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Face the challenges, set realistic expectations and then learn from what transpires. Because what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger.

The past quarter-season has been nothing if not turbulent. And some stark lessons will, or should, have been drummed home: our businesses and clubs, their competitive positions and the security of our revenue and our jobs are all incredibly fragile. Complacency is dangerous; it’s time to rally the team.

When the results don’t go their way, good leaders are in their element. Given half a chance, they’ll relish the challenge to bolster team morale, communicate shifting strategies, and keep pushing for the wins. At times like this, managers need a thick skin and brass balls. They may need to make some bold, often unappetising, decisions in order to ease cashflow or put an end to a painful goal drought. They take the brunt of the pressure when competition is fierce, and are first for the chop when customers, owners and stakeholders aren’t satisfied.

But customers, owners and stakeholders should have faith in them. Everton’s David Moyes is fortunate to have had that support. Despite never having had the kind of budgets available to the big four clubs, his team are fighting it out with the best of them. In this maiden edition of *The Manager*, we ask Moyes what many small businesses need to know right now – how do you get more from less?

Some managers will inevitably fail; others already have. Perhaps their club or company wasn’t robust enough to compete in the tough new environment. Maybe they made decisions too late or with too much haste. Perhaps the team around them was simply not motivated or experienced enough to deliver the goods.

Speaking at a recent League Managers Association charity dinner, Stuart Pearce said, “The best managers see a problem before it happens. That takes experience.” And, as we discover in this issue, experience comes not only from the highs in life, but from the lowest of the lows. Sam Allardyce and Phil Brown are among those to recall how the troughs in their career made them better managers.

As if businesses aren’t facing enough challenges this year, the negative British attitude to failure is compounding their problems, says Lord Digby Jones in our exclusive interview. At a time of recession and relegation, positive psychology has never been more important. Face the challenges, set realistic expectations and then learn from what transpires. Because what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger, and success out of failure is all the sweeter.
On behalf of the League Managers Association (LMA), welcome to the first edition of The Manager for 2009. This year has already presented some considerable challenges. Volatile global economics and instability in once bullet-proof industries have meant that all of us – whether politician, senior figure in business or football manager – have had to rethink how we do things.

Clubs and their owners are by no means immune to the problems manifesting themselves in other industries. The LMA’s members – managers in the top four English leagues – face much the same challenges as any business: exchange rate movements significantly impact on the import and export of talent; and a deep and prolonged nationwide recession has a knock-on effect on fans’ spending power and, therefore, on clubs’ core revenue. Football managers, like their counterparts in other business sectors, will need to find new ways to ride out the storm.

This issue of The Manager provides a real insight into how some of the most successful leaders in football respond when times get tough. And they have in their toolbox a wide range of skills to do the job effectively. From budgeting and recruitment to communication, the multi-faceted nature of the manager’s job is something we aim to highlight in this magazine.

There are times when countries, industries and individuals must embrace change in order to survive and grow. Football is no different. England’s bid for the 2018 World Cup is admirable, but in the shorter-term the development of the National Football Centre will be vital for the future success of the game. Of course, change is often met with resistance and can be difficult to implement. But it is at times like these that consensus thinking, focused on one clear objective, is essential in order to achieve a positive outcome.

In recent months, the LMA and the Professional Footballers’ Association have come together with managers and players to form a working party to review the systems and processes in refereeing and decision-making. The objective is not to find fault or assign blame, but to table proposals for improvements in the system. This will lead to better decisions on the pitch. We look forward to working with the game and all its stakeholders to effect positive change and embrace new thinking. Doing so has never been more important, in any business.

RICHARD BEVAN THE LEAGUE MANAGERS ASSOCIATION

"There are times when countries, industries and individuals must embrace change in order to survive and grow. Football is no different."
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The Everton manager has achieved the holy grail of business – support, longevity and success – and all on limited resources. We ask how.

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**KICKING OFF**

**NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE SEASON SO FAR**

**HOW TO DEFY A DOWNTURN**

**WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM DELOITTE’S 2007/08 FOOTBALL MONEY LEAGUE?**

Football is a growth industry
All but two of the clubs in the Money League increased their revenue in the 2007/08 season, with every one in the top 20 generating more than €100m.

Combined revenue of the top 20 clubs increased by six per cent to £3.1bn, three times that in 1996/97, when the first Money League was published.

Revenue isn’t just about results
Bayern Munich, now in fourth position, was the biggest climber in this year’s Money League, with every one in the top 10 generating more than €100m.

Bayern’s revenues were boosted by its acquisition of the Champions League. Bayern’s revenues increased by six per cent to £3.1bn, six times that in 1996/97, when the first Money League was published.

**Europe is the market leader**
All of the top 20 clubs in Deloitte’s Money League are European, seven of them English. This would have been higher were it not for the pound’s depreciation against the euro.

**Clubs can’t be complacent**
Paul Rawnsley, director in Deloitte’s Sports Business Group, said: “The unique nature of the football industry will enable major clubs to be relatively resistant to the economic downturn. Clubs’ match attendances are holding up well and clubs in each of England, Germany, France and Spain have TV deals secured well into the future at enhanced levels.” But he added that clubs will have to work hard on their matchday and commercial revenue streams in the next few years.

It’s worth remembering that this year’s Money League uses figures for the 2007/08 season, which fell largely before the economic downturn kicked in. It won’t be until the results for the current season, and more so the 2009/10 season, that the impact of the recession on clubs will become clear.

**UPSIDE**
Many firms are responding to the downturn with positive talent management:

- **55%** are developing more in-house talent
- **45%** are focusing on essential development
- **43%** are continuing to recruit key talent
- **35%** are increasing focus on employee retention

(Source:CIPD)

**Who’s on your team?**

According to a survey by business networking site BT Tradespace, the celebrity that small businesses would most like on their payroll is TV presenter, author and all-round intellectual wit Stephen Fry (above). Nearly half of those polled picked Fry for their side, with Sir Alan Sugar coming a distant second with 23 per cent of the votes. Third place went somewhat surprisingly to singer and presenter Cheryl Cole, beating the BBC’s economics tsar, Robert Peston, by an impressive four places. While one might think Peston would come in particularly handy during a recession, Cole would certainly get your firm noticed. Imagine if they worked for you:

1. **Stephen Fry**
   - next year’s Christmas quiz is going to be tough!
2. **Sir Alan Sugar**
   - hate firing people? Stick Sir Alan in HR
3. **Cheryl Cole**
   - under her spell, clients will sign just about anything
4. **Lewis Hamilton**
   - 100 per cent punctuality, guaranteed
5. **Simon Cowell**
   - the new face of the business, whether you like it or not
6. **Kelly Brook**
   - free tickets to the rugby!
7. **Robert Peston**
   - just follow his advice so he can’t say “I told you so”
8. **Peter Kay**
   - corporate entertaining will be a doddle from now on
9. **Victoria Beckham**
   - well, the staff uniform could do with a re-design
10. **Jamie Oliver**
    - in the canteen. Bing, bang, bosh – happy workers

**Downside**

So far this season:

- **28** football managers have lost their jobs
- **Bournemouth** and **Portsmouth** are each on their third manager

**Who’s on your team?**

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**FROM THE MONTHS OF MANAGERS: POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY**

**Be prepared for any eventuality:** “Experience tells me we could go [to the opponent] next week, get a deflected shot off someone’s backside and be out of the FA Cup.” Sir Alex Ferguson, Manchester United

**Deal with criticism of individuals positively:** “My team is more than the sum of its parts” Jose Mourinho, Inter Milan

**Avoid complacency:**

“Don’t even suggest it is an easy game. Look at it this way. A greyhound sees a rabbit, which starts running. The greyhound fancies a bit of snap, but the rabbit fancies his life. Who runs the hardest? The rabbit. That’s my view on life”

Mick McCarthy (above), Wolverhampton Wanderers

**Ask for commitment:** “[The team] have to sleep in the kitchen, drink only water and have proper food. I tell them to send their wives away and have a very good sleep. They have to live like monks” Mark Wotte, Southampton

**Lay down the challenge:** “Nobody’s going to trip over the finish line. You’ve got to be going at full pelt to be in the top division” Steve Coppell, Reading

**Say it like it is:** “There are two scenarios. It’s an experience tells me we could go [to the opponent] next week, get a deflected shot off someone’s backside and be out of the FA Cup.” Sir Alex Ferguson, Manchester United

**by Roberto Forzoni, performance psychologist and consultant www.robertoforzoni.com**
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