Morganisms worksheet

A checklist for managers

Learning to be a better manager is a lifelong process. Frequent review of basic principles followed by course correction if necessary, is critical. In this self-assessment, I have listed the 10 key Morganisms and questions you might reflect upon in assessing whether your management style aligns with these principles. After each section, give yourself a score between 1 and 5 (1 being rarely, 5 being always) representing your overall alignment with and adherence to the tip. Then check your total score at the end.

1. Respect and trust your people

- Does your "tone at the top" show respect for every employee's strengths, contributions, and personal health, comfort, and safety?
- Are you praising accomplishments publicly but coaching in private?
- Are your managers clear they should avoid heroic interventions and support employee decision-making?
- Do employees have the opportunity to exercise and eat properly?
- Are you asking yourself tough questions, such as: Am I being consistent in my leadership and example? Am I walking the talk?

Rate Yourself

RARELY	OCCASIONALLY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	ALWAYS
1	2	3	4	5

2. Value collaboration

- Is your team clear on the idea that for your collaborations to succeed both you and your partner must succeed?
- Are you immediately addressing signs of arrogance or sarcasm in employee conversations about customers, colleagues, or competitors?
- Can you easily list the most important customer concerns and project challenges?
- Is your team predictably delivering on commitments and giving adequate warning when there is a problem?

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1	2	3	4	5

3. Listen for and investigate hints of trouble

- Are you making time to “porpoise” into your organization in a low-key fashion to listen and understand? Do you remind yourself and others daily to listen, learn, and lead?
- If you hear whispers about politics or gossip, are you investigating the causes?
- It’s important to celebrate successes ... but only up to a point. Are you using meeting time productively to focus on addressing bad news, challenges, or missing data you need to make better decisions, rather than the “easy” subjects and good news? Are you and your managers welcoming early warnings of trouble rather than “shooting the messenger?”

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4. Develop court sense and align with driving forces

- Can you readily answer the question: “What is the essence of our business?” Do you revisit this question quarterly?
- Are you routinely scanning for key opportunities and threats on the horizon?
- Do you have a plan to address disruptive technologies, customer perceptions, or emerging competitors?
- Are you proactively addressing internal driving forces such as salary and benefit comparables, personnel changes, structural frictions, and unique leadership opportunities?
- Are you periodically thinking about a wide range of issues: strategic and tactical, global and local, the good, the bad, and the ugly?
- Are you identifying activities and efforts you’re doing today that can be eliminated or simplified or managed in a better way?
- Is your team acting on customer suggestions?

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5. Make decisions and manage the consequences

- Have you made clear to your team that the power of momentum is more important than striving for near-perfect information, in other words, do they have a bias to act?
- Once decisions have been made, is there a clear action plan, identified milestones, and an owner to manage them?
- Are you staying close to team members who appear to either over-reach or dither over decisions? Are you making timely suggestions — or necessary changes?

Rate Yourself

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6. Build complementary teams

- Do you have a clear sense of your own strengths and those of your team? Are you constantly alert to the need to shore up vital skills that may be lacking in both individuals and the organization?
- Are you alert to the need to balance teams in terms of competencies, personalities, cultural perspectives, gender, and other factors?
- Are you making sure your team is hiring not only for the job at hand but for a person who can grow into the next job?
- Do you have a list of three individuals you are trying to develop or hire? Are you taking the long view and keeping in touch with them?
- Have you determined two negatives you can live with before making an offer to a potential candidate?

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7. Commit to doing the whole job

- Do you periodically review more than bottom line numbers and product development? Are you also scrutinizing quality and organizational development, as well as customers, projects, and production?
- Are there effective audits of objectives and results?
- Are you alert to signs of a "victim" culture and making clear you value accountability?
- Are employees reporting issues and concerns both inside and outside their area of responsibility?
- Do your people appreciate the need to fight tunnel vision on challenges? Do they understand the need to step back and assess the whole job?

Rate Yourself

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8. **Reinforce individual ownership of problems**
    - Does your team pursue an understanding of what created a given problem or roadblock and how to prevent it going forward?
    - Do employees understand the concept of "owning the monkey," i.e., that every issue and challenge must be assigned a problem-solver who is close to the customer or partner or business objective, and who will see it to completion?
    - Are you careful to support and assist your reports in solving problems without dramatic public gestures or interventions?

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9. **Proactively prepare for the next major shift**
    - Do you review trends in all aspects of the organization and adjacent areas periodically?
    - Do you have a working forecast of imminent shifts in the economy or business momentum?
    - Are you saving during the good times and looking for pre-emptive investments to make during difficult financial downturns?
    - Are you putting aside 5 – 10 percent of your time to think about long-term strategy and anticipating long-term trends by making smart investments now?

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10. **Understand and manage paradoxes**
    - Do you have a clear sense of the important paradoxes your organization faces? (for example, the tensions between being global and acting local; operating at a rapid pace but with attention to quality; managing teams that must collaborate but also have focused, quiet work time)
    - Are you making clear that you understand the conflicting tensions, but reassuring your team that they have the skills and judgment to navigate them effectively?
    - Are you reinforcing that it is possible, in fact essential, to create a stable, predictable work environment even in a period of rapid change?

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Total score across the 10 Tips: ______________________

45-50 = Congratulations, it looks like you're a high performer. Keep it up.
40-45 = You're well on your way. Reinforce strengths and work on consistency.
30-40 = Keep focused and ask for feedback as you strengthen your skill set.
20-30 = Take a step back and assess your management style. Develop an improvement plan.