

# A MANAGEMENT ALPHABET



Excerpts from *The Management Contradictionary* by Benjamin Marks, Rodney Marks and Robert Spillane.  
Michelle Anderson Publishing, Melbourne, October 2006.

## **A** advisory panel

A pane in the glass.

## **B** business model

A reverse-engineered retrofitted abstraction of reality, accurate after the fact, because of the fact.

## **C** cash flow

Key economic indicator of viability. Like sex appeal, you've either got or you haven't, and if you haven't, claims about potential won't help.

## **D** deregulation

Government allowing business to make its own mistakes.

## **E** econometrics

1. An invalid, non-theoretical and incorrect "discipline": there are no constants of human behaviour, measures of quantity are historical and utility is not intersubjectively comparable.
2. Making assumptions about assumptions, and assigning a number to them.

## **F** fallacy

The mistaken view of male superiority.

## **G** goals

The line of failed past objectives which form a trajectory of future points to aim for.

## **H** holiday

Proof of poor job selection.

## **I** ID

Giving people numbers instead of names. This is actually a more personalised form of identification, as numbers are more numerous than names.

## **J** jargon

Language used by managers to obfuscate, bamboozle and befuddle everyone, even themselves.

## **K** knowledge

What information is to data, knowledge is to information. This knowing ledge is an essential platform from which to escape a profit plateau.

## **L** landlord

The lessor of two evils.

## **M** MBFA

Like Management By Wandering About – but more widespread.

## **N** non-executive director

A board director who doesn't work for the company he's working for. Hence the "non" prefix in the designation.

## **O** out-tray

Someone else's in-tray.

## **P** presenteeism

The syndrome of having people take a day off without drawing on sick pay.

## **Q** quality

A standard that is temporarily satisfactory. Later on, you'll be ashamed of what you deemed quality. And so on it goes. Continual improvement leads to self-hate.

## **R** research

Shared subjectivity masquerading as objectivity.

## **S** senior management team

Oligarchy that thinks it is an aristocracy.

## **T** "to do" list

Something else to remember.

## **U** undent

To move to the left what had been moved to the right.

## **V** values

Something to fall back on when the cashflow doesn't.

## **W** win-win

One of the four quadrants of a particularly useful negotiation theory matrix. The others are: win-lose, lose-win, and lose-lose.

## **X** ex-spouse

Someone who would correct your spelling and alphabetisation when you are out of line.

## **Y** youth

A growing market.

## **Z** zero-based budgeting

Budgeting.