MANAGEMENT OF BUSINESS MANAGERS

Business Managers are asked to work on their posture… while the problem lies elsewhere

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Behind a supposed posture problem often hides an inconsistent work framework for Business Managers. Clarifying responsibilities, arbitration, and decision-making power is often more urgent than coaching the individual.

When a Business Manager becomes exhausted or loses efficiency, the response is often individual: better organization, stepping back, changing mindset. Yet what is often called a posture problem is sometimes the symptom of a work framework that has become untenable.

THE STARTING POINT

Individual posture matters. But it cannot sustainably repair responsibilities without decision-making power, incompatible priorities, and never-acknowledged compromises.

Posture: a simple answer to a complex problem

In many IT services firms and consulting companies, the diagnosis comes quickly. A Business Manager seems overwhelmed? They need to prioritize better. Hesitant with a client? They need to become more assertive. Struggling with tensions involving their consultants? They need to gain more perspective. Not meeting objectives? They need to regain energy and adopt the right mindset.

These issues exist. The ability to organize one's activities, communicate clearly, or remain calm under pressure is part of the job. But they become convenient explanations when they prevent a look at how the role was designed.

Focusing on the individual keeps the system unchanged. Support, training, or some time management tools might be offered. The organization does not have to reassess its priorities, decision-making processes, or actual distribution of responsibilities.

The risk is then to treat the symptom while reinforcing the cause: the more tension the framework produces, the more the Business Manager is asked to learn how to absorb it.

Responsible for everything, decision-maker for little

The Business Manager occupies a unique position. They must develop revenue, preserve margins, satisfy clients, oversee their consultants, anticipate mission endings, contribute to recruitment, and maintain a sufficient level of activity. On paper, they manage a scope. In reality, some of the necessary levers are often elsewhere.

They may be responsible for a consultant's satisfaction without having control over their compensation, positioning, or next proposed mission. They may need to secure a client relationship without being able to decide alone on a discount, mission end, or contractual disagreement. They may be evaluated on the growth of their portfolio while depending on recruiting capabilities beyond their control.

This separation between responsibility and power creates structural tension. The Business Manager bears the result but must constantly negotiate access to the means to achieve it.

RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY
You cannot ask someone to sustainably assume a result without clarifying the decisions they can make, those they must share, and those that belong to a higher level.

When demands become incompatible

Difficulties do not only stem from the volume of work. They often come from demands that seem reasonable individually but become impossible to uphold together.

Accelerate prospecting without taking more risks. Protect margin without straining the client relationship. Secure consultants while reducing downtime. Grant autonomy while having each critical decision validated. Meet objectives without challenging the assumptions they're based on.

Faced with these contradictions, the Business Manager makes compromises despite themselves. They prioritize the most visible urgency and then assume the consequences on the other dimensions of their role. If they accelerate business, consultant oversight declines. If they spend time securing a team, prospecting slows down. If they flag a risk, they're sometimes criticized for lacking commitment. If they move ahead despite the risk, they're later criticized for not having anticipated it.

This is not a posture flaw. It's the absence of an explicit order of priority.

The Business Manager becomes the organization's buffer

When the interfaces between sales, recruitment, human resources, delivery, and management are poorly defined, someone must compensate. The Business Manager often becomes this buffer.

They rephrase to the consultant a decision they didn't make. They reassure the client about an issue they cannot resolve alone. They push recruitment to fulfill a commercial promise. They explain to their management why a target becomes difficult to reach when constraints change along the way.

The most experienced learn to hold everything together. They know whom to contact, what acceptable workarounds exist, and what compromises are possible. Their efficiency then hides the system's flaws. As long as they compensate, the organization can believe its operation is robust.

But this model relies on an invisible expense: attention, emotional energy, and time spent syncing separately made decisions.

THE HIDDEN COST
An organization that holds together because a few individuals can absorb its inconsistencies does not truly hold together. It simply shifts the cost onto them.

By compensating, the system stops learning

Constantly asking Business Managers for more resilience produces a paradoxical effect. The most reliable individuals are given more ambiguous situations specifically because they know how to manage them. Their competence becomes a reason not to correct what overloads them.

Conversely, newer profiles are judged by their difficulty navigating a setup that no one has fully explained to them. Their need for arbitration is seen as a lack of autonomy, when it sometimes simply reveals the absence of common rules.

The system then ceases to learn from its own frictions. Every problem is individualized: one BM must communicate better, another must be more commercial, a third must manage pressure better. Situations repeat, but collective causes remain intact.

Avoid falling into the opposite extreme

Acknowledging the organization's responsibility does not mean absolving the Business Manager. They must learn to prioritize, set limits, articulate disagreement, escalate at the right time, and not turn every constraint into a fate.

But these skills require a framework to generate effects. Knowing how to say no is not helpful if every refusal is implicitly punished. Alerting is of no use if no arbitration is made. Better organization doesn't solve two incompatible objectives. Resilience helps weather a difficult period; it should not become the permanent mode of operation.

The correct approach is thus to distinguish what truly falls under individual competence from what is related to the role's design. Without this distinction, guidance becomes an elegant way of asking individuals to adapt to the unadaptable.

Diagnosing the framework before coaching the person

Before proposing that a Business Manager work on their posture, a manager can start by examining the work situation. What is genuinely expected of them when two priorities conflict? Do they have the levers corresponding to the results they are responsible for? Are arbitration rules known? When should they decide alone, consult, or escalate? What requests should be stopped instead of merely added?

This diagnosis changes the nature of the discussion. It's no longer about why the person isn't holding up better, but about understanding what they're trying to hold up. It reveals dependencies, areas of ambiguity, and decisions that management has sometimes left in the field without naming.

Coaching then regains its rightful place. It helps the Business Manager better fulfill a coherent role; it no longer serves to have them silently endure a contradictory role.

Strengthening Business Managers starts by strengthening the framework

A healthier organization doesn't eliminate commercial pressure or difficult decisions. It makes the way to handle them explicit.

It aligns responsibility with decision-making power whenever possible. It indicates which priority prevails when preserving everything is impossible. It defines simple escalation rules. It accepts that a decision has a cost instead of asking the Business Manager to act as if all objectives can be simultaneously achieved.

The manager here plays an essential role. Their job is not only to demand results and develop skills. They must also protect role coherence, make choices visible, and handle decisions that exceed the Business Manager's scope.

A MANAGEMENT ISSUE
The real question is not: "How to make Business Managers stronger?" but: "What are they being asked to compensate for, due to a lack of clear framework?"

Posture cannot replace organization

A Business Manager can improve their way of working, deciding, and communicating. This is even essential. But this progression will yield nothing durable if the organization continues to assign responsibilities without levers, objectives without arbitration, and contradictions without space to address them.

If everything is interpreted as a posture issue, people become weakened while the system is protected. Conversely, clarifying the framework doesn't make Business Managers less responsible. It finally allows them to be responsible for what they can truly manage.

Before requesting a mindset change, it's crucial to look at how work is actually organized. What might be perceived as a lack of individual resilience could be a much more useful signal: that of a role that can no longer continue to rely on compensation.

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