

5-STEP FRAMEWORK FOR NEW MANAGER SUCCESS

There is a big difference between being a manager and being a leader, and the first 90 days of taking on a new role can set the tone for this difference with the team and organization. Setting your managers up in a few key areas can have a huge impact on their success in their role.

Use the following framework to make sure that your managers are focusing on the right areas during this critical period of time.

1. MANAGER EXPECTATIONS

Often, many managers don't succeed in their role because they step into positions without understanding what's truly expected of them. Negotiating success means having a conversation with a boss or mentors within the company to set reasonable expectations and ensure the desired goals and results can be achieved. The goal is to determine the metrics and outcomes that define "success" in the role.

Don't overpromise though! Make sure the expectations are reasonable. Many managers promise unrealistic deadlines in order to please their bosses in the short term. Instead, set reasonable expectations, and deliver excellence.

A new manager should have a clear understanding of:

- The role and responsibilities
- Deliverables
- Timelines
- Authority
- Access to critical resources

Key Takeaways:

- Listen to and learn from others as much as possible during the first 90 days.
- Ask open-ended questions, and listen with the intent to learn.
- Seek to be influenced by your team members' experiences.

How will you ensure you make good decisions for your team and organization?

2. SEEK EARLY WINS

Everyone wants to be part of a winning team; it's energizing, refreshing, and exciting to imagine what you will create and develop together. As a manager, there is no better way to energize a team and gain credibility than by accomplishing and celebrating early wins. Focusing on what the team's positive values are and how they can continue to bring success to the organization empowers them to continue to work together as a strong team under a new manager.

A new manager can seek early wins by:

- Identifying how the team adds value
- Determining top priorities
- Pinpointing expectations to establish success

Key Takeaways:

- Schedule a meeting with your boss, and make sure to prepare beforehand.
- Brainstorm, research, and ask questions about what's important to your boss and your boss's boss.

What values does the team generate for the organization, and what A-list items can be accomplished in the next few months that align with the scope of your team's long-term goals?

3. CREATE A DIALOGUE, NOT A MONOLOGUE

One of the best ways leaders can improve the communication channels on their team is by shifting team meetings from reporting out to co-creation, from information sharing to innovation, and from individual contributions to team collaboration. It is through dialogue and discussion that thoughts and ideas are shared between a manager and a team member.

Monologue is when a manager talks at you; dialogue is when a manager talks with you. Good managers hold conversations and engage in dialogue with team members while listening to their perspectives. By establishing trust between team members through dialogue, team members are more likely to be productive and collaborate more effectively on future projects. This, again, is why communication coaching and workshops are imperative to managers' success.

A new manager can create a dialogue by:

- Having regular one-on-one meetings to share thoughts and concerns in a private setting
- Encouraging team members to speak up and share their ideas in team meetings
- Being transparent about decision-making processes and addressing questions and concerns

Key Takeaways:

- Create an open and inclusive environment for all team members to share their ideas while actively listening—in both team meetings and one-on-one meetings.
- Foster honesty by being open about decisionmaking processes, and readily make yourself available to answer questions.

How interactive are team meetings at your organization, and how can more opportunities for dialogue among team members be created?

4. IMPROVE TRUSTED COMMUNICATION

There is a huge difference between communication and trusted communication. When managers' words and communication are rock solid, they gain trust and respect from their team. To become a trusted communicator, integrity should be weaved into everything that is said. This will reinforce the team's trust and ensure that the manager and leader are building a strong structure for communication throughout everything they do. Often, communication doesn't come naturally to managers, though, which is why it is imperative to take the time to complete executive communication workshops, which help managers at all levels improve their communication skills.

New managers can foster trusted communication through:

- Speaking with integrity
- Sharing information about the organization
- Explaining how that information connects to the team
- Reinforcing what the information means for all individuals and their work
- Listening to concerns and answering questions

Key Takeaways:

- Commit to having a conversation with each of your team members to build connections.
- Continue to build credibility by having open lines of communication.

Can you share even uncomfortable truths with your team? Is the work important despite the new information? Do you care about their work? Do you care about your team members as people?

5. BEWARE OF THE WHIRLWIND

Often, it becomes difficult to stay on top of a constantly growing to-do list with neverending e-mails, meetings, and phone calls. As a manager, it's important to balance these items plus make time for higher-level activities such as strategizing for the team. The “*whirlwind*” is the compilation of the daily urgent activities and tasks that are required for the day-to-day actions of the job. However, a strategic and methodical plan needs to be put in place so the whirlwind doesn't devour the team's energy and resources.

New managers can avoid the whirlwind by:

- Considering whether they are thinking strategically about the big picture or getting sucked into the whirlwind of daily actions
- Making a conscious effort daily to focus on time management

Key Takeaways:

- Reflect on this past week and the types of activities you spent the majority of your time on.
- Consider whether you are thinking strategically about the big picture or getting sucked into the whirlwind of daily actions.

What changes to your time management would be most beneficial to your team, and what would need to happen to execute these changes?