

Welcome To Your First Management Role

You have been tapped on the shoulder and offered your first full management role. It is likely this will be a supervisory role or as we refer to a front line management role. According to the research it is equally likely you are unprepared for the role. You will have been provided with superficial, if any, management professional development. If you are lucky, and have a manager that understands the importance of development, you may have been provided with some mentoring, eased into the role with close supervision. It is more likely you are ill-prepared for the role and you will be nervous.

Remember this:

The title 'manager' does not make you an expert. You will never know all the answers so don't pretend you do.

These are the most important things you must do in your new role:

- Take time to step back, watch, listen and learn
- Let others do the talking – you need to ask the questions
- Avoid offering an opinion or judgment – you will invite argument
- Lead by example – behave as you expect others to behave
- Develop trust in yourself by doing the things you say you will do
- Only commit to those things you know can be achieved

You may likely face an overwhelming desire to prove yourself. Having moved from a hands-on role you may be tempted to believe you can achieve miracles on your own. It is the people in your work group that make you look good. If you want to prove your worth then you should focus on developing the ability of your people to do their job well. The better able they are to achieve their outcomes the better they will make you look. If you don't believe this then you should hand over the role to someone else and step out of the ranks of management. If you remain in management and fail to grasp this single point you will join the ranks of managers suffering from mediocrity.

Get a management coach or a mentor. Better still, get both. A combined team of you, a management coach and a couple of mentors will ease you through the issues created by a combination of organisational politics and learning how to achieve results through people. A mentor should be someone who has been where you are now. A well balanced, and respected, senior executive is a good starting point. Maybe even someone with similar experience from outside the organisation. Select a management coach who will focus on helping you develop effective management behaviours. In your first management role, setting management goals and strategies is less important than developing effective behaviour.

Finally, don't take yourself too seriously. Have fun, enjoy yourself and enjoy working with people. Management is a journey. At the core of your management role is the ability to foster conversations and collaboration.

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