MANAGEMENT FOR BEGINNERS

2ND EDITION

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Start Here

Learning to be a good manager takes time and is a constant learning process. Becoming a manager is difficult, albeit rewarding; it is a continuous learning and self-development journey. Some people fail, which is not surprising given the difficulty of the transition, others become disorientated and some confused. The training provided here is aimed at avoiding these pitfalls and making you successful.

Most people facing their first management position feel terrified. While moving into a management position is a huge accomplishment, it's also the beginning of a huge challenge. One of the first things you will learn is that the position is more stressful than you anticipated. The skills and methods you used as a worker, and a team member are completely different meaning that you will discover there is a large gap between your current capabilities and the requirements of the new position. If your promotion means you are now managing previous work mates and friends, then you are in for a rude surprise. Your new team members will soon react to you differently, subtlety reminding you that you are no longer a friend. Your team members may also be more reluctant to express opinions or new ideas or won't be willing to share information with you. It's important to remember that you need to separate what you say as a manager from what you said as a friend.

In your previous jobs, success depended primarily on your job knowledge, skills, and actions. As a manager, you are responsible for managing a whole team of people and for creating a team plan, something for which your career as a worker almost certainly hasn't prepared you for.

As you work your way through this training, a new mindset and a new identity will emerge. You will take on board new ways of thinking and working and discover new ways of measuring success and how to derive increased enjoyment from your work. One of your immediate concerns is to ensure that things are running smoothly which is a challenging task, requiring you to keep many different balls in the air. Indeed, the complexity of maintaining the status quo will initially take most of your energy, for this reason the training starts from your first day a new manager and continues from there.

First Management Position

Becoming a manager for the first time is a significant life and professional event. It is also a daunting experience taking on your first management position and having a degree of natural anxiety is expected. However, somehow you have earned the position of manager, a senior manager has appointed you to the position, and they have faith that you can do it.

Despite any misgivings you may have, they can see that you possess the attributes the position demands, like your personal qualities, strengths, and the requisite skills. It is worth reflecting on what these things are as they will boost your self-confidence. As a new manager, you may feel that you need to have answers to everything, don't fall into this trap; ask your team members for help; it is the right thing to do and shows your humility.

If they haven't already, you should expect your manager to explain their expectations of your position. These are vital to know as it is these that your performance will be judged on. Whatever the reasons are that got you the job, you are expected to deliver, so make sure you are very clear about what that is.

You may have gained your management position at a new company meaning that it is a more difficult way to start as you may not know how the business works, and you won't know the culture (the way people behave and speak). Take your time; there is no rush.

Things to do in your first month

Read carefully, there is a lot to do and remember.

Honeymoon period.

You are not expected to perform miracles or deliver much in your first month; sometimes known as the honeymoon period, which, for senior managers, can last as long as three months or the first 100 days. For junior managers, you can relax a bit for the first month. This is because it is accepted that it takes time for you to understand your new position, its requirements, and people's expectations of you.

Have a plan.

The most successful managers have a clear plan of what that first month, two months, and three months will look like. You cannot manage anything successfully if you don't have a plan covering your work and that of your team. Talking with your team and your business stakeholders is a way of finding out what's currently working, what isn't, what the current priorities are and identifying potential issues and solutions.

Get to know your team.

Stepping into a management position for the first time isn't just a change of task; it's a fundamental shift in thinking and approach to work. To be successful, you must transition from getting the job done to get the work done through other people. This requires a new level of self-awareness, a different range of skills, and a new perspective that redefines success. Meet your staff, explain a little about your background, but only a little, a couple of sentences, people aren't interested in what you have done. Talk mainly about them, ask what their job is, what they do, ask what their top 3 issues are.

Always avoid any discussion about personalities.

Always bring any conversations about people back to focus on work processes and functions as potential issues, but never the people. You can make your judgements about people later. For now, observe how people behave, how they talk, whether they are positive or negative in their views, what seems to bother them, and what they like and dislike about the team and the company. For the first few weeks, spend 50% of your time listening and 50% doing. Listen to the needs of others, ask about things like: Do they have the tools they need to do their jobs, have they been trained? Do they understand their roles and responsibilities? Do they have performance goals, do they enjoy teamwork? Don't change anything; listen and observe. Record your notes about issues, things you might change, improvements that can be made and especially things that might boost staff morale.

Start doing check-Ins.

When you first start, set up one-on-one meetings with each team member to discuss their role, goals, and any work challenges, they may currently be facing. Also, try to join team lunches and Friday after-work drinks to get to know everyone in a more relaxed environment. The better you know your team, the better you're able to determine how they work.

Meet your peers.

That is, managers who are on the same organisational level as you. Introduce yourself, have a two-sentence description of your work experience ready to tell them, ask them what their job is, what they expect from you and if they have any issues with your team. Finally, give them a copy of the organisation chart and ask them if it is correct or add their teams.

Learn as much as possible.

First off, make it your mission to learn everything you can. Investigate if your organisation offers formal supervisor, project management or management training, and take advantage of it if they do. Review team member personnel files and past performance reviews. Do not make many, if indeed any, changes after you arrive; resist this temptation, and instead, take plenty of time to understand your organisation and team fully. Make lots of notes for review later, don't rely on your memory. Use a pad and pen, not a laptop or tablet. (You remember more by writing than typing). Understand the business structure, get a copy of the company's organisational chart, or, if need be, create your own, including your position and team.

Change your focus.

A critical mindset to adopt is that you are now a manager and not a team member or work mate; you must think about controlling, planning, and organising against just doing. This shift can be difficult at first, but it's crucial as it is tied to your team's performance. This means, if your team fails, you fail. And if they succeed? You can take credit, but you must share it with the rest of the team, or they won't be willing to do a great job for you again.

Be on model behaviour.

You are now a role model for your team members and others to copy. You must set a good example with everything you do and say. Team members will only do their best at work if they see you are doing the same. This means meeting commitments, meeting deadlines, doing what you say and keeping your personal thoughts to yourself.

Manage upwards.

Being the boss doesn't mean you can ignore your manager. It's more important than ever to keep them in the loop since you'll be reporting the progress of an entire team of people. It's also essential to ensure that the goals you outline for your team are tied to your manager's priorities. Ask to set up regular meetings to discuss your goals, progress, issues, and how they relate to the organisation. You can only impress your boss with your team's progress if you're moving in the right direction. Ask your boss about being a mentor for you or if they can recommend someone who can.

Why teams fail

Team organization has not changed much since the 1960s, with teams continuing to fail due to common dysfunctions. The most common dysfunction is traditional team management which still dominates today's organisations. Research by Deloittes confirms that managers who move from a traditional hierarchical mindset to a transformational one, achieve substantially greater results including greater productivity, increased job satisfaction and less stress for everyone. How you as the manager see and relate to your team, is the single most significant determinant of how well the team training works.

Below are images of traditional and transformational team structures.
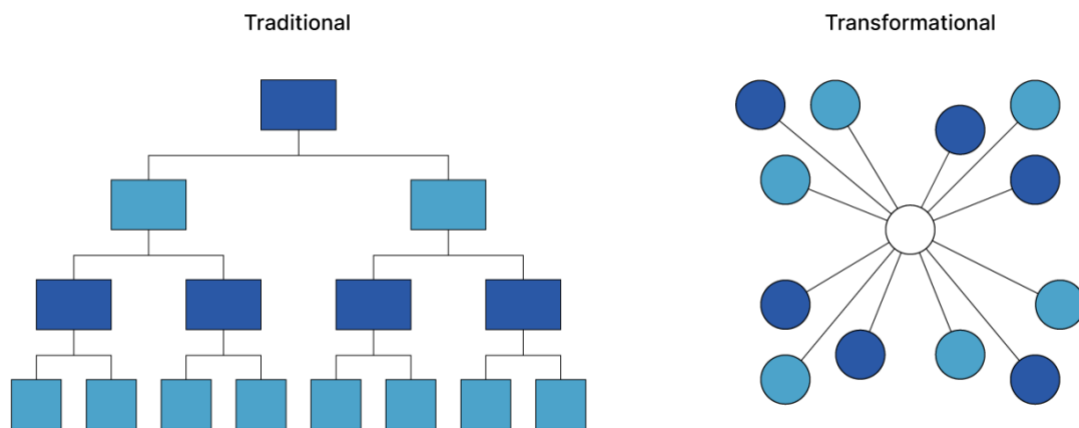
There are six other common team dysfunctions that cause teams to fail. The first is that team members do not fully understand each other. The second is a lack of open communication characterized by team members not knowing how to conduct a conversation or resolve a conflict. The third is lack of a common team vision, a common goal to direct all of the teams' activities. The fourth is a lack of team level planning, no team master plan. The fifth is no clearly defined roles and accountabilities, and the sixth is that teams fail when there is an absence of mutual accountability. The training program addresses each of these dysfunctions.

Ordinary Teams

Ordinary teams are structured as a traditional team, that is hierarchical and grouped by skillsets. Some hierarchy is needed to identify who is in charge, who is the team leader who is senior, rank and, in some cases, privilege - but these also impose inequality on the team. These concepts are now outdated and have no place in contemporary settings, todays workforce (made up primarily of Millennials) resent these concepts and are refusing to accept them.

Traditional or ordinary teams tend to operate as silos: 1. Individual team members do not share their experience or knowledge with others and 2. The team does not integrate or

cooperate well with other teams. Ordinary teams respond to a mandate from outside their team making them entirely internally focused with managers being the ones who provide clarity and direction. In an ordinary team the manager is the backbone and functions as the support system for teamwork and collaboration. In a ship analogy, managers are the people with their eyes on the horizon, managers are the ones reading the map. As a manager of an ordinary team, you are the one plotting the course and showing your team members how you're going to get there.

The High-Performance Team

In high-performance teams all team members are considered to be equal, there are no distinctions about seniority or privilege. A way of describing this to team members is to say that everyone is of equal value, everyone simply has a different job which is based upon different experience and knowledge. In this respect a high-performance team is flat, non-hierarchal. A team leader is still in charge but shares the team leadership. Using the ship analogy again, in a high-performance team the whole team would be reading the map and determining the ships direction.

You do not need to change the team's hierarchy, after all you still need to show who is in charge. What is important, however, from this point on is how you think about your team. High-performance team members need to have complete autonomy and empowerment, they need to feel that they can express their views without fear of retribution or ridicule, they need to decide rules of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, overall, they need to rise up to a higher level of professionalism.

Try to think of your team as a high-performance team where everyone is equal in status and value. Think of team members as simply having different jobs, different backgrounds, experiences, knowledge, skills, and strengths. Thinking this way will make the lessons that follow easier to understand and put into practice.

What today's Employees want?

Today's Millennial generation unlike the Baby Boomers before them are vocal about what they want their workplace to look like, they will not accept old-style methods of traditional management which they view as managing, administering, stifling, unreasonable and unwarranted. They want managers who recognize them for their efforts, who work in a collaborative, supportive and motivational manner.

Today's employees care deeply about diversity and do not want to be treated as an employee but rather as colleagues, or partners. They believe (foolishly) that they should be promoted every year, regardless of performance and want to feel like (reasonably) that they have an open and honest relationship with their manager and co-workers. They want to know that their opinion is valued and receive a good deal of feedback.

The more their manager creates shared goals, the more they will feel a sense of being part of an 'in group'. That's important to today's employees because they believe it creates more accurate sharing of information, better collaboration, and motivation. They are passionate

about autonomy, they love it when they have choices, for them it creates a sense of having more meaningful work making them feel more in control.

They will not accept toxic behaviours from their bosses such as playing favourites, bullying or managers who abuse their position to gain monetary or sexual rewards, these are deeply disliked.

Finally, they want a say in how their workplace is managed, where free-thinking, empowerment and service and community are put ahead of self-interest. The combination of a progressive management style and being a member of a high-performance team are perfect for them, these fulfil their willingness and desire to work across teams, as well as their constant need for feedback, reinforcement, and praise for being tech-savvy. No matter how they are viewed, the simple truth is that today's employees look at work dramatically differently from the Baby Boomer generation that preceded them.

Things to do in your first Six months

Focus on relationships

It is very important to build trust, influence, and agree on mutual expectations with everyone you work with. The best way to do this is by establishing productive personal relationships. Simply focusing only on one-on-one relationships with team members is not enough to guarantee success.

Focus on team building.
During their first six months, new managers tend to fail to recognise and address their team-building responsibilities. You may be tempted to exclusively focus on your team member relationships only as against a view of the team. Individual team member performance is one thing; team performance is quite another. Working with your team to solve problems, make decisions, set direction, and review progress are just some of the things you need to do.

"When new managers focus solely on one-on-one relationships, they neglect a fundamental aspect of effective leadership: harnessing the collective power of the group to improve individual performance and commitment. By shaping team culture, the teams' norms and values, a manager can unleash the problem-solving abilities of the diverse talents that make up the team." Source: Linda A. Hill, Becoming A Manager, 1992.

Pay attention to detail.
"Micro-managing and paying attention to detail are not the same thing. Paying attention to detail is what good managers must do to ensure that work is done correctly. It involves assigning work, allowing staff to do it their way, and ensuring it gets done according to agreed standards.

Checking-in during team members work progress to see if assistance is needed and to ensure that work will be completed on time is not micromanaging; it is paying attention to detail. Hold staff accountable for quality work and deadlines but give them the freedom to determine how to do their job. Tell them what you want, but not how to do it. Encourage team members to try new ideas.
Allocate enough time and create reasonable deadlines that allow for innovation and creativity to take place. Check on progress using your Weekly Check-Ins and as an opportunity to offer help and resources; this should also be a learning opportunity for you." Source: Eric J. Romero.

Delegate.
Doing all the work by yourself is no longer the goal. Productive managers drive team results by delegating tasks to their team members (team members or subordinates are known as direct reports). It's not possible to do all the work yourself anymore. If you try to, your team members will stagnate, and productivity will slow. Plus, delegating shows trust in your team.
Shift your skillset.
Many new managers struggle because they rely too much on technical skills that aren't as necessary in a manager position. So, shift your mindset and your skillset and work on managing others.

Traps most new managers fall into

Relying on the same skills that got you promoted

It's easy to assume that the skills that made you a good mobile phone salesperson will make you a good mobile phone sales manager; however, this is not the case. Thinking that you can rely on your existing job knowledge and technical skills only to succeed as a manager is a mistake. You must take the time to develop good management and people skills; these are more important than your technical skills. While having knowledge (being a subject matter expert) is important, management requires an entirely different skill set. This is the most common mistake first-time managers make, not focussing on managing their team members or peers. Most people are promoted to the position of manager based on their previous excellent performance - but aren't given adequate management training.

Not managing upwards, downwards, and sideways

As the name suggests, this means managing in three directions. Before you were a manager, you only had to concern yourself with satisfying your manager's needs - managing upwards. Now that you have staff, you also need to concern yourself with their needs - managing downwards. And because you have other managers as peers, you need to manage sideways. Managing upwards means satisfying your manager's needs, responding to your manager's directions, and prioritising completing your manager's work requests ahead of your own. Be careful of the following:

Failing to speak regularly with your manager

Approaching your manager with a problem when you have not considered how the problem may be solved.
Giving your manager a nasty surprise. (The no-surprises rule.)
Doing anything that requires your manager to defend you.

Managing downwards means giving direction to your team members, allocating tasks to them, prioritising their jobs, and responding to their needs ahead of your own. Managing sideways means being attentive to the needs of your peers.

Not asking for help

Not asking for help from your manager, team members, or indeed others is a mistake. Some new managers falsely believe that as a new manager, they should have all the answers and that if they don't, they are weak. Experienced managers know that no one has all the answers all the time. Knowledge, skills, and experience are only gained over time; it is easier to learn on the job if you can draw on the support and assistance of others.

Another reason new managers don't ask for help is that they believe it may damage or dilute their relationships with others. Sharing the fact that you don't know something, admitting to a mistake is in some new managers minds a risk that the information shared will be used against them. Take your manager as an example; as a new manager, you can develop a good, strong relationship with them simply by admitting your mistakes and by asking for help and advice.

Micromanaging

Many people confuse micro-management with attention to detail. Micro-managing has a negative connotation, and for a good reason. When a manager assigns work, tells capable team members exactly how to do it, monitors the work excessively, and takes over when the work is not done exactly as they wanted – that is micromanaging. The result is that team members never learn how to do their job or utilise their skills and creativity. Micromanaging discourages team members who will quickly lose interest, feeling that they have no sense of ownership in their work.

Micromanaging tells your team members that you do not trust them to do the job. When you constantly step in or second-guess their decisions, you're telling them that you know better than they do. Make sure to give your team members some latitude and let go of your desire to control every outcome.

Being an autocrat

A new manager can feel pressured by their team members to be a strong manager and get results. It is a mistake to push your team too hard by being unreasonable or demanding instead of supporting them. If you focus on being there for your team and giving them the guidance and support, they need, they will perform better.
Not establishing crystal clear objectives.
Which is a better objective?

Example 1: Increase sales.
Example 2: Increase sales by 20% and generate 10% more revenue.

Example 1: Reduce the number of default loans.
Example 2: Reduce the number of default loans by 10%.

Managers do and do not wield significant authority.

New managers often believe that their new position gives them more authority and, with that, the freedom and autonomy to do what they like. They find that they are now a part of a network of similar people, who are making relentless and often conflicting demands on them and instead of feeling free, they feel constrained.

The people who present the most difficulties don't fall under your control – peer managers, outside suppliers or managers in another business unit. A common mistake is ignoring these relationships, focussing too much on team members only. When you finally accept your network role, you can feel overwhelmed by its demands.

Authority flows from the manager's position.

New managers do have some authority despite the interdependencies that constrain them; the secret is how to best use it. The biggest mistake is becoming an autocrat, believing that doing this will get better and faster results which you will not. The best way forward is by realising that your new team members are the secret to your success. Just telling a team member to do something does not make it happen - in fact, the more talented the team member, the less likely they are to follow your orders. Fairly quickly, the realisation comes

that the source of your power is not your formal authority. Authority emerges only as you establish credibility with team members, peers, and your manager.

New managers need to demonstrate their management competence over and above everything else. This can be a problem because many new managers believe their technical knowledge and competence is the most important thing they have to offer, and they rely on it far too much.

Managers must control their team members.
Because of insecurity in their new role, most new managers can become too controlling to get compliance from their team members. They fear that their team members will walk all over them if they don't establish control early on. To gain this control, they often rely too much on their formal authority.

Even if they achieve some measure of compliance, whether through formal authority or authority earned over time, compliance does not equal commitment, and if team members are not committed, they won't be happy or produce good work. Sharing your power with their team members is the right approach. In this way, you command more influence that allows your people to take the initiative.

Summary

Honeymoon period. - You are not expected to perform miracles or deliver much in your first month.

Have a plan. - The most successful managers have a clear plan of what that first month, two months, and three months will look like.

Get to know your team. - To be successful, you must transition from getting the job done to get the work done through other people. This requires a new level of self-awareness, a different range of skills, and a new perspective that redefines success. Meet your staff, explain a little about your background, but only a little, a couple of sentences, people aren't interested in what you have done. Talk mainly about them, ask what their job is, what they do, ask what their top 3 issues are.

Start doing check-Ins. - When you first start, set up one-on-one meetings with each team member to discuss their role, goals, and any challenges, they may currently be facing.

Learn as much as possible. - First off, make it your mission to learn everything you can. Review team member personnel files and past performance reviews.

Change your focus. - A critical mindset to adopt is that you are now a manager and not a team member; you must think about controlling, planning, and organising against just doing.

Be on model behaviour. - You are now a role model for your team members and others to copy. You must set a good example with everything you do.

Manage upwards. - Being the boss doesn't mean you can ignore your manager. It's more important than ever to keep them in the loop since you'll be reporting the progress of an entire team of people.

Focus on relationships. - It is very important to build trust, influence, and agree on mutual expectations with everyone you work with.

Focus on team building. - During your first six months, you may tend to fail to recognise and address your team-building responsibilities. You may be tempted to exclusively focus on your team member relationships only as against a view of the team. Individual team member

performance is one thing; team performance is quite another. Working with your team to solve problems, make decisions, set direction, and review progress are just some of the things you need to do.

Pay attention to detail. - Micromanaging and paying attention to detail is not the same. Paying attention to detail is what good managers must do to ensure that work is done correctly. It involves assigning work, allowing staff to do it their way, and ensuring it gets done according to agreed standards.

Delegate. - Doing all the work by yourself is no longer the goal. Productive managers drive team results by delegating tasks to their team members.

Relying on the same skills that got you promoted. - It's easy to assume that the skills that made you a good mobile phone salesperson will make you a good mobile phone sales manager; however, this is not the case. Thinking that you can rely on your existing job knowledge and technical skills only to succeed as a manager is a mistake. You must take the time to develop good management and people skills; these are more important than your technical skills. While having knowledge (being a subject matter expert) is important, management requires an entirely different skill set.

Being an autocrat. - A new manager can feel pressured by their team members to be a strong manager and get results. It is a mistake to push your team too hard by being unreasonable or demanding instead of supporting them. If you focus on being there for your team and giving them the guidance and support, they need, they will perform better.

Planning and Time Management

Planning and time management is the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific tasks. It enables you to work smarter, not harder - so that you get more done in less time, especially when your time is tight, and pressures or stresses are high. Good planning and time management enables you to complete more in a shorter period, makes you more productive and efficient, lowers your stress and anxiety, and helps you procrastinate less and produce a higher quality of work, getting more of your important work done in a day.

Make a task list

This stops you from feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work you must do. It stops you from missing deadlines or forgetting something important. A task list is a prioritized list of all the tasks you need to carry out, it lists everything you have to do, with the most critical tasks at the top and the least important at the bottom. This means all your tasks are written down in one place, so you don't forget anything.

A task list is essential if you're going to control your workload; using a task list effectively, you'll be much better organized and more reliable, and you will experience less stress. Prioritizing means spending your time on high-value or the most critical tasks first; helping you to meet your deadlines making you more productive and a better manager.

- Write down all the tasks that you need to complete. Break down larger tasks into smaller steps or sub-tasks. (Ideally, these should take no longer than 1-2 hours to complete each.)
- Run through all the tasks and allocate a priority. (Use High, Medium, and Low or Mandatory, Highly Desirable, Nice to have) based on when the task is due.
- If too many tasks have a high priority, run through the list again and demote the less important ones. Once you have done this, rewrite the list in priority order again.

Always spend 30 minutes at the end of the day organizing tasks on your list for the next day. It is fastest to use a simple pad and pen to make your list; otherwise, use a word processor, spreadsheet, scheduling, or teamwork software.

Use for small projects

Task lists can help you get and stay on top of important projects and piles of tasks or decisions. When working on a project, there are many tasks to do and many people to do them - staying on top of this can seem daunting.

For a project, structure your list by team member, writing out tasks and deadlines for every person on the project. As you write out your tasks, check your team task list to see what's due that day. Task lists are for when you have a small number of tasks (say 10- 20) that you need to complete. When you have more extensive tasks lists, you need to move to a task scheduling App like MS Project, designed to manage larger and more complex task lists and projects.

Create a daily schedule—and stick with it

Don't start your day without a task list. Putting everything on paper will prevent you from lying awake at night tossing and turning over the tasks running through your head. Instead, your subconscious goes to work on your plans while you are asleep, which means you can wake up in the morning with new insights for the workday. If you can't do it the day before, make sure you write out your task list first thing in the morning. You'll find that the time you spend creating a task list (a clear plan) is nothing compared to the time you'll lose jumping between tasks when you lack such a plan.

Prioritize wisely

As you organize your task list, prioritization is critical for successful time management at work. Start by eliminating tasks that you shouldn't be performing in the first place. Then identify the three or four most important tasks and do those first—that way, you make sure you finish the essentials. Evaluate your task list and make sure you have organized it based on the importance of a task rather than its urgency. Important responsibilities support the achievement of your goals, whereas urgent responsibilities require immediate attention and are associated with the achievement of someone else's goals. We tend to let the urgent dominate when we should focus on activities that support our business goals.

Group similar tasks together

Save yourself time and mental energy by completing all of one type of task before moving on to the next. For example, create separate chunks of time for answering emails, making phone calls, filing, and so on. Don't answer emails and messages as they come in, as doing so is a distraction - which is an inefficient use of time. Turn off your phone and email notifications to eliminate the temptation to check at unappointed times.

Multi-task a maximum of three tasks

When working alone, aim to focus on the task at hand and no more than two other tasks or projects simultaneously. You will need to keep some time available for when team members come to see you. It can be tempting to multi-task more than three tasks at a time, but you're just shooting yourself in the foot when you attempt to do so. You lose time and decrease productivity when switching tasks.

Learn to say no

You cannot manage your work if you can't say No. Only you know how much work you must do and how much time you have available. Declining a request to focus on more important tasks is exactly what you should be doing. And if you take on a task that is going nowhere, consider letting it go. Rather than doing a lot of tasks that yield little or no value, complete fewer tasks that create more value. Use the 80/20 rule—80% of your output comes from 20% of your inputs and focus on those tasks that produce the most value. Finally, if you can't say no, delegate it.

Actions

1. Start your day with a clear intention of what you want to do.
2. Set specific goals (What needs to be done.)

3. Focus on high-value tasks.
4. Make a task list.
5. Prioritize and regularly review your task list.
6. Plan for tomorrow and use deadlines.
7. Keep a weekly and monthly calendar.
8. Try to minimize interruptions, but at the same time allow for distractions.
9. Aim not to multi-task.
10. Review your day at the end of your day.

Summary

1. **Make a task list**. - This stops you from feeling overwhelmed by the amount of work you must do. It stops you from missing deadlines or forgetting something important. Always spend 30 minutes at the end of the day organizing tasks on your list for the next day.

2. **Use for small projects**. - Task lists can help you get and stay on top of important projects and piles of tasks or decisions. When working on a project, there are many tasks to do and many people to do them - staying on top of this can seem daunting.

3. **Create a daily schedule—and stick with it**. - You'll find that the time you spend creating a clear plan is nothing compared to the time you'll lose jumping between tasks when you lack such a plan.

4. **Prioritize wisely**. - As you organize your task list, prioritization is critical for successful time management at work. Start by eliminating tasks that you shouldn't be performing in the first place. Then identify the three or four most important tasks and do those first.

5. **Group similar tasks together**. - Save yourself time and mental energy by completing all of one type of task before moving on to the next.

6. **Multi-task a maximum of three tasks**. - When working alone, aim to focus on the task at hand and no more than two other tasks or projects simultaneously.

7. **Learn to say no**. - You cannot manage your work if you can't say No. Only you know how much work you must do and how much time you have available. Declining a request to focus on more important tasks is exactly what you should be doing.

Meetings people want to attend

This is about how to run team meetings, their format, protocols, sharing leadership, and how to tell if the meetings are being effective.

One of the most common complaints voiced by members of low-performing teams is that too much time is spent in meetings. Meetings must be focused, timely, and necessary, and be used to solve problems, make decisions, disseminate information, and enhance your skills. These things make for a much better meeting experience.

Need to address only those topics that need collective, cross-boundary expertise, such as corporate strategy, enterprise-resource allocation, or how to capture synergies across business units. Steering clear of anything that can be handled by individual businesses or functions, to also foster a sense of purpose.

Meeting Content

Contributions need to be focussed on specific content, for example this content suits most situations:

1. Corporate strategy.
2. Enterprise-resource allocation.
3. Business unit synergies.
4. Customer satisfaction pains and gains.
5. Staff satisfaction levels.
6. Service Delivery.
7. Strategic initiatives such as major projects.
8. Resolution of disagreements.

Meeting Format

1. Each team member talks in turn to their items but only telling other team members things they 'need to know'.
2. Questions, discussion then actions are agreed.
3. The next team member now talks.
4. The last person to talk is the manager, who delegates tasks they have noted down.
   - The manager asks for volunteers to take on a task. Tasks are not automatically assigned based on discipline or field of expertise.
   - Manager's tasks have a highest priority.

Meeting Protocols

1. Do not use an Agenda or Minutes. (A high-performance team does not need to minute an individual's actions as accepting an action is the same as making a commitment; therefore, there is no need for follow up.)

2. Encourage quiet or introverted team members.
3. Do not speak over or interrupt others.
4. Expect that others will be truthful.
5. Encourage views on effectiveness.
6. Critique each other's ideas and comments, rather than criticise an individual.
7. No assignment of blame, rather an autopsy.

Shared Leadership

Shared leadership is when the manager shares their decision-making rights with all team members by promoting the interests of the team members and by practising social equality. Sharing leadership calls for a great deal of personal initiative from individual team members and is a vital quality of high-performance teams. Shared leadership invigorates you to deliver exceptional outcomes in the workplace and achieve synergies in your results by working collaboratively with all each other.

Shared leadership is mostly practiced in team meetings. During the meeting the manager remains as silent as possible, allowing the team members to jointly make decisions and agree on actions thereby sharing the team leadership.

Another aspect of shared leadership is when the team leadership role is taken up by various team members, according to need at the time. An example of this is the leadership of a major activity where one team member is a subject matter expert and will lead the team (including the manager) much as a project manager would.

As a result of this specific thinking style there are some interesting changes in the team leadership dynamic. Even though there might be a titular leader, everyone on the team starts to take responsibility for 'leading the team'. In this sense, the leadership is concerned with ensuring that everyone wants to provide honest, open, critical and performance focused feedback that is designed on moving the performance of the team forward. However junior or senior, however involved in the performance, the mutual accountability characteristic really does ensure that everyone is sharing knowledge, ideas, experiences, and perspectives with a view to making the team a better performing whole.

How to tell if the meetings are Working

If the meetings are working well, and a collective consciousness is developing, then people will exhibit several defining characteristics.

1. There is a sense of real energy being released during the meeting.
2. Everyone talks and listens in roughly equal measure, keeping contributions short and sweet.
3. People face one another, and their conversations and gestures are energetic.
4. People connect directly with one another, not just with the manager.
5. People carry on back-channel or side conversations within the team.

6. People periodically break, go exploring outside the team, and bring information back.

Tips for a good meeting

1. Do not wait for all team members to arrive.
2. Ban the use of laptops.
3. Same room each week.
4. Stand up instead of sitting.
5. Rotating chair.
6. No war stories.
7. Open-ended finish time.

How to have a Conversation

Have a conversation like you are doing an interview. We've all had really great conversations. We've had them before. We know what it's like. The kind of conversation where you walk away feeling engaged and inspired, or where you feel like you've made a real connection, or you've been perfectly understood. There is no reason why most of your interactions can't be like that. Here are some basic rules to guide you. Use any or all of them, but master at least one to enjoy better conversations.

1. **Listen**. I cannot tell you how many really important people have said that listening is perhaps the most, the number one most important skill that you could develop. Buddha said, and I'm paraphrasing, "If your mouth is open, you're not learning."
   Why do we not listen to each other? Because we'd rather talk. When I'm talking, I'm in control. I don't have to hear anything I'm not interested in. I'm the centre of attention. I can bolster my own identity. But there's another reason: We get distracted. The average person talks at about 225 word per minute, but we can listen at up to 500 words per minute. So, our minds are filling in those other 275 words. And look, I know, it takes effort and energy to actually pay attention to someone, but if you can't do that, you're not in a conversation.

2. **Don't multitask.** Be present, be in the moment. Don't think about your argument you had with your boss. Don't think about what you're going to have for dinner. Don't be half in and half out of the conversation.

3. **Let yourself learn something.** Everyone you will ever meet knows something that you don't. Everybody is an expert in something.

4. **Use open-ended questions.** Start your questions with who, what, when, where why or how. Try asking questions like, "What was that like?" "How did that feel?" Because then they might have to stop for a moment and think about it, and you're going to get a much more interesting response.

5. **Go with the flow.** That means thoughts, stories and ideas will come into your mind and you need to let them go out of your mind, otherwise you stop listening

6. **Don't equate your experience with theirs.** If they're talking about the trouble they're having at work, don't tell them about how much you hate your job. It's not the same. It is never the same. All experiences are individual. And, more importantly, it is not about you. You don't need to take that moment to prove how amazing you are or how much you've suffered.

7. **Try not to repeat yourself**. It's condescending, and it's really boring, and we tend to do it a lot.

8. **Stay out of the weeds**. People don't care about the years, the names, the dates, all those details that you're struggling to come up with in your mind. They don't care. What they care about is you. They care about what you're like, what you have in common. So, forget the details. Leave them out.

Source: Celeste Headlee, Writer, and Radio Host.

Team Rules – What is acceptable

The establishment of clear ground rules gives a team its cultural and psychologically safe baseline. It is a fundamental step in team development. In the case of a new team, rules also help remove the inevitable confusion and anxiety that usually exists as new team members get to know each other. Establishing team rules is a simple way to negotiate and establish team behaviours and practices, both in general and temporarily say for a project. Team rules increase psychological safety and reduce potential conflict among team members by:

1. Aligning relationships on appropriate and inappropriate behaviours.

2. Making team values explicit.

3. Creating a cultural baseline.

4. Not assigning blame.

5. Allowing legitimate measures in case of non-compliance.

6. Preventing a sense of inequity and injustice to develop within the team.

Team rules are a behavioural framework, an agreement a team makes around the behaviours it will or will not accept. It includes team behaviours and values, decision-making rules, coordinating and communicating, framing expectations such as no assignment of blame in case of failure, dealing with issues, accepting diversity, taking risks, asking for help, mutual support, and accepting diversity appreciation.

For example, if you agree upon honesty as a behaviour in a team rules framework, you prioritise being honest above most other things. If everyone agrees with each other that the team will be 'supportive', then it's much easier to reward supportive behaviour. At the same time, if someone in the team isn't being supportive, it's much easier for anyone to say, "we said we were going to be supportive, and I felt you weren't when you did XYZ". This removes the personal attack and is much easier to manage and deliver.

Why have Team Rules?

1. The establishment of clear ground rules gives a team its cultural baseline.
2. We want team rules because it is a simple way to describe team behaviours and practices, both in general and temporarily say for a project.

Team Rules Exercise

Break into groups.

Consider the table below, select those rules you think should apply to your team.

Example Team Rules	✓
Neglecting your family is unacceptable.	
We actively support our staff.	

Everyone has a voice.	
If it's not written down, it doesn't exist.	
Problems are fixed once.	
Team members do not speak over or interrupt others.	
Be prepared to present evidence.	
Never assign blame, only criticise a lack of process or a bad procedure.	
Make everyone feel that there are no negative consequences for self-image, status, or career based on what they say.	
Never ridicule, humiliate, or show a lack of respect to anyone.	
Always conduct yourself professionally.	
Asking for and offering help is expected.	
Failure is ok; having a go is what's important.	
Management submissions are restricted to one page.	
Our team is non-hierarchical, and we are non-competitive.	
It's not what you say, but how you say it.	
Sometimes it's ok to ask for forgiveness rather than permission.	

Next answer these two questions:

1. **What is acceptable?** What are the behaviours we want to abide by in our team?
What is IN. e.g., Being on time, have no meetings on Friday, be open to new ideas, complete work as agreed, informing on progress, doing it right the first-time.

2. **What is unacceptable? What are the behaviours we do not want in our team?**
What is OUT. e.g., Being disengaged, a one-fits-all solution, being late, applying procedures blindly.

Come back together as a team and share your groups results.

Using a whiteboard or flipchart, list what is IN and what is OUT: - creating a draft set of team rules. Continue discussing until a final list of rules is agreed upon.

New Behaviours

1. The team rules represent new team member behaviours to be followed by all.
2. Everyone is mutually accountable to each other for obeying the rules.

Team Engagement

Engagement is a method for connecting with your team members and connecting their work to both your needs and those of the organization. Team member engagement is when a team member is emotionally and behaviourally connected to their job, it shows their investment in their workplace.

Engaged team members are highly focused and intensely involved in their work. They are enthusiastic with a sense of urgency. Engaged behaviour is persistent, proactive, and adaptive in ways that expand job roles. Engaged team members go beyond their job descriptions, they feel focused and concentrate on how they approach what they do - satisfied team members feel pleasant, content, and gratified.

Engaged team members produce superior results, are more productive, loyal and stay at an organisation longer, linking team member engagement to better business outcomes. Based on over 50 years of team member engagement research, Gallup has shown that engaged team members produce better business outcomes than others - across industry, company size and nationality, and in good economic times and bad. Business units in the top quartile of Gallup's global employee engagement database, for instance, are 17% more productive and 21% more profitable than those in the bottom quartile.

There are three forms of Engagement:

1. **Engaged** team members are highly involved in and enthusiastic about their work and workplace. They are psychological 'owners' who drive high performance and innovation and move the organisation forward.
2. **Non-Engaged** team members are psychologically unattached to their work and their company because their engagement needs are not being met; they're putting in time but not energy or passion into their work.
3. **Actively Disengaged** team members are unhappy at work; they are resentful that their needs aren't being met and act out their unhappiness accordingly. Every day, these team members potentially undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish.

Disengaged team members feel no real connection to their jobs and tend to do the bare minimum, they do as little as possible to get by. Disengagement can show in several ways, a 9-to-5 clock mentality or a tendency to seal oneself off from other team members. It becomes most noticeable when someone who's ordinarily outgoing and enthusiastic seems to fall by the wayside and has nothing positive to contribute. They may resent their jobs, tend to gripe to co-workers and drag down office morale.

Your Teams level of Engagement

To get a deeper understanding of your team's current level of engagement, consider how your team members would answer the following questions:

1. Does your manager understand your out of work stresses and obligations?

2. Do you know what is expected of you at work?
3. Do you have the materials and equipment to do your work right?
4. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
5. In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
6. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
7. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
8. At work, do your opinions seem to count?
9. Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
10. Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
11. Do you have a best friend at work?
12. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
13. In the last year, have you had opportunities to learn and grow?

Your Role as Manager

Engagement levels are significantly influenced by the manager (through job assignments, trust, recognition, day-to-day communications, and so on.) When a manager doesn't meet with team members one-on-one or at all or neglects to provide on-the-job training, team members will view that manager unfavourably compared to those who meet with their managers regularly. Team member engagement increases dramatically when the daily experiences of team members include positive relationships with their manager. *Managers who regularly meet with their team members triple the level of their engagement.*

Team members want relationships, particularly with a manager who can coach them to the next level. Between regular meetings and touch bases, one on ones let managers see the full spectrum of the work their team is working on. The manager is after all the one who sets expectations, highlights opportunities, improves collaboration, and often distributes the workload. This can only happen successfully when the manager is involved in and engaged with their team.

Managers are mentors who need to focus on the individual needs of each team member. It is also important for managers to be able to flex their mentoring styles - for example, the needs of individual team members may require a manager to be a "teaching" mentor where the manager passes along expertise on how to achieve something, or a "facilitating mentor" where the manager asks questions and listens instead of telling or giving answers.

> Your most valuable assets are your team members. Disengaged team members feel miserable while at work, and that misery follows them home, compounding their stress and negatively affecting their overall well-being. Team member engagement should be a manager's primary responsibility.

When team members have the materials and equipment, they need to do their job right; they care more about the fate of your organisation. High-performance managers need to build genuine relationships with their team members. The best managers understand that each team member is different, that each has various successes and challenges. Knowing

their team members as people first, these managers accommodate their team members uniqueness while managing them toward high performance.

How much of your time do you spend working on your team member relationships? Building strong professional relationships and an environment of trust and respect takes time and effort, but it pays huge dividends in performance. Team member engagement is accomplished by doing regular Check-Ins, giving feedback, and providing autonomy and empowerment.

Regular Check-Ins

Check-Ins are one-hour sessions best held fortnightly that are a vital part of the team member/manager relationship. It's where team members get individualised attention, and the manager provides mentoring. It provides you with a management tool to develop your team members to their fullest potential. This is a free-form meeting for all the pressing work issues, ideas and frustrations that do not fit neatly into status reports, email, and other less personal and intimate mechanisms.

When managers hold regular one-on-one meetings with team members, they gain insights about them which helps to build stronger, higher performing teams. Team members in return feel that someone cares about them as people, and cares about their personal development. The more conversations managers have with their team members, the more engaged they become.

Holding Check-Ins also means that status or progress reports can be dispensed with.

Regular Check-Ins help you stay in the loop, alerting you to potential problems at an early stage so that you can step in, correct, or influence events before things get out of control. The overall objective is to build a supportive and trusted relationship and discuss and influence your team members toward improved 'work performance' with positive outcomes. It is also the opportunity to motivate team members to continue with newly learned behaviours that increase their effectiveness and stop behaviours that reduces their effectiveness.

Giving this kind of feedback consistently and well establishes and strengthens trust. The more trust and rapport you can build, the more readily your team members will adopt the new behaviours, accept, and act on feedback, creating a pattern of learning and growth. It is important to have genuine conversations about performance, with the intent of getting a team member to improve. All feedback is an opportunity to improve.

How to run a Check-In

Set up a one-on-one meeting with each team member using this broad agenda:

1. To get to know the team member better.
2. Review work progress.
3. Resolve any issues.

4. Remove roadblocks.
5. Understand out of work stresses and obligations.
6. Discuss personal development.

Recognise that team members have individual differences in terms of needs and desires, aim to challenge them with stretch tasks by exploiting their strengths. Accept that there will be individual differences between team members (e.g., some team members require more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still others more task structure). Aim to understand their preferred working style and what they do best as this is an area you need to focus on in terms of achieving high engagement and job satisfaction. Hold team members accountable for quality work and deadlines but give them the freedom to determine how to do their job. Tell them what you want, but not how to do it.

Suggested Approach

1. Open by asking the team member what their top three issues are.
2. Discuss something that the team member recently did well.
3. Discuss projects, activities they are involved with.
4. *Discuss team dynamics, how well the team is working together and how well new behaviours and training is going.*
5. Give updates about any new company, team, or project-related news.
6. Discuss a personal development plan. What are the team members training needs? What are their aspirations and are they realistic? What do you both need to do to help the team member achieve their goals? A personal development plan can be as simple as a list of actions and goals.
7. Include an informal performance review, making positive comments like "I think you're doing a great job." and any negative observations such as saying, "That last email you sent me was far too long." - address failings by talking about how to address them.
8. Agree on follow-up actions.

Make Check-Ins a Priority

Make holding Check-Ins a priority. Remember that this interaction is being held for the team member's benefit, so they need to talk to you about their work, the challenges they face and any professional issues. Make sure you ask questions to understand better what they are trying to say.

Check-Ins can replace Annual Performance Appraisals

Check-In sessions can replace annual appraisals because engagement more closely follows the natural cycle of work. When rapid innovation is a source of competitive advantage, as it is now in many companies and industries, that means future needs are continually changing. Because organisations won't necessarily want employees to keep doing the same things, it doesn't make sense to hang on to a system built mainly to assess and hold people accountable for past or current practices.

Businesses no longer have clear annual cycles. Instead, projects are short-term and tend to change along the way, so employees' goals and tasks can't be plotted out a year in advance with much accuracy. In the words of one Deloitte manager: "The conversations are more holistic. They're about goals and strengths, not just about past performance. Trust people, not policies. Reward candour and throw away the standard playbook."

While team members need to be held accountable for their results, most people perform best when given tools to succeed and coaching to improve performance. Companies that have reengineered their performance review processes and have eliminated ratings, have found substantial improvements in engagement and performance as a result. Shifting away from annual performance appraisals toward a process of continuous coaching and development is a new role for managers. Ideally, conversations between managers and team members occur when projects finish, milestones are reached, challenges pop up, and so forth, allowing people to solve problems in current performance while also developing skills for the future.

Moving away from the traditional focus on individual accountability (the annual appraisal) makes it easier to foster and evaluate teamwork especially given that the move toward team-based work often conflicted with individual appraisals and rewards. Now that the labour market has tightened and keeping good people is once again critical, many companies have been trying to eliminate "dissatisfiers" that drive team members away. Naturally, annual reviews are on that list since the process is widely reviled, and the focus on numerical ratings interferes with people's learning. Replacing this system with feedback delivered right after client engagements and project completions helps managers do better coaching and allows your team members to process and apply the advice more effectively.

Engagement means giving Autonomy and Empowerment

Team members who do not have autonomy or empowerment require external motivation, whereas team members who do possess autonomy and empowerment do not. Autonomy and empowerment are critical attributes of high-performing teams; without them, you have frustrated team members who are constantly reminded that they're not trusted to make even small decisions let alone the bigger ones; this saps motivation and leads to resentment.

Do your team members make decisions on their own? Or do you have the final say on every or most decisions? If you fall into the latter, you're hindering your team's ability to get results. If every decision must go through you, this slows workflow often with your team's work grinding to a halt. Furthermore, not allowing team members to make decisions demonstrates a lack of trust. You're telling them that you doubt their abilities to make the right choices.

Remove as many barriers and constraints as possible imposed on your team members. Then tell them "You have my permission and support to do as you need". You can then tell if they are feeling and acting in an autonomous and empowered manner, because if they are, they will reduce how often they email you, because there is simply no need.

Feedback and the role of Recognition

Team members work best when they are using their strengths, and a person's strengths aren't always on display. Sometimes they require a precise trigger to turn them on. Squeeze the right trigger, and a person will push themselves harder and persevere in the face of resistance. Squeeze the wrong one, and the person may well shut down.

The most powerful trigger is feedback and recognition. Great managers refine and extend this insight. They realize that each team member plays to a slightly different tune and audience. To excel as a manager, you must be able to match the team member to the audience they value the most. One audience might be their peers; in which case the best way to praise them would be to publicly celebrate an achievement. Another audience might be you; the most powerful recognition in this case would be a one-on-one conversation where you tell the team member quietly but vividly why they are such a valuable member of the team. Another team member might see the best form of recognition as some type of professional or technical award. Yet another might value feedback only from customers.

Listen to the Team

Your job is to provide direction, guidance, and support because you can see further ahead of the team. It is up to you to remove roadblocks. Listen to what your team are telling you and act on what you hear. Help them to be successful. Give honest, direct, frank feedback on their performance and *insist* on practicing the new training program behaviours.

Constantly offer Help

At the conclusion of *every* conversation with a team member – offer your help. Interestingly, this rarely if ever gets asked for – but knowing that it is available to them is your way of saying "I'm here to support you always, I have your back."

Engagement means having an Open-Door Policy

There are only two reasons to have your office door closed:

1. To tell team members to keep away from you, which you never want to do.
2. To do urgent work to the extent that you cannot handle an interruption.

I consider option 2 as the only valid option. Leaving your office door open always is a way of publicly and privately stating that you want people to approach you, give you unsolicited feedback or drop in for a chat. You must always be approachable; any barrier you put up is a roadblock to communicating with you; a closed-door also is a way of telling team members that they are less than you, that is, they do not command the same value as you.

Engagement means being close to Remote Team Members

Consider communication with team members who work remotely; the best way to keep in touch is about having frequent face time meetings (and two-monthly in-person meetings). When managers understand the importance of their relationship with their remote team

members, they begin to individualise their approach to helping these team members achieve higher performance and encourage collaboration and teamwork.

High-performance managers need to understand that remote team members' expectations are different from office workers' expectations, especially if remote team members feel isolated, which can result in as much as a 21% drop in performance. High-performance managers can't manage the modern remote workforce using a traditional management approach. Here are some ways to defeat isolation and increase engagement.

Defeat negative misperceptions of remote team members

A negative misperception of remote team members is that they are less productive and collaborative than office employees. High-performance managers recognise that most remote team members are mostly 25% more productive than their in-office colleagues.

Know your team members

High-performance managers need to take the time to understand their remote team members, especially how they prefer to communicate and to discover how they think and respond to specific kinds of workplace situations.

1. Identify your remote team members strengths (natural talents), so you know how they work best.
2. Who do they prefer to work with most often?
3. Which of their working partnerships produces the best results?
4. Make sure the remote team member understands your expectations of them and their work. Set clear expectations indicating your attention to, understanding of and respect for their job role.
5. Provide support, equipment, and information. It is extremely frustrating when held back by inadequate resources and support. You must ensure that remote team members have the materials, equipment, and information they need to do their job. Connect remote team members to colleagues doing similar work and ensure that remote team members are a part of team meetings to foster a sense of connectedness and belonging.

Performance Goals

Team members cannot be inspired if they don't know what they're working toward and don't have explicit goals. Performance goals are individual work goals based on the team members position and their position accountabilities. Team members must care about achieving their goals, whether because they stand to gain extrinsic rewards, like recognition, pay, and promotions, or intrinsic rewards, such as satisfaction and a sense of meaning.

As team members are motivated to pursue individual initiatives with your support, there should be an expectation that they will deliver excellence and be more passionate. Goals should be stretch goals creating an internal drive to accomplish the difficult.

Performance goals need to

- Work towards achieving your strategic goals by being clear with reasoning to allow team members to easily understand how and why their goals are necessary and how they fit in.
- Relate to the position responsibilities.
- Support achievement of improved team performance.
- Act as individual Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Be measurable so that a goals achievement is easily identifiable.
- Have beginning and endpoints, so team members can work to reach the finish line.

Examples

- Improve communication skills over the next quarter.
- Implement new quality assurance methods within three months.
- Increase team productivity by 30% over the next 12 months.
- Support, manage and achieve change targets within the allocated time when it occurs.
- Increase your team's staff retention rate to 80% over the next 12 months.
- Clear all high-priority work requests within two months.
- Meet monthly budget revenue targets.

Actions

1. Have copies of the organization vision, your own strategic needs, and each team members position responsibilities.
2. Using these documents, identify the team member goals, aiming for goals that support your business and management goals. Try to make them challenging by making them outside of the team members ordinary knowledge and comfort zone.
3. Ensure that each goal is measurable.
4. Complete your performance goals documentation and schedule a meeting with each team member to discuss.

5. Do not assume that the team member always knows how to accomplish their goals. Be prepared to discuss approaches with them but only if a team member raises the question of 'how'.

Summary

1. **Performance goals**. - Team members cannot be inspired if they don't know what they're working toward and don't have explicit goals. Performance goals are individual work goals based on the team members position and their position accountabilities. Team members must care about achieving their goals, whether because they stand to gain extrinsic rewards, like recognition, pay, and promotions, or intrinsic rewards, such as satisfaction and a sense of meaning.

2. **Performance goals need to**. - Work towards achieving your strategic goals by being clear with reasoning to allow team members to easily understand how and why their goals are necessary and how they fit in. Relate to the position responsibilities. Support achievement of improved team performance. Be measurable so that a goals achievement is easily identifiable.

Delegation

Delegation is defined as shifting authority and responsibility for specific functions, tasks, or decisions from one person (usually a manager) to another person – a team member. It provides autonomy and training to team members and allows you to load share your work as there's only so much that you can achieve working on your own. You can achieve much more using your team; that's why it's so important to delegate and do it well.

Delegating the right tasks to the right team members can be tough. Delegating, or giving authority, responsibility, and decision-making control to a team member or a team, is a behaviour of good managers with - follow through to ensure completion and recognition.

To start with, you need to identify what tasks you will delegate and to who. This means that you need to understand what your team is all about; you need individual performance goals. Only then will you think about your team's skills, experience, and competencies and start matching people to tasks that help you and your team members goals.

When delegating, you must explain your reasonings' for delegating a task to a team member; just telling someone that you trust them without giving them all the details of what a task requires sends mixed signals. Show team members that you trust them to do what's right by sharing all relevant information with them. You must also provide feedback to the team member in the form of a constructive observation (not a criticism) or praise. This will make the process of delegating in the future easier.

Some managers resent the idea that a team member may get the credit for completing a task or a project. In contrast, a good manager does their utmost to make certain that team members always receive credit and publicly appraises them accordingly. They also load up their team members with a heavy workload as this makes the team member perform at their best (busy people achieve more).

When you're deciding how to delegate work, ask yourself the following questions.

- Do I need to monitor this task?
- Will this work help the team member develop their skills, and will it employ their strengths?
- Do I have time to teach the team member how to do the task?
- Do I expect tasks of this nature to reoccur?

Benefits of delegation

- It frees up your time so you can achieve more. By delegating, you will free yourself to focus on more critical projects and tasks; you will also help grow and develop your team members.
- If you keep saying, "I'll just do it myself", your work will pile up and make you less efficient. Successful managers know delegating increases everyone's productivity.

- When done correctly, team members are motivated, feel involved, and grow professionally.
- When team members challenge their skill sets, their productivity increases.
- When a manager uses delegation to develop their team members, they are better placed to know who has the skills and strengths to take on other tasks.
- When team members collaborate on a project, this allows for ideas being shared, for people to have a voice and for team ideas to grow.

What prevents good delegation?

Managers who are stressed and are in constant firefighting mode, that is, they go from crisis to crisis, will almost certainly fail to delegate as firefighting is reactive and not proactive. Managers won't delegate due to the following.

- Ego: If I do it, it will be better.
- Time: It will take too long to explain what's required.
- Accountability: Am I accountable if it goes wrong?
- Skills Gaps: My team members don't possess the necessary skills.
- Authority Threat: Delegation reduces my authority.
- Fear: The assigned task will not be carried out accurately, or the team member will fail.
- Trust: I don't trust my team enough.

Actions

1. What is the goal? What is the final objective and what results are needed to achieve it? What parts can be delegated?
2. Who is the right person for the task? Who has the right skills to do the work? How might this task help them develop? Will the task use their strengths?
3. Delegate. Have a conversation with the team member.

- Give an overview of the task. Include the importance of the task, the resources available, and why you have chosen the team member.
- Describe the details of the new responsibility. Define the scope of the role and set performance standards and intended results. Set clear expectations but do not say how the task should be completed.
- Have a conversation. Solicit questions, reactions, and ask for suggestions.
- Listen to the team members comments. Make sure they understand what is expected of them.
- Share how this impacts the team. Help establish priorities and relieve some of the pressure by getting someone else to share some of the team members routine tasks for the duration of the work. Make sure to notify others who are affected by the team member's new task.
- Be encouraging. Express confidence in the team members ability.
- Establish checkpoints, results, deadlines, and ways to monitor progress. The entire discussion should be a collaborative process.

4. Stay in touch. Keep in contact with the team member and observe the checkpoints you agreed to at the outset. Remember, delegating means letting go.
5. Recognize and reward. Acknowledge the team member for successful completion of the task. Source: Google. Project Oxygen.

Summary

1. **Delegation.** - Is defined as shifting authority and responsibility for specific functions, tasks, or decisions from one person (usually a manager) to another person – a team member. It provides autonomy and training to team members and allows you to load share your work as there's only so much that you can achieve working on your own. You can achieve much more using your team; that's why it's so important to delegate and do it well.

2. **Benefits of delegation**. - It frees up your time so you can achieve more. By delegating, you will free yourself to focus on more critical projects and tasks; you will also help grow and develop your team members. If you keep saying, "I'll just do it myself", your work will pile up and make you less efficient. Successful managers know delegating increases everyone's productivity. When done correctly, team members are motivated, feel involved, and grow professionally. When team members challenge their skill sets, their productivity increases.

3. **What prevents good delegation?** Managers who are stressed and are in constant firefighting mode, that is, they go from crisis to crisis, will almost certainly fail to delegate as firefighting is reactive and not proactive.

4. **Managers who won't delegate due to the following**. Ego: If I do it, it will be better. Time: It will take too long to explain what's required. Accountability: Am I accountable if it goes wrong? Skills Gaps: My team members don't possess the necessary skills.

Motivation

Managers who actively support and motivate their team members feel closer to them. By showing a sincere interest in your team members, you build trust and inspire others to achieve higher performance. A good team is not just a healthy team, but it is a team where team members are supported, motivated, and recognised for their achievements. A good manager understands that every time they speak to a team member, they can appraise and provide feedback. Everyone needs to receive positive feedback to know that they are important, are a contributor, team player and believe they are receiving an honest assessment of their performance.

Team members fall into two motivation categories

- Self-motivated. These are self-motivated team members who have a set of internal personal and professional drivers that motivate them. These are usually your star performers, which you are always at risk of losing if you do not provide them with appropriate autonomy, feedback, and empowerment to do their job.
- Non-self-motivated. Some team members need external motivation. These team members do not possess these same drivers as their self-motivated colleagues and require you to actively motivate them.

The role of the manager

Good managers communicate high expectations to team members, inspiring them through motivation to become committed to and a part of the organisation's shared vision. They also encourage team members to be creative and innovative and to challenge their beliefs and those of the manager and the organisation. Exceptional managers are curious about the inner motivations of their team members because it's the key to higher performance. Does your team member enjoy meeting new people? Mastering new skills? Bonding with a team? Working in the background? How much do you know about your team members?

1. **Set High standards.**
   The standards that you set for yourself are one of your biggest motivation tools. Working to the best of your abilities shows team members what you expect from them. They will only work as hard as you do, that is, to the standard that you are setting. That's why a motivational manager will always push themselves to reach a higher standard. This simple act inspires others to do the same. Team members follow the lead, which creates highly motivated and productive teams.

2. **Communicate often.**
   Feedback is crucial to your team members motivation levels. Your team members need to know what they're doing well and what they could improve on. They need feedback and recognition of their efforts and successes. Unfortunately, 69% of managers don't feel comfortable talking to their team members, meaning they are disconnected from their team. This leads to them avoiding opportunities for communication, much like not listening; failing to communicate leads to team members disengaging. They feel like their manager does not care, which means they don't care either.

Motivational managers go in the opposite direction. They often communicate and with confidence. They articulate clearly, which helps their team members to understand the direction they need to go in. Providing direction is an essential team member motivation tool at your disposal. Use your feedback sessions to ensure your team members know what you need from them.

3. Listen to team members.
Every team member needs to know and feel that their manager listens to what they are saying and respects their ideas. They want to be confident that some action may be taken based upon what they have said. Despite this, many managers don't listen to their team members. They may ask questions, but they do not hear the answers, believing that their ideas are the only ones that matter.

This tells team members that their opinions and ideas have little value and is a great way to demotivate them. This results in missing out on many great ideas and suggestions.

4. How to quickly demotivate people.
- Do not give feedback or recognition.
- Micromanage.
- Make decisions without consulting team members.
- Allow team members to miss commitments without a negative consequence.
- Not making allowance for personal factors and their effects on work.

How to deal with the fear of failure
There is a significant and insidious cause of failure, and that's our self-defeating thoughts brought on by fear of not meeting expectations. You can see it in a team members eye when you give them a task that they do not feel confident about. They have learned that failure, not meeting what's expected, can have negative consequences or, in extreme cases, be punished.

These consequences can be humiliation, no further work allocation of the type just tried, no promotion or not being given a second chance to take on something new. Only negative, resounding thoughts about their lack of ability and possibly their job being at risk resounds in their head.

Fear of failure is probably one of the main reasons we prefer to numb ourselves through inaction rather than move forward. Sometimes we are so afraid of letting ourselves down or letting others down or disappointing them that the opinions of others dominate us to the point of paralysis. Other times it is a deep-seated feeling of unworthiness that makes us question our abilities.

Succeeding or failing is not the issue; what is the issue is 'having a go'. When used with people you are getting to know or to whom you are giving a complex task that they have no experience or knowledge of, the following technique works well. It is the 'hand' technique.

Hand Technique.
It works like this; explain the task, what you think the outcome may look like and then deliberately place your hand about 10 centimetres above your desk and say, "what's important here is having a go. I don't care if you only achieve this much (then raise your hand

a bit higher) or achieve this much; what I care about is you agree to have a go at this task please, I am not interested in what you achieve."

The hand technique is very good at removing anxiety about their ability to do the task and your expectation of the outcome.

Finish up by saying, "please come back at any time if you need help." Tell them it's your job to help. This technique is remarkably successful, especially as people get to know you and what you expect of them.

Just having a go, giving it a try is what it's all about and most people succeed the first time.

Actions

1. Give effective recognition for a job well done by doing it in front of others. Be sparing in your praise; recognition must be deserved.
2. Look for opportunities to improve communication between team members by highlighting someone's strengths and by underpinning any shortcomings.
3. Every time you speak with one of your team members, it is an opportunity to provide feedback on their performance and offer support and motivation.
4. Comment on a recent email or report you received.
5. Comment on customer feedback you received that concerns their area.
6. A comment that you think things are going well.
7. Equally, make 'observations', not criticisms about things you don't like. ("I noticed that last email you sent me was very long.")
8. Implement programs to recognise the performance and efforts of all team members. (E.g., Employee of the month).
9. When you give someone a difficult task or one outside of their skillset, remove the fear of failure by telling them that what you expect is that they 'have a go,' not what they achieve, and offer to help.
10. Accept mistakes, but not when the same one is made three times.

Summary

1. **Managers who motivate**. - Actively support their team members and feel closer to them. By showing a sincere interest in your team members, you build trust and inspire others to achieve higher performance. A good team is not just a healthy team, but it is a team where team members are supported, motivated, and recognised for their achievements. A good manager understands that every time they speak to a team member, they can appraise and provide feedback. Everyone needs to receive positive feedback to know that they are important, are a contributor, team player and believe they are receiving an honest assessment of their performance.
2. **Team members fall into two motivation categories**. - Self-motivated. These are self-motivated team members who have a set of internal personal and professional drivers that motivate them. These are usually your star performers, which you are always at risk of losing if you do not provide them with appropriate autonomy, feedback, and empowerment to do their job. Non-self-motivated. Some team

members need external motivation. These team members do not possess these same drivers as their self-motivated colleagues and require you to actively motivate them.

3. **The role of the manager**. - Good managers communicate high expectations to team members, inspiring them through motivation to become committed to and a part of the organisation's shared vision. They also encourage team members to be creative and innovative and to challenge their beliefs and those of the manager and the organisation. Good managers: - Set High standards. Communicate often. Listen to team members.

4. **How to quickly demotivate people**. - Do not give feedback or recognition. Micro-manage. Make decisions without consulting team members. Allow team members to miss commitments without a negative consequence.

5. **How to deal with the fear of failure**. -There is a significant and insidious cause of failure, and that's our self-defeating thoughts brought on by fear of not meeting expectations. For a team member, the consequences can be humiliation, no further work allocation of the type just tried, no promotion or not being given a second chance to take on something new. Only negative, resounding thoughts about their lack of ability and possibly their job being at risk resounds in their head.

Managing Discipline

As unpleasant as it is, eventually, one day, you will need to discipline a team member about their behaviour, language, appearance, or many other things. Discipline is different to giving feedback because it doesn't always relate to a team members work. For example, you can provide feedback on how someone answers the phone but handling problems with timekeeping or personal grooming needs a different approach.

Managing discipline means setting minimum acceptable standards of behaviour as laid out in policies and guidelines. It is all about following a fair and reasonable process to deal with poor performance or misconduct. A disciplinary process needs to be carefully carried out as a team member may lose their job. Disciplinary actions usually result due to underperformance.

What is underperformance?

Team member underperformance describes a team members unsatisfactory performance, behaviour, attitude, or misconduct that is inconsistent with or contrary to organisational expectations, policies, or procedures.
Underperformance can be exhibited in numerous ways (behaviour, language, appearance) and can range in severity. Accordingly, the approach taken when handling underperformance can vary and must be determined on a case-by-case basis. For example, if a salesperson were underperforming, you would need to prove that targets were set, that they were communicated, and that performance has fallen short of the mark. Common types of underperformances.

- Attitude problems (rudeness, arrogance) and non-compliance. Disregard for organisational policies, procedures, rules, and regulations.
- Unsatisfactory work performance. A failure to achieve performance standards required of a job.
- Unacceptable relations with other team members. Behaviour is hostile or inappropriate, use of offensive language, being dishonest, intimidating other team members, and harassment.

Establish clear rules for team members

- Having clear, documented employment policies is imperative; team members need to know what is expected of them, what is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Presentation and dress codes are a common problem, especially when your team members are younger. Be clear about what is acceptable.
- Behaviour rules include how everyone integrates, how customers are treated and appropriate use of language. Put in writing what is acceptable.
- Productivity and work ethic involves how much you expect a team member to do and specific duties and standards for a job, including laziness and tardiness.

- Mobile phone usage deserves noting on its own. Be specific about what is acceptable usage and what is unacceptable.
- Illegal behaviour, such as theft, illicit drug use, intoxication, or violence, is grounds for immediate termination, whether you use a progressive discipline process or not.

Don't assume people know that they should sweep the floors if there's no work to do. Don't assume they know they can't turn up to work late every day. Document it all and have them read it, have them sign the document so that you have proof that they have understood what is expected of them.

Progressive disciplinary process

Discipline methods are based on achieving a goal or standard, and that not meeting it puts disciplinary actions into effect. You can approach that in a punitive or rehabilitative way. It comes down to what you think will work best for your business and what you are comfortable doing.

Progressive discipline is when you increase the severity of your actions when someone fails to correct an issue. It's a common approach because it protects employers from legal action. This generally takes a punitive approach, but it can also be rehabilitative. Training and performance improvement actions are less about fixating on the problem and using the threat of termination as an outcome but are more about viewing the team member as valuable and worth investing in.

- Step 1 - Verbal warning. A meeting is held with the team member, the unacceptable behaviour is outlined, and a verbal warning is given.
- Step 2 - Written warning. If the behaviour continues, then a second meeting is held. The team member is provided with a written description of the unacceptable behaviour and what they are to stop doing. The written warning also describes what will happen next if the behaviour does not change. This warning is signed by the manager and the team member concerned. A copy is given to the team member, and a copy is placed onto their HR file. You may choose to issue more than one written warning before moving to the next step.
- Step 3 - Performance Management Plan. If the unacceptable behaviour continues you may move straight to the next step. This is a rehabilitative approach. A Performance Management Plan (PMP) is documented with things the team member must do. This time, however, the actions are about training, learning, and education against changes in behaviour. The plan also includes check-in points, measurable goals, and steps to help the team member achieve the goals.
- Step 4 - Final warning. Another meeting is held, and the team member is told all the instances that the unacceptable behaviour has occurred, including verbal and written warnings. The manager informs the team member that this is now a final warning, and if changes do not happen as outlined in the last document provided, the team

member's employment will be terminated. At this meeting, a third party, usually a Human Resource representative is present to witness the meeting; this is essential.

- Step 5 - Termination. If the problem continues, the team member is invited to a meeting with the manager and the third-party witness. The team member is informed that as their behaviour has not sufficiently changed that their employment is being terminated.

Summary

1. **Managing discipline**. - Eventually, one day, you will need to discipline a team member about their behaviour, language, appearance, or many other things. Discipline is different to giving feedback because it doesn't always relate to a team members work. Managing discipline means setting minimum acceptable standards of behaviour as laid out in policies and guidelines.

2. **What is underperformance?** Team member underperformance describes a team members unsatisfactory performance, behaviour, attitude, or misconduct that is inconsistent with or contrary to organisational expectations, policies, or procedures.

3. **Establish clear rules for team members**. - Having clear, documented employment policies is imperative; team members need to know what is expected of them, acceptable and unacceptable.

4. **Presentation and dress codes** are a common problem, especially when your team members are younger. Be clear about what is acceptable. Behaviour rules include how everyone integrates, how customers are treated and appropriate use of language. Put in writing what is acceptable.

5. **Progressive disciplinary process**. -Discipline methods are based on achieving a goal or standard, and that not meeting it puts disciplinary actions into effect. You can approach that in a punitive or rehabilitative way. It comes down to what you think will work best for your business and are comfortable doing.

Terminating Employment

There will come a time when you need to remove a team member for unacceptable performance or behaviour; this is a difficult thing to do; it is an unpleasant thing to do, but it is something you need to be prepared for.

When you do need to remove a team member, it is sometimes easier than you may think because the person concerned often recognises that they are not keeping up with or performing like their colleagues. Sometimes they may be having trouble adapting to a changing environment. It is usually a relief for these people when they are removed from their current situation as it relieves anxiety and stress. But it is not always a relief; in fact, it can be a shock.

Approach - Do you want to become a professional?

Do you want to become a professional? It is a valuable technique for managing people out by telling a team member that you expect them to act professionally and then asking them if they want to become a professional and describing what that entails to make an informed decision. If they say Yes, you give them a second chance, document the discussion, and copy them and Human Resources. If it doesn't work out, you may need to provide them with one final opportunity; else, you have what you need to terminate their employment. Being a professional means subscribing to professional standards, for example.

- Having a professional attitude. Being upwardly supportive. Not participating in secret or negative conversations. Arriving at work on time and staying until the day's work is complete. Putting in extra time when required.
- Demonstrating professional maturity. Producing quality work. Acknowledging mistakes without shifting blame. Owning up to issues and presenting solutions. Being predictive about problems, acting before they occur to avoid them.
- Managing time and workspace. Maintaining a diary for appointments and deadlines, regularly checking to stay on schedule with meetings and tasks. Using smart email management techniques. Organising a workspace so that it's clean and files are organised.
- Practising leadership skills. Making presentations, being a business liaison contact, joining a professional society. Being up to date with industry changes by attending seminars and reading professional publications.
- Communicating professionally. Being aware of body language, eye contact and a handshake. Speaking clearly and practising active listening.

You can decide on your definition of professional standards and use that to manage your team and to manage someone out. This gives you specific criteria against which you can assess the team member and explain your reasoning for letting them go.

The people you don't want

These team members are not comfortable with the concept of being a professional. They are usually the cowboys who ignore instructions and things like process and do as they please.

Then there are terrorists; they actively look for situations they can make worse for the pure warped pleasure of it. As a word of caution, you need to ask yourself, "Do some people behave in a certain way because of the current workplace culture?" If you suspect this might be the case, you need to assume that they can change. Only you can judge. Then there are team members who are just plain lazy and disinterested no matter what the culture. Don't waste your time with these people; manage them out as fast as you can.

1. Unprofessional.

Some people are not interested in becoming a professional; they choose not to change their behaviours. There is no room for this attitude in your team. Team members need to decide upfront if they are interested in being developed into professionals. Personal biases and prejudices, for example, cannot be part of a professional persona, nor is there room for personal issues.

2. Job perks.

These people are more interested in the job's perks than they are in the job. These people, believing they are highly valuable, come to you demanding or strongly suggesting at least that it's in everyone's best interest to expand their remuneration package. They want to receive more flexible working hours, paid overtime, a personal use Uber account, to bring their dog to work, want company paid life insurance, and the list goes on. What is good about these people is they declare their real agenda to you, which makes them easily identified as people you don't want. The best team members are in it for the job, work, and experience, not just perks.

3. Hostage takers.

A staff member that holds you hostage: These are team members who, due to their many years of service, are the only team members left with specific business knowledge making them a highly valuable resource, and they know it. Steps need to be taken in these situations to document what they know (which is extremely difficult) and train others. Often team members of this type believe that they are indispensable and, therefore, can do as they please. They ignore management directions, carry out unauthorised work, are often lazy and even go as far as to turn up for work when it suits them.

Discuss with these team members what your expectations are and what specific behaviour of theirs is unprofessional and that there is no room for them in your team. Then document the discussion and copy them and Human Resources as part of a potential 'Performance Management plan' to manage them out. Be warned that often, these team members call your bluff, believing you won't do it.

Actions

No matter how sound the reasoning, terminating a team members employment is an unpleasant experience; try following these points.

1. Write out in bullet point form the professionalism points the team member is not meeting, that is, the reasons for letting them go.
2. Write a bullet point script that you will follow as your discussion points. This makes the conversation easier to execute, keeps you on point and not distracted from the duty you need to perform.

3. Sample script.
4. We are meeting today to discuss your ongoing unacceptable performance.
5. I am not happy with your performance as it is not meeting the professional standards, I have outlined to you.
6. Specifically, these are the professional standards you are not meeting.
7. This is a first (or final) warning that you need to meet these standards or terminate your employment.
8. This discussion today will be documented, and a copy will be sent to yourself and Human Resources.
9. We will meet again in two weeks to discuss the situation then or; I am terminating your employment as of now and require you to collect your personal belongings and leave the premises. A final salary payment will be paid to you within x days.
10. Do not answer any questions if you have terminated their employment.
11. Do discuss questions only if you are giving a warning.
12. Stick to your bullet point script, remembering that it is not a negotiation.
13. Do not accept interruptions or questions; if this happens, reply that you will discuss questions when you have finished.

Always have a Human Resource or another third-party present to witness the discussion; they do not participate in the discussion; they only listen.

Summary

1. **Approach**. - Do you want to become a professional? It is a valuable technique for managing people out by asking them if they want to become a professional and describing what that entails to make an informed decision. If they say Yes, you give them a second chance, document the discussion, and copy them and Human Resources. If it doesn't work out, you may need to provide them with one final opportunity; else, you have what you need to terminate their employment. Being a professional means subscribing to professional standards, for example.
2. **The people you don't want**. - These team members are not comfortable with the concept of being a professional. They are usually the cowboys who ignore instructions and process and do as they please. Don't waste your time with these people; manage them out as fast as you can. Look for: -Unprofessional team members, team members just after the jobs perks and look for hostage takers.

Team Vision

Ordinary teams respond to a mandate from outside their team making them entirely internally focused, whereas high-performance teams define their own team vision.

In an ordinary team the manager is the backbone and functions as the support system for teamwork and collaboration. In a ship analogy, managers are the people with their eyes on the horizon, managers are the ones reading the map. The manager of an ordinary team plots the course and shows team members how to get there. However, this does not apply to high-performance teams where the whole team reads the map and determines the team's direction. Without a clear purpose or team vision, a team will wander, uncertain about what is important. The team vision exercise allows you to work together, sharing honest views, feelings, and opinions that you may not otherwise share. This is because the conversation around setting a team vision allows you to express what you like about the team, what you do not like.

Common problems experienced by ordinary teams:

1. No common goal or purpose.
2. Mixed understanding of why the team exists.
3. Different views as to what success looks like.
4. No sharing of views, opinions, fears, gripes, and frustrations.

Most teams exist with little understanding of why they exist, what their actual purpose is in terms of how they contribute to the larger organization. Therefore, a team needs to define a meaningful, measurable goal or team vision, something that acts as a target and gives direction to all the team's activities. Such a vision needs to consider likely changes in the organisation's business environment, competitors' movements, and the future behaviours of consumers, combined with the team's aspirations. It needs to answer the question of why the team exists. People can't work at their highest standard if they are unsure of what they are working towards.

The absence of a clear and well-communicated team vision means a team will fail to align itself for mutual success. Without a common vision team members may go off in different directions, not knowing why they are working together. This leads to everyone forming different views as to what success looks like. A common team vision on the other hand acts as an initiator to discussing and developing common ways of working, like adopting new processes and developing guidelines.

High-performance teams define their own team vision, they always have a clear view of where they're going and their purpose - clarity on why they exist. Reasons why a team vision is necessary:

1. It's crucial to the success of a team. One highly rated manager at Google explained that "having a compelling team vision is crucial to the success of your team, as it allows all of you to stay focused and move forward in the same direction. Conversely, not having a

vision can dramatically hurt your team through lack of focus and a commensurate lack of momentum."

2. A clear team vision means that everyone on the team knows where they're going, if they're on track, and what success looks like.
3. It helps teams decide what to work on. A clear team vision helps teams make trade-offs and prioritize. Managers should tie back to the team vision when communicating decisions.

A team is made up of individuals with individual motivations, a team vision unifies these varying agendas giving the team a single, shared purpose. This is one of the key steps in creating high-performing teams. It's about taking a group of talented people and turning them into a team that works for each other and the organization. The team members become individually and jointly accountable for the achievement of the team vision, they accept mutual accountability for the team outcomes, whether success or failures. It becomes a matter of one for all, all for one.

When the team sets a clear team vision, it communicates what role each team members plays in achieving this objective. When the vision the team is aiming to reach is not defined, it leads to confusion and wasted effort and time.

The team vision needs to be strong enough to inspire, and it needs to be realistic enough so team members believe it can be achieved. A compelling team vision describes *'This is what we'll achieve, and this is how we'll achieve it'*. The team vision is the reason the team exists, its own vision, mission, goals, or aspirations. It provides a purpose for the team members to rally around, and shapes both the team's strategy and tactics. A clear team vision provides team members with an anchor for their commitment to the team. Consequently, it should be framed in such a way that encourages team member buy-in. It has long been accepted that an effective team vision must be clear and challenging but achievable. Recent thinking also highlights the importance of the team vision being ethically aligned.

A team should understand and be able to articulate the team vision, they should frequently refer to it, define it vigorously with stakeholders and explore its implications. It is important to make the team vision short, meaningful, and memorable to reinforce its importance.

Most organizations have a mission statement which is the corporate objective. The mission is usually set by a Chief Executive Officer - the team vision is a subset of this. The team vision should clearly state what a department, business unit or team does to help the organization achieve the mission, it should highlight the work goals which inherently imply their reason for the team's existence. The measure of the team vision is that all work contributes to the team vision achievement. The team vision creation process is phsycologically important in that the team is agreeing on shared values and targets. They are giving meaning to their existence, and this has a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction and personal feelings of being a contributor, not just a worker.

Creating a team vision allows each of you to subconsciously work together, sharing honest views, feelings, and opinions that you may not otherwise share. This is because the

conversation around setting a team vision allows you to express what you like about the team; what you do not like. It also helps start the process of open and honest communication. It allows you to agree on shared values and targets and give meaning to the team's existence, which has a significant and positive impact on job satisfaction and personal feelings of being a contributor, not just a worker.

The team vision is important as it acts as a target to direct and motivate team members and their staff. It gives direction to all actions and acts as a measure of success after a task is completed. Creating a team vision as a team, aside from creating the goal itself, also has several important team building aspects:

1. Everyone on the team knowing the team vision becomes committed to it and has a stake in it. When each team member and their staff buy into the team vision and how their specific role contributes to it, productivity goes up.
2. If team members understand and believe in the team vision, the team achieves better results as it gives team members extra motivation to push that little bit more when dealing with difficult situations. They'll also put their own interests aside to achieve the organization's goals.
3. A good team vision stimulates teams on both the emotional and intellectual levels. It challenges and excites them, which inspires them to work towards it.

Team Vision Exercise

Break into groups and answer these questions:
1. What is the purpose of the team?
2. Why does the team exist?
3. What would be missing if the team did not exist?
4. Who are the beneficiaries of the teams' activities, and who are its stakeholders?
5. Where does the money come from to pay the teams salaries?

Using the answers from the questions:
1. Create a list of keywords that describe the team's operation, purpose, and outputs.
2. Add keywords that describe the teams' stakeholders and beneficiaries.
3. Next merge all of the keywords into one or two sentences that describe a team common goal - the team vision. A test of the vision is that all teamwork is consistent with it.

Examples.
1. Alphabet Mission: "Organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful."
   - A team within Alphabet could have a team vision of "We provide quality and timely information."

2. Southwest Airlines Mission: "Dedication to the highest quality of customer service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, and company spirit."
   - A team vision could be" Our friendly and supportive customer service will exceed your expectations."

3. IKEA Mission: "Offer a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them."
   - A department within IKEA might have a team vision statement of "We build low-cost home furnishings that you will love."

Come back together as a team.

1. Present the Team Vision that you have created.
2. Discuss what has been presented and merge the suggestions into one Team Vision the whole team will support.

Team Communication

This workshop involves making changes to the way team members communicate. It is based upon Psychological Safety, something that fundamentally changes communication behaviours. If you want to create chaos where confusion runs rampant and production is low, have a team that does not know how to communicate. We all know that poor communication is at the root of all problems.

What is required is open communication which means practicing mutually beneficial and honest discussions. This doesn't just refer to discussions during a meeting or other work activities, but also to keeping others appraised on important matters, sharing fears, and seeking counselling from others.

Open communication is a higher form of communication-based on trust, and mutual respect. Team members need to be able to voice gripes, complaints, praises, predictions, concerns and especially fears as long as they do so in a positive manner. Team members should never refer to an individual team member as the cause of a problem (the concept of never laying blame) but rather only refer to a broken process or function, which is nearly always the actual cause of any problem. Teams need encouragement to indulge in communication for discovering improved ways of reaching the team's vision, resolving differences by collaborative problem-solving and sharing of experiences. It is also important to know that misunderstandings can be a good thing because they prevent groupthink and spurn innovation.

All meetings must have open and honest communication where team members explain progress or setbacks and frustrations and disappointments and suggestions for improvements in the way the team works. When there is tension in the team -bad air – this must be allowed to escape, which only happens through sponsored dialogue. Team members need to openly communicate everything—good and bad—if there is to be open and honest communication. It is a matter of not what you say but how you say it.

Team members need to accept critical feedback and provide constructive input to others. Feedback should answer questions, provide solutions, or help strengthen the task or project at hand. You cannot have a high-performance team without strong relationships and genuine communication. These traits are essential for high performance teams because without honest communication and the strength of the relationships that follow, it becomes near impossible to fix problems with performance. Strong and open relationships allow team members to talk honestly about successes and failures, areas for improvements and without fear of animosity.

How to practice Open Communication

1. It is a matter of not what you say but how you say it.
2. Accept critical feedback and provide constructive input to others.
3. Allow everyone to voice gripes, complaints, praises, predictions, concerns and especially fears as long as they do so in a positive manner.

4. Never refer to an individual team member as the cause of a problem - never lay blame. Refer only to a broken process or function, which is nearly always the actual cause of any problem.
5. Accept that misunderstandings can be a good thing because they prevent groupthink and spurn innovation.
6. Allow everyone to explain setbacks and frustrations and disappointments and suggestions for improvements in the way the team works.

Psychological Safety - Being able to safely speak your mind

We are all reluctant to engage in behaviours that could negatively influence how others perceive our competence, awareness, and positivity. Although this kind of self-protection is a natural strategy in the workplace, it is detrimental to effective teamwork. On the flip side, the safer team members feel with one another, the more likely they are to admit mistakes, to partner, and to take on new roles.

Being able to speak your mind is not as easy as it might sound. Many of us, especially depending on our workplace situations, feel that we cannot speak up about what we truly think. We do not speak up for fear or ridicule, humiliation, not being respected, not being taken seriously, being held back by our position or status and a feeling that we will not be listened to. All of these things hold us back. They are aspects of workplace culture barriers, meaning that these are the things that need to change if we are to feel confident about speaking our mind.

To overcome these barriers, a team must adopt what is known as psychological safety – "a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking". It is the ability to present oneself and act without fear of negative consequences for self-image, status, or career. In psychologically safe teams, team members feel accepted and respected.

Low psychological safety equates to a foot on the brakes when someone wants to say something controversial resulting in the apathy or anxiety. High psychological safety equates to taking your foot off the brakes and putting your foot on the accelerator allowing everyone to speak their mind in safety. This puts teams into a learning zone where workplace wellbeing is high, and performance is high.

Psychological safety has been identified as a critical factor in team learning and high-performance team development. It is a workplace, an environment where team members feel a sense of inclusion which creates conditions that enable individuals to speak their mind, take moderate risks and stick their necks out without fear of having it cut off. An all-inclusive and understanding environment is a breeding ground for new ideas where team members feel they can put forward risky or innovative concepts because they know they will be taken seriously. Hostile business environments lead to the stagnation of creativity, poor work ethics, dogmatic policies, and low retention. It is particularly relevant in the modern business world, which counts on teams to innovate and perform in a chaotic environment. Team

members who have no sense of psychological safety are unlikely to collaborate efficiently and effectively, and productivity will be hampered as a result.

An atmosphere of psychological safety means that people are content and able to admit and discuss mistakes; a healthy, positive learning and high-performance environment is created with team members more likely to ask questions and speak up to express issues and concerns, leading to the quicker identification of problems and search for solutions.

When a team creates a sense of psychological safety it will see higher levels of engagement, increased motivation, more learning and development opportunities, and substantially better performance. Team members become more energised because they feel they can be truthful and take risks. These types of behaviour lead to market breakthroughs without fear of judgment or reprisal and facilitate effective collaboration and creativity. In simple terms, psychological safety supports a belief that you won't be punished when you make a mistake or make an honest comment.

The research is now abundantly clear that psychological safety is a powerful differentiator of teams. The best teams are the ones that have trust and belief in each other. Team members who don't feel safe will keep their problems to themselves and be unwilling to share information. This lack of openness may slow a business down, preventing it from responding as agilely as it might, as collaboration and communication become impaired, and individuals are reluctant to share the problems and opportunities they see. At its worst, senior managers can be left unaware of problems until they become so serious that an external regulator or government body is forced to step in.

High-performance teams do not allow grudges to build up and destroy team morale, they also replace blame with curiosity and autopsy. If team members sense that blame or criticism is being assigned, this leads to defensiveness and then to disengagement. High-performance is about having team members settling and deciding between competing ideas noting that no team can progress until all team members believe they have a voice that is heard. Conflict arises from differences when individuals come together in teams, their differences in power, values and attitudes contribute to the creation of conflict.

How to practice Psychological Safety

1. Allow everyone to speak their mind in safety.
2. Never ridicule, humiliate, or show a lack of respect to anyone.
3. Take seriously what someone is saying.
4. Never assign blame, only criticise a lack of process or a bad procedure.
5. Make everyone feel that it is safe for personal risk-taking.
6. Make everyone feel that there are no negative consequences for self-image, status, or career based on what they say.

Interpersonal Skills

Daily stresses and the rush to get things done means that we often fail to communicate clearly, diluting our ability to listen effectively and to influence and persuade. There are eight interpersonal skills that have a big impact on people, and which can increase your management acumen. Being adept at these skills is an essential management quality that increases your social capital and promotes you as an understanding and supportive person. Here is an opportunity to quickly brush up on them to maintain an open and honest communication style.

Open Communication

Open communication means practising active listening and mutually beneficial honest communication. Active listening requires you to fully concentrate, understand, respond to and then remember what is being said to you. You need to make a conscious effort to hear and understand the complete message being spoken, rather than just passively hearing the message of the speaker, it means reading between the lines and using:

- Paraphrasing to show your understanding.
- Nonverbal cues to show understanding such as nodding, eye contact, and leaning forward.
- Brief verbal affirmations like "I see," "I know," "Sure," "Thank you," or "I understand".

If you have trouble listening without interruption, try using the index finger of one hand to draw a letter L (for listen) on the palm of your other.

Mutually beneficial communication is a higher form of communication-based on trust and mutual respect. This doesn't just refer to discussions and meetings but also keeping others appraised on important matters including sharing fears and seeking counselling from others. It means building trust with whom you are speaking by establishing a friendly, supportive rapport and by showing concern.

Conflict Management

Conflict is inevitable and needs to be managed constructively and professionally. When appropriately harnessed it can be a very positive thing. Did you know that a clash of ideas can be the beginning of innovative thinking whilst being overly dominant with your ideas; is being selfish and diminishes thinking. You must learn how to settle and decide between competing ideas by using both conflict and competitive thinking to your advantage. When you find yourself in a position of conflict or competitive ideas, try this:

- Practice active listening to hear exactly what is being said, it doesn't matter if you agree with it or not, what matters is that you understand as fully as possible what is being said to you.
- The act of active listening on your part and using cues gives you a more dominant position during the discussion as you have demonstrated that you are prepared to listen without interruption.

- When you do finally talk, insisting if necessary that you be given equal time without interruption (even the most hostile people find this hard to refuse) at first aim to summarise the other persons point of view. Doing this shows that you did in fact listen and that you understood. (Many people get angry simply because they are used to not being listened to).
- After the summary, state your own viewpoint and try to do this as if you were reading out bullet points. This makes what you are saying easier to understand, remember and being understood.
- Finally, merge the good points from the other person with your own to form a new point of view. Try to stress that the answer to the dilemma is somewhere in the middle, or a merger of both of your ideas, in other words, a compromise solution.
- The compromise solution is often the start of innovative thinking that you can both share as your own idea.
- Also, it is worth remembering that often it is not what you say but how you say it.

"In surveys of European and American executives, fully 85 per cent of them acknowledged that they had issues or concerns at work that they were afraid to raise. Afraid of the conflict that would provoke, afraid to get embroiled in arguments that they did not know how to manage and felt that they were bound to lose. So how do we develop the skills that we need? Because it does take skill and practice, too. If we aren't going to be afraid of conflict, we have to see it as thinking, and then we have to get really good at it". Margaret Heffernan.

Says Keith Ferrazzi, CEO of Consulting firm Ferrazzi Greenlight. "Ideas do not progress when conversations are too polite, people are not challenged, ideas are not questioned. A lack of candour will inevitably diminish decision making, creating a hierarchical culture where people only speak their minds in private." The firm studied 50 large companies and found the highest-performing teams were the most forthright.

Trust

To build trust, the approach is to strike a balance between appearing as warm and competent so that you come across as credible and human.

People are generally aware of your background, namely, the credentials that gained you your current position. With credibility established, it's now time to demonstrate some vulnerability and show that you are indeed a fallible human being. The combination of competence and warmth makes you seem more trustworthy. Counsellors often employ one of three tactics when meeting a new client, they spill their coffee, drop their pad or embarrass themselves somehow to show they are fallible. By making yourself vulnerable, it is possible to build trust quickly. You must demonstrate your credibility first before you exhibit vulnerability; otherwise, it doesn't work.

- Commitment is the flip side of trust. (You give me a commitment; I trust you will do it).
- To earn trust, you must demonstrate trust.
- Trust means making yourself vulnerable.
- Trust must be accompanied by accountability.
- Trust someone until such time as you have evidence that you can't.

- Set your expectations of someone based on trust.
- Learn to trust your intuition. (If something doesn't sound right it probably isn't).

Sometimes we accidentally say or do the wrong thing and can lose the trust we have built up; here is a quick solution:

- Act quickly.
- Be candid.
- Accept responsibility.
- Apologise.
- Outline a remedy.
- Don't blame.

Respect

Experienced managers know that respect isn't an entitlement linked to a job title, rather it is earned by:

- Leading by example. Demonstrate the qualities and characteristics you expect from the people you manage. It is essential to exhibit the traits you want others to adopt, such as honesty, creativity, being forthright and industriousness.
- Being humble. No-one cares about where you went to school or past successes. Egotists are boring and turn people off they need to get over themselves and do it quickly. Avoid conversations that entail self-promotion; they are obvious and do damage to your reputation.
- Showing commitment every single day. Get into the trenches with the troops and get your hands dirty with your team members as often as you can. Work alongside them. Work longer and harder than they do. Get out of your office and visit their workplaces. Talk to them, get to know their names so you can address them personally, ask them how things are going, ask what their top three issues and follow-up.
- Sharing your expectations of others. People want to know what your expectations are of them; that way, they can work to meet or exceed them.
- Helping people succeed and advance. Help team members gain exposure and give them opportunities for development and advancement. Be a mentor, focus on those people who are bright, hardworking, dedicated, reliable and creative, and have skill sets that you don't or those who show potential. Mentor them with support programs that allow them to learn a new skill or certification.
- Compromising. This is not a weakness; in fact, nothing could be further from the truth. A manager who can compromise comes across as caring and someone who puts others before themselves and who appreciates understanding a differing point of view.

Body Language

Nonverbal behaviour, or body language, is language, so you need to remind yourself that it is a form of communication. Your everyday body language is often what determines whether people like you or not, and when someone has made up their mind about you it's all but

impossible to change, therefore, body language must be made to work for you. Here are five common mistakes you need to avoid:

- Not having a firm handshake. A firm handshake makes an essential first impression. A firm grip displays confidence and establishes you as someone to be taken seriously.
- Not meeting someone's eyes. A failure to look someone directly in the eyes makes you seem shifty and untrustworthy. But too much eye contact can put some people off. If you want to hold someone's gaze, look at the point just above their nose between their eyes. To the other person, it appears as if you are looking directly into their eyes and you can maintain the gaze for as long as you want. (A good negotiation tactic).
- Fussy hand gestures. Your hands can be used to enhance words. But don't fuss as this can make you look nervous, distracted, bored or rude.
- Crossing your arms. This says you are on the defensive, it's a sign of disinterest, being closed off and unapproachable.
- Nodding too much. You can't be taken seriously if you nod too much. Even when agreeing with what's being said, nodding can be off-putting. It is, however, a very good active listening cue, but you need to be subtle.

Persuasion

A primary management activity is the ability to persuade people to do things they either don't want to, have an unreasonable fear of or think they will fail at. The key to persuasion is motivation, when delegating a task consider:

- Telling them that if you were doing the task this is how you would do it.
- Telling them that you are less interested in the outcome of the task but rather that they have a go.
- Talking about what they'll lose if they don't do the task.
- Drawing on their past actions as examples of their ability to do the task.
- Telling them that nearly everyone is doing it or soon will be.
- Asking for a 100 when you only want 10.
- Talking about the counterargument before they do, that is, the pros and cons of doing the task.

Charisma

Charisma is believed to be an innate personality trait that cannot be learned, you either have it, or you don't. However, a manager or team member that possesses gusto and alacrity is curious and always upbeat in front of others will be perceived as being charismatic. Putting forward a positive attitude also infects peoples thinking and feelings and this adds to the perception of charisma. In some workplaces, where the manager has charisma there is energy, a vibe, electricity, or vibrations in the air. This is the result of the manager exuding a positivity that infects the workplace to the extent that everyone possesses it. You can demonstrate charisma by:

- Demonstrating gusto (showing great energy, enthusiasm and enjoyment when taking part in an activity)

- Demonstrating alacrity (doing an activity with speed and eagerness).
- Being totally focussed on the present, in the moment.
- Having emotional buy-in.
- Exuding positivity - the glass is always half full.
- An attitude of getting things done and that no problem is insurmountable.
- By motivating others.
- Your whiteboard is always covered in something new.

You can test if you have charisma by:

- People feel energised, motivated, good after speaking with or just being near you.
- Your speech or presence creates a sense of positivity in others.
- A team member runs to your office.

"The transformational leader uses charisma, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation to inspire employees to make extraordinary efforts". Bernard M Bass.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of yourself and others.
It is the ability to be able to identify and express feelings, perceive and evaluate others' emotions and use emotions to facilitate thinking. Daniel Goleman, the author of 'Emotional Intelligence,' researched models from 181 different job roles from 121 companies and discovered that 67 per cent of the competencies deemed essential for effective performance were 'emotional' competencies. We learn, develop, and practice our emotional intelligence skills through real experiences. This is what you need to try and do:

- Become more self-aware by paying attention to how your emotions are affecting your decisions and actions.
- Pay attention to managing strong emotions such as excitement, anger, frustration, and distress.
- Improve your social skills by being 'curious', start a conversation by asking benign questions like:
- "That's an amazing tie, where did you get it?", "Those are fabulous shoes, where did you buy them?"
- Focus on being more empathetic by using active listening to look for 'emotional' cues and words.
- Work on motivating yourself to do things you don't like such as starting difficult tasks as early as possible. It's most often a lack of confidence and self-doubt that stops you from doing such things. Breaking a difficult task into smaller chunks and just doing a bit at a time builds confidence and lessons your resistance to the task.

Three things every employee needs

If you want outstanding employee performance with high levels of morale and job satisfaction – there are only three things, you need to do. Doing these things often and well will produce great teamwork, increased productivity, work quality and profitability, to name just a few. Moreover, by practising these three things every day, your management acumen and social capital will also literally skyrocket.

The three essential things you need to do to manage your employees effectively, to keep them happy and satisfied and feeling respectful about you and to show that you genuinely value them and their contributions; are:

- Giving Recognition
- Providing Support
- Facilitating Growth

A supportive company culture is essential for every workplace because it engages everyone. When employees are engaged, they perform better and are far more likely to reach their full potential.

An important part of building a supportive culture is encouraging feedback, concerns, and praise. Managers must go beyond an open-door policy and must reach out to employees. Part of being an effective manager is building healthy professional and personal relationships with employees so they can develop a sense of trust for their managers. When there is trust, they are more likely to share concerns or ideas they may otherwise not share.

Giving Recognition

From an early age, we crave recognition from parents, teachers, and friends. So strong is our need for positive affirmation that we can even perceive a neutral reaction as a negative one. We all need and highly value recognition of our efforts, our contributions; we need regular feedback to understand how well we are going and if our work is hitting the mark. An employee of the month award or positive comments in front of peers is a good way to go as well as simple, genuine expressions of thankfulness which inspire people to do their best.
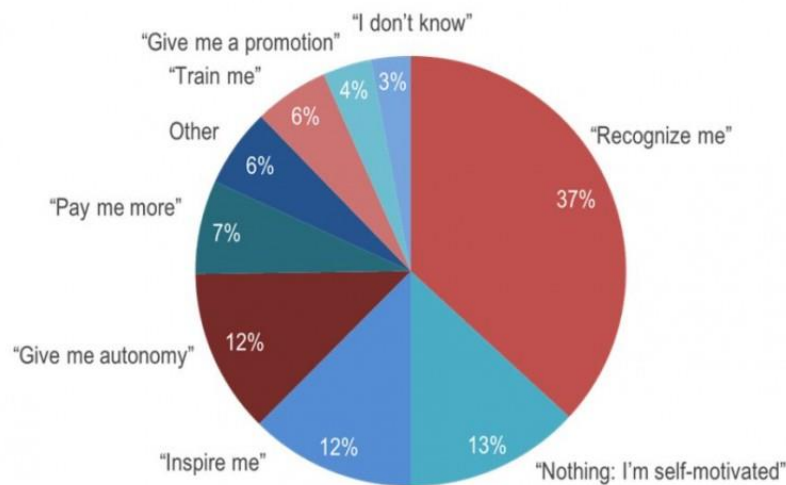
Recognition shows employees that their company values them and their contributions; it helps employees create a sense of security of their value to the company, motivating them to do great work. Employee recognition is a method of support that helps employees know their contributions are recognised and appreciated. Employees want to know how they are doing, and recognising employees demonstrates what success looks like. Companies recognise employees for going above and beyond, for their achievements, tenure or service, or desired behaviours. Employee recognition helps to:

- Retain top talent
- Increase employee engagement
- Encourage high performance

An employee survey included the question, "What is the most important thing that your manager or company currently does that would cause you to produce great work?" Respondents answered in their own words, providing a variety of responses, but a clear pattern emerged. 37% of respondents said that more personal recognition would encourage them to produce better work more often.

While other themes like autonomy and inspiration surfaced, recognition was the most common theme that emerged from responses. In addition, the study showed that affirmation, feedback and reward are most effective for motivating employees to do their best work. See the chart below:

Most Important Drivers of Great Work

- "I don't know" 3%
- "Give me a promotion" 4%
- "Train me" 6%
- Other 6%
- "Pay me more" 7%
- "Give me autonomy" 12%
- "Inspire me" 12%
- "Nothing: I'm self-motivated" 13%
- "Recognize me" 37%

What you need to do
Recognition is absolutely essential in the workplace, and it doesn't need to be complicated or expensive. In the workplace, it looks like this:

- Showing acceptance and respect.
- Giving approval.
- Respecting a person's Individual preferences.
- Finding out an employee's likes, dislikes, and personal wishes.
- Being sensitive as to how you say things.
- Making comments such as:
    - "That was a great monthly report you wrote, it helped me a lot."
    - "I appreciate all of the work you put in on your latest project."

- **Being specific.** Recognition is more meaningful when it is tied to a specific accomplishment or business objective. When recognising employees, explaining what the recognition is for helps employees relate the recognition to their behaviour. This encourages continued strong performance.

- **Being timely**. Recognition needs to be timely; the longer it takes for managers to recognise employees, the less likely employees will see the affirmations as authentic.

- **Just saying thank you**. While it's crucial to recognise major accomplishments, just saying thank you every day is just as important and effective and motivates employees just as much (and sometimes even more).

Providing Support

Committed employees feel supported and perform far better at work, are absent less often, and are far less likely to resign. This is because employees want the organisation to value them, to have their contribution appreciated, to have an organisation that cares about their well-being and is ready to offer help when needed. This is referred to as "Perceived Organisational Support. The main effects of which are:

- **Increased commitment**. If an employee feels valued and cared for, they are likely to value the company in return. They are also likely to feel a sense of belonging and support so that working for the organisation becomes part of their identity and sense of purpose and meaning. These things increase the employees feeling of commitment and loyalty to their organisation.

- **Improved job satisfaction and mood**. Employees who feel valued have greater job-satisfaction. They feel happier at work, and their overall attitude towards work is more positive. They expect that hard work will be rewarded and feel that help will be available if needed.

- **Increased interest in work**. People are more likely to be interested in a task if they feel they are good at it. Support from the workplace can help increase an employee's feelings of competence and, therefore, their level of interest in their work.

- **Increased performance**. Employees who feel valued and supported perform better at work and go beyond their required duties. They might help other employees gain knowledge and skills that benefit the workplace or use their initiative to help the company or protect it from risks.

- **Decreased psychological strain**. Organisational support is believed to help employees cope better with stress, as practical help and emotional support are available. Previous studies have shown organisational support can help reduce psychological stress and reduce reactions to stress, including burnout, anxiety and headaches.

- **Increased desire to remain working for the organisation**. Supported employees are less likely to leave their job for another one that offers slightly better pay, more status or greater freedom.

- **Decreased lateness, absenteeism and turnover.** Employees who feel valued are less likely to withdraw from work. Employees might withdraw by taking sick leave, arriving late or quitting.

Perceived organisational support has a strong effect on commitment, job satisfaction, mood and desire to stay with a company. The main factors that increase perceived organisational support and make employees feel more valued and cared about are:

- **Fairness**. Employees who believe their organisation is fair, feel more valued.

- **Support from supervisors**. If employees feel valued by their managers, they tend to take this to mean that the organisation values them as a whole. Employees are also aware that their manager's evaluations will probably be passed on to higher management.

- **Rewards and job conditions**. Recognising an employee's contributions increases their sense of being valued, achieved through recognition, pay or promotions.

What you need to do

Support in the workplace increases an employee's feelings of competence and their level of interest in their work. Employees who feel valued and supported perform better at work and go beyond their required duties. In the workplace, support looks like this:

- Providing appropriate work tools.
- Providing training.
- Providing material assistance.
- Providing encouragement.
- Always offering to help.
- Providing examples.
- Doing walkthroughs of what it is you are after.
- Being more interested in the person having a go as against what they produce.
- Understanding when it's time to step in.
- Not waiting for performance reviews to give feedback.
- Providing mentorship.
- Actively promoting a healthy work-life balance.
- Showing your employees that you trust them.
- Thanking your team for their hard work.

Facilitating Growth

Every employee needs a workplace that develops them personally and professionally, where there is growth that increases their competencies and capacity for external accomplishment and inner fulfilment.

The rate of development varies from person to person, as does how the development is delivered. Therefore, it is vitally important to understand and accept individual differences (e.g., some people receive more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still others more task structure), and it follows that when delegating tasks, it should be done as a means of developing your employees.

- **Provide training opportunities** like chairing meetings, leading a project, or giving a presentation.

- **Increase a person's energy.** Giving recognition and providing support with added motivation increases a person's energy levels, and the higher their energy, the greater their capacity for accomplishment.

- **Provide challenges.** We grow when we are challenged to be our best and exceed ourselves, and this is best done by delegating tasks outside a person's comfort zone, skillsets, experience and knowledge.

- **Make sure the person is organised.** Organisation converts energy into accomplishment. The more organised someone is, the greater the results they can achieve.

- **Capitalise on a person's skills.** If not challenging someone, the greater the skill they possess, the less the time and effort needed to perform the action and the greater the result.

- **Create performance goals**. Help your employees establish individual performance goals that are aligned with (a common goal) their strengths, interests and experience, as well as with the overall business strategy. Establish goals and expectations to help them set their sights on career aspirations.

- **Help them build their networks**. Recommend opportunities within the organisation, as well as networking or professional groups that will help them build strong connections.

- **Show employees, you trust them**. If you want to help, employees develop, trust them to do their jobs by getting out of the way. Let them know your expectations by modelling the behaviour you expect—show them you trust them. This not only lets employees know what they need to succeed and gives them greater ownership, but it also shows them that credibility and trust are important in your organisation.

The best way to do all three - Mentoring

As a manager in an organisation who wants to be respected, looked up to, and who wants to develop teamwork, means you need to have a good understanding of your people. Spending time with them, talking to them, is the way you come to understand what they care for individually; this is how you discover what makes them tick. Managers who actively support and motivate feel closer to those whom they are helping. By showing a sincere interest in your employees, you are building trust and inspiring them to achieve higher levels of performance. Mentoring is the best way to achieve these things and the three primary employee needs discussed above.

The purpose of mentoring is to create a working relationship that is positive and supportive that provides you with a management tool to develop your employees to their fullest potential.

Establish a weekly formal mentoring session, the scope of which should change and evolve as the needs of the employee being mentored changes.

At the start of your mentoring sessions, explain why the sessions are being held, their purpose of providing review current work activities, provide recognition, provide support and foster personal and professional growth. Then try to exchange background information about yourself and the employee before you talk about anything else; take the time to get to know each other. Try to understand the employee's situation and out of work stresses and obligations. Use your situation as an example. Being as frank and honest as you can helps build repour and encourages the employee to do the same. You are building a working relationship here, and you want to be able to quickly and easily, openly and honestly, discuss any subject, no matter how contentious or troublesome.

At subsequent sessions, the employee being mentored should be encouraged to share information about his or her career path aspirations and be given guidance, motivation, emotional support and assistance with problems.

Without a mutually understood agreement to speak freely, the relationship is unlikely to reach its full potential. Commit to honesty. Both parties should be prepared to offer frank feedback as appropriate, even if the feedback is critical. Listen and learn. Mentors, especially, need to remember that the relationship is not primarily about them. These sessions should reveal employees preferred working styles and as mentioned, professional aspirations. You are their role model, leading by example, remembering that your words and actions will create a lasting impression and be copied.

Be careful of language; for example, never criticise anyone even when the situation warrants it. Instead, I strongly suggest that you tell them that you have an observation to make, albeit negative. The word 'criticism' or being perceived as critical is negative; it turns people off; they stop listening and are unlikely to take on board what you have to say. If, for example, you have made the same mistake yourself at some time or exhibited the same poor behaviour that you have 'observed', say so; it builds trust and reiterates that we all learn from our mistakes. Language is important. Always try to follow a negative observation with a positive one.

If you are running a team-building process, use this time to explore how the employee is adjusting, any concerns they may have and any suggestions for improvement. Work to get them to take on increased ownership of the team-building process, its outcomes, and new ways of working, new habits. After all, it's for their benefit. It is important to impress on each employee how important it is to adopt, practice and make permanent the new team building ways of working. It is strongly recommended that you repeat this message every time.

Recognise that employees have individual differences in terms of needs and desires, aim to exploit their strengths and challenge them with new tasks to address weaknesses. Accept that there will be individual differences between team members (e.g., some team members require more encouragement, some more autonomy, others firmer standards, and still

others more task structure). Aim to understand their preferred working style and be prepared to address failings.

You can find a Management Guide to Mentoring here

Conclusion

The three essential things you need to do to manage your employees effectively, to keep them happy and satisfied and feeling respectful about you and to show that you genuinely value them and their contributions; are giving recognition, providing support and facilitating growth.

To give recognition you need to be provide positive feedback, show approval, understand how each person accepts compliments, be timely and just say thank you. To provide support you need to provide tools and training, material assistance and always with offers to help. To facilitate growth, you need to provide challenges, create performance goals and show employees that you trust them.

Finally, the best way to deliver all three is by doing a weekly mentoring session with each employee.

How to make Stress work for You

When we talk about stress, really, we are often talking about how stress affects us in body mind and spirit. Stress can be defined then as the reaction we have to difficult, demanding, or challenging events. Our bodies and minds have been designed with a 'fight or flight' reflex that helps to orient and become alert when we are faced with challenging or dangerous events. Our attention gets narrowed towards such events, and our brain instructs our bodies to prepare for possible physical action such as confronting the event physically (e.g., 'fight') or running away from the source of the danger (e.g., 'flight'). Muscular tension, increased heart rate, and higher concentrations of blood sugars and hormones are involved in this process.

Not all stress is bad. In fact, we love stress. We pay good money for it in a scary movie or on a roller coaster ride.

When is it optimal? When it's only moderately stressful. Good stress is transient—it's not for nothing that you don't have roller coaster rides going for three weeks! The stress also must be happening in a context that feels safe overall.

Good stress, or what psychologists refer to as 'eustress' is the type of stress we feel when we are excited. Our pulse quickens and our hormones surge, but there is no threat or fear. We feel this type of stress when we ride a roller coaster, compete for a promotion, or go on a first date. There are many triggers for this good stress, and it keeps us feeling alive and excited about life. Eustress, or good stress, has the following positive characteristics:
- Motivates, focuses energy.
- Is short-term.
- Is perceived as within our coping abilities.
- Feels exciting.
- Improves performance.

Stress is more likely to result in positive outcomes if you see it as a challenge or something you can strive to overcome. It can help motivate you to work hard. Positive stress can also lead to positive effects if you respond with healthy behaviours that improve your situation, it is when you perceive a stressful situation as an opportunity that will lead to a good outcome. This positive expectation contrasts with negative stress or distress when you perceive a stressor as a threat that will have a poor outcome.

Research shows that moderate, short-lived stress can improve alertness and performance and boost memory. Manageable stress increases alertness and performance. Moderate and short-lived stress—like an upcoming exam or preparing to deliver a speech in public—improves cognitive performance and memory.

We all experience stress at some point. Whether it's daily chronic stress or occasional bumps in the road, stress can sneak up on us at any time. What you may not know about stress is that it's not all bad. In fact, we can experience eustress, or positive stress, just as frequently as we do negative stress. We rarely hear people say, "I'm really feeling stressed. Isn't that great?" But if we didn't have *some* stress in our lives—the "good stress" variety—we'd feel

rudderless and unhappy. If we define stress as anything that alters our homeostasis, then good stress, in its many forms, is vital for a healthy life. Bad stress can even turn into good stress, and vice versa.

Benefits of Good Stress

1. Increases creativity

Sometimes stress is the kick we need to push ourselves outside of the box and to do a little better than we did before. If you're feeling stressed about a project, situation, or paper, it can give your creativity a boost and help you push through roadblocks you may be facing.

- Managed stress increases alertness and performance.
- Facilitates your learning something new every day, whether big or small.
- Emotionally, positive stress can result in positive feelings of contentment, inspiration, motivation, and flow.
- Pushes you outside of your comfort zone. This may mean taking on a new responsibility or developing a new skill.
- A work example of positive stress is taking on a new project that encourages you to leverage existing strengths (which can be incredibly energizing) and requires you to hone existing skills or learn new ones.

2. It motivates

When we experience stress, sometimes we feel like we may not be able to accomplish what we set our minds to. But your brain is wired to react in a way that makes you strive for success. Stress can move you in the right direction and provide you with a deep sense of accomplishment when you overcome your fears or worries.

- Motivates, focuses energy.
- Is short-term.
- Is perceived as within our coping abilities.
- Feels exciting.
- Improves performance.
- If you see your work as a challenge or something you can strive to overcome, it can help motivate you to work harder.
- Facilitates the setting of goals (personal and professional) that are challenging and realistic.
- Positive stress produces positive feelings of excitement, fulfillment, meaning, satisfaction, and well-being.

3. Increases your brain power

That's right, stress might make you smarter. Not only does it give you the opportunity to find new ways of doing things to reach success, biologically stress releases chemicals in the brain, known as neurotrophins, that can help improve your concentration and enable you to be more productive in the short-term. Short-lived stress—like an upcoming exam or preparing to deliver a speech in public—improves cognitive performance and memory.

4. Can make you strong

We're not talking strong as in able to lift weights, but stress can make you more resilient. After you go through a period of stress and come out the other side, you're bound to see

how strong you are *mentally.* You will realize that you *can* get through things, and it can help you better prepare for next time.

- Physically, it helps us build our body (e.g., through completing a challenging workout).
- Psychologically, positive stress helps us build our self-efficacy, autonomy, and resilience.

5. May improve your immune system

Studies show that short-term periods of acute stress may help improve your immune system. According to Stanford University School of Medicine, stress causes your body to release hormones that improve the function of cells that are vital to immunity response. Researchers believe this is connected to the fight-or-flight response that all humans inherently have, but it must be noted that this boost in immunity is only temporary. In fact, chronic stress can lead to more frequent illness and susceptibility to infection.

6. Examples of positive personal stress

- Receiving a promotion or raise at work.
- Starting a new job.
- Marriage.
- Buying a home.
- Having a child.
- Moving.
- Taking a vacation.
- Holiday seasons.
- Retiring.
- Taking educational classes or learning a new hobby.

Negative stress

Excessive workloads can negatively affect your health, productivity, and morale. As a manager, it's essential to realize the negative impact of excessive workloads on your team members, it's your responsibility to plan things ahead and distribute the workload evenly to reduce the burden on your them and take the steps needed to reduce stress on the job. Negative stress is also called 'distress', is something we are all familiar with and has the following characteristics:

- Causes anxiety or concern.
- Can be short- or long-term.
- Is perceived as outside of our coping abilities.
- Feels unpleasant.
- Decreases performance.
- Can lead to mental and physical problems.
- Can leave us completely debilitated.

1. Examples of negative personal stress

- Repetitive negative thought patterns.

- Worrying about future events (e.g., waiting for medical test results or job restructuring).
- Unrealistic, perfectionist expectations.
- Overscheduling.
- Failing to be assertive.
- Procrastination and/or failing to plan.
- Fears: (e.g., fears of flying, heights, public speaking, chatting with strangers at a party).
- Filing for divorce.
- Losing contact with loved ones.
- The death of a family member or spouse.
- Hospitalization (oneself or a family member).
- Injury or illness (oneself or a family member).
- Being abused or neglected.
- Separation from a spouse or committed relationship partner.
- Conflict in interpersonal relationships.
- Bankruptcy/money problems.
- Unemployment.
- Sleep problems.
- Children's problems at school.
- Legal problems.

2. Examples of negative work stress
- You have a poor or inexperienced manager.
- You have an unmanaged workload.
- Having several assignments to complete at once.
- Meeting tight deadlines.
- Receiving too few resources to properly handle your responsibilities.
- Accepting too many tasks from managers or other employees.
- Understanding very little about a certain assignment.
- Feeling unsure about your work performance and what you can improve on.
- Market competition.
- Financial problems leading to working overtime.
- Competitive job market.
- Job insecurity.
- Excessive job demands.
- Conflicts with teammates and supervisors.
- Inadequate authority necessary to carry out tasks.
- Lack of training necessary to do the job.
- Making presentations in front of colleagues or clients.
- Unproductive and time-consuming meetings.
- Commuting and travel schedules.

What are the key causes of work stress?

- When your manager has a Traditional management style.
- Poor performing team members, inability to manage, motivate, support.
- The rapid pace of business change.
- The rate of technological change.
- Being under lots of pressure, the pressure of artificial or unrealistic deadlines.
- Times of uncertainty, facing big changes, worrying about something.
- A mental disorder.
- Not having much or any control over the outcome of a situation.
- Having responsibilities that you're finding overwhelming.
- Being accountable for something you cannot control.

How I use scheduling to manage a stressful event

Stress is much less likely to be harmful if you have control over it when it occurs. A tight deadline is stressful but manageable if you have the ability to meet it. If not, if you feel helpless, and the stress is more likely to be harmful. Scheduling or time management methods involve finding ways to work more efficiently, to maximize your use of time. A variety of techniques and tools for list-making, task analysis scheduling, and task prioritization are typically used for this purpose. The basic process involves the following steps:

1. I acknowledge to myself that I am experiencing stress.
2. I identify the cause of the stress.
3. I accept that I must motivate myself to deal with it (as no-one else will). Motivation is critically important to the process of resolving your stress, serving as both foundation and fuel. It is the wind that fills your sails, propelling you forward through the stages of stress resolution.
4. I immediately review my task-list and prioritise the cause of my stress as priority one or two.
5. I develop a thorough understanding of all the various steps that must be performed to resolve the cause of the stress.
6. I then spend at least 15 minutes to address the cause, this gives me the feeling that I am getting control of the cause and the stress. This usually results in creating another task list of what needs to be done. In other words, I am planning my way out of the stress.
7. I write the steps down and identify dependencies, in the order they must be completed.
8. I then complete at least two actions from my task list to solve the problem.
9. I tick off the step or steps I have completed. (This action alone reduces my stress).
10. I then review my overall task list again and re-prioritise all my work advising others of changes as required, simply informing them that my number one priority has changed.
11. I then spend at least an hour working on the cause of the stress.
12. I continue as above until the cause has been dealt with. This may of course take several days but having a plan to address it I find dramatically reduces my stress.

If you perceive the cause of the stress as a challenge, the fear you would normally experience may turn into excitement and anticipation, or at least resolve. You can often make the shift in perception by:

- Focusing on the resources you have to meet the challenge.
- Seeing the potential benefits of a situation.
- Reminding yourself of your strengths.
- Having a positive mindset (getting into the habit of thinking like an optimist).
- As you practice looking at threats as challenges more often, it becomes more automatic, and you experience more good stress and less bad stress.

Coping With Stress

People try many ways, both positive and negative, to lessen their stress levels. Dysfunctional negative and unhealthy methods of coping include:

- Addictions (alcohol, drugs, sex, gambling, etc.)
- Smoking
- Over-eating
- Being Perfectionistic

These methods are considered dysfunctional because, over time, they end up making the situation worse for people rather than making it better. Drinking as a means of stress reduction works in the short term because alcohol is a powerful muscle and attention relaxer. Repeated use of alcohol ends up causing 'tolerance' which means that people must drink more and more to get the same effect. The result is addiction to alcohol (a very serious health and social risk) which only adds stress to the drinker's life.

There are many positive and 'functional' methods of coping with stress:

- Relaxation/Meditation - Cultivating interior stillness and calmness through meditation and relaxation techniques such as massage therapy, and progressive muscle relaxation.
- Exercise - Regular physical exertion of any intensity (a gentle 30-minute walk, a Yoga or Pilates class, an hour-long strenuous free-weight workout, etc.) helps discharge muscle tension and build strength, resilience and energy.
- Healthy Diet - Eating healthy whole foods and avoiding sugary and fattening treats helps keep the body's internal rhythms more balanced.
- Socialization And Supportive Conversation - Many people are able to relax and to feel part of something larger than themselves by sharing their concerns with trusted others. This can take the form of talking with friends and family, psychotherapy or counselling, or prayer.
- Assertive Communication - Some stress is caused by not getting what you want from other people. Asking for what you want in a direct but polite way is the best method for getting what you want, and thereby reducing stress.
- Time Management - Some stress is caused by poor organization. Learning how to manage appointments, to say 'no' to requests you can't get done, to organize records,

and to use memory enhancement tools (like alarm clocks and 'palm pilots') can make a big difference.

- Asking For Assistance - Whatever it is that you are dealing with right now, other people have dealt with it before. Seeking out their counsel when you don't know what to do is often a good way to avoid reinventing the wheel.

Lastly, it is often possible to predict that particular events will be stressful, and then to use this knowledge intelligently so as to minimize their impact on the quality of your life. Scheduling stressful events to occur during times when you have fewer responsibilities and more attention to give them can lessen their negative impact.