

Managing People; Managing Transitions



Associated **Employers**

“The best managers
make decisions on
the basis of what
is fair and equitable,
not what is popular —
bearing in mind
that not everyone
will be pleased with
these decisions.”

-Priscilla Gross

Give It Some Thought

- When you think about the best supervisors, managers, coaches, or teachers you have ever had, how would you describe them? How did they make you feel? What made them effective? What qualities or techniques did you admire about them and aspire to in your new job as a manager?

- Now think about the worst supervisors, managers, coaches, or teachers you have ever had. How would you describe them? How did they make you feel? What made them ineffective? What characteristics made them difficult to work with? What supervisory practices did they use that you will try to avoid in your new position as manager?

Making A Place

Managing people is not a task-oriented function; it is a people-oriented function. Despite what you have been told about what your organization does, it is not a business of tasks; it is **a business of people**. And your position as manager or supervisor is one of **making a place** where the people can then do the tasks of commerce.

How do we do that you ask?

Making a Place consists of the following elements:

- Honesty
- Trust
 - Creating Dialogue
 - Transitional Management
 - Expectations – those you have for your staff, and those your manager has for you.
 - Maintaining Trust Long Term
 - Delegation
- Special Treatment
- Courage

Honesty

Research shows that managers who use coercion, manipulation, and negative reinforcement will drive their employees to do mediocre work. “My way or the highway” is a shortsighted strategy that forces individuals to meet a manager’s current demand – no more, no less – for as long as they can tolerate the pressure or until they can safely escape the oppressive situation.

On the other hand, managers who create a work environment in which people feel challenged, appreciated, and respected for their efforts will allow employees to drive themselves to do exceptional work.

- Deal with others honestly and without hidden agendas.
- Understand the feelings of your employees – Show empathy.
- When things go wrong, learn to separate the person from the problem.
- Value their contributions by being open to new ideas.
- Show a willingness to modify your own behavior whenever appropriate.

Honesty

- Don't Show Favoritism
 - If you have had a close relationship with someone you now supervise, other subordinates may think you're playing favorites simply because of your close association. If your association extends beyond working hours, there is a greater likelihood that some will suspect your friend is getting special treatment.
 - Don't advertise your friendship at work, but don't downplay it either.
 - Take the time to discuss the work relationship with your friend.
 - Set expectations early
 - Possibly consider your friendship
 - You don't want to appear antisocial, but you don't want to become too close either.
 - Learn to routinely turn down requests to socialize with people from work.
 - If accused of favoritism, don't get mad. Try to get to the facts.
- Getting Needled About Being the Boss
 - Take it in stride with a smile and good humor.
 - If they cross the line, let them know.

Building Trust – Creating Dialogue

- Create **A Culture of Dialogue**
 - Motivation and performance will vary from person to person depending on how well individuals are able to do the work (competence) and how comfortable they are with their own ability (confidence).
 - Initiate discussions with your employees about their developmental needs (coaching).
 - Maintain ongoing communication by providing regular feedback on performance.
 - Encourage your employees to discuss their concerns, frustrations, or needs (counseling).
 - Discuss your reactions to changes or new challenges that affect your employees' level of confidence and provide supportive coaching to help them through any tough spots.
- Work Conditions
 - Motivation and productivity are affected by the conditions under which your employees perform their jobs.
 - Problems can occur when there are sudden and unexpected changes in working conditions; a lack of support when changes occur; and, limited flexibility about priorities even though a change has occurred.
 - Communicate openly about changing job conditions. They need to understand why, have notice and some input, if possible.
 - Maintain ongoing problem-solving conversations.
 - Encourage honest, ongoing self-assessments about how you and your employees need to change to meet the new conditions.

A Word For Transitional Managers

In your previous position as an individual contributor, lines of communication were fairly straightforward and usually upward. Your immediate manager was your main source of information, and you maintained positive relationships with a handful of co-workers who had the biggest effect on the work you were doing. As a worker, terms like “we/they” were used to describe the difference between workers and management, and you were part of the “we” group.

Now, as a manager, everyone will want to know whose side you are on. You will be helping to set standards rather than living up to performance goals set by others. You will be held accountable for what may seem, at times, to be contradictory outcomes: Meeting your manager’s expectations and keeping your employees satisfied and productive.

Now, if employees use “we/they” language to describe what is going on in your work area, you often will not be (and cannot be) a part of the “we” group. Most people will understand and respect the difference created by your position. A few may not be that respectful of your management duties.

A Word For Transitional Managers

Your employees will expect you to represent them fairly with management. If you have been promoted from the ranks, you may feel the additional pressure having been “one of them.” It gives you first-hand knowledge of your employees’ (former coworkers’) performance, behaviors, concerns and complaints about the work, the company and other managers. At some point, having previously been their coworker, you may have even contributed to complaints.

A Word For Transitional Managers

- Be Yourself
 - Whether a new manager or experienced, there seems to be no end to the unsolicited advice you get on how to handle your duties. Some of it is useful, but much of it is someone else's agenda. Learn to be patient and listen, not get defensive, and then separate the wheat from the chaff.
 - Start with a clean slate and take nothing for granted.
 - Access all information about what you have been told or have learned prior to making a decision or acting upon an emotion.
 - First impressions are everything. Don't try to be someone or something you are not.
- Start Slowly
 - Even if you are familiar with the operation when you start, it's better to carefully assess the situation before you do anything. By moving slowly, you will be better able to enlist the support of your people when you do decide to revise operating procedures or juggle job assignments.
 - Making hasty decisions and judgments without knowing all the facts can lead to mistakes. Unless you take the time to learn about the operation and its people, you may be pegged as someone who shoots from the hip.

Building Trust – Setting Expectations

Recognize that most people WANT to do a good job

Assume competence

Manage for the best among us and the best within us.

Have **High Expectations**

- Show You're a Boss Who Cares About People
 - As a manager, you should not have to coddle your employees, but you should also not treat them simply as human capital. They should always be treated with dignity and respect.
 - Show concern for your employees by your actions. Be pleasant; solve personal difficulties they bring to you; listen; validate.
- Be Consistent
 - People can deal with someone unpleasant and consistent far easier than with a boss they don't know what to expect from.
 - Workers will pretty much adapt to the management style of a boss as long as they are able to recognize it.
- Encourage Worker Participation In Job Decisions
 - When worker participation is lacking, employees are likely to respond with "Don't blame me, I didn't decide to do it that way," when something goes wrong.
 - You can counteract this attitude by actively consulting 11 with workers on how they can best do their jobs.

Building Trust – Setting Expectations

- Understanding Expectations
 - Motivation and productivity are affected by a person's understanding of your expectations and acceptance of job responsibilities. Problems occur when expectations are not clear, and there is a lack of understanding, a lack of agreement, or a lack of acceptance.
 - To avoid these problems:
 - Maintain ongoing communication & dialogue about expectations.
 - Discuss your reactions to changes that affect your job or your team's objectives first with your manager, then with your employees.
- Make Your Expectations Known to Your Subordinates
 - It is imperative that workers understand what you expect from them. There's probably nothing that can cause greater friction between a boss and worker than an unsatisfactory performance evaluation, or critical feedback, when the worker assumed he was doing a good job.

Building Trust – Management’s Expectations Of You

Your manager will expect you to represent the views of management fairly with your former co-workers and to take a different perspective on many of the same issues that you used to debate openly from the other side. This will require you to weigh other factors, take a broader look at certain situations, and communicate your decisions and opinions more carefully.

Your company’s success depends on the ability of individual managers like you to direct and influence the job performance of their employees.

- Managers have the responsibility for producing desired results through others and are, therefore, ultimately accountable for the actions, behaviors, and performance results of their employees.
- Managers are expected to communicate effectively, to build strong work relationships, to foster teamwork, and to demonstrate leadership that supports business goals.

Building Trust – Management’s Expectations Of You

- **Managers Must Plan and Organize Their Activities** for maximum efficiency so that they can act as a catalyst for others by showing a task orientation, imparting a sense of purpose, and translating directives into meaningful challenges for others.
- **Make Your Own Decisions**
 - Don’t always defer to someone else when you are not sure. Listen, clarify, weigh options, ask questions then decide.
 - Managers must have the responsibility for making informed decisions, to take decisive action in resolving problems, and to confront individual or team performance issues in a timely, honest, and constructive way.
 - Give credit where credit is due.
- **Learn the Facts**
 - Don’t make decisions or give answers until you have checked it out, even if someone tries to bully you. Be patient, set boundaries and give the answer when you are ready.

Building Trust – Management’s Expectations Of You

- **Managers are expected to recognize the talents of others** and to assist their employees in developing skills and potential through active coaching, training, counseling, and recognition of their accomplishments.
- Managers have the responsibility to create and maintain a work environment in which high expectations and standards of success are consistently met.
- Managers are expected to **work effectively with their managers and their peers** as members of a management team so that their collective efforts will set an example.
- **Identify the Priorities of Your Job**
 - Focus on what matters most – learn to set priorities by using a Task List every day.
 - Ask questions from management, peers and subordinates.
- **Observe Your Workplace**
 - Don’t get so wrapped up in the day-to-day issues and paperwork that you forget to step back and observe what is going on.

Understanding Your Manager's Expectations

- You are running behind schedule on an improvement project mostly because you are not getting the information or support you need from another department. You have tried talking to the people you deal with on a regular basis, but the problem has not been resolved. How soon would your boss like to know about the problem? What would your boss expect you to do next?

- There have been several unexpected expenses on one of your current assignments, and you are concerned about the budget constraints you discussed with your boss at the beginning of the project. Do you have the authority to go over the budget to ensure a timely and effective outcome? Do you need your manager's permission to change specifications, get additional resources, or rearrange priorities?

- You are spending too much time at work trying to stay ahead of things. At first, you thought the changing demands were part of your promotion, a temporary crunch. But it has been months now since you have been able to leave work on time. You have taken work home almost every night, and you work weekends to try to catch up. You see no end in sight. Your typically good performance is beginning to slip. Your manager is also particularly busy right now, but your workload has reached crisis levels. What would your manager expect you to do? How can you resolve this problem satisfactorily for both you and your boss?

Building Trust & Maintaining It

Poor morale, low productivity, and high attrition are a direct result of employees that don't trust their boss. Trusting and respecting a boss shouldn't be confused with popularity. A boss can be trusted and respected without being popular. Conversely, a boss can be likeable, but not trusted. The key is the ability to make decisions that are unpopular, but fair.

To earn trust and respect doesn't mean that a boss can't also be well liked. The difference is that when push comes to shove, a trusted boss won't avoid the responsibility of discipline or conflict for fear of becoming unpopular.

- **Accept the Responsibility When Something Goes Wrong**
 - Even when one of your employees makes a mistake, you as manager need to learn to take responsibility for a problem that originated in your department. Be careful not to be a manager that readily points the finger of blame at a subordinate, but accepts praise for when their unit achieves success.
 - Accept responsibility openly. Reassure your boss the situation will be corrected and leave it at that. Then privately assess what went wrong and take corrective action.
- **Battle To Get Workers The Recognition They Deserve**
 - Work to know which of your employees put in an extra effort. When individuals or your entire unit truly deserve it, make sure it happens.

Building Trust & Maintaining It

- **Be Confident**
 - It is critical to show your staff and boss you have confidence in your ability to do the job.
 - Don't appear indecisive; spend your time gathering the facts, then decide.
- **Be Visible**
 - Spend as much or more time in the work area than in your office.
 - Get to know your staff, their attitudes, behaviors and duties.
 - Spending time in the work area will encourage information exchange, dialogue and increases your acceptance.
- **Use Your Boss**
 - Assess your boss's approachability. Is your boss task-oriented, detail-oriented or relationship-oriented; respond appropriately. Observe your boss's reactions to good and bad news from others.
 - Get your boss to introduce you if you are new.
 - Attempt to setup short, weekly update sessions with the boss.
 - Don't be afraid to ask questions when you need help, but don't rely on the boss for all the answers.
 - Never go to the boss with a problem unless you have a solution.

Building Trust & Maintaining It

- **Be A Good Listener**
 - Your ability to have the patience to listen will help you to get to know your staff and their capabilities.
 - Everyone, no matter their behavior, likes to be listened to, just know your limits and theirs.
- **Have a Sense of Humor**
 - This of all things will get you farther in your position than anything else.

Building Trust - Delegation

Delegation is the transfer of a task (and the authority to do it) to an employee who reports to you. Since you are sharing your authority with them, delegation is often described as a way of *empowering* employees, broadening their responsibilities and your expectations of them.

Delegation is not dumping your work on someone else; it is not getting rid of tasks that you no longer want to do by passing them on to someone else. If you need to depend on others to help you get through your current workload, it is certainly within your rights to share tasks or assignments with your direct reports. This is not delegating, however.

Delegating involves letting go of key tasks and responsibilities that you do well, enjoy doing, and formerly received recognition for doing. You are sharing your *power* in a positive way--by sharing your authority with others, by empowering them to do something on their own.

Determine whether you are comfortable with delegating:

1. Think about your own experience – How much confidence do you have in your employees?
2. Think about your employees – How ready are they to assume responsibility? Are they committed to organizational goals?
3. Think about the situation – How urgent is the assignment? Does your company's culture value delegation?

Building Trust - Delegation

Benefits of Delegation

1. Employees are given opportunities to develop new skills.
2. You have the opportunity to develop employees.
3. Your organization has a deeper, more experienced pool of talent.

Reluctance to Delegate

- If you are a perfectionist, get over it! Your employees will pick up signs that you lack confidence in them. If you do not delegate because you feel no one else can do it your way, you will find people reluctant in the future when you do need to delegate.
- In your reluctance to delegate, don't become an enabler. Ultimately, your employees will learn to delegate upward to you.

If you want people to be and feel successful, you have got to start somewhere. No matter how insignificant the task may seem to you, it may be very important to them. Delegation requires the thoughtful matching of a task that you no longer need to do yourself. Tasks that you may also not have the time to do anymore because of your management commitments.

Building Trust - Delegation

The first step in becoming effective in delegation is to identify the tasks or activities that one of your employees can accomplish. Start by making a list of the tasks for which you are currently responsible. How much autonomy and control do you want your direct report to have?

1. Authority to take action without your approval.
2. Authority to take action but keep you informed of decisions, problems, etc.
3. Must check with you about possible options.
4. Must check with you before taking any action.

Use the following action steps once you decide to delegate:

1. State the purpose of the meeting.
2. Describe the specific tasks, standards, and expectations associated with this responsibility.
3. Give appropriate authority.
4. Ask for questions.
5. Agree on a deadline, implementation schedule and controls to measure progress.
6. Ask for additional feedback and clarification.
7. Express your confidence in the individual's ability to perform the new task.

If the results of an assignment you have delegated do not meet your expectations or your own high standards, do not get discouraged. Most important, do not take back the task and do it yourself. Instead provide a careful review and get the project back on task.

Special Treatment

New Attitudes of the Caring Leader

- **Know** that you must treat everyone **fairly and equitably**.
- **Recognize**, however, that you don't have to treat everyone the **same**.
- **Understand** that providing "special treatment" is an outgrowth of trust. It means responding to each individual's unique human needs.

Special Treatment:

- Must be handled one-on-one.
- Requires effort and attention. It's part of the art of caring leadership.
- Involves recognizing and praising each individual's strengths.
- Recognizes differences as opportunities, not obstacles.
- Focuses on providing resources and conditions that allow each person to be most productive, most successful.

Special Treatment

- Reward and Recognition
 - Motivation and productivity are affected by the rewards or benefits people get from doing a good job.
 - Find out what motivates your employees.
 - Maintain communication with your employees regarding their individual motivators.
 - Encourage your employees to discuss their concerns, frustrations, or needs (counseling).
 - As possible, respond to your employees' needs for recognition.

Courage

New attitudes of the Caring Leader:

- **Understands** the greatest courage is called for to correct people without anger – and to lead without intimidation.
- **Demonstrates** real “toughness” by having high expectations for others.
- **Acts** to protect the individual from abuse by the group and the group from abuse by the individual.
- **Confronts** with care.
- **Supports** employees by giving them a chance to redeem themselves after errors.
- **Goes beyond** personal ego to allow what’s best for all concerned.
- **Find A Mentor**
 - A peer, who is an experienced manager, who is willing to take the time to help you. Even experienced managers have mentors.
- **When Your Authority is Challenged**
 - Get your boss on board – in a positive, solution-oriented way.
 - Create dialogue with the offender.
 - Set expectations, but don’t be hostile.

Sixteen Basic Principles

1. Handle Employee Complaints Promptly
2. Be Informed
3. Don't Sweat the Small Stuff
4. Handle the Difficult First; Then the Easy Stuff
5. Nip It In the Bud
6. Have Confidence in Your Subordinates
7. Don't Worry About Looking Foolish
8. Don't Dwell on Past Mistakes
9. Listen Carefully to Everyone and Everything
10. Show Your Gratitude for Assistance
11. Maintain Your Confidence
12. Leave Your Baggage at the Door
13. Don't Try to Do Everything at Once
14. Be Available
15. Set Expectations & Hold Them Accountable
16. Don't Make Yourself Miserable Over the Job

“The best executive is the
one who has enough sense
to pick good people
to do
what he wants done,
and self-restraint
enough to keep from meddling
with them while they do it.”

-Theodore Roosevelt