

Build Better Management Skills

Leadership can be lonely. You're in a challenging and complex role if you are a supervisor, manager or other workplace leader. Your role includes motivating team members, assessing their performance and helping them improve. You assist them in navigating workplace changes, and you strive to give them opportunities for professional growth. You also need to manage the many demands on your time.

Keep in mind that—despite your many challenges—tools are available to help you make the most of your leadership position. This issue of *Your Source* offers tips on:

- How to get more control over your time
- How to support your team while managing workplace changes
- How to better motivate and reward your team

It's important to remember the full range of management tools available through your program. On your program's website (see link below; select the "Managers" menu), you can access a wealth of material that supports your growth as a manager. The tools can help you improve your people management skills. You can learn how to deal with troubled team members and refer them to your program for help. You also can become more skilled at resolving workplace conflicts, learn how federal regulations affect your workplace, and much more.

So whether you need information on a specific topic or want to build your overall management skills, your program offers resources to help you succeed. Log on today!



Employee Assistance Program

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Make Time Work for You

When you are a leader, it can seem like there are never enough hours in the day. But if you reflect on a typical work day, you may identify areas where you could do things more efficiently. This can help you avoid burnout and frustration at work and make you a better leader. Here are some tips for saving time and prioritizing:

Plan ahead. Write down realistic annual, monthly and weekly goals. Prioritize your daily "to-do" list.

Stay on task. Take a close look at your day and consider how you can get rid of unnecessary activities. Avoid texting and using social media.

Track your hours. Document how many hours you work in a week. Set a limit, and identify things that consistently seem to generate extra work hours.

Delegate more to your staff. You'll still be accountable for completing the tasks, but you can let others decide how to do them.

Keep control of meetings. Be sure to run time-limited meetings with structured, written agendas.

Control your "open door" policy. Minimize interruptions by offering your open door hours on a scheduled basis.

Leadership Can Be Learned

Are all good leaders born that way? Not necessarily. A number of techniques are available to anyone who wants to lead others in accomplishing an organizational goal.

Give team members control over their work. Team members take more interest and have more pride when they determine work procedures, prioritize, schedule, communicate with customers and vendors, and identify the need for changes. Instead of closely managing every process, try giving feedback and help at checkpoints along the way.

Show employees how their work is meaningful. Boost your team members' business acumen by encouraging them to see the big picture. Show them how their roles and contributions affect the organization's financials. Ask for their ideas on how to improve the organization.

Promote personal growth on your team. Provide opportunities for training. Change individuals' jobs or rotate tasks so people can learn more skills. Let your team members work with others whose roles require advanced skills. Assign people to projects outside their job descriptions.

Reward teamwork, not individual competition. When rewards are based only on competition—and only a few people can “win”—it won't help overall morale. Instead, make sure rewards are tied precisely to the work behavior you're trying to motivate. Instead of having people compete against each other, try having them strive to achieve individual or team goals. Then reward all who succeed.

Stay positive despite challenges. Even when situations make it hard to stay positive, try to evolve your mindset by focusing on solutions rather than problems. Maintain a can-do attitude and you are likely to attract people who will support you in achieving your goals.

Good leaders believe that every team member matters. Even when the economy is tough and personnel resources are stretched, good leaders try to maintain a work environment that makes everyone feel important.

What is the best way to manage a self-directed “superstar” or high-performing employee?

- A. Provide periodic recognition of the team member's efforts.
- B. Mostly leave that person alone to run his or her own area if things are working well.

The correct answer is A. Even high-performing self-starters need recognition and appreciation to stay on course. So don't take the top performers for granted.

Now That's an Idea!

Managing Workplace Change

Keep the team updated—Provide regular information about specific changes in the organization.

Foster a supportive environment—Allow people to express their worries in a nonthreatening setting.

Promote a group effort—Involve staff members in planning the introduction of changes.

Listen closely—Keep close enough to your staff to hear about and counter any rumors.

Be inclusive—Try to ensure that no one feels left out amid the changes.

Offer individual support—Take time to meet with those who are struggling with change.

Stay positive—Acknowledge and publicize your staff's positive contributions.

Get help—Suggest your confidential program to team members needing extra support.