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## Rockville writer provides help for the accidental boss

by Brooke Kenny | Staff Writer



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If you're new to managing other people, or if you plan to have others working for you one day, there's a new book just for you.

Katharine Giacalone, a human resources expert from Rockville, has written a book that takes the mystery out of how to be a good boss. "Oops! I'm the Manager!" is an easy-to-read guide for how to become a fair and effective workplace manager.

In a system reminiscent of the Enneagram of Personality, the author breaks down workers into four types: the peacemaker, the organizer, the revolutionary and the steamroller. She details the characteristics of each type, shows how to identify who falls into which category and then makes suggestions for how to work most effectively with each.

With her system, she aims to teach readers that "their way of communicating is not the only way of communicating."

The book has an interactive reading component, where readers are given a detailed scenario and then asked to reflect on what went wrong between characters and why. This feature gives readers a way to put the principles they are learning into action, rather than just simply listing them, says Giacalone.

Now president of her own human resources consulting company, the author herself wound up in a management position unexpectedly when she was only 20. She was working as an account manager in New York City and was asked to move to Pittsburgh for six months to fill in for a regional vice president leaving the company.

"Not only did I not have a clue about being a supervisor, but I was in a new city," explains Giacalone. "I was scared to death."

She now has 25 years of experience, which includes working in human resources for Celera Genomics and Marriott.

One of the most common pitfalls for inexperienced managers, she says, is the tendency to try and take on too much.

"One of the hardest things to do is to learn how to delegate," she says.

Another tough part of managing others is giving feedback, especially if it's less than favorable.



Photo from Tom Kochel  
Katharine Giacalone is known as "The Corporate Nanny."

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"People don't like to deliver bad news," she says.

Management challenges are prevalent during these difficult economic times, says Giacalone, since many employees are asked to step into management roles after co-workers have been laid off.

Giacalone's principles were developed during years of observation of workplace behavior and communication. After identifying people she thought fit into certain categories, she interviewed them so she could learn more about their thought processes and workplace needs.

The author decided to self-publish her book for two reasons: to get it to readers faster and so she could maintain complete control of her intellectual property.

This book offers more than just guidance for workplace contact. It helps explain why people do what they do.

"There's so much applicability beyond the workplace," she says.

While her book offers tools to become a successful manager, Giacalone knows that management is not for everyone. Some people like being in charge and perhaps making more money, and others are really best suited for making individual contributions in the workplace.

"I encourage people to try [management], but I also tell them it's not for everyone," she says.

"Oops! I'm the Manager! Getting Past 'What Do I Do Now?!' In 5 Easy Steps" is available for purchase at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

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