



Maximized Management

by Peter Lowe

Managing people is both a skill and a challenge. Here are some proven keys to becoming an extraordinary manager that will make your workplace a great for everyone.

LEARN THE JOB BEFORE YOU MANAGE IT

Employees resent managers they feel are less competent than themselves. Educate yourself in the daily duties of every department and position you supervise. You need to be able to do the job effectively yourself if you are to be a competent manager in overseeing it.

To be a manager, you have to start at the bottom, no exceptions.

- Henry Block

HIRE THE BEST, FIRE THE REST

Saturate your organization with the brightest talent available. Only the insecure are afraid to hire people more gifted than themselves. Gain a reputation for being able to pick a winner~ it will serve you well. Mentor those with the talent, desire, and potential to be star performers. Dismiss or demote those who lack the motivation or skill to do their jobs effectively. They deplete their co-workers and the organization as a whole.

When you hire people who are smarter than you are, you prove you are smarter than they are.

- R. H. Grant

It isn't the people you fire who will make your life miserable; it's the people you don't fire.

- Harvey MacKay

SET AND ENFORCE AN ATTAINABLE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE.

Hold your people accountable to a measurable standard of excellence. Consequences must be a part of enforcing the standard: when the standard is met and exceeded, rewards are in order. Poor performance, however, must result in equally negative consequences.

People don't change their behavior unless it makes a difference for them to do so.

- Fran Tarkenton

If standards are not formulated systematically at the top, they will be formulated haphazardly and impulsively in the field.

- John C. Biegler

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

A boss who is a loving authority will get better results than an authority-loving boss. Your team should see that you don't just supervise, you work. Lead your team by your own sterling example.

A good supervisor is a catalyst, not a drill sergeant. He creates an atmosphere where intelligent people are willing to follow him. He doesn't command; he convinces.

- Whitley David

Setting an example is not the main means of influencing another, it is the only means.

- Albert Einstein

MANAGE BY VISIBILITY

Your best source of information, incentive to productivity, and indicator of corporate conditions is gained by visibility in the workplace. Walk around. Watch, listen and learn. Make it a regular part of your work day.

One of the problems of American corporations is the reluctance of managers to practice visible management - to get out and listen and talk to employees.

- Ed Carlson

Management by wandering around may be the most important thing managers can do to improve work quality and productivity.

- Thomas Peters & Robert H. Waterman, Jr.

HELP YOUR TEAM MEMBERS TO DEVELOP THEIR INDIVIDUAL TALENTS

Your role as manager could also be defined as "mentor." Help your team members discover and develop their talents. Help them set, and assist them in achieving, their personal career goals. You'll gain respect and loyalty in the process.

The only thing worse than training employees and losing them, is not training them and keeping them!

- Zig Ziglar

For all the intellect and technique a manager can muster, his success turns on a subtle, elusive quality ~ the degree to which he can stimulate people to make the most of their own inherent capabilities.

- Lester Bittel

MAKE THE WORKPLACE A FUN PLACE

When work is a grind, people get worn down. Create fun incentives that reward productivity and motivate employees. Celebrate special occasions with theme parties. Decorate your workplace for holidays. Use music, props, and participation exercises to create energy and excitement in meetings. Most importantly, don't hide your sense of humor.

If it's not fun, you're not doing it right.

- Robert Basso



Many business people have mourned the death of the work ethic in America. But few of us have applauded the logic of the new value taking its place: work should be fun. That outrageous assertion is the value that fuels the most productive people and companies in this country.

- John Naisbitt

ASSIGN SOLE OWNERSHIP TO PROJECTS

Map out clear cut areas of responsibility for each individual. Avoid overlapping responsibilities. One person should have the final ownership for each project. When a group is asked, "Who owns this project?" someone should speak up and be able to account for it. Finally, remember that ultimately you "own" your team. The buck always stops with you.

Give your people the feeling that if THEY don't do the job, it won't get done. Also let them know that when they accomplish something, they will share in the accolades.

- Jimmy Johnson

PRAISE PERFORMERS PUBLICLY

Create a corporate culture that openly applauds individual successes. Pass the praise around, dish it out daily, and don't ever try to hog it for yourself.

Make heroes out of employees who personify what you want to see in the organization.

- Paul Schumann

People like to create when they can earn recognition for their ideas. When a good idea surfaces, the creator's immediate superiors should show prompt appreciation.

- James L. Hayes

SELL YOUR TEAM ON THE BENEFITS OF WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO

Show your team how achieving corporate goals will benefit the customer... and will benefit them. Give them a vision for the big picture. Enthusiasm is more caught than taught. Infuse your team with your energy and passion.

A mediocre idea that generates enthusiasm will go further than a great idea that inspires no one.

- Mary Kay Ash

USE INCENTIVES TO MOTIVATE YOUR TEAM

Contests, prizes and recognition bring out the competitive juices in people. It is also a proven way of increasing productivity and adding the fun factor to your workplace.

You can't manage people, but you can bribe them!

- David Aycock



KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BOTTOM LINE

As a manager you have a fiscal responsibility to your company to cut costs and/or increase revenues. It is not enough to run a smooth operation, it has to be smooth and profitable. The business of business is to make money.

It is an immutable law in business that words are words, explanations are explanations, promises are promises - but only performance is reality.

- Harold S. Geneen

DON'T MICRO-MANAGE

Describe the outcome you want, provide direction and deadlines, then step aside. Express confidence in your team's competence by letting them do their job. Good management includes the ability to get out of the way.

Most companies are overmanaged. And most people need less instruction than we think.

- James Treybig

Surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority, and don't interfere.

- Ronald Reagan

(Reprinted by permission from *Peter Lowe's SUCCESS Magazine*)