



MANAGE RIGHT, RIGHT NOW

A New Manager's First 90 Days

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welcome



A New Manager's First 90 Days

Starting a position as a new manager can be overwhelming or stressful at the least, even for the most seasoned professional. Perhaps you have been promoted to management within your current organization or you have joined a new organization. Either way, new expectations can be a source of pressure for new managers.

Many managers tend to rely on their experience, education, and other credentials or recommendations to support them in their new role. That's fine, to a point.

Every new opportunity is just that—a clean slate where professionals can essentially start over and re-position themselves for greater impact and levels of success.

A New Manager's First 90 Days provides insight and action steps to help both new and experienced managers position themselves and their teams for peak performance.



Hello, I'm Tuesday

WWW.TUESDAYSTRONG.COM

I help managers do their jobs with more confidence, so they can maximize their impact and gain more satisfaction from their work.

Life is too short to be frustrated by workplace challenges that go unresolved. I believe that the more confident we are about our roles, the better positioned we are to support our teams and thrive in our work. Whether you are new to management or a seasoned manager looking to further enhance your skillset, I'm here to support you on your management journey.

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Elements



Q1 GET UP TO SPEED QUICKLY

Starting as a manager with a new organization can be overwhelming or stressful at the least, even for the most seasoned manager. A new supervisor and expectations can also be sources of pressure for new managers. Many managers tend to rely on their experience, education and other credentials or recommendations to support them in their new role. That's fine, to a point. Every new opportunity is just that—a clean slate where professionals can essentially start over and re-position themselves for greater impact and levels of success.

Relationships

Associating and partnering with the right individuals can help you get work done and create opportunities. If you are a new manager, how do you know who you should be connecting with? In addition to any information your supervisor gives you, consider recommendations provided by your mentor, if you have one. Identify any high performing peers on your team and discover any shared goals with others. Expand your circle to include others throughout the organization and ensure you are known at various levels.

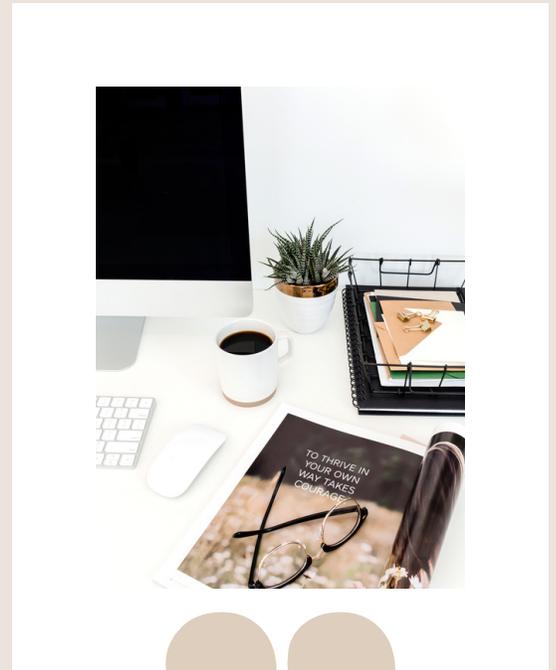
Information

Your supervisor, mentor, peers, and others can share information with you that will help you better understand your role and your department as well as the organization's strengths and challenges. You can also learn a great deal from these individuals about your team.

Review reputable, external sources of information as well and discover how the organization positions itself to the public and what various sources publish about the organization, its leadership, and prospects. Reports, press releases, and Internet searches can be valuable supplemental sources of information.

History

The more you learn about the organization's culture, values, and traditions the better—your actions need to demonstrate your understanding of them. In addition to the individual sources of information mentioned above, consider speaking with others throughout the organization. Attend events to observe and participate while seeking out opportunities to speak with retirees or other individuals with longevity with the organization who may be willing to share cultural or historic information.



An organization's culture can be one of the most powerful aspects impacting performance.

Key Takeaways

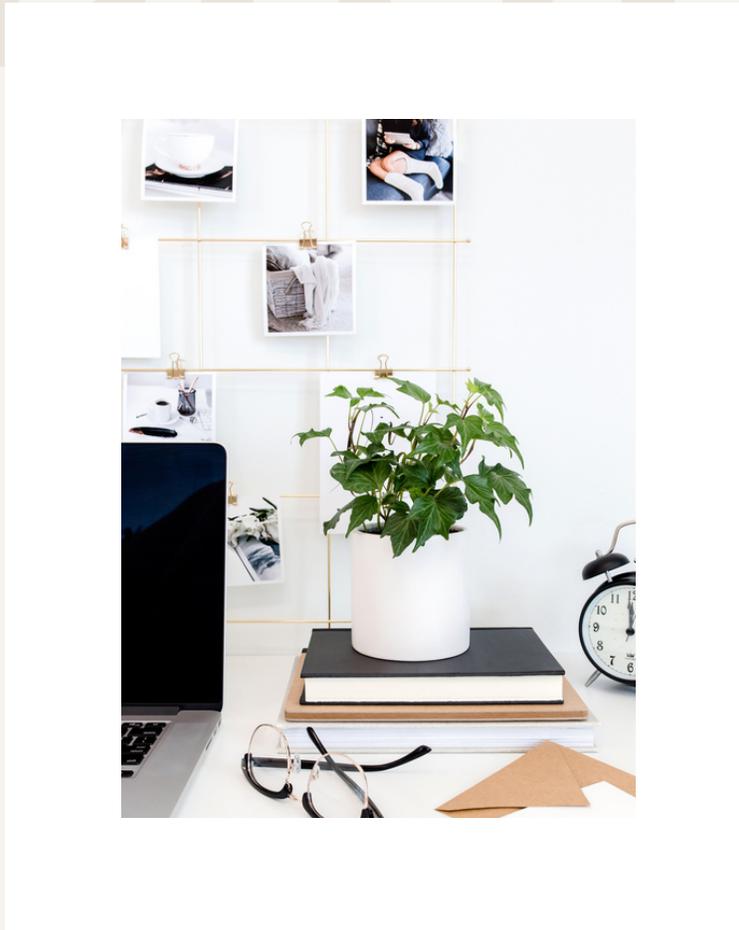
- Relationships impact your success.
- Information that helps you do your best work will come from multiple sources.



Try This

- Within your first 60 days, build key relationships and continue to enrich relationships thereafter.
- Work with a mentor to learn as much as possible quickly. If a formal mentoring program doesn't exist, find one yourself.

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YOUR SUPERVISOR'S STYLE & PREFERENCES

Your supervisor's style and preferences for communication, meetings, decision-making, and getting work accomplished will impact your work. Understand their preferences and adapt yours, when possible, to align yourself and your team for high levels of efficiency and productivity. Styles and preferences vary widely, and you may discover that the way you prefer to work is opposite from your supervisor. This may work well most of the time but there will most likely be times when you need to set your preferences aside and adapt your style to promote collaboration.

Preferences for Independence or Collaboration

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Ask your supervisor about their preferences and speak with their assistant, as appropriate, to learn more about how they prefer to get work done and any preferences they have for meetings and teamwork. You want to understand if they prefer to work independently or if they seek input and consensus as part of their decision-making process. You want to be prepared as much as possible to participate and be flexible to ensure your contributions are high value.

Communication Style

Your supervisor's communication style may vary widely from yours. Listen to their word choice in meetings and during speeches and other broad communications. You can learn a great deal about their preferences, tendencies for planning and the extent to which they tend to be empathetic, abrasive, authentic, or elusive with others. Observe their body language and compare your observations with commonly held beliefs about body language. You will most likely learn very quickly the extent to which they are filtered or unfiltered in their communication with others. What you discover may be useful in how you communicate with your supervisor and employees. The goal is to learn as much as you can as quickly as possible to maximize the value you add.

Political Cadence

Your supervisor's goals and motivations combine with directives from their leadership and the circumstances in which they are expected to produce results. Observe and be aware that any time you ask for their support they will most likely weigh the importance of supporting your request with the amount of political capital or time it will cost them. They only have so much capital and time, and the most effective leaders will spend them wisely. Do not take offense if they decline a request for support, understand instead that your requests are only a few of the requests that they are asked to consider.

Key Takeaways

- During your first 30 days, understand your supervisor's agenda and preferences, and plan to align your actions accordingly.



Try This

- Invest time to understand as much about your supervisor as possible from various sources.
- Review information about communication styles and body language.
- Understand how work is accomplished and about any alliances or unwritten rules.

GAINING GOAL CLARITY

During the interview process you should have gained clarity about the goals and expectations for your position. Within the first few days in your new role, re-confirm the expectations for you and your team. Ask questions and understand what resources are available that you can leverage as well as any challenges that you should anticipate. Gain clarity about how performance will be evaluated and how you and your supervisor will work together to achieve shared and independent goals.



Performance Expectations

Revenue, market penetration, and other targets will have most likely been established prior to you assuming your position. Confirm this and other performance expectations with your supervisor and how and when your performance will be measured and discussed. Ask about any reporting requirements you may have and share information with your direct reports as appropriate. Sharing information in advance with employees can help them prepare to meet deadlines. Once you understand performance expectations, share as much information as possible to empower your team and support progress and transparency.

Goals

Managers are key to ensuring employees understand and implement practices that position organizations to effectively compete or sustain themselves. They also serve as interpreters, champions, and organizers of change who are tasked with understanding departmental operations and aligning resources to ensure individuals and teams are supported and empowered to complete their work.



Effectiveness depends in large part on understanding goal setting and the interrelatedness of organizational, departmental, individual, and team goals. Managers must be able to conceptualize the connections and anticipate challenges and successes.

Performance Management

Most organizations have policies and procedures in place to support performance management. Discuss these with your supervisor, representatives from human resources, and other individuals who can help you understand the system and norms and what you can anticipate as you assume responsibility for managing a team of employees. Managing performance involves more than conducting an annual performance evaluation meeting. Goal setting, training and development, coaching, recognition, performance reviews, and correctives action (when necessary) are all components of managing performance. Equally important is frequent informal and formal communication and supporting employee advancement.



Managing performance involves more than conducting an annual performance evaluation meeting.

Key Takeaways

- During your first week in your new role, confirm goals and performance expectations with your supervisor.



Try This

- Gather information about goals and performance management from multiple individuals.
- Learn if any cultural norms and unwritten rules exist regarding how performance is managed.



COMMUNICATING WITH MANAGEMENT & YOUR TEAM

The most effective managers use proactive communication to their advantage. They recognize that they must take the initiative and set the tone for performance, team building, and change. This involves working to proactively to communicate with leadership as well as sharing information with employees. You may need to disregard personal communication preferences to realize success in the workplace. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and communicate effectively are critical for managers.

Communication Norms

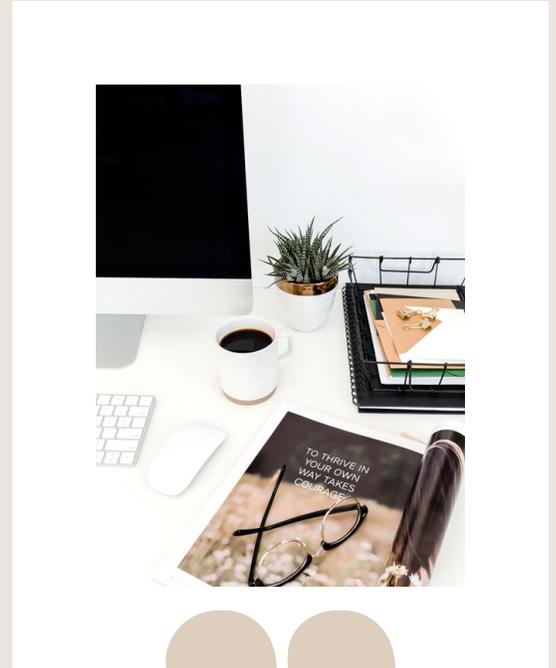
As a new manager, you have the chance to change the frequency of communication or the flow of information. While such changes have the potential to impact employees, the sooner you make changes the better after assuming your role. A certain amount of change will be expected given your newness. Once you establish new norms, implement additional changes with caution or risk negatively impacting your credibility if the changes could be perceived as unwarranted.

Communication Channels

Employees get used to management communicating with them using a variety of channels including in person, and via email, newsletters, etc. Consider the different ways in which your employees receive information and their effectiveness. Also take employee preferences into consideration and then decide which communication channels you will use. Be sure to evaluate how well the channels you decide to use work after a few months. Seek feedback from your team and if the feedback you receive is not positive, make changes to improve. Doing so let employees know that their feedback is valued.

Communication Expectations

As a manager, you will most likely communicate with your direct reports individually and as a team. Each meeting you have with employees leaves an impression upon them and affects their perception of your expectations and capabilities. Take advantage of meetings to encourage two-way communication and get to know individuals. Be consistent and confidently lead meetings, respecting the time and commitments of others and share your excitement for the organization and for the work of the team.



*Share your excitement
for the organization and
for the work of the team.*

Key Takeaways

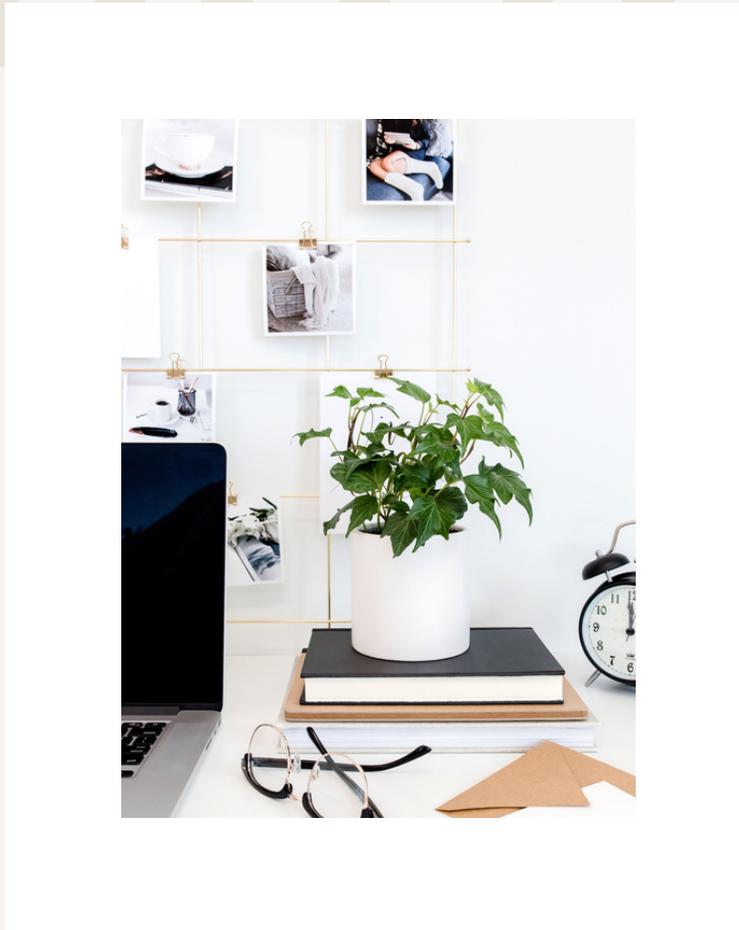
- Be proactive and set the tone for performance, team building, and change.
- Understand current communication practices and preserve or implement practices to support the goals and effectiveness of your new team.



Try This

- Consider beginning meetings by acknowledging positive performance and when appropriate, recognize individuals with specific examples.
- Start and end meetings on time, respecting the time of all employees.
- Use a variety of channels to communicate and encourage the use of technology.

chapter



UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE STRENGTHS, GOALS, & CHALLENGES

Individuals are typically more productive and content when their strengths, interests, and goals are in alignment with their work. Learn as much as you can about these aspects for each of your employees and align their responsibilities when possible. Doing so enables you to tap into higher levels of performance and contentment. Challenges may appear as setbacks for some, but they can be valuable learning experiences and position employees for improved performance while preparing them for greater responsibility.

Tapping into the Ideal State

ALIGN WHEN POSSIBLE

There are many tasks and aspects of positions that are undesirable for employees, but they must be completed. Most positions have such aspects, and they are unavoidable. Creating positions tailored to employee strengths and goals is not the intent here—the intent is to align work with employee strengths and goals as much as possible. To do this, you must discover their strengths and goals through direct conversations and formal assessments.

Understanding & Aligning with Goals

The best way to learn about employee strengths, goals, and challenges is through direct conversations with employees. Spend time with them to understand both their short and long-term goals and which aspects of their work that they find most challenging. Various instruments are also available that can identify individual strengths. Speak with your supervisor to determine if such instruments are available through the organization or if they will consent to your contacting the human resources department to explore other resources. Independent research and recommendations from colleagues can also be important sources of information and insight. Once you understand the ideal state for each of your employees, you can identify the areas in which you can tap into their strengths.

Empowering Employees

Managers have a responsibility to provide support, developmental opportunities, coaching, and if needed, corrective action, to position employees to thrive in their roles. Well prepared managers know that empowerment can occur in the form of setting goals with employees and meeting with them periodically to discuss progress. You can let employees know that they can seek assistance from you at any time and stress that they do not need to wait for scheduled meetings to reach out to you.

Key Takeaways

- Align work assignments with employee strengths, goals, and challenges when possible.



Try This

- During your first 30 days, meet with each employee to learn about their strengths, goals, and challenges.



ALIGNING LEARNING WITH EXPECTATIONS

Managers mainly assign work based upon position requirements. In many cases this can be effective, however, performance can be elevated when managers attempt to tap into employee strengths and interests. Focusing on strengths can be powerful but it can prove disastrous if done in isolation without consideration of organizational goals. To prevent this from occurring, managers need to understand employee strengths and weaknesses and plan to leverage strengths and improve weaknesses.

Gain clarity about the expectations of your team from your supervisor and assign work after reviewing operations and employee performance history. Determine what responsibilities will change and create a plan for implementing the changes. Discuss your plans with your supervisor and make any recommended changes, then begin meeting with employees to discuss the upcoming changes. Make broad announcements as needed and let employees know that you will be meeting with them individually.

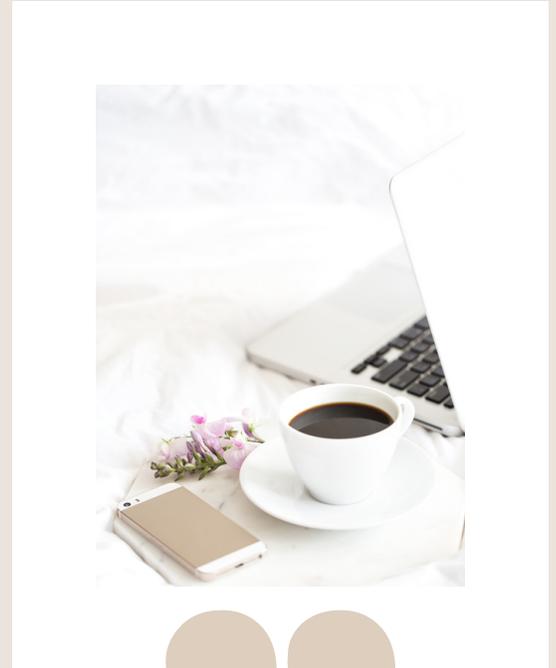
Learning

Depending on work assignments, learning and developmental opportunities may be needed for both individuals and teams. Employees may be able to receive customized training in-house or you may need to bring in consultants to help achieve learning goals.

A formal needs assessment will help identify the learning needed to support desired performance. A needs assessment with a proposed learning plan and budget should be prepared and discussed with your supervisor. You need to be able to clearly articulate the learning support needed for your team as well as understand the options for learning and how much it will cost.

Learning occurs formally and informally, individually and as a group. Ensure learning plans engage employees and give the opportunities to apply learning, discuss challenges, and celebrate successes.

Take action to reinforce a learning culture, one that embraces a willingness to experiment and try new concepts, processes, and tools. Incentivize learning and development and recognize and reward progress and improved performance.



The capacity to learn is a gift; the ability to learn is a skill; the willingness to learn is a choice.
- Brian Herbert

Key Takeaways

- Set and communicate clear expectations to ensure employees can meet expectations.
- Provide employees with learning opportunities to support performance expectations.



Try This

- Within your first 30 days, review team and individual learning plans to ensure alignment with performance expectations.
- If a mentoring program does not exist, explore the feasibility of creating a task force tasked with creating a mentoring program proposal for your unit.

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OWNING YOUR DEVELOPMENT

Too often professionals rely on the advice of their management or human resources department in isolation to guide their professional development. While their feedback and guidance are very important to your performance at your present place of employment, if you rely on it in isolation you may be doing yourself a disservice. Management and human resource professionals often provide guidance in the context exclusive to the current work environment and use processes and tools that may not focus on leveraging your strengths and improving your weaknesses while guiding your development as an individual who will likely encounter additional career transitions—all of these are not, nor should they be their focus—you should own your professional development.

Take Responsibility for Development

OWN YOUR DEVELOPMENT

Planning, participating in learning and development activities, or working with mentors are all possible options for you as you take responsibility for your development. Your developmental plans and investments should be designed to support the achievement of your short and long-term goals. Plan and work toward goals but remain flexible. Circumstances change and you need to be prepared to adapt your plans.

Peak Performance

Many of us know what it takes to perform at our best. Prioritizing and developing habits to sustain high levels of performance elude many. You can have stellar credentials including the experience, education, and network to support you in your role as manager. You will most likely experience difficulty if you fail to ensure time for your health and wellness and family and friends. Community service and activities outside of work also tend to contribute to our overall effectiveness, even our effectiveness at work. Many also find spirituality or other related connectedness important as well. Find a mix of aspects and activities that contribute to your well-being and performance and build time in your schedule for consistent participation, adjusting activities as necessary.

Align Development with Impact

Responsibility for ensuring you meet or exceed performance expectations for your current organization lies with you. Most of us will eventually transition out of the workforce or at least transition from our current place of employment to another role. Take your career plans into consideration and ensure you meet current commitments while preparing for your future.

Key Takeaways

- You are responsible for your development and performance—not your supervisor, not human resources, only you.
- Developmental experiences can improve your performance and position you for opportunities.



Try This

- If you don't currently have one, create and implement your developmental plan today. Your plans should evolve over time to support your needs and interests.

A close-up, soft-focus photograph of a desk. In the foreground, a white laptop keyboard is visible. To the left, a gold watch with a white face and a gold band lies on the desk. To the right, a pair of gold-rimmed glasses is placed on the desk. In the background, a clear glass pen holder contains several pens. The overall aesthetic is clean, professional, and modern.

"MANAGEMENT'S
JOB IS TO
CONVEY
LEADERSHIP'S
MESSAGE IN A
COMPELLING
AND INSPIRING
WAY. NOT JUST
IN MEETINGS,
BUT ALSO BY
EXAMPLE."

Jeffrey Gitomer

IDENTIFYING COLLABORATORS, SUPPORTERS, & DETRACTORS

Each professional experience offers us opportunities to connect, learn, or support others. The extent to which we do any of these depends upon us. The nature of work brings professionals together who are at various stages of their development and career progression. Mentorship, teamwork, and enhanced levels of collegiality can all occur. When they do, individuals develop, and the depth of their contributions have the potential to increase.



Partner with Collaborators

In your newly assumed role as manager, you are given the opportunity to develop new professional relationships. You are essentially given access to different professionals—access that you should take advantage of as opportunities to add value. Supporting others and adding value to their work is important. Professionals want to work with other professionals who are supportive and can be counted on as reliable contributors. Proactively seek partnerships with other professionals when you can contribute to their efforts or when they are willing to support yours.

Engage Supporters

Your role positions you to work with others throughout the organization. This means you have opportunities to add value to others in different departments or units while also developing relationships with professionals who possess a wide variety of expertise. They can get to know you, the work that you do, and the work that you're capable of. Consider each interaction with these individuals not only opportunities to add value to their efforts, but also opportunities to position yourself to engage with or be recommended by them in the future.



Offset Detractors

Unfortunately, you will encounter individuals who are not supportive of others and who seem determined to focus solely on their agendas to the detriment of others. Your interactions with others should be confident, supportive, and focused on accomplishing shared and individual goals while expressing collegiality and a level of consistent professionalism. Demonstrating positive, professional behaviors lets others know what you value and what behavior is acceptable to you. Consistency of purpose and a willingness to help others impacts your reputation with your team and throughout the organization.



Key Takeaways

- You cannot maximize your effectiveness without others—you need others to learn from and to help you get work done.
- Understand that you will encounter distractors during your career. Be prepared to deal with potential distractions and setbacks.



Try This

- Within your first 30 days, schedule to meet with your peers. Lunch or coffee meetings can be less formal but productive for learning about each other, the organization, and how your work can support one another.



PARTNERING WITH YOUR PEERS

Your peers will be one of the biggest assets to you in your new role as manager. Other managers within your organization can provide information about the organization, operations, and competitors. They can help you learn about and understand the culture. You can also help each other by contributing your time and talent to one another.

Start getting to know your peers as early as the first week in your new role as manager. Use the information provided by your supervisor or human resources office to identify other managers and peers that you plan to connect with during your first few weeks with the organization. Organizational charts can help you understand who your peers are as well as give you an idea of how responsibility is distributed throughout the organization.

Use the information you have gathered and review it with your goals to determine any mutual interests or potential areas of overlap. Then reach out to set up meetings to get to know others and learn about their goals. Work with them to determine any areas in which you can partner to accomplish work or be beneficial to one another professionally.

Your future with the organization may depend in large part on your ability to be forward-thinking about how you can add value over the long-term. Several organizations offer career paths, but they are less common than most. You may have decided that you want to continue to progress upward through the ranks within the organization and apply for a promotion to a director or other position in the future. Your potential, future peers may be willing to provide input to other senior leaders or express an interest in working with you or having you on their team. Consider possible positions of interest to you throughout the organization and identify individuals working in these areas who may want to work with you or recommend you in the future. Reach out at informal gatherings and get to know them, their interests, and if any possible opportunities exist to work together. Be open-minded and even consider opportunities to volunteer a viable way of getting to know one another.

Take time to thank you peers for their support of your efforts and for the opportunities to contribute to theirs. Use both private and public settings to express your gratitude and compliment the specifics of their work or the impact of their work on others or the organization. Be thoughtful and genuine in your remarks.



Key Takeaways

- Be known for supporting and adding value to others.
- Focus on developing meaningful relationships.



Try This

- Within your first 30 days, develop and implement plans to meet with your current peers while identifying potential future peers.

chapter



MODEL THE WAY

As a manager you have responsibility for setting the example you want others to follow. You should not only demonstrate alignment of your actions with organizational policies and procedures but also by exhibiting high standards and values reflective of the organization. This means being genuine and forthright in all that you do both at work and during non-working time. You are an extension of the organization and will be expected to always act accordingly.

Manage with Integrity

Working in organizations can present us with situations that challenge what we value and even our moral code of conduct. Not all coworkers, managers, or leaders will be professional or ethical. How you respond to such challenging situations can be developmental or even detrimental to your career. When such situations arise, be discreet and gather as much information as possible. Attempt to base your decision-making on facts and not hearsay.

When possible, ask questions of your supervisor, mentor, or of the individuals involved themselves but be cautious and keep in mind that questions about unethical or potentially illegal activities or those of a nature that conflicts with organizational policies or codes, may not be welcome. Such questions could also jeopardize your position or even your employment with the organization. While it may seem difficult to believe, not all questions are welcome by upper management—especially if they could be viewed as controversial nature.



Not all coworkers, managers, or leaders will be professional or ethical.



Set the example you want employees to follow.



Your direct reports will observe your behavior and oftentimes model it. They may not always understand what you do or why you do it so, when possible, be transparent and practice open communication. You will most likely not be able to openly discuss certain aspects of your work such as budgets, personnel, or matters of a confidential nature with employees. You may be able to share details that impact your attendance, productivity, or other aspects of your work with your direct reports and possibly eliminate any questions that they may have about how you approach your work.

Recover from Mistakes

Making mistakes can prove quite valuable. They are opportunities to learn and develop and can be learning experiences for teams or entire organizations. Take responsibility for your mistakes as quickly as possible, apologize as appropriate, and describe what action you will take to move forward.

Key Takeaways

- Employees notice how you act and treat others. Each interaction they have with you impacts their impression of your abilities and credibility.
- You are responsible for setting the example for employees.

Try This

- Identify three of the most critical behaviors you want your employees to demonstrate and ensure your actions exhibit them. Build reflection time into your schedule at least monthly and review the behaviors and your recent demonstration of them. Maintain this practice until the behaviors become habitual.



KNOWING YOUR NUMBERS

One of the most impactful actions you can take involves understanding finance, both your personal finances and those of the organization where you are employed. If this is an area of weakness for you, improve your understanding through coursework or by researching information electronically or by meeting with professionals. The importance of understanding how money is put to work for both individuals and organizations will prove important to you personally and throughout your career. Take the time to learn the terminology and practical applications so you can confidently participate in conversations and decision-making about budgets within your organization as well as take responsibility for your financial security.

Gather Information

As a new manager you may benefit from reviewing a few years of budget files. Doing so may help you understand any trends or how the organization has responded to market conditions. Both internal and external sources of information can prove informative as you develop your understanding of the organization's historical performance and current financial state. Conversations with your supervisor, peers, and other managers may also contribute to your understanding. If the position you have accepted is in an industry that is new or less familiar to you, take the time to invest in becoming well versed in the norms for your industry. This may involve researching the financial history and current conditions of other similar organizations

Develop Understanding

Each operational unit encounters various challenges that impact their budgets. Once you understand costs and the processes, you may be able to recommend changes designed to decrease costs, increase revenue, or both. A fresh perspective or approach may be what the organization needs to make impactful changes.



Follow the Money

Every organization has a group of individuals who control the budget process and access to funding. Learn about who controls the money so you can better understand the policies and processes you need to adhere to as a budget manager. Depending upon the organization, you may discover that you need to modify your approach to budgeting to be consistent with the organization's practices.



Key Takeaways

- You need to understand the budgeting process, costs, and how allocations or funding flows throughout the organization.

Try This

- Meet with your supervisor to discuss your budgetary responsibility.
- Review the information provided and participate in follow-up meetings as necessary.
- Review your budgets frequently and ensure any transfers, corrections, or other edits are made in a timely manner.



12 SETTING GOALS WITH EMPLOYEES

Goal setting matters because organizational performance, revenue, and sustainability rely on it. Goal setting impacts culture and contributes to the establishment of the norms that guide employee behavior. It also matters from a talent attraction standpoint. Managers are uniquely positioned to impact the success of organizations and the careers of employees. Those who use goal setting and other performance management techniques are better positioned to contribute to the organization's financial position and long-term sustainability. Employees benefit from being provided guidance that can impact their development and progression within the organization. Managers also benefit from using goal setting because they can transfer goal setting techniques to their own career development.

Goal Alignment

Managers are key to ensuring staff understand and implement practices that position organizations to effectively compete. They also serve as interpreters, champions, and organizers of change who are tasked with understanding departmental operations and aligning resources to ensure individuals and teams are supported and empowered to complete their work. Their effectiveness depends in large part on their understanding of goal setting and the interrelatedness of organizational, departmental, and individual and team goals.

Managers must be able to conceptualize the connections and anticipate challenges and sources of progress. They need to communicate clearly and consistently and set the standards for employees by offering guidance, tools, and recognition.



Managers need to communicate clearly and consistently.



Understanding contributes to commitment.



Connecting Performance

One of the easiest ways in which you can help employees assume ownership for goals involves ensuring that they understand how their actions contribute to larger team and organizational goals. Employees can lack commitment and enthusiasm when they do not understand these relationships. Consider an example involving an employee who has been helping his vice president by introducing a new product line to potential clients. While he has done this on a limited basis, he may be surprised when he is asked to join and become actively involved in the local chapter of the industry's most recognized association. He may not recognize that he is being groomed for a new role as the organization's product expert or that he could be an integral part of a pitch the organization is planning for new potential clients during the next quarter. As a manager, ensure that you share as much information as possible with employees to help them understand how their goals and actions relate to the organization's plans and expectations.

Key Takeaways

- You are responsible for explaining goal setting to employees and ensuring they understand the process, their role, and what support is available for realizing goals.

Try This

- Within your first week, review the organization's strategic plan and all organizational and departmental/unit goals.
- Within your first 90 days, ensure all direct reports have updated goals.

INHERITING UNDERPERFORMING EMPLOYEES

New managers are often faced with supervising underperforming employees. While these situations can prove challenging for even the most seasoned managers, they can be even more complicated when poor performance has been allowed over a period of years or when the organization lacks the policies, procedures, or appropriate leadership to manage performance.



Understand History

Meeting with employees to discuss their history with the organization and their performance specifically can be very informative. Use these discussions to gather information about their strengths, interests, challenges, and goals. Use conversations with your supervisor to gather additional information as well as conversations with other managers and possibly human resources. Your goal is to learn as much about the history of performance management at the organization as well as how your employees have been managed.

Understand the System

Once you understand the history of performance management at the organization, you can ask questions specific to the system—the actual forms, software, and supporting processes used to document performance related conversations, goals, and progress. You will need this understanding to ensure the goals you set with employees can be tracked and reported in a meaningful way. If you discover an outdated system or process and you have experience in this area, meet to discuss potential improvements with your supervisor.



Empower Employees

You can determine how best to manage employee performance once you understand the organization's history, guidelines, and goals. You may discover some employees simply need clear goals and empowerment to perform at high levels while other employees may need help transitioning from their role with the organization. You are not assuming an appropriate amount of responsibility if you are not honest with employees about their performance. Conversations about performance can be challenging and uncomfortable. The most impactful managers understand that helping someone prepare to leave the organization may be the best course of action for the employee and organization.



Key Takeaways

- Leadership, culture, systems, and other aspects influence employee performance.
- Gather information about employee performance from multiple sources.
- Employee performance may have been mismanaged in the past.



Try This

- Within your first thirty days, gather information about your direct report from various sources (including from the employees themselves) and review personnel files.
- Identify which employees need empowerment or developmental opportunities or if any need to transition from the organization. Create and implement plans to achieve desired performance and team structure.



THE ART OF
EFFECTIVE
LISTENING IS
ESSENTIAL TO
CLEAR
COMMUNICATION,
AND CLEAR
COMMUNICATION
IS NECESSARY TO
MANAGEMENT
SUCCESS.

James Cash Penney

Chapter



BEING STRATEGIC, TACTICAL, OR OPERATIONAL

Every manager has abilities and preferences for how they accomplish work. Everyone does not possess the ability or desire to function strategically, tactically, and operationally. Highly effective leaders will help identify your strengths and position you to thrive using your strengths while improving or offsetting your weaknesses. Many managers are quite comfortable within an operational capacity but lack the ability or interest to think strategically while others prefer a mix of being able to participate in strategy setting sessions while overseeing operations. Understanding your strengths and preferences will help you and your team perform at higher levels.

Using Your Strengths

Understanding the differences between being strategic, tactical, and operational can be helpful if you are interested in developing professionally or if you seek advancement to another type of role in the future. Use your strengths to accomplish work and develop employees in your current position. If you have strengths managing from an operational perspective, determine the top ways you can best use them to accomplish goals and support those of your supervisor. You should strive to complete your work and empower your employees to complete theirs while also serving as a resource and source of value for your supervisor. Being effective in each of these roles involves understanding your strengths and how they can be used or leveraged for effectiveness.



*Be willing to step outside
your comfort zone.*



Growth Opportunities

You will most likely encounter opportunities to step outside of your comfort zone and do work for which you have little or no formal training or experience. Take advantage of these opportunities to learn, develop, and prove that you are capable and willing to accept new challenges. Doing so demonstrates your abilities and professionalism. Your participation and performance are evidence of your potential and may influence which future opportunities are presented to you.

Key Takeaways

- You can learn to develop your abilities to be more strategic, tactical, or operational.
- Once you understand the expectations for your role, you can implement plans to leverage your strengths and improve weaker areas.

Try This

- Within your first week, discuss expectations for your role with your supervisor. Ask them about their expectations for you and to what extent they prefer you be strategic, tactical, or operational.

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