

**©<sup>®</sup> The  
101 One  
Minute  
Manager  
Meets  
the Monkey**

Books by William Oncken, Jr.

MANAGING MANAGEMENT TIME, 1984

Books by Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D.

MANAGEMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR:  
UTILIZING HUMAN RESOURCES  
(with Paul Hersey), 5th edition, 1988

THE POWER OF ETHICAL MANAGEMENT  
(with Norman Vincent Peale), 1988

THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER GETS FIT  
(with D. W. Edington and Marjorie Blanchard), 1986

LEADERSHIP AND THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER  
(with Patricia Zigarmi and Drea Zigarmi), 1985

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP  
(with Robert H. Guest and Paul Hersey), 2nd edition, 1985

PUTTING THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER TO WORK  
(with Robert Lorber), 1984

THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER  
(with Spencer Johnson), 1982

THE FAMILY GAME:  
A SITUATIONAL APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE PARENTING  
(with Paul Hersey), 1979

**O<sup>®</sup>The  
One  
Minute  
Manager<sup>®</sup>  
Meets  
the Monkey**

**Kenneth Blanchard  
William Oncken, Jr.,  
and Hal Burrows**

---

WILLIAM MORROW AND COMPANY, INC.

*New York*

Copyright © 1989 by Blanchard Family Partnership and The William Oncken Corporation.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Publisher. Inquiries should be addressed to Permissions Department, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1350 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10019.

**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

**Blanchard, Kenneth H.**

The one minute manager meets the monkey/Kenneth Blanchard, William Oncken, Jr., Hal Burrows.—1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 0-688-06767-0

1. Management time. 2. Executives—Time management.  
3. Delegation of authority. I. Oncken, William. II. Burrows, Hal,  
1937— . III. Title.

HD69.T54B56 1989

656.4'092—dc20

89-34583  
CIP

**Printed in the United States of America**

06 07 08 09      20 19 18 17 16

**BOOK DESIGN BY ARLENE GOLDBERG**

## *The Symbols*



The One Minute Manager's symbol—a one-minute readout from the face of a modern digital watch—is intended to remind each of us to take a minute out of our day to look into the faces of the people we manage. And to realize that they are our most important resources.



The Monkey Manager's symbol—a harried manager overwhelmed by a deskful of problems—is intended to remind us to constantly discipline ourselves to invest our time on the most vital aspects of management rather than dilute our effectiveness by “doing more efficiently those things that shouldn't be done in the first place.”

## I NTRODUCTION

Over a decade ago a real joy came into my life—Bill Oncken. I first came into contact with Bill and his monkey-on-the-back analogy when I was given a copy of his classic November 1974 *Harvard Business Review* article entitled “Managing Management Time: Who’s Got the Monkey?” that he co-authored with Donald Wass. I read it and light bulbs began to flash. At the time, I was a tenured full professor in the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts. As such, according to Bill, I was a typical northeastern intellectual bleeding-heart social theorist who thought my role in life was to wipe out pain and suffering by helping everyone. In other words, I was a compulsive monkey-picker-upper.

Then several years later I sat in on one of Bill’s “Managing Management Time” seminars. Participants burst into laughter as they recognized the problems Bill discussed. Since crying in public is not an accepted practice, the only thing left for us to do was laugh. And laugh we did. Why? Because Bill Oncken, time after time, hit both the absurdities and realities of organizational life in America with such accuracy that it hurt.

Bill Oncken, more than anyone else, has taught me that if I really want to help others, I need to teach them how to fish rather than give them a fish. Taking the initiative away from people and caring for and feeding their monkeys is nothing more than rescuing them, that is, doing things for them they can do for themselves.

So when Hal Burrows, a longtime associate and principal of the William Oncken Company and one of the outstanding presenters of the "Managing Management Time" seminar, approached me about co-authoring this book, I was thrilled. In fact, I am honored to have this book as part of THE ONE MINUTE MANAGER LIBRARY.

Hal and I wrote several drafts of this book with Bill over about a three-year period. Then Bill suffered a serious illness and died as we were completing the final working draft of this book. So he never saw the finished publication. As I write these words my heart aches because of the loss of Bill. I am especially sad for those people who never knew Bill Oncken, for they suffer the greatest loss. My hope is that reading this book can soften that loss because it reads as accurately and humorously as Bill and colleagues like Hal Burrows have told thousands of managers about monkey management over the years. This is vintage Bill Oncken with the bite and insight left in.

What follows is a story about a harried manager who worked long, hard hours, yet never quite seemed to get caught up with all the work he had to do. He learned about monkey management and how not to take initiative away from his people so they can care for and feed their own "monkeys." In the process, he learned to be more effective in dealing with his own manager and the demands of his organization. The performance of his department drastically improved as did the prospects for his career.

*Bill Oncken's seminar and book, "Managing Management Time," include many wonderful insights about how organizations really function and present strategies for gaining the support of your boss, staff, and internal and external peers. The One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey is adapted from the "staff" strategy.*

My hope is that you will use what you learn in this book to make a difference in your life and the lives of the people you interact with at work and at home.

—Kenneth Blanchard, Ph.D  
Co-author  
*The One Minute Manager*



This book is dedicated to the  
memory of William Oncken, Jr.

Bill Oncken, like Amadeus Mozart, was that exceedingly rare combination of masterful composer and virtuoso performer, the difference being that Bill used words instead of musical notes to fashion his works. His masterwork, *Managing Management Time*, is a timeless, enduring composition that captures the very essence of management, an art as old as organizations themselves. And anyone who ever saw him perform his work will never forget the experience!

—Hal Burrows

 *Contents*

The Problem	13
First Management Position	15
Meeting with Boss	17
Meeting with the One Minute Manager	19
Fundamental Management Dilemma	21
Diagnosis—Self-Inflicted Problem	24
Definition of a Monkey	26
Who Owns the Monkey?	27
Vicious Cycle	33
The Solution	35
The One Minute Manager's Awakening	37
The Depth of the Problem	40
Rescuing	42
A Feeling of Optimism	49
Returning the Monkeys	51
Having Time for My People	54
Oncken's Rules of Monkey Management	58
Rule 1 <i>Descriptions</i>	61
Rule 2 <i>Owners</i>	67
Rule 3 <i>Insurance Policies</i>	78
Rule 4 <i>Feeding and Checkups</i>	87
A Summary of Oncken's Four Rules of Monkey Management	94
Delegation	95
Coaching	100
Balancing Three Kinds of Organizational Time	111
Boss-Imposed Time	113

System-Imposed Time	116
Self-Imposed Time	119
Discretionary—The Most Vital Time	120
Starting with Subordinate-Imposed Time	123
Planting Discretionary Time	124
Managing Rather Than Doing	127
The Ultimate Conversion	129
Praisings	132
About the Authors	134
Services Available	137

**I**F you are someone who feels overwhelmed with problems created by other people, what you are about to read can change your life. It's the story of a manager, but it applies as well to other roles in life, especially parents and teachers.

This is the account of how my career went from imminent failure to considerable success after some wise counsel from two able people. My purpose in telling it here is to pass along their wisdom to you in the hope that it will help you as it has helped me.

The story begins some two years ago after a luncheon meeting with my friend, the One Minute Manager. I returned to my office, sat down at my desk, shook my head in amazement, and thought about what had just happened.

During lunch I had poured out my frustrations about my work. My friend listened and then told me the cause of my problems. I was astonished that the solution was so obvious.

What surprised me most was that the problem was self-inflicted. I guess that's why I couldn't see it without some help. But when my eyes were opened I realized that I was not alone; I knew other managers with the same problem.

As I sat there alone in my office I laughed aloud. "Monkeys!" I said to no one in particular. "I never would have suspected my problem is monkeys."