

Thinking Managers

Robert Heller of www.thinkingmanagers.com is vehemently against management doctrines as the world of management has very few absolutes. Instead managers must learn to deal with endless trade-offs.

Paradoxes & the Fusion Manager

Plenty of paradoxes exist in a manager's world – for that reason I advocate an approach which recognises that a world of endless trade-offs exists rather than one of absolutes.

So you must live by the paradox rather than try to solve it. I called this 'Fusion Management' in my 2003 book, which I recently revisited. On doing so I discovered that the pursuit of the paradox and the fusion of opposites are even more crucial than they were when I first expounded the concept. In order to avoid risks, you have to take them, and that's the paradox of the trade-off.

The Fusion Manager knows that new ideas are the lifeblood of a business. They deal with the pressure that the paradoxes bring by combining Five Foundation Forces, being:

- ➔ Fast to react and act
- ➔ Flexible in their choice of ends and means
- ➔ Focused on their prime activities and markets
- ➔ Friendly in relations within the business and with partners, competitors, suppliers and customers outside the firm
- ➔ Flat in non-hierarchic structures.

The Five Forces are combined to offer customers what they want, when they want it and at a reasonable price. The customer cannot want what doesn't exist, but the Fusion Manager can tell the customer what they want and then give it to them.

For the Fusion Manager, times of prosperity are treated as if the business were in crisis. They strive to create new growth areas when they don't appear to be needed. They build the organisation round young, cross-functional, multi-tasking teams who can deal with new launches, business analysis and solve major problems.

Fusion Managers can create a business where it's a pleasure to work and at the same time achieve lasting prosperity. And here's the best of the paradoxes: the greater the good they do for others, the more benefit to themselves.



About the author: Robert Heller is one of the world's best selling authors on business management.