



# WELCOME TO YOUR USER MANUAL

A 3-step guide for creating your user manual  
Improve communication and relationships at work

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# YOUR USER MANUAL

## WHAT IS A USER MANUAL?

You know how it is when you go to the shop and buy a new appliance for your home. It could be a washing machine, a microwave, a toaster or a barbeque. Whatever it is, it always comes with a user manual.

Now, I know that some of us skip the user manual and just tackle this thing by plugging it in and setting it to work straight away. And some of us take the time to read the user manual so that we understand what the features are and exactly how to use our new machine as effectively as possible.

Often, with more complicated machinery, it is essential to read the user manual first. It makes life a lot easier and we can get to the task of putting our new machine to work as quickly as possible with the least amount of fuss.

It may take a bit of extra time upfront: to read it, understand it and apply the instructions. But once we've done that, we know how to work our machine and we're good to go. Is there a similarity with people?

Would it be useful for us to have our own 'user manual' so to speak so that people at work could understand how to work with us better?





## YOUR USER MANUAL

# WHY A USER MANUAL?

This is something that I often create with my clients, their very own user manual. I love to work with clients on their user manuals because it enables others to know how to get us at our best, wouldn't it be amazing to let them know? Let's tell them that and then really have the opportunity to be our best in that relationship or interaction.

Now it doesn't mean you have an excuse to say, "Ok, that this is who I am. Use the user manual so that I don't have to improve myself or learn different ways to behave."

Actually, not at all, the user manual allows those around you to understand you better to facilitate the best interactions. They allow others to know the areas you're still developing yourself in.

# YOUR USER MANUAL

## SOME EXAMPLES

### Example 1

A CEO client of mine recently told me that after we have worked together to develop his user manual, he instituted it with his leadership team. There are now 75 people in his organisation who have their own user manual. The ripple effect is huge. They store their user manuals on the company intranet and people can go on and check each other's user manual and know the best way to interact with each other. What a great way to strengthen relationships, encourage self-awareness, build trust and openness.

### Example 2

Another CEO client shared with me that every new hire to his company gets a one-on-one meeting with him where he goes through his user manual with the new recruit. Here's yet another example of a beautiful opportunity to get to know each other, build trust and increase effectiveness in communication.





# YOUR USER MANUAL

## STEP 1: GATHER RESOURCES

So, here is my challenge to you. Create your own user manual by following this step-by-step guide.

Here you go

### STEP 1: GATHER RESOURCES

Gather information about your preferences, style and approach. Dig out any reports that you have on personality profile, leadership style, etc. Ask friends, family and colleagues to describe you in 5 words. Sit down and think for yourself:

1. What are your values?
2. What are your pet peeves, the things that drive you crazy?
3. What brings you absolute joy?

Gather the info, make some notes of your own

Now you're ready to begin...



## YOUR USER MANUAL

# STEP 2: USE THE TEMPLATE

This template highlights the key sections for your user manual. Under each section heading, there is an explanation of what goes into this section with an example taken from other user manuals.

Here's a list of the headings

1. A little background about me and why I wrote this manual?
2. For best results...
3. What makes me really happy?
4. What to do if you've made a mistake?
5. How best to communicate with me?
6. What I'm working on myself?

Feel free to add some of your own headings - change it up and make it your own. A sample template is included at the end of this document



## YOUR USER MANUAL

# STEP 3: GET FEEDBACK

Now that you've created your own user manual, think about how you want to use it.

The first step is to share it with others and get some feedback. Others see us way better than we see ourselves so it's important to corroborate our thinking. Choose 2-3 people you trust to be honest with you and ask them

Is it an accurate reflection?  
Have you missed anything important?  
What would they change?

Now, it's time to share it and have conversations about how this can be useful as a tool in your business.

Encourage others to create their own so you can begin to build relationships, openness and trust.

# YOUR USER MANUAL TEMPLATE

[YOUR NAME]'S USER MANUAL – HOW TO WORK WITH ME...

## HEADING 1

### A LITTLE BACKGROUND ABOUT ME AND WHY I WROTE THIS MANUAL?

This is where you give a general description of yourself, your likes and dislikes, values and beliefs or philosophies. You then explain why you took the trouble to write your user manual. This could be a combination of an exercise in your own self-awareness, getting to the nuts and bolts of what makes you tick and helping others gain insight into how you do things, what's important to you and how they can get the best results from your relationship.

### EXAMPLE

My MBTI personality profile says that I'm rational, logical and I need to understand cause and effect...I live by the motto – actions speak louder than words and I value results I can sometimes be overbearing and a bit of a know-it-all wrote this user's manual so that you can gain a better understanding of how I think and hope that will help us have a strong, honest relationship of openness and trust. In particular, if we can understand how to communicate better, we can resolve conflict much more easily.





# YOUR USER MANUAL TEMPLATE

## HEADING 2

For best results...

Describe what makes you happy. Do you prefer to be communicated with in-person or via email? What drives you crazy? Do you value attention to detail or does it drive you crazy when people tell you every detail of a conversation? This can be in bullet points with an explanation next to it.

### EXAMPLE

- **Pay attention to details.** Please please please check your work before you send something to me or a client to ensure that it doesn't contain any mistakes. Errors in grammar, spelling, formatting are a big pet peeve of mine. I will hold you to a very high standard.
- **Ask me questions.** Curiosity and inquisitiveness are really valuable and critical to learning and I love to share what I know. If you don't know something, I'd way rather that you ask me about it than pretend you understand it.
- **Don't email me complex questions Email me if there is something specific and straightforward you need me to do.** I prefer in-person or phone communication to email, come talk to me, particularly if you want to discuss something complicated. On the other hand, if it's something I can add to my to-do list, then do email me.



# YOUR USER MANUAL TEMPLATE

## HEADING 3

### What makes me really happy?

We all love it when people go the extra mile, but what does that mean for you, in your work context? Is it about thinking about the most efficient way to get things done? Is it about keeping you out of most meetings? Is it about involving you in the details? Let your team know what they can do to impress you

## HEADING 4

### What to do if you've made a mistake?

Here you describe your preferred approach when someone makes a mistake. Do you want them to tell you right away, to come with a solution or to sort it out independently?

# YOUR USER MANUAL TEMPLATE

## HEADING 5

How best to communicate with me?

This section is critical and can save lots of misunderstanding

### EXAMPLE

Phone me when...

Email me when...

Text me when...

If I haven't responded within 24 hours to a call...

If I haven't responded within 48 hours to an email...

## HEADING 6

WHAT I'M WORKING ON MYSELF?

This section shows that you're not just expecting them to fit in with your approach, but that you're also working on yourself and trying to improve in various areas. It also enables your team to hold you accountable for these areas of development.

### EXAMPLE

- I'm terrible at responding to calls and I'm working on it. This is something my Mom complains about too. If I haven't responded to your call, please feel free to call again (after 24 hours).
- I have a short concentration span and can get easily distracted. When you notice that I'm doing this, please let me know gently by asking, is there something on your mind?

# YOUR USER MANUAL FINAL THOUGHTS

Well done for taking the time to create your user manual!

You're invited to share your use manual with us for feedback.  
All you need to do is send your manual to [support@daphnahorowitz.com](mailto:support@daphnahorowitz.com)  
and we'll personally reply to you with our comments and suggestions.

## ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact Daphna on [support@daphnahorowitz.com](mailto:support@daphnahorowitz.com)

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