



New Manager Survey Results



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Several months ago, we began discussing the difficulties of stepping into a new, first-time manager role. The challenges associated with the role have become exacerbated by the impact of the pandemic on working conditions and the limitations placed on interactions with others.

We agree that there are lots of great resources out there to support someone stepping into a people manager role for the very first time, from training to self-help books. But as we dug deeper and discussed the topic with other colleagues and clients, we came to the conclusion that more needs to be done to prepare new, first-time managers to handle the pitfalls they face. We felt there was a gap between the standard new manager training and the specific actions a new manager needs to take depending on their specific context. It's those specific decision points and the corresponding actions new managers need to make, and then take, we are after.

The first step in this discovery process was to gather feedback from clients, colleagues and friends regarding what they felt were the major challenges. This report summarizes that feedback (n = 42). The questions we asked are as follows:

1. In your opinion, what is the biggest obstacle to success for a new (first time) manager?
2. What are the most important actions/activities a new manager should be engaging in first?
3. What should a new manager focus on with his team and boss as it relates to getting to know them and setting expectations? ("people side")
4. What recommendations do you have for new managers on getting their own work done while managing a team? (balancing priorities)
5. How does your organization set up a new manager for success?
6. Where do you see there being the biggest challenge(s) you face when supporting new managers?
7. What successes have you had in the past with regards to preparing new managers for their role? To what do you attribute this success?

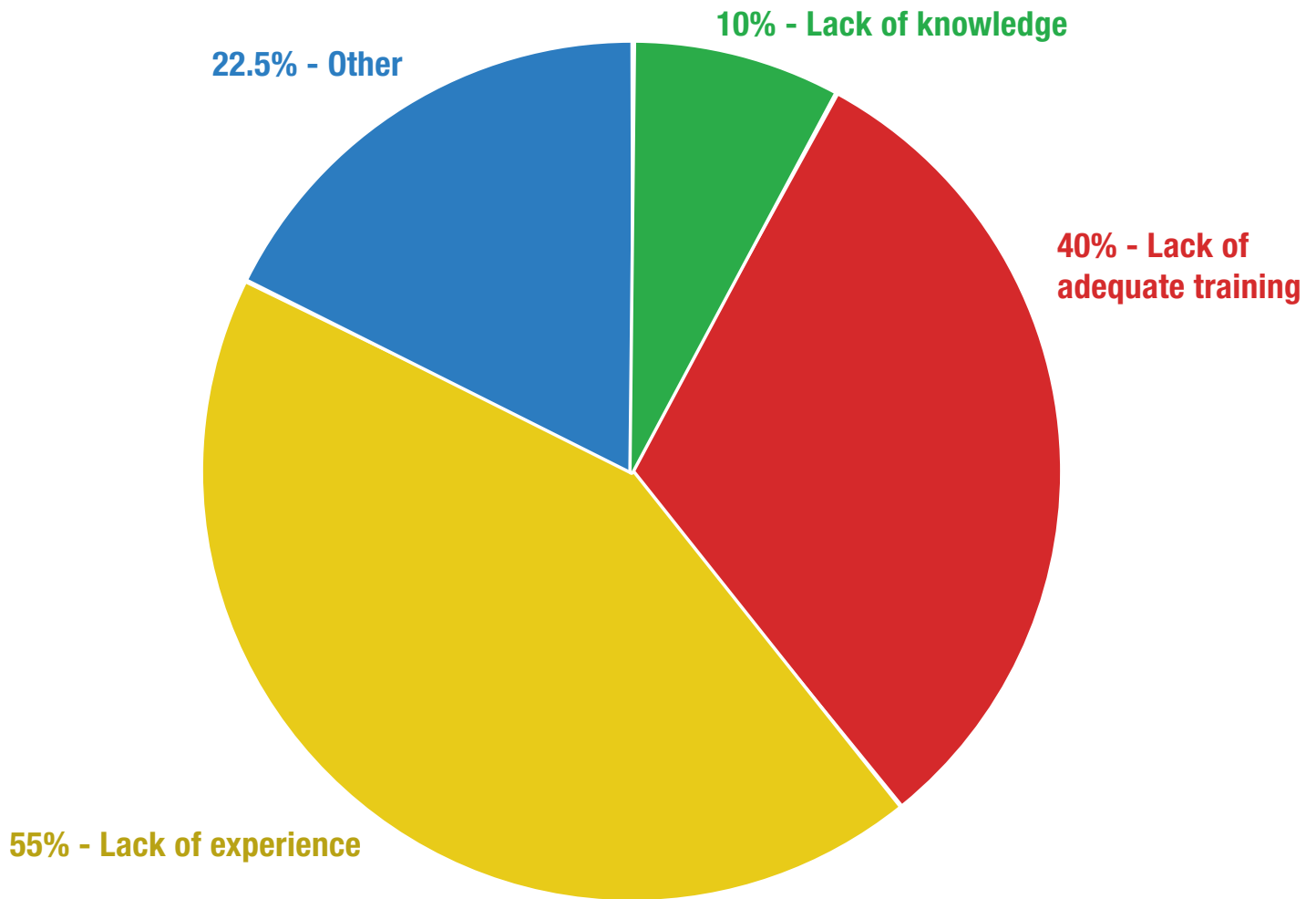
We appreciate those who participated in completing the report, and hope you find the aggregate feedback helpful.

Next Steps: Our plan is to transform this feedback into a resource for new managers that can help guide them (and the organizations in which they work) to greater success.

Regards,

Wayne Hauenstein & Rob Stevens

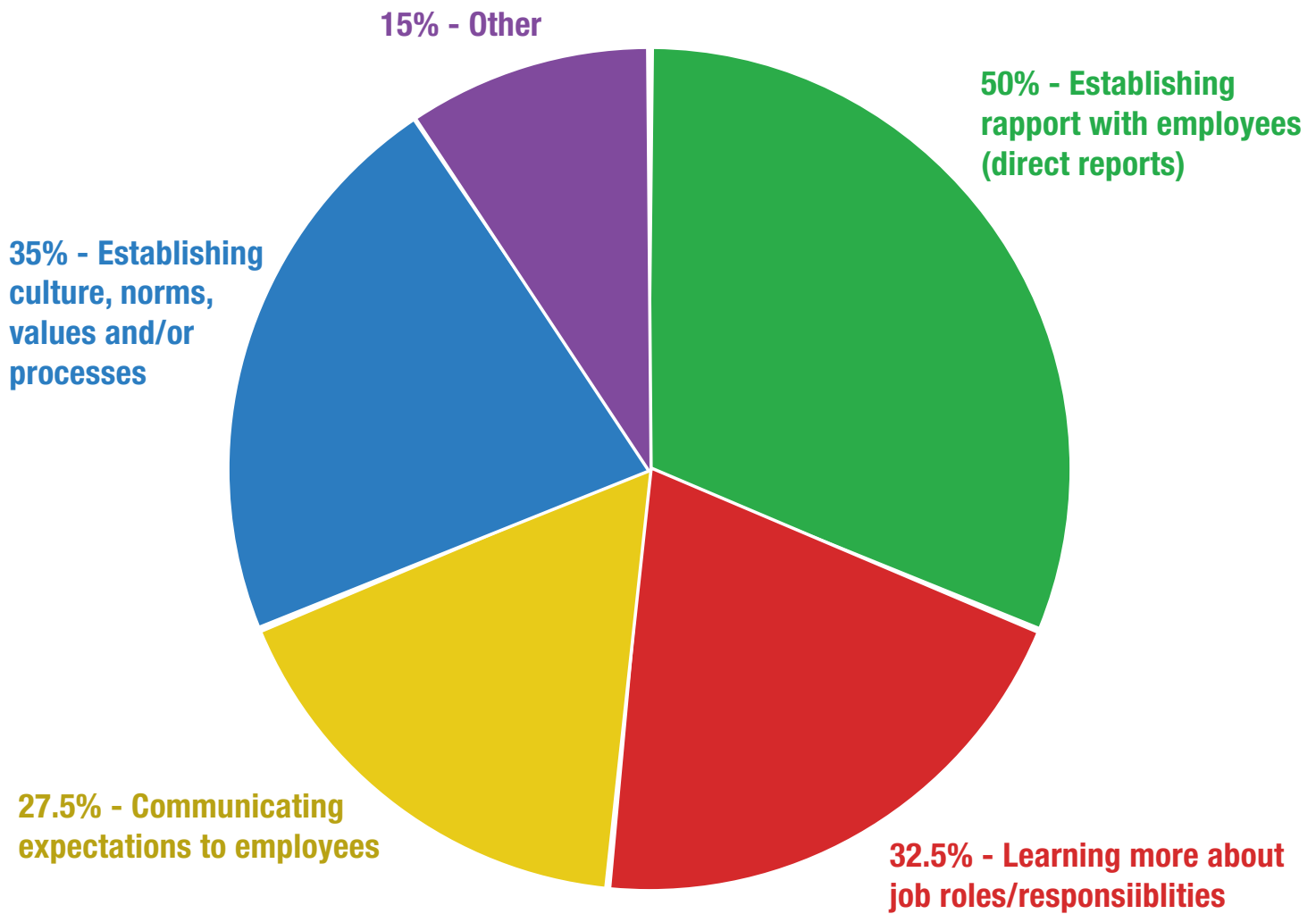
Q1 *In your opinion, what is the biggest obstacle to success for a new (first time) manager?*



“Other” Responses:

- Lack of mentorship or no experience with having a good leader previously. Anyone can manage; not anyone can lead
- Confidence in their ability and experience testing new skills around compassion, creating a vision, tapping into motivations, etc.
- Getting buy-in from new team
- Innate abilities
- Lack of Leading People Skills
- lack of judgment and confidence-- goes with lack of experience
- Lack of time to adjust and apply
- Lack of structure to guide her/him
- Clarity of expectations and lack of management systems

Q2 What are the most important actions/activities a new manager should be engaging in first?



“Other” Responses:

- it's important to spend some time to sit back and observe, take notes, ask questions, learn the dynamics of the team and the personalities. Those who come in wanting to change things from day 1 usually don't have the support of his/her direct reports ultimately
- Getting an early “win”
- First thing new manager should be doing is listening to new reports
- Building a vision
- 1. Understanding functional goals and objectives 2. Mapping team and individual goals 3. Defining Job alignment/gaps 4. Assessing individual KSA vs. job requirements 5. Re-aligning, communicating changes/goals, addressing gaps,
- observing and learning first before affecting culture or setting expectations

Q3 *What should a new manager focus on with his team and boss as it relates to getting to know them and setting expectations? (“people” side)*

- learn personalities and what inspires the employees. Leverage their likes and what they are good at. Support and develop the elements they don't like or aren't good at (the items that are necessary). I think a leader must lead by example. If you expect deadlines to be met, then show late nights or activities to meet this. Produce high quality output and/or own up to mistakes so that when others make mistakes they won't be afraid but will fail forward and try harder. Once rapport and respect has been established, collectively define expectations since they may have constraints that won't permit them to meet the initial ones (ex / everyone works until 5pm....some may come in early because they have school pick up, etc)
- Setting very clear measureable expectations with direct reports and boss.
- The new manager should understand the strategy of the company. From that strategy, he should learn the strengths of his employees to see where they fit when it comes to achieving success. Set employee goals based on the strategy and strength of each employee.
- Understanding personalities and communication styles
- Aligning the leadership's expectations, with the New Manager's direct reports. Establishing a baseline of 'current state', and clearly setting a team focus on 'future state', and a road map capturing how the process of moving towards the future state will be measured (goals / objectives).
- I believe a new manager should focus on learning their network and knowing who the Go To people are in the organization that will help in their future success. They need to build rapport with both their peers and their subordinates and help others to understand their style of management. Also, admit when you don't know how to do something and don't be afraid to FAIL. The most successful people I know fail often. However, they learn along the way. Those who sit back and don't try, don't succeed. Another thing, their people have to know right away that you have their back. Even when they fail. That foundation is important to build loyalty and drive successful teams.
- Discover strengths and communication style of each coworker and understand what is important to each.
- First, listen to them and understand what they think the organization has done well in the past and what it can do better. Second, get to know them personally... what motivates them, their background, their family.
- what, when and why
- Get to know individuals beyond their title
- getting to know them and setting expectations. Sharing personal style and pet peeves. Learning the style of everyone else. Learning the challenges he/she will have.
- Ensure time for relationship building. This could be one-on-one time outside of progress check-ins. Who are their family members, what are their interests, what is top of mind outside work, are they a caregiver, what do they love/loath about work, where do they see themselves in 6 months/year/2 years, what are their dreams. The manager should be just as open too.
- Understand the strengths of the team, what about the current roles team members are happy with, what they would change, and what their interests and their career aspirations.
- Job descriptions and how to be evaluated
- Learning about their background and experience. Learning about interests, goals, hobbies, and etc.
- Get to know team members, what external issues (outside work) factors into their behavior and morale, what motivates them to perform at work, what are their ambitions and what can you help them with. Focus on clarity of expectations with your own boss.
- How their role is critical to the vision and mission
- Understanding their current role/responsibilities and understanding the knowledge/skills/abilities of the employee.
- Good communication and using good change management approaches
- Meeting with Boss to understand how they operate and what their expectations are. Meeting with team regularly to get to know them, create team engagement activities, converse with team members 121 to build that rapport and glean their interests and strengths.
- Recognize past and focus on future. Engaging team and individuals in goal alignment, role requirements, development plans. Establish peer training and subject matter coaching roles.

Q3 (Continued)

- Identify key priorities, understand work in progress/obstacles to success, create clear expectations for each person and understand each person's needs/career goals.
- Getting to know people's strengths and how you can all support each other, mapping out expectation for working together and how people like to communicate. Getting to know the other leaders you will be working with and understanding their goals and priorities.
- I think first-time managers must avoid the trap of becoming too friendly. Rather, it is more important to be accessible, fair to all team members and direct in expectations.
- expectations goal setting
- People and their areas of focus and expertise. What is working well, what is not working.
- Setting regular meeting schedules and clarity of expectations between meetings. What needs to be done by when.
- Getting to know their professional goals and aspirations. Also understand their hobbies and personal background.
- The team and boss all have a view on what is expected of this particular team. understanding these views is critical to setting expectations as not everyone will be aligned. The manager has to navigate any MIS alignment and set appropriate expectations.
- Current duties, experience, personal information (married/kids/etc.)
- their history; history of the organization; their goals, needs and expectations of their job and of the leader
- Understand the team's current status and pain points, ask a lot of questions and do not make any major changes or decisions — build rapport by being “real”, authentic, and be a constant learner
- Know the job descriptions and learn the employees strengths and weaknesses.
- Set regular 1:1 meetings to learn what each person needs, document proper approaches to be tailored for his boss and clear direction for the direct reports
- Get clear on his responsibilities to his boss. Get clear on roles/skills/communication style of each direct report.
- Build rapport with the team by getting to know them and what they do outside of work. What are their interests? What makes them tick? How do they view their job and position?
- Understanding what everyone does and the challenges they face. Listening to their ideas and concerns then putting together a plan for short and long term goals.
- Understanding each employee's outlook on the business, issues, concerns, aspirations and relationship they wish to have with their manager
- New managers are often tested by employees, so establishing communication and leadership early on is key. They should also try to understand the expectations of their boss, including boss' priorities, frequency of communication.
- What makes others “tick”

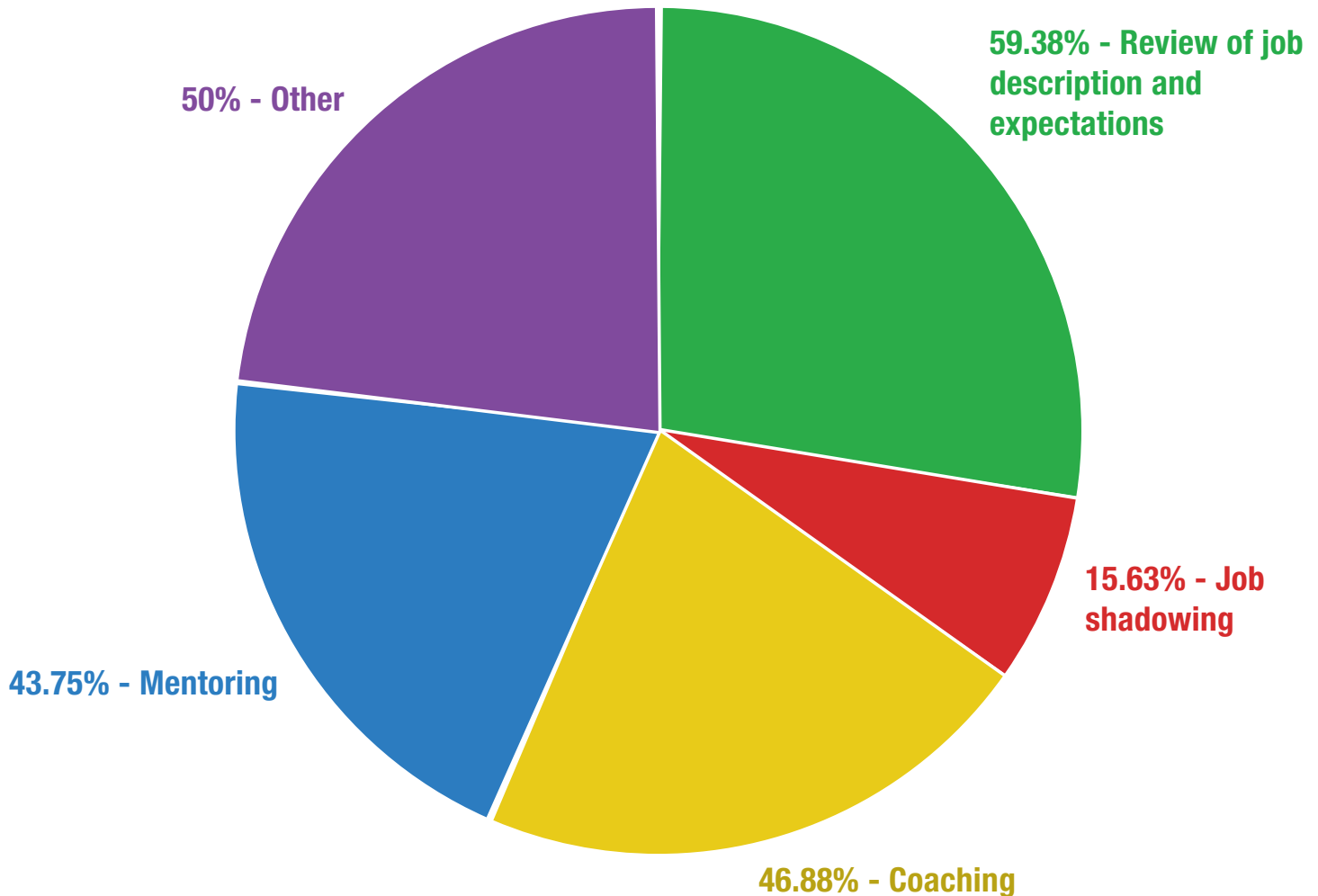
Q4 *What recommendations do you have for new managers on getting their own work done while managing a team? (balancing priorities)*

- Schedule management including dedicated time to focus on employees
- Scheduling time, creating Team Channels, weekly check-in meetings (upward and downward).
- Schedule time on your calendar for your work. Don't read emails ALL DAY long. Set aside time for that. Know when to say NO. It's ok to have times where you are off limits for questions.
- The work you do empowering others and encouraging their success will pay far more dividends than the work you personally do.
- Their own work initially be is to get to know their team and what motivates them. New manager shouldn't be doing "old job" and delegate those tasks. New manager should be motivating staff and focusing on strategic items for organization.
- managing your team is your priority, do reports on your time, if need until your team is up and running.
- Come in early and stay late
- Learn the strengths of your team and what to delegate to whom
- This is a personal management philosophy but I believe investing in your people is #1. Make sure they have what they need. Also sending messages like not cancelling meetings with them reinforces that you are available. I prefer to calendar block work time vs calendar block "open door office hours". That way the manager is accessible most of the time vs just in this block of time.
- The key to this is ensuring that roles and responsibilities of the team are clear and that the manager is clear about their role. Managers who are promoted into management are often experts at their prior role. That's not their job any longer and they will tend to focus on what's comfortable and familiar instead of learning the new role, which is to manage the team and develop talent.
- Open door policy with reports while leading by example
- Prioritize! Block out time on your calendar to check email Delegate Cross Train Top Performers
- Schedule time on your calendar to get your work done and also schedule regular 1:1 meetings with direct reports. Schedule time each week for "walking around", which may end up being virtually walking around in today's environment.
- Serve and teach your people how to lead themselves.
- Your employee(s) are an extension of you. You as a manager have been hired to do a job and your employees are your resources to do it. Develop and agree on expectations from your employees, trust that they will deliver on those expectations, and inspect those expectations.
- Set aside specific "office hours" and don't give them away.
- Plan your time/block calendar to focus on the competing priorities.
- Managers roles are to ensure their team is set up for success. They are required to coach, If they are also required to fulfill a SME role hopefully it is leveraged as an escalation role.
- Those two are almost the same thing. New managers tend to think that they were promoted because they are technical expert. They have to learn to be successful through others.
- Use your calendar. Block off time to get things done. Don't be afraid to delegate small tasks that can easily be done by your people. Find out which tasks are most important and prioritize. Do an inventory of the tasks assigned to you and make sure they are still relevant.
- Time blocking
- Planning Connect with Family
- Set reasonable expectations. Block out time to 'get work done'. Delegate (and develop) whenever appropriate.
- Set a schedule and stick to it. Don't let tasks and conversation overrun their allotted time. If they need to overrun, communicate impact on other deadlines.
- Batch processing. When interacting with team focus on team and not multitasking. Block time before or after "office" hours to get their work done.
- Setting aside a particular time during the day to get their own tasks completed is key.
- Block your calendar - 30 minutes in either the morning or afternoon (your preference) to document your day (priorities, things to delegate, follow up items, etc.)

Q4 (Continued)

- learn the team and delegate so you have time to lead; also, don't micromanage or do the job of your direct reports; know your role and what is needed to facilitate success below you
- Block time in your calendar for high priority items that need to be addressed - work offline or in off hours to address non-critical items
- Try to learn and understand the culture of the company while avoiding getting caught in company politics. Focus on your goals and daily tasks.
- Creating a standard calendar that provides space for getting that work done and for thinking time
- Block time and communicate with the team when you have blocked time out for your own production work. Set recurring meeting with the team together and/or each direct report individually if appropriate.
- Focus on the team first. Get the team rolling in the right direction, focused on the task, then they can deal with their own work. They do not want to put the team off to later in the day - it harbors ill will and not a cohesive unit.
- Make a priorities list then ask yourself how much of this can I delegate. As a new manager your top priority is spending time with your team and leading them. If you are "in the weeds" then you're not leading.
- Establish own standards and rhythms and ensure their people understand what s/he expects of himself / herself
- Understanding the needs of the team that they're managing will help new managers know how much time they need to dedicate to their own tasks vs. managing staff. The manager also needs to take time to understand the added responsibilities that the new role will add, so they need to make additional time for training.
- Avoid the temptation of doing vs leading/managing. This is the avoidance of "reverse-delegation" - the mistake of doing for others what they need to be doing for themselves.

Q5 *How does your organization set up a new manager for success?*



Comments

- We used to have some HR/OD training (crucial conversations, etc) but that hasn't really been offered of late. We aren't great at preparing new managers.
- New Leader Assimilation process
- Turn 'em loose! :)
- Honestly, there is not enough focus on this. Most new managers are thrown to the fire and then given help when they are struggling with something.
- All the options listed.
- N/A however hopefully management would provide the map (goals &

tools) for success. Coaching and Mentoring are key. If a Knowledge, Skill and Ability Inventory is administered prior to the appointment a gap analysis should reveal the training both peer, coaching and formal training reequired.

- Very dependent on the department at this point. We have a lot of work to do in this area.
- My last organization focused on making sure the manager had the appropriate technical skills and not much attention was paid to training etc. This is not the best approach.
- Right now it is haphazard. There is not clear plan.
- No current plan in place

Q6 *Where do you see there being the biggest challenge(s) you face when supporting new managers?*

- communication and level setting on expectations AND the need for mutual respect/trust leading to ability to delegate and not the need to micro-manage
- Alignment of goals. Supporting and not micro-managing. Enforcing core values.
- For me, its the lack of a dedicated training department. I would implement a training department or look to outsource the training.
- Helping them navigate their own responsibilities and effectively communicate employee expectations for their direct reports
- Knowledge, supply chain is a diverse scope, experience, confidence.
- Teaching them the people aspects of managing. How to interact with people and not just following rules on a page and driving towards stats. That's hard to teach. Communication. Gaining Trust. At the end of the day you want people to respect you and know that you respect them.
- Time. We run so lean that new managers are overwhelmed and just keeping up, so time for training goes to the wayside.
- Biggest challenge is first finding and choosing the right manager for the job. Once they are in the position, biggest challenge is observing their activities enough to give them critical feedback.
- have them support their employees efforts, not take control of doing those efforts themselves
- Different personality styles
- soft skills
- Changing the mindset from focusing on tasks vs people.
- Often they are filling a gap and there is much to be done. It's very hard to develop new managers who have already moved into a new role because they simply don't have time for training and coaching. It's much better if we can identify and train emerging leaders to be ready in advance.
- Maintaining company expectations while allowing to maximize strengths and ideas
- Hiring Manager doesn't have an Onboarding Plan
- Teaching them the difference between management/power and leadership/influence as well as making difficult conversations constructive.
- Consistency in creating a culture of support and accountability.
- Protection from conforming to "status quo".
- Time and support from their managers
- -Currently remote environment makes connections/coaching/accountability challenging. -Team-building that takes into account the needs of the team and team member strengths/weaknesses. Focused direction/support understanding the growth areas needed.
- Putting together a success plan.
- Leading others is not seen as a core responsibility by the individual or the organization
- Understanding where they are with their skills, what personality and leadership styles do they align with currently. Are their expectations of the job realistic.
- We are a startup with people wearing many hats. It is important to make the right hire who understands the situation and is flexible and will take personal responsibility to learn and integrate into the team.
- Getting them to try new ways of working
- Ability to make the move from 'independent contributor' to team leader - and our focus / prioritization organizationally on that need.
- Time management and getting them to Clearly communicate their own stressors with sufficient time
- Scheduling quality one on one time.
- New managers have to balance the needs of their groups and the needs of the organization. If the 2 are perfectly aligned then it works well if not they often need help in finding the appropriate balance. In the end the organization needs to perform to the levels of expectations of the company.

Q6 (Continued)

- Assessing their level of knowledge and addressing their gaps. Everyone is at a different place - hard to have something for everyone.
- Time-- it's hard to spend enough time making sure they are being inculcated properly-
- Helping them to see bigger picture, helping them to prioritize and understand their workload and how to balance that with being a support to their team
- Transferring my expectations into actions. Seems like unless guided properly produces completely different results.
- Leadership behaviors. Getting managers to treat direct reports with proper respect and recognizing the impact of their leadership shadow.
- Confidence/worrying about making a mistake
- Understanding their attitude and management style.
- Transitioning from colleague to manager. Moving from being responsible for oneself to being responsible for others.
- Time, acceptance of expectations, and a road map on how to move forward
- Training is a key challenge, as finding time to properly train new managers. Having a good job description helps, as that can act as a roadmap for tasks and priorities.
- Too many conflicting priorities (their personal life, internal and external culture conflicts, inherent uncertainties.)

Q7 *What successes have you had in the past with regards to preparing new managers for their role? To what do you attribute this success?*

- meet and greets; mentoring; development (external courses even); handbooks; structure (official charters/expectations); co-writing performance objectives
- 1. retention 2. results achievement 3. Moore time for me
- My success has been as a mentorship type program. I have mentored them to manager role. Also, assigning them higher level task as they grow helps to increase confidence and develops decision making skills.
- Letting them shadow meetings and effective leaders
- Ongoing, repetitive dialogue in the onboarding stage (0-3 months), standard 1/1 check-ins after, support on training and education, at 6-9 months, assigning projects that support other business groups so the Manager can holistically learn the business process.
- Teaching them how to communicate and be seen as compassionate yet drive for results. You can teach processes and procedures but leadership is the key to success. I teach them how to be a leader which is the key to success.
- Being careful about who is selected to be a manager. Expertise in the tasks does not usually equal expertise in managing others.
- I spend a lot of time with them one on one. Focusing not on project or work related activities, but on personal issues they are dealing with employees. I also started a book club with new managers and potential new managers where we read different management books together (ie 1 chapter per week) and discuss what we read. This helps me to mentor them and also helps me to understand who is growing in their management maturity,
- training is how I've helped
- Transparency and listening
- New Leader Acceleration helps. Teambuilding early on helps. We have program for new managers - training.
- Peer mentoring is powerful. It feels safe for a new manager (vs the big boss) and the peer often has gone through similar challenges recently or can help brainstorm real time with the new manager. They need a safe "Buddy".
- When we can prepare emerging leaders by offering them training and stretch opportunities, then they move into the role already having many of the skills and some of the experience needed. This requires leadership to have a way to identify potential leaders and to make a commitment to the development of talent, preparing them for future roles.
- Balance trust and expectations
- Detailed Training and Onboarding Plan
- Sending them through an external course. I liked the AMA Managing for New Managers course as well as a similar online class on Coursera.
- Patience and consistency in expectations and deadlines while serving/supporting along the way.
- Strengthfinders has been a huge help in helping managers understand their own strengths and the strengths of their teams.
- Focusing on communication skills and EQ
- -Clear review of objectives, team expectations, and initiatives, with timelines for implementation. -Regular feedback. 360 feedback activity. -Development plan focused on core competencies needing attention.
- Clearly mapped out goals, expectations. Initial plan to enable new manager to communicate what is good and what will be built on and where there are opportunities to grow. Supporting communications and process to manage change.
- Discussion-based scenarios about real-life issues led by leaders of the company. Brings it to life and shows that it's important.
- Successful new managers recieved training on every aspect of their role, were given a roadmap on what it ment to lead in the organization, where given time to make mistakes during their first year while being coached by their leader. Were enrolled in continuing leadership development programs as they grew into their position.
- Communication - lots of it.

Q7 (Continued)

- 1. Ask them if that is something they want to do (be a manager of people). 2. Give them specific stretch goals / and projects PRIOR (e.g. having them take the lead on projects)
- Familiarization with the metrics needed to achieve goals and coaching in best practices to help them coach their team how to meet those metrics
- Building rapport and being able to have candid conversations about the day to day challenges.
- I spend a lot of time with new managers especially in the first 6 months and coaching them through their first performance evaluations of their reports.
- Giving them insight to their team before they start. The history, the successes, and the opportunities.
- counseling is second line of defense to actually spending enough time with them-- make sure to communicate and help when needed
- Partner with the team, offer leadership training, conduct team building exercises - all of this builds rapport and team confidence in their new leader
- Our Sales Manager has helped our company grow after being promoted 8 years ago. Showing empathy for the challenges facing own his team. Hard worker too.
- We are currently implementing our high performance culture initiatives and providing coaching for manager and up levels.
- ?
- Best success is to be a mentor. Let them make mistakes, but explain why things went wrong so they will learn for the next time. Be there to answer questions and have periodic check-ins. And, pulse the team to know how the new manager is being viewed.
- Mentoring works well as does training that is specific to their needs. Leadership assessments like DISC are also helpful and letting the individual understand their strengths and opportunities.
- Clarity of expectations
- Handing over client communication to managers is important, and I've had more success when doing so gradually. Introducing manager as future point of contact, and slowly transitioning communication to manager over time rather than all at once.
- Lots of success - lots of failures - and yet the commitment to never give up and yet if you must give up - to do so - respectfully - for the benefit of the "failing" manager and their team.



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