

Title	Managing Employee Involvement and Participation
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Brief Introduction	<p style="text-align: center;">Preface</p> <p>Few would disagree that employees should have a say in workplace affairs. The problem is that there is far less agreement over the ways in which the voices of employees should be expressed. The three main directions identified in this book are initiatives which promote and reflect management concerns; those which aim to regulate relations between employees and employers; and those which propel united worker interests to the fore.</p> <p>Management initiatives are often introduced on the understanding that relationships between themselves and employees are essentially tranquil and harmonious. Regulatory prescriptions aim to ensure stability and progress in industrial relationships through providing machinery which recognizes and resolves areas of conflict in pluralist management–employee relations. Radical perspectives contend that worker interests are inevitably subjugated to the needs of capital and can only be truly liberated within a restructured socio-economic system.</p> <p>The practical effects of these different perspectives in enhancing or inhibiting organizational efficiency, at a time when competitive concerns are foremost in the priorities of both employers and state, are also subject to much dispute at present. In consequence, debates over the parameters of employee influence are circulating strongly within political as well as commercial circles.</p> <p>This book has been written with the intention of examining, in detail, the different ways in which employee influence can be articulated at work, ranging from radical expressions of worker control to management insistence on limiting employee inputs to task-based and communicative issues under management direction. The effects of contrasting philosophies and practices are evaluated within a rapidly evolving industrial landscape from which manufacturing industry is gradually subsiding and in which enterprise networks are expanding on a global scale. Inevitably, issues of raising or containing employee influence are extending beyond national boundaries. We attempt to address this breadth of experience by examining involvement and participative policy and practice under both free market and regulatory regimes.</p> <p>We endeavour throughout the book to explain what is happening in this vital arena of employee relationships, why certain features are prominent, and the possible consequences for the parties whose interests are at stake.</p> <p>Though responsibility for the book is ours alone, we have been helped by numerous colleagues and friends who have offered support, criticism and advice. We cannot name everyone but we owe special thanks to Sue Jones for</p> <p style="text-align: center;">viii <i>Managing Employee Involvement and Participation</i></p> <p>her continuing encouragement and counsel throughout the duration of this project. We would also like to express our appreciation to Debbie Cadenhead and Pat McTaggart for their word processing professionalism.</p> <p>It is 'traditional' to conclude appreciations with expressions of gratitude to partners and families. We have no intention of breaking with this tradition, especially because we recognize that without continuing tolerance and understanding by Sabine and Margaret, this book would not have been written. Support was offered to us at a time when family commitments have been at their strongest, following the births of Matthew, Ewan and Connor and of Pierre, the newest arrival in January 1995. To our partners and families we offer our sincere and lasting thanks.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Jeff Hyman and Bob Mason</p>