The Challenge of British Management

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THE CHALLENGE OF BRITISH MANAGEMENT

**Jean-Louis Barsoux
and
Peter Lawrence**

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For my Grandparents
(Jean-Louis Barsoux)

For Mig
(Peter Lawrence)

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JEAN-LOUIS BARSOUX
PETER LAWRENCE

Note

Portions of this book were previously published under the title *Invitation to Management* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1986), singly authored by Peter Lawrence.

Preface

The present book responds in fact to a variety of challenges. Some of the confusion surrounding management derives from the possibility of viewing management variously as an idea, a subject, and an activity: we have tried to dispel the confusion. Much of what managers do is somewhat opaque to the general public: we have tried to describe management work honestly. There is some doubt as to whether all management work is the same or whether it differs markedly from job to job: we have tried to elucidate both the patterns and the variation. The more formal textbooks are not always very clear about how managers actually get things done: we have tried to illuminate these processes.

Having tried to lay these foundations for an understanding of management in general and cosmopolitan terms, we shift the focus on to Britain. Here we look at management training and qualifications, development and careers, business start-ups and small companies, and at various forms of selling – home market, retail and export. We attempt a delineation of British management style, using our knowledge of management in several other countries to say what is definitive and expressly British about the way managers in this country approach their work. We follow this by looking at some of Britain's corporate successes, and offer reflections on the dynamics of this success. We round off with some thoughts on how British management has changed in the later twentieth century, what it does well, and where gains may be made.