serve us.

*Conspire* is also meaningful for another reason. Back in 2007, Jakada participated in a Rockwood Leadership Institute year-long program. In one of its final sessions, then-president Akaya Windwood led the group in a breathing exercise. She said, “This is the meaning of conspire—to breathe together. To be so deep in it with each other that we share the same air. This is the level of closeness—of alignment—that we aspire to as leaders and as movements.”

It’s true; the word *conspire* also comes from the Latin *conspirare*, which means “to breathe together,” and shares a root with the words *inspire* and *aspire*. When we conspire, we *co-inspire* ourselves and our team with a shared, co-created vision of success. When we align, we get in formation—not like battle formations, but the way birds flock,

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<sup>2</sup> It’s worth noting that many managers don’t *intend* to treat people like automatons, but when you manage with too heavy an emphasis on outputs and too little a consciousness of people, that’s what happens.

dancers get in their place, and people assemble at marches and actions.<sup>3</sup> When we conspire and align, everyone understands where we're going *and* our role in getting there.

When we reframe management in this way—and create structures and practices to support it—a new world opens up. We're no longer limited to the brilliance of one person. When a team works well together, its members' combined powers are greater than the sum of their parts. It's still up to us to own our power and responsibility—but it's not up to us to have all the answers.

The *conspire-and-align* approach can be used in both nonhierarchical settings<sup>4</sup> and in places with *positional power*—the kind of power most people think of in the workplace, where an executive director has more power within the organization than a middle manager, who has more power than their direct report. *Conspire and align* is about recognizing power, being honest about it, and exercising it thoughtfully.

Many of you might already take this approach. If you've ever brainstormed a vision of success with your team, sought input before making a decision, or tapped your team's knowledge and expertise to solve a tricky problem, you've conspired and aligned.

## EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE<sup>5</sup>

Author and activist Tema Okun names 15 “White Supremacy Culture Characteristics” that white dominant culture holds up as virtues.<sup>6</sup> Those characteristics are perfectionism, a sense of urgency, defensiveness and/or denial, quantity over quality, worship of the written word,

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<sup>3</sup> And, yes, the way Beyoncé told us to in her 2016 masterpiece and tribute to Black feminism, “Formation.”

<sup>4</sup> At TMC, we believe that whatever their structure, all organizations need mechanisms for accountability, support, defining success, and decision-making (all of which come with effective management). We've seen our tools and advice work in all kinds of hierarchical configurations, including in flat structures.

<sup>5</sup> As the National Education Association points out, “white supremacy culture” isn't just about overt, violent racism like the Klu Klux Klan (KKK); it's a culture that generally perpetuates the social, economic, and political dominance of white people over people of other racial backgrounds. “Characteristics of white supremacy manifest in organizational culture, and are used as norms and standards without being named or chosen by the full group. The characteristics elevate the values, preferences, and experiences of white people above all other racial groups, to the detriment of everybody (including white people). Organizations that are led by people of color or have a majority of people of color can also demonstrate characteristics of “White Supremacy Culture Resources” (National Education Association, 2020). More at: <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/white-supremacy-culture-resources>

<sup>6</sup> See [whitesupremacyculture.info](http://whitesupremacyculture.info) for an updated version of Okun's original 1999 article on the subject.

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the belief in one “right” way, paternalism, either/or binary thinking, power hoarding, fear of open conflict, individualism, progress defined as more, the right to profit, objectivity, and the right to comfort.

Packaged together and left unchecked, these are some of the worst habits of ineffective management and toxic workplaces. They promote a narrow definition of success, keep power in the hands of a few, demand productivity at all costs, and stifle diversity and difference. The antidotes to white supremacy culture are a social justice–oriented management approach, centering equity, inclusion, and belonging.

We want to be clear: effective management isn’t just about saying “no” to everything on Okun’s list and doing the opposite. After all, we *do* feel a sense of urgency about social injustices, and sometimes progress *is* more—white supremacy culture didn’t invent goals, y’all! Effective management isn’t just about being *against* racism and other systems of oppression. It’s about being staunchly *for* racial equity and social justice, which leads us to question the status quo and seek different approaches. Instead of believing in only one “right” way, we work to apply multiple ways of knowing,<sup>7</sup> and draw on the wisdom of marginalized communities—whether they be BIPOC, queer, trans, disabled, immigrant, or many others.

## THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

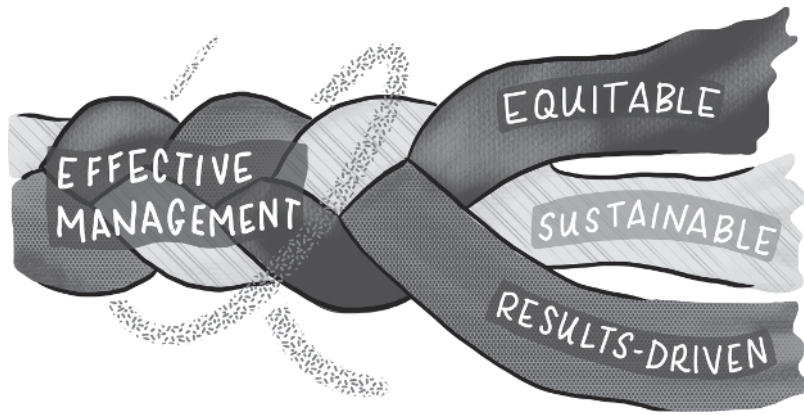
A command-and-control view of management treats people like robots and the natural world like something to be tamed and conquered. It takes a stance of domination, extraction, and exploitation—classic examples of white supremacy culture in action.

*Conspire and align*, on the other hand, approaches management the way we’d ideally tend a garden: by engaging in reciprocal acts of care. By gardens, we’re not talking about manicured green lawns in desert climates and prize-winning roses behind fences. Instead, we’re talking about healthy, sprawling ecosystems that sustain life for generations through thoughtful, active stewardship.

This is why, under the *conspire-and-align* approach, we believe management can only be “effective” if it has three dimensions: *equitable*, *sustainable*, and *results-driven*.

Equity, sustainability, and results are like three strands of a braided rope. The braid weakens if you try to separate the strands. They reinforce each other and depend on each other. And effective managers don’t play favorites—they don’t routinely focus on one dimension at the expense of the others.

<sup>7</sup> Elissa Sloane Perry and Aja Couchois Duncan describe four interdependent ways of knowing: practical, artistic, generalized, and foundational. Practical and generalized ways of knowing tend to dominate in Western culture. Read more at “Multiple Ways of Knowing: Expanding How We Know,” *Nonprofit Quarterly*, 2017, <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/multiple-ways-knowing-expanding-know/>



### ***Equitable***

Ever tried to grow a tomato in a desert? In the same way that specific environments favor some plants while creating barriers for others, some workplaces are easier for some people to succeed in than others. Most people aren't consciously trying to oppress others, but we can't help being steeped in white supremacy and other systems of oppression. Equity is about disrupting these systems and creating new practices so that more people—especially those with marginalized identities—can thrive.

Note that *equity* and *equality* are different. Equality means treating everyone the same—but equal treatment doesn't always lead to equal outcomes. Equity calls for managers to account for unconscious bias and systemic barriers in supporting people to succeed. For example, let's say you work at a majority-white organization. You have a Black staff person who just joined the team and a white staff person who's been on your team for four years. Who might benefit from more of your time, energy, and support in the coming months?<sup>8</sup>

A manager's job is to spot where these different experiences and identities might disproportionately impact people and work to remove barriers and support their staff to succeed.

### ***Sustainable***

Social change work, while often purpose-driven and joyful, can be grueling. In the worst-case scenarios, people start out feeling hopeful and energized, only to burn out and leave their organizations, schools, or even movements. In the introduction to this book, we named some of the downsides that lead to people leaving—lack of resources, long hours, and low salaries.

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<sup>8</sup> Of course, it's usually more complex and nuanced when you layer in other aspects of identity and life experience. Class, ability, age, sexual orientation, and gender identity, among many other things, all impact our experiences of marginalization and privilege.

## WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE SAY *MARGINALIZED*

When we say *marginalized*, we're not using it as a euphemism for "people of color." We believe in making the implicit explicit, *especially* when it comes to race and other social identities. If we don't see color, we can't address racism. If we don't discuss gender, we can't address sexism and cissexism. And so on and so forth. As writer James Baldwin said, "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

So, let's face it: because these oppressive systems are the water we swim in, margins and mainstreams show up at every level in society and in organizations. "Mainstreams" are the groups that set the underlying norms and culture (often unconsciously). "Margins" are the groups whose behaviors and practices are pushed to the edges. While people often think of margins and mainstreams along racial lines, we know from experience that it's not that simple—especially in organizations that are led by and for BIPOC.<sup>9</sup>

For example, when Jakada was at the Ella Baker Center for Human Rights, cisgender Black folks were the mainstream. They were hired, retained, and promoted at a higher rate than anyone else. At EBC, marginalized staff included Latin,<sup>10</sup> trans, and gender nonconforming folks. When Monna was at Lavender Phoenix, an organization for Asians and Pacific Islanders (APIs), differences in class, education, and ethnicity created margins and mainstreams.

In this book, when we intend to refer to a specific identity or cluster of identities, we name them explicitly. When we want to be inclusive of a wider variety of identities, we use broader language—such as *marginalized*. (In those cases, feel free to fill in the blank with the margins and mainstreams in your context.)

In the best cases, though, people stick around long enough to recruit, train, and mentor a new generation of leaders. Sustainability is about the longevity and durability of results, organizations, people, and movements. It means getting the results we need and doing the hard work—but not at the expense of our individual or collective well-being.

<sup>9</sup>The concepts of margins and mainstreams originated from the Process Work Institute and were further developed by Training for Change.

<sup>10</sup> At the time of this writing, there's debate about what terms to use for people who trace their roots to Latin America and/or Spain—some options include Hispanic, Latino, Latinx, Latine, and Latin. Language is always evolving and no community is a monolith. In this case—and throughout the book—we chose the term that represents what the folks in the story would use to self-identify.

## YAMANI'S STORY

*For managers, part of sustainability is doing what you can to keep people around in a sector or movement. Here's a story about a make-it-or-break-it moment early in a TMC coach's career:*

Yamani was a 22-year-old Black parent of a one-year-old who worked at a small feminist foundation, running a grantmaking program for young women. Yamani was often late to work or had to leave unexpectedly because of unforeseen childcare challenges. She didn't have alternative childcare, so if an incident happened at the daycare, she or her partner would have to leave work to resolve it. She was good at her job, but unreliable childcare made Yamani an unreliable staff person. One day, Yamani showed up to pick up her baby to find that he wasn't there. When she eventually found him (safe!), she learned that the caregiver had taken him and the other children on an errand without informing the parents. She took him out of the daycare and called out of work for the rest of that week.

When she returned to work the following week, Yamani's manager Alicia, the head of the foundation, pulled her aside and asked, "Hey, what's going on? I don't want to lose you, but I need you to be here to do your job." Yamani told her what was happening—that she didn't have childcare and wasn't sure when she'd get off the waitlist for a center. She couldn't afford a nanny. After discussing Yamani's situation and options, her manager said, "Bring your baby to work."

To Alicia, this decision was part of living up to her—and the organization's—feminist values. She was committed to supporting Yamani. She saw Yamani's inconsistent performance not as a failure on Yamani's part, but as a result of challenges exacerbated by multiple systemic barriers—challenges they could get through together. So, until a spot opened up at another childcare center, Yamani set up a playpen in her office and brought her baby to work. Her colleagues and the young women in her grantmaking program happily spent breaks playing with the baby.

This was a game-changing moment for Yamani, not just because she kept a job she was good at (and needed to support her family), but also because it showed her what was possible. When she moved on to other jobs—including serving as executive director at two reproductive justice organizations—she brought the same compassion, grace, and support she'd experienced to her management.

### **Results-Driven**

The "results-driven" part of management means grounding our work in what our team is trying to accomplish, whether it's registering enough voters to build local power or increasing math scores for fourth graders. Being results-driven helps us understand the impact we can make if we succeed—and what's at stake if we fail. This drive for results motivates us to strive for excellence, innovate, take calculated risks, and stretch

beyond our comfort zones. And, when bolstered by our commitments to equity and sustainability, we set guardrails to avoid the dangers of prioritizing results over people.

Being results-driven has led us to do things like:

- Share difficult feedback with a staff member whose lack of awareness about race and gender negatively impacted our team of mostly women, trans people, and people of color.
- Let someone go (with a generous severance package) because they consistently couldn't deliver on expectations, even though they had been at the organization for a long time.
- Intervene when a critical project was off-track, including by rolling up our sleeves to work alongside the team member to help reprioritize and develop a new timeline.
- Try an entirely different—and rather unorthodox—approach because the traditional methods weren't getting the results we needed.

An often-overlooked part of management is supporting *others* to get results, which makes it possible to go beyond the results you would have gotten on your own. After all, if you could do it yourself, you wouldn't need to work with and through others! We bet you've been pretty successful at getting results on your own. Many managers we know ended up in their roles not because they were great managers, but because they'd gained issue area expertise or were highly skilled at an area of work (like communications or legal advocacy). As they progressed in their career, they took on increasing responsibility, including managing others. Unfortunately, being an excellent writer doesn't mean you're excellent at supporting others to write well.

### EXCELLENCE VERSUS PERFECTION

In our quest for excellence, we sometimes fall into the trap of perfectionism (a tenet of white supremacy culture!). Where excellence is about doing our best to get great results, "perfection" is a narrow target that defines "one right way." In perfectionistic cultures, people are afraid to fail, go off-script, or be wrong. The relentless demands of perfectionism can cause burnout. It leads us to spend months wordsmithing goals before sharing them, even when the work has already started. It causes us to hold back useful feedback or ideas until we've figured out the "best" way to share them. On the other hand, when we commit to excellence, we exercise discernment. We differentiate between "gold star" and "good enough," knowing that our efforts should be proportionate to our intended impact (more on this in Chapter 3).



One colleague told us about attending a yoga retreat where the facilitator welcomed participants by saying, “Some of you have as much experience practicing yoga as I do. Here, we’ve agreed that I’ll hold the space so you can practice.” As managers, we take up the power and responsibility of *holding space* for others to do the work (even as we’re also doing some of the work ourselves) to get the results we’re after. We help everyone stay focused on what we’re there to deliver and why.

## MINDSETS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

When we use a *conspire-and-align* approach that centers equity, sustainability, and results, we adopt new mindsets about management.

To us, three essential mindsets about management are:

- Management is a **practice**.
- Management is a **duty**.
- Management is a **balance**.

### *Management Is a Practice*

Management is like jazz, dance, or basketball. These disciplines (and many others) require fundamentals, freestyle, and flow. The fundamentals are the building blocks—the skills you learn, practice, and develop muscle memory for, like scales for pianists or toprocking for breakdancers. With any skill, you gain proficiency in the fundamentals before you add your flavor and freestyle. Eventually, it might become so second nature that you find yourself *in flow* with your work or *flowing with* the people around you, like in a dance cypher or jam session.

But, before you get to that place of being easy, free, and in flow, you must take the time to learn the fundamentals. Getting good at management requires consistent and rigorous practice (and the occasional failure). In this book, we’re covering the fundamentals.

### *Management Is a Duty*

It’s more than performing the “duties” of your job. Yes, we are responsible for daily tasks and outcomes. But we must also *be responsible*, in the sense of being ethical and acting with care and conscience.

We have a duty to be good stewards of our team members’ time and energy—and that of our own. After all, people spend a lot of their lives at work, and how we manage people influences whether they feel a sense of purpose or dread coming back the next day.

We have a duty to our team members, organizations, communities, and movements to manage toward strong, equitable results—without burning people out. We are responsible for our team’s impact on those we aim to serve.

### ***Management Is a Balance***

When managers struggle, it's often because they can't figure out how to balance competing priorities, values, or approaches. For example, they might feel trapped between resource constraints on one hand and staff capacity on the other—with no free hands for long-term planning or self-care.

The art of management will always involve the act of balance. It's the balance between power and love, as Dr. King put it, between holding others accountable and being accountable, between supporting and giving space, between rigor and flexibility, between focus and play.

Crucially, we don't have to—and shouldn't—choose only one option when two (or more!) necessary things are in tension with one another. Just like breathing requires inhaling and exhaling, we often need something from both elements.<sup>11</sup>

Balance can mean:

- Flowing between two opposite approaches, like putting in extra hours for a sprint, then taking a week off after the end-of-quarter crunch.
- Finding a happy medium between two undesirable extremes—like not micromanaging and not neglecting your team completely.
- Holding two (or more) things as equally important so they keep you stable—such as your care for people and your commitment to results.

## **THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT**

Now that we've gone over the philosophy behind our approach, let's look at some foundational tools that will help you manage. We'll reference these frequently, so consider this your starter kit. Each tool can help you make more equitable, sustainable management decisions to get strong results.

In particular, some of these tools can help you spot and avoid biases. Bias is like dental plaque—we all have it, it's hard to see (at first), and it's a big problem when it builds up. Regular maintenance with various tools is the only way to keep it in check.

### ***Sphere of Control***

Our colleague Jessica compares *sphere of control* to playing spades—the card game of strategy, teamwork, and luck. With spades, like most card games (and life in

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<sup>11</sup> This type of leveraging is also known as a “polarity,” a concept developed by Barry Johnson in his book *And: Volume One Foundations* (Human Resource Development Press, 2020) and expanded on in *And: Volume Two Applications* (Human Resource Development Press, 2021). “Polarity mapping” is a great exercise to help you think through the positives and negatives of two contrasting “poles,” like activity and rest or structure and flexibility.

general), you can't choose your hand. The skill is recognizing what you have and then strategizing, communicating, and keeping your cool—so that you can win, even with a terrible hand.



Sphere of control helps us focus our precious time and energy on the things we can control so we can claim our power and agency. As managers, we have control over many things that can impact our staff and others. Sphere of control lets us identify those things so we can make strategic choices.

Knowing your sphere of control helps you see what you can do to get (closer) to the outcome you want, turning your “possibles” into wins.

Some things that are usually within our sphere of control:

- The relationships we build.
- How we spend our time.
- Solutions we propose.
- Feedback we share.
- The choice points we consider (more on this later).

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

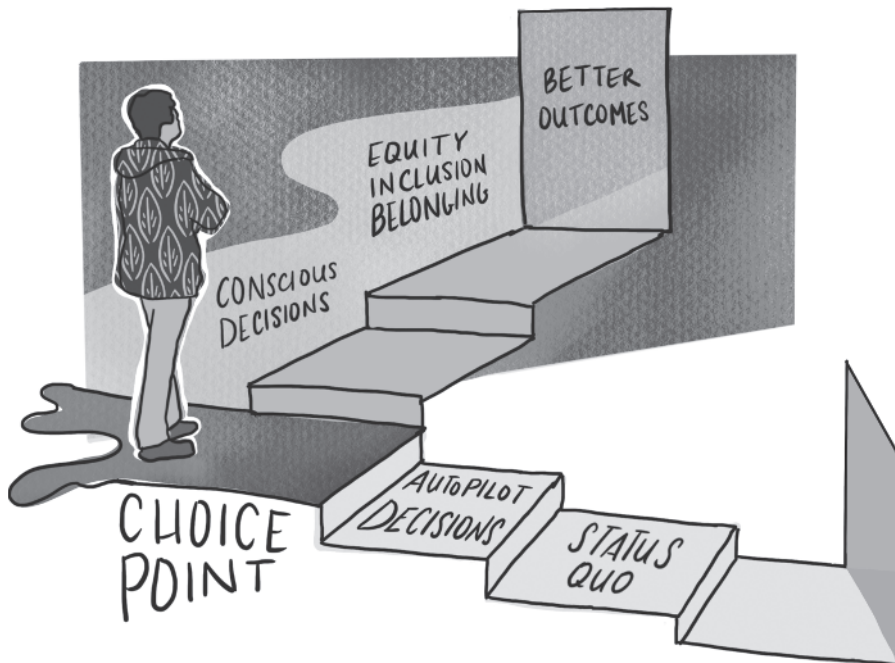
What's within my sphere of control? What's outside of it? Where do I have influence? What choices can I make to promote equity, sustainability, and results?

### Choice Points

“When people come together to solve problems, they do not automatically become immune to the ways society and the economy are organized. We bring the things that shape us, consciously and unconsciously, everywhere we go. Unless we are intentional about interrupting what we’ve learned, we will perpetuate it, even as we are working hard for a better world.”

—Alicia Garza, author of *“The Purpose of Power: How We Come Together When We Fall Apart”* and co-founder of Black Lives Matter

Our friends at Race Forward taught us the term *choice point* to describe forks in the road. Some paths replicate the status quo—they are well trod, paved by history and tradition. Others (usually less familiar or might not even exist yet) open opportunities for more equity, inclusion, and belonging.



When we consider our choice points, we take ourselves off autopilot and pause to consider the impacts of our decisions. We take a moment to reflect, generate options, and choose the ones that advance equity and inclusion.

In Yamani’s story (see the “Yamani’s Story” box), her manager Alicia encountered several choice points. A major one was what to do when she learned of Yamani’s child-care challenge. In that situation, Alicia had a few options:

- She could’ve let Yamani exhaust her paid time off (if she had any) and hoped for the best.
- She could’ve treated the most recent absences as proof of Yamani’s poor performance and written her up—or worse, fired her.
- She could’ve approved time off for Yamani to take care of her baby for as long as she needed.

In this scenario, the “status quo” would have been something like: let Yamani use up her PTO and once it ran out, let Yamani work it out on her own. However, when Alicia paused to consider, she saw the systemic barriers Yamani faced and knew that the status quo option would only perpetuate them. Unfortunately, given the uncertainty of Yamani’s situation, Alicia couldn’t give Yamani unlimited time off. So, Alicia did the next best thing she could think of: make it possible for Yamani to care for her kid and show up to work.

When you arrive at a choice point, pause to:

- **Spot bias and barriers.** What underlying or implicit assumptions inform your current approach?
- **Look at unintended consequences.** Who benefits? Who’s burdened or disadvantaged?
- **Generate options.** What alternatives might create more equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging, especially for those on the margins? What can you do to get more equitable results?

### ***Preferences, Traditions, and Requirements (PTR)***

PTR helps you distinguish between your biases or habits and the things that *really* matter.<sup>12</sup> Notice the difference, as illustrated in Figure 1.1.

- **Preferences:** “I like to share updates in writing”
- **Traditions:** “We always communicate organizational updates via email”
- **Requirements:** “We need everyone to know that we’ve changed the dates and location for our upcoming staff retreat”

<sup>12</sup> The concept of PTR comes from Ernst & Young’s diversity and inclusion programs.



**FIGURE 1.1** *Examples of PTR.*

We all have preferences and traditions—there’s nothing wrong with that! But Ps and Ts don’t exist in a vacuum; they’re shaped and reinforced by identity, culture, and experience. As managers, we can’t let our preferences and traditions become default requirements—that’s how bias takes over. Instead, use PTR to make more equitable decisions, communicate clearly when delegating, and stay open to new approaches.

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Did I check my PTR? How are my preferences and traditions showing up? What are the requirements, and why?

### ***Make the Implicit Explicit***

The premise is simple: don’t expect other people to read your mind. Instead, share what’s in your head directly, clearly, and specifically. When managers don’t make the implicit explicit, they create conditions for misunderstanding, which costs time, energy, and trust.

*Making the implicit explicit* is about embracing the idea that people are different. We each come to the table with worldviews, assumptions, and values shaped by our identities, backgrounds, and life experiences. The more lines of difference between us and those we manage, the more likely we will make different meanings of the same information.

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What's in my head that I haven't said aloud? What do I assume this person already knows that they might not? Is there anything I'm worried about that I haven't shared explicitly?

### *Seek Perspective*

"It's hubris to think that the way we see things is everything there is."

—Lisa Randall, *American theoretical physicist*

Making the implicit explicit is about sharing what's in your head; *seeking perspective* is asking people what's in theirs. After all, two (or more) heads are usually better than one! Our experiences impact our perspectives, and because our experiences are limited, we must seek perspective to mitigate our biases and expand our thinking.

It's crucial to seek perspective from people who will be most impacted by your decisions. For instance, you should seek your staff's perspective on things like:

- A policy that will impact the whole team.
- What success looks like for a project they're responsible for.
- Next year's goals.

If these tools seem like a lot to keep track of, don't worry. We refer to these ideas often throughout the book, with stories and examples to help you apply them to your work. And if you need even more templates, tools, or support on any given topic, check out our website at [www.managementcenter.org](http://www.managementcenter.org).

## SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Did I seek perspective? Did I hear from the people who might be most impacted?

## KEY POINTS OF EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT FUNDAMENTALS

Here are the takeaways from this chapter:

- We use a *conspire-and-align* approach to management. This means treating staff as partners, coming together with team members for a collective purpose, and getting on the same page about realizing that purpose.

- **Effective management** has three dimensions, which reinforce each other:
  - **Equitable:** accounting for unconscious bias and systemic barriers in how we support people to succeed.
  - **Sustainable:** ensuring the longevity and durability of results, organizations, people, and movements.
  - **Results-driven:** knowing what we're striving to accomplish; and being willing to stretch beyond our comfort zones and make hard decisions to get great results.
- Three key **mindsets** about management are:
  - Management is **a practice**. Like any craft or discipline, we must practice consistently and rigorously.
  - Management is **a duty**. We must exercise our power responsibly and get the best results we can for our movements and communities.
  - Management is **a balance**. Balance can mean flowing between two poles, finding a happy medium, or holding two or more things of equal importance to stay stable.
- The five most important **tools** we use daily in management are:
  - **Sphere of control:** identifying what you can control.
  - **Choice points:** turning off autopilot and pausing to consider equity implications and alternative options.
  - **PTR:** identifying preferences, traditions, and requirements (and focusing on requirements!).
  - **Make the implicit explicit:** saying what's in your head.
  - **Seek perspective:** getting input from others, especially those most impacted.