

# THE DIARY OF A MANAGER

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## Welcome

Everything that happened in this story is fictional, made up and not true.

Despite it being fictional there are companies where leaders drive the business into the ground by being too remote from the people doing the work. There are companies with too many systems, too much complexity and too much red tape. There are companies releasing products that don't work. There are companies that treat people with little respect or appreciation. There are companies where workplace harassments happens with little room for complaint.

This book is a fun way to explore what are serious topics. Topic that, here at Cultivated Management, we believe need addressing through better management and HR, clearer communication and the focus on building companies that enrich the lives of all who work in them.

A business should be a force for good in society. A good business should embrace diversity, encourage creativity and relentlessly focus on providing better service. A good company is not obsessed with scale, nor growth at all costs - and certainly not obsessed with meeting deadlines, over doing the right thing for customers, clients and society, and employees.

Learn more about building a brighter future for business and how management and HR plays a large part in that over on the website [cultivatedmanagement.com](http://cultivatedmanagement.com)

Thanks

Rob

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## Setting The Record Straight

The story of our end of project disaster has been very well documented in the news and industry. In some circles it has become a legend, but all reports of what happened are missing something. That something is called the "Truth".

It's with a heavy heart that I tell this story of my time as a Manager at CBPBOS and as the person being blamed for their downfall. This whole episode has brought immense pain to my life, and has been a burden for myself, and my family, to carry. Even though I had no role in it.

Even though the dust has settled, and no charges were placed on me (thanks to this diary), I am still sitting here with my reputation in tatters, and my CV doing the rounds.

I doubt I will land a role unless the interviewer has heard nothing of CBPBOS. It's taking a while as I suspect almost everyone in the industry has heard about the disaster that happened at CBPBOS. Despite the heavy heart, I can be proud of the staff I managed and the work we completed.

I was only there for a few weeks but in that time most of the Engineering team resigned, the product was shipped with over 9000 known high severity issues, and I don't think I managed to successfully upload a single update report to the ridiculously complicated systems they had in the business.

I had no time with my own manager, nor did I really have any clue what was happening. This was through no fault of my own, for I did ask plenty of searching questions, but I was kept in the dark, and then ultimately blamed, for what was years of poor leadership and management.

It sounds bad doesn't it? Losing staff. Poor quality software. Blame cultures. Legal cases. Poor leadership. It sounds bad indeed, but I believe I handled my role with integrity, approached the job with passion and dedication, at least in the first two days, and handled myself with professionalism at each turn, even after people made bleating noises at me and I found my head through a wall. Literally.

Despite all of this, I still find myself being blamed for the debacle. This release was over three years in the making, but I was blamed for merely being there at the end.

The software resulted in over 300 people receiving incorrect summonses, 150 people had their accounts deleted, 927 people were incorrectly marked as "illegal alien", 3000 people were incorrectly billed, and the British

Software Industry took a whopping £8.7 million in losses, due to the system taking out part of the banking infrastructure.

But it wasn't my fault. I was only there for a few weeks. I had barely sat down before I was asked to leave. I was a scapegoat.

For my own sanity I've decided to release this diary in an attempt to prove how broken CBPBOS was before I even set foot there.

As the accusations are becoming even more far-fetched in the news, I feel it right I give my version of events. Throughout my time at CBPBOS I had been keeping a daily diary of events. Partly as a record, partly as therapy for myself. The diary let me vent my anger, empty my head of negative thoughts, be therapeutic and be a constant source of inspiration and creativity.

Each day I sent a copy to myself with a timestamp, for I had some inkling something about CBPBOS wasn't right. I'm glad I did, as this diary was used as evidence during the legal wrangling. Even though I was cleared of all wrongdoing, my reputation is still in tatters. The judge made it clear I had nothing to do with it, but the powers that be in CBPBOS have far reaching hands into the media, and hence, they are controlling the narrative.

Initially, even my devoted wife believed my diary writing was a waste of my time. Upon telling her of the diary, she proclaimed "Not one single person will read your diary. It's a waste of time". At one point she called me a "notebook freak", or words to that effect. She was wrong though. It wasn't a waste of time. In fact, it was one of the smartest things I did. Almost the polar opposite in terms of good decisions, compared to joining CBPBOS.

I'm now publishing this diary to avoid the truth being edited or sensationalised. It's a sad state of affairs but people want guts, not the truth. I just hope those who do read this realise that I, as a Manager for just over a week or so, should not have taken any of the blame. In fact, I should have taken no blame at all. The company and project was already doomed before I even sat at my desk.

The Judge concluded my diary showed I had no part in it. The staff supported me and my diary shows the carnage. Even so, I am publishing it for peace of mind. I am publishing it to counter the rhetoric from the CBPBOS leadership and elements of the media. I am sharing it to show the drama I had to go through.

## The People in This Story

I feel it is only right to introduce the main people I mention in this diary. I have used their fake names for legal reasons.

### *Malick*

Malick preferred to be called Bear on account of his size and appearance. I must admit he didn't look much like a bear to me but he was both fluffy looking and fierce.

Bear's main skills were in project management and scrum mastery. Some sort of new fangled term given to Project Management with Kanban boards, or something like that. He mentioned phrases like "sprint" and "servant leader" and "lean".

I don't understand young people's slang, so throughout my short time at CBPBOS I humoured him. It sounded logical but I couldn't help thinking this was a generational thing.

It turns out it's not a generational thing at all and I really could have learned a lot from Malick. Only now do I realise why Malick got so frustrated with management asking for more work from less staff and weekly increases in velocity.

### *Pete*

His first words to me were "out of the way, I'm going to be sick". After which he was indeed sick; in the kitchen bin to be precise. It was an interesting and challenging start to my working time with Pete.

Pete introduced himself as a communications expert; someone who championed good communication.

His communication skills were indeed second to none, a point he took around 10 minutes to explain, expertly of course, using long words I didn't understand. His use of TLAs (Three Letter Acronyms) was incredible and at one point I don't believe anyone knew what he was talking about. A sign of a real communications expert. His actual day job was Team Lead, but it took me some time to tease this from him.

### *Marie*

Marie is an incredibly animated member of the technology team. She was also a member of the "yoof" and so used slang terms in everyday

conversation. She too seemed to be a fan of this thing called agile and scrum.

On my first day she pounced on me to talk about something called "scrum" and extolled the virtue of testing before the coding was done, about working in small "sprints" and about automating as much as possible. In hindsight it's a shame she never really got to complete her ideas at CBPBOS.

## **Day 1 - The Start**

A bit of a strange day today. I was obviously feeling fairly nervous about starting at a new company, especially in a senior management role, but nothing could have prepared me for the bizarre first day.

It appears that they simply weren't expecting me to start today, so I was left sitting in reception all morning. That was until one of the junior office staff nervously told me I could go home. To say I was furious and disappointed would be an understatement. I'm seriously hoping tomorrow will be better. I'm beginning to have doubts about this job move after all.

To make things worse I was handed a document before they sent me home, with a title that made little sense to me - "CBPBOSA" .

It was only when I got home and read through it, that I realised the horror of the systems I would be encountering at my new place of work, that's if I ever get to see the inside of the office.

On a positive front though, my awful neighbors have put their house up for sale.

## Day 2 - The Desk

Thankfully it seems they were expecting me today, as the Managing Director was there to greet me this morning with lots of apologies about my first day. It seems they had some "filing" to do which meant they were too busy to look after me. A bit of a lame excuse if you ask me.

It was still a disappointing day at work. I had no computer on arrival and the only desk they had free was a rickety old piece of wood propped up against a bank of filing cabinets. Not only that but it's right next to the main stairwell, and there isn't enough room to open the stairwell door without the door hitting my desk.

As someone opens the door roughly every 5 seconds it wasn't long before I was starting to get tetchy. The lovely picture of my wife that I insist on keeping on my desk has had to come back home with me. Every door slam against the desk knocked it over, I was worried it might break.

I must admit I also don't really trust anyone here. They all seem to look shady. A fact that was re-enforced by a constant "bleating" noise whenever I walked past the water cooler. The kind of noise a goat would make. Strange.

## *Day 3 - The IT Systems*

During a nondescript conversation with Pete this morning, we reminisced about how we got into our current line of work.

I used to always question things as a child, much to my parents' annoyance. I questioned everything. Not to be annoying but just to seek out the truth...to find out more. I was curious. I was skeptical.

I didn't really know much about consulting and management in my early career, which was spent moving between lots of retail jobs. That was until a fateful night on 5th June 1994.

On said evening I'd had a few drinks in the Jolly Sailor pub in Whitby, and thought it was a jolly good idea to get embroiled in a serious game of poker with a few locals.

Throughout the game I'd been asking lots of questions about everything; the game; the pub; Whitby; Dracula; everything. I sensed I was annoying everyone and it all came to a climax over the last hand of cards. I had indeed questioned the group too much, and I ended up in a heated verbal argument with a local about why his "hand" beats my "hand" in the game. He threw some beer over me and uttered those career defining fateful words "You are even more annoying than my manager".

From that point on I sought out everything I could about management, and as it turns out I became rather good at it.

I digress.

I finally started using the insane IT systems they have in place here. It seems massively complicated. I'm surprised this company can ship anything at all with this much red tape in the way.

I've listed the Acronyms they have in place, which, by the way, is what the "A" stands for on the CBPBOSA document I got handed on my first day. It should give you a sense of scale about how stupidly complex they have made everything.

## *The Systems*

| TB9

The Travel Budget 9000.

It's a travel management tool to be used by everyone in the company, except marketing, who use the TB10202.

It's not obvious who owns this, or who supports it.

### | TH3

The Team Hoarder 3000.

Some kind of Team Meeting scheduling tool.

It's not obvious who owns this, or who supports it.

### | TRD

The Technical Report Deluxe.

Technical tool for reporting progress against software build, test and delivery.

Owned by Sales (for some reason).

### | SH3

Safety House 3.20.

Source Code Control system.

Owned by the Office Admin team (for some reason).

### | TSSS9

The Super Support System 9000.

The Customer Support system.

Owned by Sustainability Team (for some reason).

## | TSS44

The Sales System 44.

Sales and pipeline tool.

Owned by Legal (for some reason).

## | TCCS

The Compliance Conformity System.

Compliance management tool.

Most people thought this was owned by Marketing but no-one is really sure.

Marketing has never heard of it.

## | SNB

Sticky Notice Board.

Digital agile sticky board.

Owned by Reception (for some reason).

## | DoSAGE

The Document Storage Advance Gold Edition.

Document storage and management system.

Owned by the Software Test Team (for some reason).

## | DD4

Defect Deposit 4400.

Defect Management tool. Very full. Very full indeed.

Sales own this (for some reason).

## | CASSIUS

The Intranet.

Not an acronym but a code word for the intranet.

Owned by Cleaning and Maintenance (for some reason).

## | PPCC

Pitter Patter Chitter Channel.

Internal communication channel, a bit like X (formerly known as Twitter).

No-one obviously owns this. Last person to make an admin change was the Head of HR. I'm considering her the owner now.

## | Cmail

Email client by CBPBOS.

Email tool.

Owned by Development (for some reason).

## | MMMSDE

Meeting Micro Monitor Super Deluxe Edition 9930030.

Meeting monitoring tool.

Owned by the Directors.

## | TMWYD

Tell Me What You Did.

Online Timesheet.

Owned by Directors.

## | CCCC8

Corporate Config Control Controller 8000.

Configuration Control System for managing live environments and operations.

Owned by Cleaning and Maintenance (for some reason).

## | CBPBOSMM

Can't Believe People Buy Our Software Maturity Model.

Maturity model for project maturity and compliance.

Owned by Support.

There are loads of tools. The small print states that there are hundreds more, which will be covered during a proper induction, if I get one.

I'm so shocked and scared about this system; I'm going to bed now.

## Day 4 - The Cakes

I had a rubbish night's sleep last night. Constantly waking up thinking about those TLAs. I think my mind was trying to draw maps linking the systems together. I feel heady.

Today was a first for me regarding Marie's cakes, and I'm a little upset that no-one warned me about them. To be fair Marie did the gracious thing of baking cakes for us all, as a "welcome" present for me joining. At first I felt honoured. Apparently she likes to bake.

However, I've never known anyone make such a monstrosity from flour, eggs and sugar. I've had my fair share of bad food, like the pasta from my local Magic Pasta Masta van to the vile contents of the staff vending machine at my last place of work, but nothing could prepare me for the gut wrenching cakes baked by Marie.

The faces on the rest of the team told a telling story of horror and woe as they put on fake smiles and each took a cake. They continued to break pieces off the cake and hide them in their pocket, or drawers, or to throw out of the window, or in the base of plants, or occasionally, throwing them at each other when Marie wasn't looking.

I got the impression this isn't the first time Marie has baked for everyone. Upon "eating" all of the cake they all declined more on the basis it would make them feel sleepy in the afternoon. At this point I was trying my hardest not to pass out. The smell alone was enough to render an elephant immobile.

At one point I thought I had lost a tooth but was unable to tell through a fog of confusion and fear. I was sweating profusely, my left eye started to twitch and I started shaking violently. I'm still amazed now, as I write this, that I managed to avoid going to hospital. I still feel rough now. Marie reckons this recipe has been handed down through 15 generations. It tasted like the cakes had too.

I remember a holiday I had a few years back where the head chef at the hotel must have been a relative of Marie because everything he served tasted like sun dried plastic and cinnamon and made your face hurt.

After I had recovered from the cakes I started speaking to Malick who was in a kind of "sad" mood. I almost instantly regretted asking him "how he was", as he went on and on about how he missed his girlfriend and that his life was over until she came back to him.

No-one had ever trained me in how to deal with this situation, so I swiftly offered him one of Marie's cakes which quickly drew this conversation to a close. I know I need to be able to cope with my staff coming to me for advice, but I can't stop thinking about these systems and how much of an overhead they are adding to my team's daily work.

This evening I was surprised at how polite my neighbours were, only to realise they were showing people around their house. I was obviously very polite as I can't wait for these people to move out.

## Day 5 - The Joke

This morning I started receiving emails from the TRD system about people not completing their allotted and assigned work.

Upon further inspection, I found that this system allocated 20 pieces of work, per person, per day. If people didn't complete the work, it sent the administrator (now me) an email "telling on them". This seems absurd.

I tried to look up the policies on this but couldn't find anything in the SH3, TB9 or DoSAGE systems. So I checked the CASSIUS, the Cmail system and the MMMSDE. I finally resorted to asking on the PPCC system but to no avail.

After much searching it turns out it's stored in two systems. Chapter 1 (installation) in the TSS9 system and Chapter 2 (compliance rules) in the TCCS. This is mad and it's starting to drive me nuts. The senior management didn't agree with me that we have too many systems. Apparently "It won't be a problem for long", whatever that means.

At the weekend I bought some cheap cartons of fruit juice in a concerted effort to save money. However, at lunch today, my carton of pineapple juice exploded all over me leaving me dripping wet. The smell of the pineapple juice and my "super sports" deodorant combined to create a rather nauseous smell. Something Pete commented on immediately.

It was this embarrassing act that finally got one of the lazy contract project managers off his backside to help me source some paper towels. This lumbering giant, Graham, decided now would be a good time to tell me about his lost loved ones and missing pets.

It seems the people here are not used to having someone who listens. As such they are seeking me out like a moth to a flame. I'm quickly becoming a CBPBOS social worker.

I told a really hilarious joke in a meeting today after a series of heated arguments and finger pointing by the development and project management team.

I said "It's not a blame culture but it's definitely your fault" and pointed at the dev lead. Me and the support manager Tom were in stitches. Not sure anyone else laughed though. Difficult to tell I was crying so much.

There were still several of Marie's cakes left. A day of maturity did little to make them more appealing. I took them home after everyone had left the office and threw them in the garden next door for their awful little dog to chew on.

Fairly dull evening. I spent it surfing the web looking for a new car whilst listening to the dog next door howl with horror at those horrid cakes.

## Day 6 - Problems

I had a nice long weekend by the seaside where the only really eventful thing was when a seagull attacked me and stole my chips.

I have to admit that the blame culture joke I told on Friday was indeed hilarious. So funny in fact that I woke up 3 times every night over the weekend in stitches, much to the annoyance of my wife. I've been fairly sleepy today.

Got stuck in a dreadful meeting this morning about encryption. The meeting seemed to have been hijacked by the techies who sought to out-do each other in how complicated they could make the security of a log-on page.

The discussion ended in a design that included biometric access and retina scanners, until someone pointed out that it was only a KPI page that was read only anyway. The discussion then entered the realms of quantum physics and particle displacement theories. All of which was noted and stored in the MMMSDE system except for the diagrams which were stored in the DoSAGE system because the MMMSDE doesn't accept images.

If the design becomes a requirement then they obviously go in the TRD system until they become developed, and end up in the CBPBOSMM system and the CCCC8, CASSIUS and TRD system again, but filed under a different name.

All of which duplicate the details in each document, meaning changes need to be made in each one should anything change. Madness. I was so confused with where to find the document that I started to get a headache.

It reminded me of the time I tried to ponder what it would be like to have a perfect company to work in. A company that not only provided something meaningful to society, but also enriched the lives of all who worked in it.

At first the thought seemed logical but the more I pondered it the more my head hurt. After four hours of thinking I retired to bed only to be off work for the next two weeks with a constant migraine and partial blindness. I vowed never to ponder such gigantic things that my tiny head can't grasp.

I'm writing this before tonight's impromptu work night out. Not sure what to expect to be honest as most people seem really untrustworthy and shady at work. It should be a good opportunity to get to know people further though.

We found out this afternoon that one of the developers, who has since left, checked out a rather important piece of code and didn't check it back into

the source system. As the SH3 system was so cheap in the first place, it seems there is no admin override, to force any kind of check in or check out.

The developer's machine has since been re-commissioned as a live piece of kit running an important processing system, and hence no longer has any of this elusive bit of code on it, but the system still thinks it's checked out. As such, this feature has been in the state of "not working" for some time now. It seems there is no plan to make it work.

Just like everything here, it's left to rot until some poor soul has to do code archaeology to work out what's happening.

I'm looking forward to tonight. I won't be writing anything else tonight as I shall hopefully be merry on a glass or two of sherry.

## Day 7 - The Hangover

I'm fairly sure someone kept ordering me high alcohol beer last night. I've not been that drunk in a long time. Felt awful this morning. I'm sure I only had three drinks too. I'm beginning to think that someone has taken a dislike to me.

I did get to talk to Pete this morning. Whether through natural ability or environmental responsive learning, he's mastered the unique ability of being completely immune to spoken instructions and orders.

In one way perfect for his role as Lead and Communication Expert, in another way, his lack of compliance has resulted in three small fires and electrocution of the entire sales team. This electrocution is something many are calling payback for all of the extra shiny features they have sold over the last 6 months. He is a remarkable character and someone I look forward to working with closely over the next few years.

This afternoon my hangover was made worse by the incessant aggression from everyone in the office. This aggression stems from them having to use these ridiculous systems. All across the office you can hear them shouting at their computers and cursing the systems for losing this, and losing that, and not accepting this or that format.

Again, management seems to be rejecting all of my proposals to streamline the systems and are instead piling more and more responsibility, but without power to change it, on my shoulders.

## Day 8 - The Certification

I've been feeling a little put out to be honest. A few weeks back I sat a management certification course. I was annoyed that it was being delivered by a project manager who had never actually done any management, or even worked with a management team. I felt cheated somehow that I was being taught a course about management, by someone who had actually done it.

On day 2 of the training I got into a little verbal disagreement with this chap which ended in him phoning the official certification board and demanding they explain to me why it's fine for him to deliver my training. He was a "trained trainer" and hence could train, even though he had not managed.

On the call I got a little agitated as the official certification person also had no idea what management was about. It all ended with an argument in which I declared I would not pay for the certification.

They summoned me to pay. I sent a rather sarcastic letter back to the trainer and the certification board, explaining how I was grateful for being taught by such an expert in the field but that I valued my own experience over his and thanked them for the nice course.

I thought they would see the sarcasm in the letter and be infuriated by it. Instead I received a letter in which they thanked me for my apology and were glad they could help me enhance my management career, but they really did need that payment. I was furious. Not only did they miss the sarcasm but they thought I was apologising. So I wrote one back outlining my fury.

On a positive note my neighbours appear to have sold their house, which is fantastic news. For the purposes of this diary I will fill you in on a rather horrific episode I had with my neighbours, which is why I will be glad to see the back of them.

I used to own a nice, fast convertible sports car. Every day in summer I would put the hood down and set off for work. Every day at the T junction I would get hit square on the nose by a water bomb thrown by my neighbour's kid. What initially intrigued me though, was that he managed to always get me square in the face.

I used to move my head around whilst sitting at the T junction, yet every time, with the most amazing accuracy, I would take a water bomb on the nose.

I obviously didn't keep suffering for long and ended up putting the roof up until I got to the main road. But they too moved along with me until I actually never put the hood down at all. I reported them to the police but that night my waste-bin caught fire. I reported this too and the following night my beloved garden gnomes got lined in the middle of the main road and crushed.

I was actually unaware of how my gnomes got crushed until I got sent a YouTube video link. Anonymously.

I have to say I was quite sickened by what I saw as my poor gnomes got lined up in a row and crushed by a passing supermarket delivery lorry, whilst my neighbour's kid stood there laughing.

The whole sorry event was made even worse by the fact the video became that week's most viewed video on YouTube. Some of the comments were truly offensive.

Today the development team has done nothing, as we have a problem uploading code to the system. What am I doing here?

## Day 9 - 10,000 Emails

I didn't get much sleep last night due to some bizarre animal in the local woods making a noise that sounded like a cross between a parrot and donkey. Very tired today and dreading working on this infernal set of systems that saps every last bit of my creativity and passion.

It seems our new international sales manager, Dave, has dropped us in it again. A large deal he had been chasing for us on the Isle of Ventara Paradise has fallen through after Dave called the buyer's wife something I shall not repeat in this diary.

Dave's excuse is that there is a subtle difference in emphasis on the letter "o" in the word Ormassical (Dave claimed to be a fluent speaker). More emphasis meaning honorable and less emphasis meaning something altogether more sinister.

He admits he may well have got the emphasis wrong and accidentally caused an international outrage. The PR and Legal teams are working around the clock to rectify the problem. Heavily discounted licenses seem to be the price we will have to pay. This is the fourth time he has done this. The last time apparently resulted in a court case, a hefty fine and his picture on the front page of every tabloid newspaper in Britain.

I managed to lose 5 documents today and received in excess of 10,000 emails from the TB9 system. It seems it has a feature where at the end of each week it sends me a "round up" email about every person who didn't complete their 20 work items, as well as the daily emails. The kicker is it sends me one for each work item they didn't complete also. I now can't open CMail at all.

I tried to use the MMMSDE system but failed miserably and was referred to the CCC8 and CBPBOSMM systems for more information.

I'm at the end of my tether and now management have decided to release version 3.5 of our own software next week and none of it has been built to spec, coded very well, nor tested. This is a huge surprise to me.

This system they plan on releasing seems vast from what I can make out from the documentation in the CBPBOSMM, CCC8, RRR, CASSIUS, DoSAGE and SNB systems. I'm so confused. And worried.

## **Day 10 - The Release Date**

I'm still swamped with working out what this software actually does, and management have lined up the marketing and sales teams to get busy selling the release. They've moved the date forward to 2 days time to align with some new social media launch, and have demanded the team get it ready by then.

First estimation from the team suggests that there is about 6 years worth of work for a team of 500 people, let alone the 15 they currently have. Oh how I hate this new role.

I also hate these systems which is why the team are now flying below the radar and using a shared spreadsheet for all of their work.

Our first round of work this week raised in excess of 500 problems with the software. Although the team is struggling to get these logged in the DD4 system.

The neighbours have finally sold their house. On a sad note though, their dog has been really ill recently. Apparently it has eaten something that has disagreed with it.

## Day 11 - The Plaster Dust

I received an email from the certification people explaining that they fully understood why I was furious and that I shouldn't be so hard on myself. They suggested I take the practitioner exam to combat my low feelings of management value. Somewhere along the line my message has been lost and it's now beginning to look like I really cannot win this one.

One of the junior developers, Ruth, let slip about rumours that they were going to close the office or condemn it. To be fair the office is in ruins and apparently there are ever decreasing budgets available for things that make the office tick.

Apparently we nearly failed our ISO 9993777266388000000001 audit when the auditor attempted to open the Compliance storage cupboard and instead pulled off the handle, which caused him to punch himself in the face and then fall backwards over a bookshelf. Only a free flowing supply of tea and cakes (not Marie's) persuaded him not to condemn the building.

We are living on borrowed time here. Every night when I get home my wife brushes plaster dust from my shoulders and out of my hair. The ceilings are falling in and the walls are crumbling. I really wish I'd never set foot in this building. And who-ever is "bleating" when I walk past the water cooler is really starting to grate on me.

The team is now blocked because the software is too buggy. I have no idea who is in charge of the product.

I've spoken to management about delaying the release as it's not fit for purpose, but apparently it requires me to raise a "ticket" in the DD4 and then raise a request in the TCC system followed by an "issue" in the Compliance management tool, and an announcement on the PPCC. I also need to move some stickies around on the SNB before they will even talk to me about anything.

These systems and processes are insane. Each and every person I ever meet is driven mad by this archaic and overburdening process, lack of clarity and pressure from leadership to just ship anything.

It frustrates me because I believe the people here are talented and creative. They are just pressed into doing the wrong thing through fear of losing their jobs. Process is forcing them, rather than their needs guiding the process. This whole place feels wrong.

Realised my diary was getting a little somber. Will really try to make it more upbeat. On that note, I've worked out how I can do this. Get another job. So I've started looking for new work.

## Day 12 - The Floorboard

I'm really not sure why they don't seem to be fixing any of the broken stuff in the office. It's as though they are having a closing down sale.

They are lucky I'm not suing them too. Whilst walking back from the coffee machine I tripped over a loose floor panel and put my head straight through the partition wall between the office and the meeting room.

I was unharmed but it was embarrassing, especially as there was a meeting going on with senior leaders. They accused me of snooping on their meeting by forcing my head through the wall, just to listen to them. For the rest of the day I had "plaster dust white" hair and kept sneezing.

Writing about it now I am positive the loose floorboard was put there on purpose. There is someone in this office who has taken a real dislike to me. I'm sure it's the same person who sent me that vile Valentines card last week. I've never felt so violated.

I decided not to write about it in my diary as it's so horrible. This is workplace harassment. I tried to speak to HR but couldn't work out who they are and where they work. I was told to use a new system called RHODES; Resourceful Humane Open Dedicated Enterprise Systems. Of course, I didn't have a login and didn't know who to ask for one.

This same person has also written unflattering comments on the toilet wall about me. I feel hemmed in by this lunatic and I've only been here just over two weeks.

I've got to get out of this place.

## Day 13 - The Fight

I had the most terrible meeting this morning. It was the Dev Strategy review meeting where the whole project team went through the department release strategy for the next year. I cannot understand why we're having this meeting about next year's release, when we have an impending one this week.

The meeting was fairly constructive with the exception of Davis Danielson, the documentation manager. He is somewhat arrogant and incredibly aggressive. He got all fired up about a sentence Mikel Mikelson, The Communication and Marketing Manager, had added regarding "the code being the documentation".

What started as a discussion soon spiraled into a heated debate. This too soon spilled into a full on fight where fairly soon the whole meeting, and all in it, were embroiled in a giant fisticuffs.

At one point during the fight I got slapped in the face. I can't be sure who did it but I bet it's the same person who sent me the vile Valentines card. When the police and ambulance turned up it was fairly clear that Mikel Mikelson wouldn't be coming back to work anytime soon.

It seems this whole office hates each other's guts. This is no place to work. I've got to get out of here. Preferably not in an ambulance.

Later this evening it seems the management are releasing the latest version of our software to the live platforms even though it doesn't work. I'm dreading tomorrow. I really am.

## Day 14 - The Release

I really didn't sleep much last night worrying about today. I was right to worry though. The release was a disaster.

The support desk has been rushed off its feet.

Here's some of the initial major issues I've been informed about:

- 300 people received incorrect summonses
- 150 people had their accounts deleted
- 927 people were incorrectly marked as "illegal alien"
- 3000 people were incorrectly billed
- 12 customers reported dodgy internationalisation issues causing international outcry amongst their customers, especially as the translation wasn't great
- Some customers have reported that their Cmail systems went mad and started spamming people
- 1,345,253 customers reported that they couldn't install the product
- 13227 of our hosted customers reported they could not log on
- The 475,663 that could log on to the hosted system saw other people's data
- For some unlucky few the system was so slow that it took over an hour for them to log in.
- We also took down much of the British Banking systems.

It's estimated that the British Industry took a whopping £8.7 million loss due to our system.

Tomorrow will indeed be a very interesting day.

## Day 15 - The reckoning

This morning all of my team handed in their notices and all of the contractors were "let go". This didn't come as a shock and I've been busy drafting my letter of resignation too.

It seems the management thought we needed a new system to cater for this disaster we've created so they rolled out the AEDRCS (Accident Emergency Disaster Recovery Compliance System)

I've been called into a meeting. This isn't going to be good. I'll write more soon.

As suspected, it wasn't good. I was sacked and it appears the blame has been squarely put at my feet. This is completely unfair, especially as a press release has already gone out blaming me, with a fake admission statement by me. Here's what it says:

*"I, as The Manager, accept full responsibility for the problems caused by CBPBOS products. It was my decision to release the software, even knowing that it had not been fully tested or proven. It is therefore my fault. Lots of love. The Manager."*

I've yet to see what the outcome of this will be. No doubt there will be some form of lawsuit, court case and media circus. I just hope my dear wife and my beloved family can see past the lies and understand I had no major part in this scandal.

One day I may pluck up the courage to publish this diary. Until then I guess I am the scapegoat. Those bleating noises were for a reason. It seems they had me pinned on day one for all of this. I am such a sucker.

I guess I'm the most hated person in the country right now. Maybe all of this is because I didn't pay for my management certification, or for not liking my neighbour. Karma and all that. Maybe I would have learned something about scapegoats and blame cultures had I sat the certification.

I should have followed my instinct and jumped ship the moment I saw the systems of doom. The systems that strangled the poor people of CBPBOS. The systems that brought chaos to the project. The systems that infuriated and complicated everything. The systems that ultimately forced process on to people. The systems that I knew to be bad, but could do little about. The systems that were management lead rather than work focused. The systems that the leaders used to "manage" their people from afar.

I just hope I can recover from this and find a new job. A job with fewer systems. A job where the environment aids productivity, not hinders. A job where people don't make goat noises and I get a computer on my first day.

A job where I can just be, a Manager.

The End