

**NO
NONSENSE
ADVICE**

3

FOR THE FIRST TIME MANAGERS

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NO NONSENSE ADVICE (3)

for First Time Managers

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INTRODUCTION

Being promoted is a grand feeling ! All of the hard work you have put in is finally recognized : and you are now given the mantle of a 'Manager.' Not only have you got a 'title' but you now also have your own team ! Celebrate !

Being a first time Manager can be a little daunting. Being a Manager is a lot more than bearing a title - and resorting to do pretty much what you did as an Executive. The ROLE needs to be understood - and also, the expectations of ALL your stakeholders. As an executive : you are responsible for YOUR work only : as a Manager you are expected to get work done through OTHERS - and there is a world of a difference between the two.

Remember : now, you are not only responsible for yourself : but you are responsible for a team, their performance and also, become an active contributor towards the overall organization's success.

There really isn't a 'guidebook' to steer you along. This book is meant to fill that void - but only partly : the rest, is up to you. Remember that EACH context is different : and only you will know your particular context. So, as with all books we do, please note that this is NOT a 'bible' or a 'definitive' guide : only a set of broad pieces of advice that will help you steer your first few months in your new role - and get your bearings in place.

Our book is based on fond memories of the trials and tribulations each of us went through in being managers ourselves. We made a ton of mistakes (hilarious now, looking back - but, rather 'serious' back then, leading to much heartache and sleepless nights !) We hope this book becomes a small contribution towards easing your burden as a first time manager : and making the transition a little easier...

Remember : no matter what you read : temper things with good old fashioned common sense !

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CHAPTER - 1

ESTABLISHING CREDIBILITY AS A MANAGER

One of the first things you need to do as a 'newbie' manager is to establish credibility. Remember : your credibility is set within the first 6 to 9 months of you taking on your job. This 'first impression' you create is important for you to be 'taken seriously' by your seniors : so, knuckle down and get down to basics...



Das



1



Set a Vision - align it to the company Vision

Start your new role with a clear Vision that you set out for the department. Don't go over the top and put in fancy words just to prove you have a great vocabulary. Be focused, be simple, be clear. The Vision statement is YOUR direction for the future. Make sure you align it very very clearly to the organizational Vision. The key question you should be answering is HOW your department is going to add value to the overall Vision.

2



Set CLEAR objectives

Once the Vision is set, develop a very very clear set of objectives for the department - and then, have each Objective 'cascaded' to the members within the team. Remember, EACH objective needs to have a target, a clear timeline and also, each one needs to have a clear metric for measurement.

Sit with the Team and discuss the Objectives. There is nothing called 'realistic' objectives when you are a middle manager : you align yourself to the overall objectives of the business - and generally have no say in them. So, forget SMART as an acronym for now - and focus on HOW you can achieve the objectives set for you - and then, look at how they can be aligned to the department and the team.

Leave HOW to achieve the objectives to be decided by the Team. The WHAT is never negotiated but the HOW certainly is up for negotiation and discussion. Once the team has come up with their plans, sit down and review it : and give your input too...

3



Set up your 10 commandments

As much as performance, behavior is also critically important in running a tight ship.

Make your own **'10 commandments'** : those essential behaviors that you REALLY WANT to inculcate in your team : and the 10 things that are 'non-negotiable.'

When designing them :

- Make it short and succinct
- Make it easily understandable
- Make it straightforward - it can't be dubious
- Make it something you personally live by too !

4



Ensure you have a few quick wins

Gaining credibility has a lot to do with perceptions : and perceptions are formed based on what you DO rather than what you SAY.

So, ensure you plan a few quick wins : something that is easy to achieve - but also something that has a deep impact on the organization. Make it your mission to get these 'quick wins' before the first 3 months are up ! A set of quick wins puts your superiors at ease : and silences the nay sayers.

Get your team rallied to ensure the quick wins happen : and when it does : make the celebration public. The Seniors must be convinced they made the 'right choice' in promoting YOU.

5



Understand EXACTLY what is expected of you

Go out for a cup of coffee with your boss. Don't have this conversation in your or his office, or the board room. Take him/her out for a coffee : and have an honest, straightforward and genuine conversation about his/her 'expectations' of you. Take a note book and make notes. Paraphrase it and make a list of core expectations : and ensure you share this with your team too.

Remember : KPIs are a given : but each boss has their own set of expectations of each of those who report to them.

NEVER assume what they want : ALWAYS ask !

6



Be the first to come - and the last to leave

No... We are NOT recommending you make the office your de-facto home : neither are we telling you to work late hours... However, remember : YOU set the pace. So, come to work a little early and spend a few minutes alone : and plan : and review work you have undertaken. Reply those all important mails. Stay after everyone has gone : do a round around the department : see if everything is tidied up.

NEVER be that boss that expects the team to slave themselves on your behalf - and callously leave them to 'sort it out' and leave exactly on time. Get the team to leave on time : but you stay back a little : and do the little things that will help you become better planned, and organized.

7



Dress for the job

Please don't be slovenly in your appearance.

Take that regular haircut. Dress well. Dress smartly. Be conscious of your hygiene. Clean your teeth. Polish your shoes daily...

You get the drift. Remember : you ARE a manager : and you represent the organisation. You are (or certainly should be) your team's pride and joy - and epitome of 'class.' Your work will speak volumes about you - so will the way you dress. Remember : they SEE you before they HEAR you or 'experience' you !

8



Keep your desk tidy

Clear the clutter every day.

Keep a tidy desk.

Keep your 'desktop' (on your PC) tidy and neat too - with all documents neatly filed in meaningful folders. NEVER have your entire desktop covered in files...

9



ALWAYS respond to a mail within 24 hours

Gain a reputation for being 'prompt.' In today's context, most communications happen via mail : so, ensure all your mails are responded to and actioned out within 24 hours (48 hours the latest.)

10



Go prepared for EVERY meeting

Don't just call in meetings.

Plan them carefully - and as much as possible have one or two days for meetings. Nearly 70% of executives complain of 'too many meetings' and over 80% of them say they are a waste of time ! So, ensure you are selective about the meetings you run : and ensure they are productive.

The KEY is to PREPARE for the meeting : and demand that everyone attending them are prepared too. There are tons of good articles and videos on how to make meetings more meaningful and effective : so, invest some time into reading them/watching them : and ensuring you are fully equipped with the skills required to make the most of meeting times.



Dan's



1



Don't let the promotion get to your head

So... you are promoted...

Now... just get on with it...

Remember : just because you are promoted it does NOT mean that you are the brightest, the most effective, the most competent - nor infact the most suitable for the position. It may just mean that the management likes you or trusts you the most. So, don't think too much of yourself or your abilities...

Don't let the promotion get to your head : just put your head down and commit to solid work !

2



Don't over promise

Don't do only what you are comfortable either

Please don't make the horrible mistake of over promising and under delivering. Take on only what you are capable of : and learn to say no politely.

However, don't just live within your comfort zone.

Stretch yourself to take on more : but within reason. Pick and choose the additional work you undertake : and please bear in mind the capacity of your team when you take on work. NEVER overburden them with work simply because you haven't learnt to say no.

3



Don't blame any of your team members for failure (publicly)

YOU are the boss : so, anything that goes wrong is YOUR fault !

Take the blame for ALL that goes wrong in your department. NO ONE ELSE is at fault : ONLY YOU.

Pick up the failings of team members privately with them : and NEVER at a public meeting. In front of others YOU and ONLY YOU are to be blamed for any faults !

4



Don't promote 'gossip'

If EVER anyone comes with tales about another team member : NEVER promote it. Put a stop to it IMMEDIATELY. Be clear that personal issues are to be settled between the two parties concerned : and that you will NOT take sides.

Breach of company policy, harassment etc are a different conversation. When it comes to these, ensure your team knows that they HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION to tell you : and that you have a zero tolerance on them !

However, with regards to playing politics and telling tales - be firm in your conduct in ensuring the team understands that you take a dim view of anyone who carries tales !

5



Don't shy away from a stern word when required: specially with regards to shoddy work !

Don't tolerate shoddy work.

Don't tolerate tardiness.

Don't tolerate slovenly attitudes.

Have those firm conversations when required. Remember: it is YOUR team now - and their conduct and performance is a reflection of you as a leader. So, ensure you are clear about your expectations : and that you point out when team members slack off. If you 'let it be' it never corrects itself : and before you know it, it becomes part of the culture. NEVER allow it to be considered 'ok' to resort to anything but one's 100%.

6



Don't play favorites

Don't EVER have a 'favourite.'

Stick to data : and objective feedback. Stick to performance and verified behavior as your guides on who is 'most suited' to become your successor(s). LIKING someone, and making them your 'most trusted' confidants are two different things. Remember: IF you play favourites, everyone will start sucking up to you: and before too long you will only hear what you want to hear: and that is a sure way of losing the plot completely as a manager ! After that you are no better than a two bit politician !

7



Don't 'cover up' for your team (Don't reprimand them in public either)

When working cross functionally, acknowledge the mistakes the team makes WITHOUT blaming anyone in the team in particular. Take the blame yourself - and NEVER try and 'defend' your 'turf.' Be OPEN to be challenged, probed and reprimanded by your peers for mistakes : and be mature enough to accept your misgivings and failures.

8



Don't EVER use filth (or SHOUT for that matter)

Pretty simple. If you use filth you are not a manager : but a lowlife from the gutter !

If you shout, it just means you cannot control yourself : and if you can't control yourself, then you are not fit to be anyone's boss !

9



Don't make unrealistic demands

Be conscious of each of your team members' workload. Don't keep piling it on - and expect them to just 'shovel it' without burning out.

Have constant dialogues : and assess each person's abilities and innate talents. Don't give them things they can't do - or don't really enjoy doing. YOU are the boss - and you can easily reassign work. So, when designing JDs, take into consideration what people LIKE as much as what they are QUALIFIED and EXPERIENCED for.

Don't make unrealistic demands : remember the immortal words of Albert Einstein :

"Everybody is a genius. But... if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid !"

10



Don't EVER run down your Peers or Superiors

NEVER resort to cheap 'brownie points' by resorting to fuel the lunch room banter about peers and superiors. Don't encourage it from others either.

Be complimentary and grateful about everyone. Be positive. Don't just wag your tongue to be the populist.

CHAPTER - 2

MAKING THAT DREAM TEAM

As a Manager, your success or failure will depend largely on your TEAM. Without a solid team you are honestly at a huge disadvantage. It is true that most never have the luxury of choosing their own teams : but you CAN take some tough stances when required : and 'cull the herd' if required.

Remember though : everyone deserves an honest chance to be their best : but also remember that some just don't have it in them to perform at the levels you may expect. Being able to navigate this : and still truly truly love your team and drive them towards superlative performance will define you as a Manager.



Das



1



Understand EACH of your team members PROPERLY

Each member is different in their own way. They have their own baggage and challenges.

Spend time at the very start to understand them. Their likes, dislikes, preferences, etc.

Remember they may have been there way before you and will be able to contribute meaningfully, if treated well.

Take time with each individual and get a basic understanding so that you can start somewhere. Remember this process is a continuous one and NOT a one-time activity.

2



Take the time to have meaningful conversations: not only about performance but about aspirations and expectations as well

While it is important to understand your team members, remember it is not a Tick-In-The-Box exercise.

Don't get them into a room and just ask them directly 'what are your challenges?', 'What do you like to do?'

Please sit with each member/direct report and have a meaningful conversation. It should come from your heart. They must believe that you are really there to have a conversation with them.

They must feel at ease with you. That's your responsibility and you can't just expect it from them.

Remember: they will go out there and repeat their experience with their peers, so don't sound like a parrot. Change the routine, questions, probe a little bit when they share details.

Be GENUINE!

3



Give Autonomy:

It is important to ensure that there is autonomy within your team, but always be on top of things too.

The process of being self-governed is only possible if they all understand the common purpose and do their part in the team.

However, there is always a possibility that things may not go the way you would ideally like it to. To avoid major setback or disappointment, it is equally important that you be on top of things.

Find a gentle way of ensuring you are kept in the loop, but allowing your team to work things out by themselves.

4



Train your team regularly

Your role as a manager is also to ensure that individually there is development for each of your team members.

It could be a soft skill, product/service knowledge enhancement or plain general knowledge pertaining to the industry/business.

Ensure that the team is regularly trained!

Training should not be a tick exercise. Ensure that each session has some ROI. Each individual must be able to do his or her role more effectively and efficiently.

5



Do job rotation periodically

The key to breaking monotony is to ensure proper job rotation. While this can be done across the organisation, later on: for now, you must focus on creating a plan on job rotation within your team.

This will ensure each member fully understands every role and in the event of absenteeism, you always have contingency within. Your overall objectives and team goals will have minimum, or no effect and your team will be seen as an effective team.

You must however plan this properly and equally across your team. Announce it so that it is a transparent process and its done gradually without impacting the current deliverables.

This is also a great opportunity to witness each members capabilities and strengths & areas of development.

6



Encourage Coaching, and Reverse Mentoring

Coaching or teaching is crucial to ensure individuals are developed in their career journeys. As a manager you will be dealing with both senior and junior members and you will realise that there are areas that the senior members will be familiar with that the newer members may not be entirely comfortable with: or vis-a-versa.

As a manager you need to identify need and the skill gaps so that you can effectively partner individuals to gain from each other.

The pairing will break the barrier between seniors and new members and it will create a better synergy. It will mitigate feelings of embarrassment, shyness and ensure an open channel is established which enables both parties to gain, and drives towards achieving the common goal of the department.

For it to be successful you must ensure that each member respects the other and that each one's contribution is valued and appreciated.

When successfully done, not only does it increase the team bond, but it also helps in retention.

7



Encourage cross functional team work

Once your team is comfortable with job rotation and they will see the benefit in fully understanding the department's role: having now tried their hands at different roles within the department.

You should now encourage members to cross-train in other departments. This will begin to create better collaboration within departments, as your team members will better understand their challenges. This will also ensure that your team gain an understanding of the bigger picture – the organisation as a whole: rather than being like horses with blinders!

The trick though is how you sell this to them and support them to follow through on the exercise. Also it will depend on how they are able to share that experience with their team mates.

8



Ask them what YOU can do to make their life easier

Don't worry...you are not going to give them the latest car or a million dollars!!

This is an important question and a conversation you MUST have with each of your team members.

Remember: They are the experts, NOT you! It is imperative that they do their jobs well. Your ROLE is to ensure that they get the necessary support at the required times. Be it a business support or an emotional support, you need to be there for your team members.

They will always look up to you. So asking them for ways in which you can support to make their life easier, will ensure you don't go shooting in the dark, but are able to contribute meaningfully!

9



Encourage socialising outside of the workplace: and encourage family to participate. As a new manager, this may be a bit daunting. There may be financial constraints.

Encouraging your team to socialise will further strengthen their bond and will ensure a super-efficient team that gels with one another openly.

Start with maybe a simple Ice-Cream outing to the nearest supermarket as a team and back.

The objective is to go outside your office as a team talk freely with one another, on any subject but WORK!!!

This practice should lead to maybe a gathering during a common holiday and eventually include the family members at such gatherings. It does not always require money and no one is expecting YOU to pocket the expense, although I am sure if you had the means, no one would complain either!

10



Consciously teach them all you know

As with the exercise of you learning about your boss, it is equally important that your team knows about you.

Spend every opportunity to teach them things you know. Your experiences and your failures and what you have learned from them. Remember you have come up the ladder and are their manager.

That is their aspiration now as well: to become a manager. Remember knowledge becomes wisdom only when imparted.

Every bit of knowledge you have gained so far, you must be able to impart it to your team so that they can become strong or stronger than you. The sooner you create more capable members to take on your task, the sooner you can look at options to grow your own career.



Dan's



1



NEVER give solutions when they come with problems: encourage them to think of options BEFORE they come to meet you

Creating the right behaviour and culture is crucial. Now that you are the boss, you may feel the need to give answers to all the issues. You may feel great about being the 'go-to-person'.

This is certainly a short term experience. The key is to ensure you create an autonomous team: a team that can function with minimum supervision. To do so, you must create the environment for them to look deeper, understand the situation, the impact on business and find workable solutions. Given that not all solutions are the correct ones and you may need to support mould or re-align the thinking, but atleast you have a team that thinks first. What you don't want is a lazy team that cut corners or take the short cut: in this case run to you so that you can dish out the answers and made to feel like a 'cool boss'. Its tempting, but will certainly be a disaster in the long run!

2



NEVER make a promise you can't keep

You are the boss now and you want to impress your team and your boss....great idea!

However, exercise caution, you don't want to find yourself over promising and under delivering and being the YES Man who can't get his act together. In this instance it is better to err on the side of caution.

When committing to your team create the right expectations. Where possible commit to quick wins but know when to manage expectations and set realistic attainable goals.

3



Try not to interfere in their personal life:

unless they open up to you. There is a concept of work life balance. Always maintain regard for your employee's personal life. If they chose to share components of their personal life with you, respect this, and remember the detail. You are not however at liberty to share this information with the rest of the team unless it is general information.

While you may provide a listening ear and understanding, exercise discretion in dispensing advice or getting involved in providing a solution unless, explicitly asked to do so. However, knowing and helping a member of your team personally, cannot detract from your objectivity of their work. While you can empathize with Sharon on her breakup, poor performance or tardiness cannot be encouraged.

4



Don't get insecure if they don't invite you for their private parties.

Leadership is not a popularity contest. To effectively lead you need to shed your ego. It will serve you well to expect that your team have private lives independent of you. It is important that you get along with your team and lead them towards performance. Not be the life of their parties.

Focus on your priorities instead and give them their space.

5



Don't make important decisions without talking to the team first (doesn't mean you need their 'approval' - but DO consult them)

While you are not expected to run a democracy, important decisions are best discussed, with the aim of including them, and getting a buy in! Often, you are not seeking for approval when implementing a new process.

However a quick team chat could reveal a better way to go about a change. They would have effectively saved your time in going back to the drawing board and they now feel included, which drives a better team ethos.

6



Don't panic when the chips are down

If things don't pan out the way you want them to, its best to take a step back and retrospect on the actions that lead to the situation.
Think carefully and weigh the options.

Most of all, keep your emotions in check. Energy is contagious, be it positive or negative.

Very soon you will see that your entire teams is at the end of their wits, or just nervous in general. Breath.
Change your perspective.
Keep your calm!

7



Don't EVER settle for anything less than 100% of the objective :

but, don't be overtly critical and run them down either... There IS a fine line – but NEVER get the team to think that 99.9% is a 100% ! While driving an effective team, a 100% is always the requirement! Never indicate that 99% is acceptable. Now achieving a 100% is a bonus be in productivity or quality and must be celebrated.

However if 99.9% is achieved, there should be a gentle nudge towards achieving that 0.1% If the team realises that 99.9% is acceptable, they will soon start testing your boundaries.

This is one boundary which cannot shift. Gently but firmly direct them towards that 100!

8



Don't tolerate bad behavior :

specially that which is detrimental to the team. REMOVE toxic members EVEN if they are brilliant performers. It takes just one toxic team member, just one, to take down an entire team. Negativity is contagious. If you choose to ignore bad behavior, even from a brilliant performer you are setting the wrong precedence, you are effectively sending your team a subliminal signal that you are tolerant, boundaries can be tested.

They will soon begin to test boundaries or emulate bad behavior and negativity.

At the very least establish that performance and behavior are independent of each other, bad behavior will not be tolerated, Endeavor to coach out the bad behavior,if all fails resort to an exit strategy your company has established.

9



Don't complicate processes:

get your team to simplify them as much as possible
Long complicated processes are not only tedious and counterproductive, they are unnecessary burdens on the team.

Unless there is a risk element or audit requirement, where possible, create the space for your team to simplify processes while maintaining the integrity of the output. This is win win for both parties involved.

You can save time on unproductive steps and shorten a process and you now have extra resource to perhaps up-skill or cross train, plus your Boss will be impressed with your productivity!

10



Don't get the team to work extensive hours and try NEVER to get them over weekends !

Unless it's an absolute process requirement refrain from having your team work extensive hours and at all cost do not get them in over the weekend.

First of all, overtime while increasing overheads sends out a message of incapability of you as a manager to manage your resources.

An overworked team leads to burn out, and lower productivity on the long run. Give them that brain break they deserve.

Do not create the expectation of your team coming in over the weekend, this will create a ripple effect amongst the management and other teams and may become an irreversible requirement.

Finally, Sharon deserves time to attend to her personal matters on her own time, and won't bring in her problems to work, Jeff needs to spend time with his kids, and Karen a single mom needs to go for her kids recital! Everyone has other priorities.

Work Life balance is important!

CHAPTER - 3

MANAGING YOUR BOSS

Sure, YOU are the Boss now - but don't forget that you too have a boss !

Making sure your Boss is ok with you : and also, comfortable 'leaving you alone' is an art you must master the more senior you become. 'Nosy' bosses don't want to be 'nosy' : it is merely a sign that they don't trust you completely - and that they are 'anxious' ! So, why leave room for them to be anything but COMPLETELY comfortable with you ?

There is a delicate balance between being a nay sayer and being a 'yes man' : both are of no use to being a super second in command ! So, be your own person - BUT never undermine your boss either !



Das



1



NEVER go with your problems to your boss:
solve them (UNLESS you actually NEED a higher authority
than yourself to solve the problem)

‘There are no problems, only solutions’ is the new mantra you now subscribe to. There are situations and there are outcomes. How you address every situation secures the kind of outcome you need. Once you shift your perspective you will find an array of outcomes you may present to your boss, you may diplomatically add weightage to the outcome which would best suit your team. However, note the objective is to present a positive outcome to a perceived negative situation.

At the early stages of your relationship with your boss, these kind of tete a tete could be frequent until you have learnt your manager’s style of management and you have established yours. Once this is in place, you will find reigns loosening and your ability to make judgement calls go through unquestioned.

There are however definite instances which will need the direct involvement and mediation of your manager. If you can’t discern the difference yet, go by the golden rule – “If in doubt – shout it out” – With your pre-planned solution obviously!

2



ALWAYS keep your boss posted of what you do: do this systematically and not in an ad hoc manner.

With the objective of giving your Boss overview of your tasks, establish a way of reporting into your boss the task you are setting out to do, and the tasks you have achieved. The benefits of this are in two-ply;

One is that you are in a constant dialogue with your Boss, and he or she has a clear purview of the projects and tasks that you are focusing on. Which allows for delegation without overloading you.

On the other hand, this is a perfect opportunity for you to highlight team development initiatives which you have successfully implemented; maintaining your accountability and time management, while providing you with a great “cookie-trail” which you can refer to when you are facing your performance reviews.

Now, how you plan to implement it is up to you. However a quick chat at the beginning of the week/day, and a point form email of achievements and pending areas of action at the end of the day (if urgent/critical tasks have been completed) or at the end of the week, along with team performance MI’s to back up your claims – is a recommendation to consider!

3



Get to know your boss's idiosyncrasies and quirks - and respect it

Adapt and overcome! - This is your new motto, and a reminder of skill you need to gain fast – diplomacy. Bosses are notorious for their quirks and idiosyncrasies. You may not realise this, but perhaps something your team is dealing with too.

The quickest way around this is to learn them fast, adapt your behavior accordingly and overcome the situation. Perhaps it's that your boss is a stickler for formatting, perhaps he has an overly voracious appetite for numbers and statics, she may be a grammar Nazi, he may be a neat freak.

Navigate these waters carefully. Remember we all have things that make us tick. Learn them quick, understand and overcome the demands.

4



Give your ideas to your boss - and be comfortable enough to allow him/her to 'steal them'.

Perhaps innovative ideas are what got you noticed in the first place, or your ability to provide insight but differently. Either way it is now your role to feed your ideas into your Boss. You need to be able to deal with having them shot down or taken up and implemented with little or no credit to you.

Take a deep breath and repeat – This is what I am here for! You relinquished your right to be validated the moment you took on the Manager title. Your ideas are no longer innovations, but expectations. Rest assured that when the moment is right, your Manager in turn will provide you with your time to shine; besides his or her success is your own. You are next in line for succession, and this is to your best advantage.

If all else fails, remember that all great presidents, kings and leaders throughout history seek the council of their advisors, and in turn they hold the greatest power. You are in essence, the King Maker!

5



Learn to say no to your boss

This is perhaps an essential but difficult step in your role as a new Manager. Your need to please the boss often leaves you being the “Yes Man” (Or Woman), which often leads to a host of additional problems like; unrealistic deadlines, herculean workloads, disgruntled over-worked teams, and questionable moral decisions.

It boils down to the delicate art of saying No but oh so positively.

This is the fine art of leadership. Remember, to backup your No, state your priorities, negotiate timelines and workloads for you and your team. When it comes to your morals being questioned, then a clear no is always the right way to go!

6



Earn enough credibility to question your boss's decisions - but ALWAYS do so privately.

While we learn at an early age to not question authority, we also learn that authority is not always above question. As children, adolescents and young adults we observe how authority which we initially deem as absolute, becomes more malleable as we mature and build a relationship of mutual respect in which ultimately a decision can be questioned.

However, important takeaways are shouting and tantrum throwing, and public displays of insolence never yield the desired outcomes.

As an adult, you have hopefully learnt to manage each stage of authority as you grew up. Use these skills wisely. Gain your managers trust, with time, you will be in a position to consult and question a decision (always asking for the viewpoint of course). Also remember all any public outbursts will accomplish is a negative/unprofessional image of you.

7



Ensure you support your boss in his biggest challenges:

NEVER let him/her down on critical tasks.

Shared success leads to mutual respect and is the name of the game. Just like you depend on your team to deliver results which reflects on your ability and success as a manager, you too are accountable to your Boss, in supporting him through his challenges.

In an environment where organizational goals are cascaded; his goals are yours and yours are his. If this isn't reason enough to ensure that your boss achieves his biggest challenges, remember his inability to achieve his goals or task is also a reflection of your inabilities.

Besides, its always to your advantage to have your boss depend on you. For one you will be privy to management decisions and outlooks, you are able to establish your reliability. While its good to remind yourself that no one is indispensable, it's a feel-good factor knowing that at least your boss will think twice before letting you go!

8



Take on things your boss doesn't like to do himself/herself

Think Self-Development! Keep your eye on the endgame and take on components of your managers role that they find tedious. The mindset to maintain is that you are taking on the opportunity of enriching your job role, securing yourself as a successor and gaining insight to a higher management role.

The way not to go about it is whining about your manager offloading on you, this is your opportunity. Think this is that opportune moment to gain favor while bettering yourself.

A Win-Win for sure!

9



Don't second guess your boss: VERIFY

The very first step? A Mindset adjustment!! No one likes a negative Nancy or a Ned! Once you have put on your Rose hues glasses, resolve to the fact that you are probably not seeing the bigger picture and are not privy to all the details that would help understand the situation.

Now, once you have put aside your negative vibes; have a respectful and clam discussion on the viewpoints of your manager and the higher management. If you are now slowly forming a bigger picture but foresee some speed bumps ahead, present them to your manager for consideration.

If somehow you are still miffed, commit to trying it first and then weighing the consequences if there are any. Remember, sometimes delaying a response to mull a situation over is often to your benefit – verification clears most if not all doubts!

10



Become his/her friend and confidant - as much as his/her subordinate

Your Boss is human, and you may have felt it a bit too, it gets a little lonely at the top.

Often hard decisions need to be made and the brunt of this absorbed by your manager. Understanding this and accepting this aspect is the first step towards a strong relationship with your boss.

You will need to learn how to tread the fine line of 'Friend-subordinate'. Which is generally pretty easy if you know the meaning of confidentiality and respect. Learning when to give confidentiality and when to respect your boss' designation.

A rewarding yet ultimate place to be! If you are here you are doing it right!!



Dan's



1



Don't take his/her criticisms of you personally

Choosing to believe this or not, is your prerogative, however discomfort is a good indicator of growth. An indicator of stepping outside your comfort zone and pushing your boundaries. Often stepping out is accompanied by a healthy dose of... brace yourself
- Criticism!

Now not everyone adheres to criticism dispensed constructively, however before letting your emotions get on that roller coaster, reign them in and take control of your thoughts. Think through and filter the words you are hearing. Look for the truths;
Lock away the emotions.

If the criticism is fair, challenge yourself with new goals to overcome them. The essential ingredient is to extract the emotional component, making it impersonal, and then it is easier to take in the essence of the criticism.

2



Don't get uncomfortable when your boss deals directly with your team: but talk to him if this creates problems.

Open communication has its benefits, if the organizational culture promotes the same, which is the norm in many international corporates. This translates to skip level meetings, and conversations or sometimes your boss by passing you to get information directly from a member of your team.

Remember if your boss has gone directly to 'Bob' for the sales figures for last week, this is an indication of his confidence in your team's abilities and he respects your workload and deems that 'Bob' is more than capable in providing this information.

There is no requirement for you to question your position, unless of course your work has been questionable. While you will have to learn to be comfortable with your boss dealing directly with your team. If you are not?! Fake it till you make it! However, if the instruction is contradictory to what you have discussed with them before, it's best to schedule in some chat time with your manager and agree on an amicable way forward.

3



Don't EVER go to your boss's boss without going through your boss first

Unless it's a scheduled skip level meeting, always take your concerns and ideas to your boss first. Not only is this a mark of respect towards your manager, it is also a means of being loyal.

In this instance it's best to put yourself in your boss's shoes! If one of your team members were to approach your boss, first it sends the message that you are not open to communication, and your view of that particular employee if you know who it is, would be jaded.

Skipping a level is the best recipe to create a toxic work environment – for everyone! To be avoided!

4



Don't hide anything from your boss

Always be quick to own up to any mishaps or missteps under your watch. Taking immediate responsibility mitigates time wasted in finger pointing. Step up to the plate call it in and work towards putting it right.

Being reprimanded for an error is noble, being called in for errors hidden from sight is deceitful.

5



Don't take offense when the boss demands things be done their way: but, learn to have private conversations if you have a better way

Generally, if your boss demands things be done in a certain way, there is perhaps a very good reason to it. Till you gain insight to the same, his processes and demands perhaps make little sense.

The best way to implement change is to learn where he/she is coming from in order to bring about change. This is not a showdown, but should be introduced as an improvement, privately after you have established why things are being done a certain way.

6



Don't expect too much from your boss: remember - your boss is a human being too!

Expectation is the famed root of all frustrations! Contrary to popular belief, your boss is 'not' an all-hallowed being. He too is susceptible to human error. Hence, just as you expect your boss to have your back when you make a mistake, make sure you are around to support him too.

To Customize the age old saying: To err is human; to support is being a good leader!

7



Don't be demotivated if your boss does not 'pat you on the back' all the time!

Don't tie indicators of your success to "pat on your backs" from the boss. In fact, don't peg your attitude and habits to motivation at all.

You will soon realise that motivation is fickle as it is fleeting.

Accept pat's on the back when given, but stick to your work habits. Also remember to give as much as you hope to get! Dispense pat's and create a culture of appreciation within your team while nurturing a rigorous work ethic!

8



Don't stick to your JD - ALWAYS do more

Look at your JD as a list of the basic functions you need to complete in order to be competent at your job. Once you have achieved this, if you settle for competence you are also settling for mediocracy.

Always look to skill yourself and prepare yourself for the next level. If you are blessed to have a boss you can learn from, emulate him. Take on components of his job, look at innovating new processes. Remember your direction – Forward!

9



Don't suck up to your boss

While learning to work around you boss's idiosyncrasies and quirks is a skill you have to learn fast, there is a vast difference in formatting that excel sheet just right and doing your boss's laundry just so!

Gaining your boss's trust and respect is great if done genuinely, however deceitfully hedging yourself to garner favour from your boss is not ethical, and above all not sustainable. Hard work and commitment is a slow but steady path to an inroad with the boss...

Bull Sh*! may get you to the top faster but it won't keep you there long!

10



Don't leave room to be questioned on your loyalty

No one is a fan of having their loyalty questioned, and this is where actions would definitely speak louder than words. Remember, you are now under more scrutiny than before, and often you may find yourself between a rock and a hard place. Your actions and words will speak volumes of where your loyalties lie.

As a rule of thumb, never comment on something you are not sure about or have not encountered yourself, and never say something about someone behind their back which you cannot say to their face! In short don't get caught up in office banter, listen but never add!!

CHAPTER - 4

WORKING WITH YOUR PEERS

As much as your team, your Peers will also play a crucial role in your success (or failure).

Don't be blind to office politics. Learning to wade through politics but not quite 'getting dirty' in that cess pool is a fine art you **MUST** master. There are **ALWAYS** little cliques and little power struggles at play all the time : resort **NEVER** to be caught in the cross fires : nor be ganged up against either.

What you must do is to have a reputation of being 'non partisan' and **ALWAYS** putting the **ORGANISATION** first!



Das



1



Help whenever possible

As a new manager you now need to fit in with your 'peers' which is not always easy, there are inter-departmental politics and many under currents at play; which you will need to learn and fast!

The best way to break in is to be helpful. Know that everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, should you see that your strengths come in handy in a situation, and you have that capacity to take on a bit of extra work, then don't be afraid to pitch in. The best working relationships are formed if they too reciprocate in some way. So watch out for opportunities when they present themselves.

2



Make your processes/policies something that does NOT cause more work to your peers

So, as a new manager you are keen to make those changes and harness productivity, drive a winning team and bask in the glory, right? -Wrong! Always remember your team is but a mere cog in a greater mechanism.

If your changes have a ripple effect, on the teams you collaborate with on a daily basis, its best to consider their process and see if your implementation is causing a bottleneck, rework, or an adverse effect. You are honing your analytic skills, learning the nitty-gritties of another process, and being a great and considerate peer.

3



Focus on internal customer satisfaction

Your colleagues are your customers too. They too wait on you and your team for output that contributes to the overall organisational deliverables. The best way for you to uphold these expectations is for you to view your colleagues as customers.

Once you do this your next step is to aim at satisfying your internal customer.

Quick responses, polite and professional correspondences, are simple ways which leads to overall employee satisfaction, increased employee productivity and performance and creates a great work culture and environment. Get your team on board too and aim to be the greatest team to deal/interact with!

4



Conduct regular meetings to find out if there are ways in which you can serve your peers better

If it's not already a part of your organisational culture, initiate regular interdepartmental meeting with the aim of having a pulse check, on matters they are concerned with or things their team has recently remedied and overcome.

These meetings are great opportunities to; Offer up your help where needed, grab quick tips on how issues were dealt with, have general awareness of the cross functions and interdependencies of various teams. It's always better to be in the know.

5



Hang Out' with everyone

Avoid the typical high school tendencies to gravitate towards likeminded colleagues. You are limiting yourself. Everyone has varying points of view that would only enhance yours. Also, you don't want to be tagged as being something or other.

While yes, its natural to have more in common with a certain person, make it a point to carve out a little time in your schedule to interact with ALL your peers.

You will never know when you will have to seek them out for help.
Keep all your options open!

6



Give your inputs on how your peers can improve their performance (but don't take an air of superiority!)

Looking to increase productivity and efficiencies need not be limited to your patch only.

If you look over at your neighbor and see that they too could use a little bit of improvement, do provide your input. Sharing best practices creates greater efficiencies.

HOWEVER, watch your tone, when dispensing this advice! You don't want to come off as a nosy neighbor or know it all. Focus on being helpful and take a suggestive tone.

You may even want to consider making it sound like their own idea!!

7



Do a favor when required

Creating your own personal bank of “I owe you” are a great tool when you someday need to call in a favour. Remember though you need to give in order to get.

Accommodate favours when you can and when it does not hamper your process and enjoy the feel good factor and the rapport you are building, while knowing you are creating good credit with your peers.

8



Have open conversations about your frustrations with them: carve out quiet time to do so

Frustrations are easier to manage when they are shared. Firstly, this is mildly therapeutic, it also helps you to gather insight on how to best approach or resolve a situation. Perhaps your colleague has already ‘been there done that!’. Everyone loves dispensing advice and often feel honored to do so.

The trick is to find the right time. Don’t appear at their table, while they are trying to complete that PowerPoint presentation that they need to present to their boss in the next ten seconds!

Instead, walk over and ask them for some time when convenient.

9



Try and socialize with your peers outside of your work environment: get your teams involved too

Forging a great working relationship can extend beyond the confines of an office setting.

These can be at training programmes, sporting events, or just grabbing a casual dinner or a drink, even coffee!

Have your teams join too, so as to widen their network and create a bond, after all they are all members of the same team – your organisation!

10



Give praise and credit: to peers and their teams

Working collaboratively, and considerately with your “Internal Customers” a.k.a colleagues, means giving credit where credit is due.

A little bit of appreciation goes along way. Be it verbally or a bit more formally acknowledging the good service provided with a copy to the respective bosses goes down well on everyone’s book!

You are modelling great skills to your team for them to follow and setting the standard of appreciation.

Remember, you need to GIVE in order to RECEIVE!



Dan's



1



Pick your battles privately - NEVER in open forums and meetings

It's easy to lose your temper and at times, agreed, it may be absolutely required...or you may feel like it.

NEVER get into an argument in an open forum. When in public forums, people get very defensive and there will be a lot of emotions involved.

Which is all fine, as an entertainment for everyone else. However, no one will see the objective and you will end up being the 'bad guy'.

Choose your battles wisely. Mark your time. Patience in these areas will play in your favour on the long run. You will most certainly begin to see the other side or see things more objectively.

2



Don't go over your peers heads and talk to their teams personally

RESPECT is given and taken. Managers tend to be territorial and overly protective of their areas and teams. Insecurity is another concern for many today.

Exerting your authority or presence in another managers area by directly getting work done through his or her team, may not be seen favourably.

Be polite and respectfully ask the manager of that team if the support can be obtained from their team. When the green light is given, ask if you could directly work with an individual, without inconveniencing the managers time.

Only when they agree, should you proceed to work directly. Be mindful that at times, they may want to be the 'middleman'.

So be it! Don't push it or bypass!

3



Don't get your boss involved in your peer battles

Every now and then co-workers will fail to see eye to eye and this can lead to a rather unpleasant situation.

While its good to let people vent, remember that this is not a long-term strategy. Having said that, the smartest thing is to keep away.

If you do have to get involved, remember to keep your boss away from this. Be matured and objective. Empathise but do not take sides.

Only involve your boss, if the above has failed and the situation is disrupting the work.

4



Don't let your peers 'bully' you

As a new manager, you will find that your peers are mostly seniors and possibly been in that position for a while. They may either feel threatened or frustrated at not being promoted or for being overlooked.

As the new kid on the block, you are bound to attract some attention, and this may at times come in the form of being bullied. Often this comes from those who are doing well and want to be popular or if the culture has indeed fostered it.

Nip it in the bud. When it happens, then and there make it clear that you will not tolerate being bullied. You could say, for example, "Hi John, when you do this or when you behave like this, it makes it really hard for both of us to foster a team environment."

If it continues, then you need to escalate it to your boss.

5



Don't play 'dirty politics'

Being a manager and running a business requires influencing people. However, avoid deceit and deception, cause that's what 'dirty politics' is all about.

Either to gain an advantage with peers or bosses, people often tend to lie or gossip. This is an age-old trick and you must be careful not to get sucked into it.

You must be aware of your beliefs and values and be firmly grounded in them. You need to foster and drive a positive influence towards the organisation's values and principals.

6



Don't allow a peer to fail - even if you don't like him/her

Remember being a manager is like a team sport or even a relay. If one fails, the results are disastrous.

It is in your best interest that everyone succeeds; that everyone crosses that finish line by giving their very best. That no one drops the baton. Even the ones you really don't like.

Remember your personal likings are not important. You were not given this role to make friends and become popular. You have a job! Do them objectively. Stay focused on the task and core job.

7



Don't allow a peer's subordinate to carry tales to you about him/her

Again, as a new manager you will find people being nice to you to try and get into your 'good books'.

This will include people creating or just telling tales (in many cases pure assumptions) about your peers. They may do this also because they truly believe that you are a good manager.

Regardless, of the intentions, you must clearly and politely ensure that this is nipped right there on the spot and you must set the standards that you are not one for gossips, rumours or stories.

Once you have established this at the very beginning, you will find people will think twice before coming up with stories to tell you.

8



Don't allow your peers to slow you down

It's good to be building rapport with your peers and to share ideas and thoughts.

Always remember that while this is all great, you do not get caught up in things that slows down your performance and deliverables.

Always remember your Core Job!

Whether it's as simple as a coffee break that goes beyond the given time or a delayed submission of a report, make sure you are always on top of your game and that you do not get carried away or simply distracted.

You need to set the standards and ensure that there is always consistency.

Remember: you want to be remembered by your bosses for your timely deliverables and not your constant delays!

9



Don't get involved in your team's battles with your peer's teams. Tell them to sort these out by themselves

Often there are battles between junior staff across departments or even within smaller teams.

As a part of their learning they must find a way to manage these situations. Do not get involved. This is NOT a battlefield for you to go out there and defend your team!

Firstly, they need to find a solution and a way out. Secondly, if you observe a situation, maybe you could find creative ways to impart tools that will make them to collaborate better for a common goal.

In many instances they eventually find solutions. Either way, it will become their learning!

10



Don't wait till things escalate to have a dialog : do so on a regular, structured basis

When working with peers, you will not always find a smooth pathway. There will always be challenges and roadblocks.

Don't be discouraged. This is your pathway to success. You must go down that pathway!

Keep your focus on the job objectives and the company values,
while not forgetting your own values.

Do everything within your abilities to find amicable ways of moving
forward. This means having regular chats that are structured
and objective.

When open and structured communications are implemented on a
regular basis, you will rarely see escalations and it always paves the
way for better team ethos and collaboration.

CHAPTER - 5

HAVING A LIFE (AFTER WORK)

Sure : work will always be important - and take a chunk of your time. However, it IS important to have a LIFE too. Having 'work life balance' maybe a myth in reality to most : but the 'acknowledgement' of having a 'life beyond work' is important - specially if you are married : and have kids : all of whom will want your time too... Even if you are single : having some time for yourself, your friends outside work, your parents, and also, for your own improvement it is important to grow.

Remember : your performance will be greatly impaired if you have not 'taken care' of yourself !



Das



1



Carve out time to exercise

Apart from the obvious health benefits, regular exercise enables you to be fit : and being fit is essential for a productive day. The reason for your energy to ebb after lunch and be downhill from then on ending up with sheer exhaustion towards five is down to the fact that you are unfit !

A twenty minute exercise routine, specially if structured well, can lead to an amazing increase in energy throughout the day. So, talk to a personal fitness instructor - or search the web for countless exercise programs and structure a program for yourself. Remember : the aim is NOT to have that chiseled six pack (you can certainly go for it if that is what you want) but to be fit !

Carve out that twenty minutes for yourself : it will honestly be the best 20 minute investment you make !

2



Have time to spend time with family - in a meaningful way

Don't just 'be at home' : spend time with family in a meaningful way. Sure : you are exhausted - and mentally drained - but have that ability to really 'spend time' with family too. Create rituals with your family that they look forward to with you...

- A 'download' of each others day everyday over dinner
- A 'coaching session' on a difficult subject for your kids (PLEASE make it is fun rather than a pain !)
- Movie nights on a Friday night
- A jog at the beach and breakfast on a Saturday morning
- Day trip on a Sunday

Go home at a decent hour - and spend time with them... Don't forget a visit to the grandparents often as well - don't forget they get older each year !

3



Take up a hobby

Hobbies and 'Pass Times' are different : collecting stamps is a hobby : binge watching TV is a Pastime !

Take up a hobby : it genuinely helps to have something that give much meaning and satisfaction - and something to look forward to after a tough days work week ! It will be great if it is something you can get the entire family involved in !

4



Take at least one solid holiday every year : and 'unplug'

Commit to having a crazy holiday every year : to a place everyone enjoys : and create fond memories that last a lifetime. A great holiday is something we tend to talk forever about - and it requires good planning.

Remember - no phones - no e mails - no 'work' during this holiday : keep you bosses, clients and peers as well as your teams informed of this well in advance - and have that auto reply plugged in early as well.

- Start researching places early - get the entire family involved
- Ensure you build in 'activities' that cater to every ones' likes
- Always build in a unique experience - don't just laze at a hotel

5



Have a solid 7-8 hour sleep

Sleep is important EVERY DAY !

So, no matter what you do - or how busy you are - go to sleep at a particular hour - and have your quota of sleep.

Remember the good old saying - early to be and early to rise makes a man/woman healthy, wealthy and wise !

6



Read daily

Invest in a Kindle - and download some books that will help you with your work - and also, books that are just good reads.

Utilize the times when you commute to work (if you have a driver - or office transport) or carve out a particular time to sit and read. Make this a daily ritual.

Reading improves your vocabulary - as much as it helps you gain essential knowledge. Your improvements in your vocabulary will show - and being well spoken as a manager is as important as being well dressed and delivering the right results.

Read at home too - watching you read will encourage your kids to read too !

7



Take up a qualification every 3-5 years : not to get a qualification but to augment your knowledge

Don't just take on a MBA for doing an MBA. Take on a subject that will augment your work. If you are doing HR - why not take on a Masters in HR - or Business Psychology ? If you are in Finance : why not a MSc in Finance ?

Whatever 'qualification' you undertake - remember - having the knowledge is FAR more important than the qualification itself. For sure - pass your exams - but, ensure you are absolutely knowledgeable as well.

Don't stop qualifying yourself - make this a lifelong journey. Take on a structured piece of study every 4-5 years : and allow yourself a small breather between qualifications. Taking on Masters level programs and beyond takes a chunk of time - so, ensure you don't exhaust yourself by taking on too much either ! Look at flexible learning options - which are far more common now than it ever used to be !

8



Remember birthdays, remember anniversaries, remember to buy flowers

It's nice to remember birthdays of colleagues, family and also key Clients. Take the time to buy a meaningful gift : and WRAP IT ! Don't send e mail wishes - buy a card and post it - with a personal note : take that time to show them that you REALLY CARE.

Also, make a habit of just buying flowers for your spouse - for no 'reason' at all but to show you love them. Buy a small gift at random for a team member that they may not invest in for themselves - like a good pen - or their own personalized letterheads : make a habit of resorting to 'random acts of kindness'

9



Have date nights with your spouse

Don't ever neglect your spouse because of your work - and specially now that you are a manager. Your wife/husband is as important (if not FAR more important !) than your work !

So, make a habit of rekindling the 'flame' and go on date nights. Keep the kids at home - and just take some lone time ever so often : and show her/him that you enjoy nothing more than a good meal and a great conversation with them !

10



Have regular Health Checks

Once you hit 30 - commit to an annual health check.

NEVER take your health for granted NOR wait until you are actually SICK to go to the doctors ! Prevention is ALWAYS better than cure : so, get yourself a health check - and commit to a healthier lifestyle !



Dan's



1



Don't look at drinking as the only way to have 'fun'

It's quite common for Managers to use 'having a drink' as a way to connect with their teams - and also, build bonds. This is fine : but please don't limit it to that. Alcohol is fine in absolute moderation but that weekly 'binge' and calling it 'fun' is irresponsible.

Remember - when the 'boss' asks you to come, it is tough for a team member to say 'no' - even if they are teetotalers ! So, have that social drink if you must - but don't make it a regular fixture - nor make it the ONLY way you 'have fun' with the team.

2



Don't take your work too seriously that you are constantly stressed over it

Work is important : and it IS serious stuff : BUT... take a chill pill too - and understand that NOTHING is more important than your sanity. Be able to see work for what it is - and nothing more. Commit to doing your best - every day - but NEVER let it stress you out. Things WILL go wrong : teams WILL fail : bosses WILL lose their temper : work WILL get overwhelming : budgets WILL get squeezed - take it all in your stride.

Keep a copy of Rudyard Kipling's 'IF' printed and pasted on your desk - and read it regularly !

3



Don't get into bad eating habits

If there is any possibility - eat from home ! Take a lunch pack from home - rather than resorting to eating 'short eats' ! Don't make dinner the full on meal for the day - make it breakfast.

Read about meal plans. Read about healthy alternatives to some of the unhealthy meals you eat. Understand nutrition - and also, the direct link between what you eat and your health.

Ensure you eat healthy - everyday - and sure - ever so often, binge if you must !

4



Don't work weekends (unless you REALLY REALLY REALLY have to)

Make sure weekends are sacrosanct : both for you AND your team. Establish that discipline from day one. NEVER call a colleague during a weekend. NEVER call your boss either. Tell your team they are NOT to call you unless its AN ABSOLUTE emergency !

Keep weekends to wind down - think - and also spend quality time with family and friends.

5



Don't take work home

Try and get into the discipline of ensuring your work is done before you go home. Sure, you have a laptop - and push mail on your phone - but don't get into the habit of taking work home.

If your work is such that you HAVE to do some work from home too - make sure you have a particular time for that. Spend time with the kids, talk, have dinner - tuck the kids to bed and tell them a bed time story and THEN start on your work !

6



Don't take on too many personal things all at the same time

Try not to crowd your life with too many changes all at the same time. Space things out so that there isn't that constant 'rush' for prolonged periods of time. Remember - it is not only you who gets stressed out - and having everyone at the edge is a sure way of having lots of arguments and 'fights' and 'edginess' that destroys families. Ease it out...

7



Don't go to bed angry : find SOME WAY to let it go : and NEVER take your anger to the next day

Let it go each day.

Say sorry. Make up. Be grateful for all you have. Say your prayers (if you are religious - if not, just say thank you to those that helped you as a way of saying grace).

Go to bed thankful, grateful and happy. NEVER take your grudges and anger with you when you wind down for the night. Empty that 'emotional trash can' daily.

8



Don't take it all out on the family or your friends

Things going bad ? Nothing working out ? All the KPIs are messed up and the boss's are at your back like jackals ? Don't take it out on the family and friends. Remember - they had NOTHING to do with it ! The easiest 'venting' is done at home - and when you do that - your family starts hating the fact that you work (or where you work !). So, make the effort to 'keep it out' of the home door - and address it at work - where it matters !

9



Don't forget why you work in the first place !

We all work for different reasons - but most of us work because we want to 'provide' for our families. So, remember this - and be willing to put up with a little 'sh*t' at work : and be ok with it. Purpose is a great motivator. When the chips are down - always remind yourself why you are here in the first place - and put your head down - and commit to fantastic work !

10



Don't forget to pamper yourself

YOU are important - as much as your family. Remember NEVER to forget to pamper YOURSELF as well. Go for that mani-pedi : for that soothing massage : that film you always wanted to watch on the big screen (but no one wanted to come for !), go watch the sunset, have a day all for yourself : the important things is that you give yourself a little something ever so often too !

CHAPTER - 6

DRIVING RESULTS

Ultimately, it all boils down to this : your results.

Driving results can be done in two ways. You can always be the right royal asshole who everyone hates - but be that 'star performer' : or, you can be a stellar performer AND also the person everyone has deep respect for. How you go about it is up to you !

Remember though : asshole or not : performance is performance - and that is non-negotiable!



Das



1



Once targets are set, don't negotiate on them : change strategies - NOT the targets

Targets, unless changed at strategic level, is non negotiable. Targets are not up for discussion or debate : it is what we have undertaken to do - come what may - that's the job. It is not our place as managers to debate whether the targets given are 'realistic' or not - that's the job of our bosses. Sure, when targets are set, we can, and should, give our feedback and thoughts : but ONCE it is set, it is our bounded duty to ensure they are achieved. Towards this end, rallying our teams and driving them towards the set target is the job we have as Managers.

So, stop wasting time about 'haggling' over it : get on with it. Use all your collective energies to come up with strategies - action plans - ideas - new methods - all aimed at delivering the 'numbers' - the rest is honestly irrelevant.

Truly believe ANY target set is possible. So, don't open up the debate about whether the targets set are fair or not. Don't EVER open that can of worms - it never gets you anywhere !

2



Performance measurements are ALWAYS OBJECTIVE - they are NOT measured by 'subjective' variables

Be clear what targets and objectives are : and have proper systems in place to measure them using DATA rather than OPINIONS. If targets are not measured objectively they become really really counterproductive : as having a 'discussion' to decide whether someone achieved an objective or not is really stupid isn't it ? The lines have to be clear : you either achieved the objective - or you didn't - its that simple : but for this to be validated, you need DATA.

3



Have regular updates - and take corrective actions when things are falling short Have a weekly update with the team.

Look at the numbers carefully. Understand why things are going wrong - and also, identify corrective action plans weekly : never procrastinate - nor resort to wishful thinking.

Act decisively : and act fast.

4



Attack the problems NOT the person

Things WILL go wrong. They almost always do : afterall, if all things went according to plan we won't need managers at all !

When things DO go wrong, look at solving the problem - don't become part of it. Keep the 'person' out of the issue - and address the issue itself. Correct the SITUATION - and if the 'person' concerned needs to change in order to deliver better results, coach him/her accordingly. NEVER get into the blame game - nor encourage it from others.

5



Lend weight when required but NEVER get suckered into doing someone else's job

Help when required : BUT remember, your team needs to do their jobs. NEVER take the easy way out by lending your technical expertise and solving the issues PERSONALLY. This only results in an unhealthy over reliance on you personally - and they will make a habit of bringing all their issues to you - expecting you to solve them for you. Teach them to solve their own problems !

6



When additional resources are required - give it - but, always be mindful of the 'nett' impact

Often times the team will be stretched - and will require additional resources (be it budgets or people.) Take serious consideration BEFORE committing to additional resources - specially if it is NOT budgeted for. It IS important to give the team the resources they need to succeed : but it is ALSO important to meet targets with the resources at hand - and learn to be ingenious in finding solutions - and work AROUND issues and constraints. Don't be too quick to add to the overall costs - because 'cost cutting' later is a much more painful exercise !

7



Ask for help from superiors and peers when required

Don't shy away from asking for help when required : from peers and also your superiors. Be clear about the help you want : and also, NEVER abuse this. Remember - they have issues of their own : and don't really need more ! Also, remember NEVER to take offense if they refuse to help - they are in no way OBLIGED to give it to you in the first place. If you DO get the help - then, be sure to help them in return when required.

8



Have meaningful conversations regularly : remember the SBI model from the Center for Creative Leadership

Learn to have meaningful conversations. Learn to follow the SBI model (search the net - and you will find enough material on the model and its use). It's important that you are professional in the conversations you have around performance - and unless you are, you will never really 'coach' your team in superlative performance.

Learn the SBI model - and put it into practice.

9



Hold people accountable

Don't make exceptions. Hold EVERYONE accountable and responsible. You make an exception : it becomes a habit. So, don't ever make exceptions. Work is work. Targets are targets.

10



Offer constant praise and recognize those who 'pull their weight'

Learn to recognize those who really go out of their way to make it happen. Often, managers are quick to reprimand and very very slow to praise - don't fall into that trap. Praise those who deserve it : don't EVER use it for 'show' - MEAN IT.



Dan's



1



Don't be unfair in how you set targets - don't overload some and underlay others : be equitable

When deciding targets for the team, don't be tempted to overload the one that does the most. This is one of the most despicable acts a manager does : and it is always hated by those who you should actually safeguard the most - because they are the top performers. The idea is not to overload the one that does the most - specially if he/she does so unflinchingly - but to ensure EVERYONE does their bit. So, ensure the workload to distribute is EQUITABLE. IF you are giving a hell of a lot more to one - compared to the others - make sure you also PAY THEM THAT MUCH more - otherwise, you can be rest assured you are bound to loose the very person you ought to fight to keep !

2



Don't misunderstand effort for results

Be assured that most will TRY HARD. Praise the efforts - but not overtly so. RESULTS MATTER : not the effort : so, don't get caught up in seeing those who work hard and 'sympathise' with them : and misunderstand their best efforts as 'better results.' Be VERY VERY clear about this : EFFORT does NOT equate RESULTS. When you review progress, focus on RESULTS - not the effort.

If someone is putting the effort but still not seeing results, coach them. If someone is NOT putting the effort and therefore not getting results, talk to them sternly, and if they still don't do anything much, these are the people you need to identify for removal. Start on the documentation process, and start the official warnings in writing.

3



Don't get team members to be selfish - get them to work together towards the objectives set

Targets are set individually - yes - but this is NO REASON not to work together. Create that team ethic from the get go - and ensure they comply. NEVER create 'individual brilliance.' Actively encourage members to work with each other - and help each other towards each others' goals and objectives.

4



Don't make results the ONLY thing that matters - remember they need to behave well too !

As much as you focus on the results - watch the behavior too. Living the VALUES is as important as delivering the results. So, ensure you have words with those who are violating values - and take a zero tolerance approach to things like harassment, bullying, unprofessional conduct and such.

5



Don't watch things slip away : intervene and act

NEVER EVER ignore things : bad behavior, violation of processes, misbehaviors at functions, slovenly dress codes : these are ALL indications of things slipping away. Put a stop to them immediately - and nip things in the bud. NEVER allow things to escalate. 'Watching' never solved anything !

6



**Don't be demotivated by the lack of results :
sometimes it takes time. Better to have sustained
performance than a yo yo effect !**

Don't push it too hard... Remember, you need to build a team that delivers superlative results CONSISTENTLY - and this genuinely takes time. You can push things in the short term - but this generally just means sheer exhaustion and dropping of performance in the medium and long term. If you have to take the flack for bad performance - do so with aplomb - as long as you know things are moving in the right direction. Make sure performance comes THROUGH people and also PROCESSES - rather than by force and scrambling at the last minute !

7



**Don't allow shortcuts to be taken :
performance must NEVER be at the cost of
breaking processes or policies or values**

NEVER allow your team to take short cuts. Processes are there for a reason. If anyone breaks processes, procedures or policies you need to take disciplinary action against it. NEVER encourage shortcuts either - and NEVER ask one of your team members to break policy. If a policy, procedure or process is cumbersome or not really helping you - CHANGE IT - but as long as it is there - you are duty bound to comply !

8



Don't resort to 'creative fixing' of the 'numbers'

Don't fudge the numbers - period - EVER !

9



Don't pay everyone the same : always differentiate : performance and pay must be linked

NEVER pay everyone the same. If someone has done better - they need to be rewarded accordingly. After all, what is the point of having targets if rewards are not linked to it. If you pay everyone the same increment all you will achieve is everyone just taking the easy way out - and never really driving the targets set : and the best performers will leave.

10



Don't hesitate to weed out non performers - but do so respectfully

Not everyone CAN be a good performer - some are just not adequately competent to grow with the organisation. So, you need to take that tough call when required - and weed out non performers. Remember though - that does NOT mean they are bad people - so, treat them with dignity and respect at all times. However, they DO need to go !

CHAPTER - 7

CREATING SUCCESSION

Start finding and grooming successors early. True : this MAY mean that you may be out of a job soon - but that honestly IS the idea ! You must be brave and bold enough to take yourself out of the equation : and allow the team to run without you. You can never really take the next steps when there is too much dependency on yourself.

Creating successors is a fundamental part of the job of a good manager. Take it on with genuine intentions.



Das



1



Find more than one successor - but NEVER promise them the promotion UNTIL they have truly proven their worth.

Don't have just one successor - if you possibly can :
for two critical reasons :

First : it sends a clear message that your choice is already made :
and that there is no chance for anyone else to even try to be the
'next boss'

Secondly - and possibly more importantly : it generally makes the
'chosen successor' complacent

So, try and have a few successors identified : and tell all of them
that they need to 'up their game' and learn from you/others : and
after a certain period you will take the call on promoting one of
them to be your 'lieutenant'

2



Curate a carefully thought through development plan for each successor. Succession requires carefully planned - and structured development.

- Take each individuals development needs into consideration
- Factor in technical and soft skills
- Factor in cross functional know how
- Factor in essential skills such as IT skills, Linguistic Skills etc as well
- Put a training plan together - and take each individual through it

- Don't forget to do a few programs that involves each successor learning from the other : promoting peer learning
- Don't over rely on 'workshops' or 'seminars' : focus more on coaching, self learning and organisation led initiatives (learning by doing)

3



Commit time to have more detailed one on ones with identified successors. Build in a solid half hour at least weekly with your successors.

Take a cold hard look at their work : and also, progress against the development plans you have set out for them.

Offer pointed feedback...

4



Allow the successors to take on more of the strategic work you do.

Involve your successors in the strategic initiatives you run as much as possible. Get them to work on aspects of the strategy by themselves and mould them to think of the 'bigger picture' and not get into a silo mentality. Initiate them in the overall business direction.

5



Give visibility to your successors at critical meetings

Give the successors visibility. Give them the opportunity to represent the department at crucial meetings and allow them to hold their own without your 'input' : and guide them through the mistakes they make - and how to correct themselves. Groom them to be independent in thought and deed : and also, to be open to suggestion and criticism.

6



Hold your successors to a higher set of standards than the others

Your successors need to have credibility : so, hold them to higher standards than the rest. After all, if they can't demonstrate that they 'deserve' to succeed you - what's the point ? Their performance, their behavior, their values and their value additions need to be a clear cut above the rest. Constantly challenge them to bring their best to work - every day !

7



Be willing to let go - and allow them to make their own mistakes : but when they do, teach them patiently

Making mistakes and learning from them and moving on is an essential skill for any trainer. Allow your successors to make their own mistakes : and fight the impulse to 'save the day.' However, be there in the sidelines to coach them through the mistakes - and equip them with the skills to learn from their mistakes - and ensure they are never repeated. TEACHING them to do this for themselves is the answer - NOT 'protecting them.'

8



Encourage creativity, innovation and ingenuity in your successors

Encourage your successors to think differently : to challenge the conventional paradigms : to look at processes, procedures and policies with an eye to improve them - and make them simpler. Get your team to be never satisfied with 'good' and to continuously drive towards excellence.

9



Encourage your successors to find their own successors and groom them

Mid way into their development program, challenge them to find a successor each - and start grooming them the same way you are grooming them. Make it absolutely clear that they will NOT be promoted UNLESS they themselves have created their own successors.

10



Be open to finding places OUTSIDE of your department or company for your successors :

specially if they are ready to take on your role but have no place in the organisation in the short term. However talk to your superiors and HR about it BEFORE you broach that topic with them. There are many times that your successors are ready : but they don't really have a slot within your own team to grow into. So, be comfortable to pass them on to other departments who may not have successors groomed : and in extreme circumstances, even outside your own company. Talk to HR constantly : and your own superiors : and ensure your successors have slots open - and be open about the fact that you will not hold them back if they decide to leave because of a lack of progression within the organisation.



Dan's



1



Don't breed unhealthy rivalry between successors

Your successors must work together - and collaborate : not compete. Sure, only one will get the slot : but, it is important that there is healthy rivalry : rather than a cut throat 'win at all costs' attitude. Have stern conversations with anyone who does not live by this ethos : and be comfortable to take those out of the running if they don't really embrace the ethos of collaboration.

2



Don't rule out others - things CAN and WILL change over time - so, keep your eyes open for others who may show promise

Succession is NOT a given. Your team may well have others who grow faster than the successors you identified earlier on. Be completely open that anyone can be brought into the fold if they show promise : so, keep a sharp eye across the team to identify potential.

3



Don't allow pig headedness to take over your successors

Allowing being identified as a successor getting into their 'head' is a good indicator of ego getting in the way of sensibility ! So, talk to anyone who seems to float rather than walk, bully rather than connect, 'boss' rather than lead. NEVER allow one of your successors to get 'big headed' over their success. Send a clear message that your successors need to be sensible and down to earth at all times !

4



Don't give any form of 'preferential treatment' to your successors

Don't cut any favors to those who are identified as trainers. They are, for all intentions and purposes, an equal part of the team : and the rules are NOT to be bent for them - simply to 'save face'.

Never think that your decision will not be questioned if they are not really proving their worth - and not really cutting the grade. We all make mistakes about people - and if we do - the wise thing to do is to acknowledge it and correct it - rather than 'covering it up'

So, treat your successors the same way you will treat everyone else... Don't make any exceptions...

5



Don't only look at your industry : get your successors to study and learn from other industries as well

Get your successors to go for as many best practice visits as possible to other industries. Tell them to come back after the visit and run a presentation of what they have seen - and charge them with implementing ONE thing that they thought was worthy of emulating within your department/company. Make these projects a great opportunity to teach your successors how to 'contextualize' concepts - rather than merely 'cutting and pasting' ideas - which as we all know never quite works !

6



Don't think of succession as a one year plan - it often takes a few years to truly groom someone

Take a long term view - NEVER be bound by financial years. The time it takes to really groom a person depends on many factors - but mostly based on the individual himself/herself : and how 'hungry' they are to learn. So, don't make this into a tick box exercise and look at timelines in a linear fashion, bound by the financial year.

7



NEVER get successors to do your 'dirty work' - unless there is a lesson to be taught which will be important for their future

Your successors are NOT THERE for you to abuse - and get all your 'dirty work' done. Give them meaningful work - work that they can learn from. Giving them 'grunt work' is perfectly fine - but the purpose ought to be to teach - rather than 'make life less painful' for you.

8



Don't shy away from taking a successor to task if they step out of line - and if required out from the running completely

Be bold to sack a successor who does not live by the values and expectations you set. NEVER shy away from a tough stance on values - and those who are detrimental to the 'whole'

9



Don't make succession planning an annual paper exercise : the plans need to be executed

Succession planning is NOT just a document. It is a LIVE document : one that needs to be executed. So, please, don't make fancy presentations and reports and make it collect dust ! Please don't scramble at the end of the year to send the successors for some meaningless training programs and think that this is training either !

10



Don't take the final decision on the successor alone : always get peer feedback and subordinate feedback as well (apart from your boss of course !)

Once the successors are ready, and you are confident they are fully groomed to take on the next roles, allow a panel of peers to choose the final candidate - and also, allow your team to do the first round of assessments and 'interviews'. Remember - your successor needs to work with your team and your peers as much as you - so, as long as you are comfortable with those identified - allow the final decisions to be made by others - which will enable much better buy in !

And... Finally...

Ok. So now you know the basics... Here are a few other points to remember overall...



Das



1



Being boss is also about being a good human being

Being a 'boss' means that you are DIRECTLY impacting the team under you (and possibly many many others indirectly) on a daily basis. It's a responsibility you need to take seriously. As much as driving a team : you have a moral obligation to ensure they are influenced positively overall : and for this, you need to be a good example for them...

Be humble. Be rooted. Be someone worthy of being emulated.
Be a good human being...

2



Remember that your role is to help others succeed

Now that you have proven yourself - to yourself and to others around you, remember that from now on, till you retire, it's not about YOU but about OTHERS. Remember, from this point onwards your role is different : rather than being an individual contributor, you need to be able to bring the best in others. So, help others succeed - and through that, your own success will be guaranteed.

3



Learn the importance of 3 simple words : Love, Responsibility, Sacrifice

Love your team. Love your job. Take responsibility for EVERYTHING that goes wrong. NEVER palm the blame on others. Take full ownership. Then, finally, make a few sacrifices on behalf of your team : and your organisation. Making a few sacrifices augments you from merely a manager into being a true leader : and earns you the right to truly win others' respect. Sacrifices are never easy : but if you really want to resonate with others and truly win them over : then, make a sacrifice BEFORE you demand one from them !

4



Always remember basics - always simplify things

Most organisations are complicated : but they don't need to be. Even the most complex and complicated process can be simplified. So : make it your mission to simplify everything ! You will augment your team's performance every time you simplify things for them !

Go back to basics often. NEVER forget the basics. Whenever things start going South : look at basics - and chances are you would be missing something small that you and the team has taken for granted. Basic disciplines are often the reason for the biggest issues inside any organisation !

5



Always do more than you are paid for

Forget the pay. Work for the joy of it. Work for the thrill of it.
Work for the opportunity to be at your best : and bring out
your best...

Always, always, work for more than you are paid for : this gives you
the right to demand it of your team too !



Dan's



1



Don't pretend to be perfect : you are NOT

Are you perfect ? Yep... No you are not ! So then, let's not pretend we are !

Be comfortable in your own skin. Be honest to yourself. Be ok about your limitations.

Promise yourself you will learn and grow continuously : the rest will take care of itself !

2



Don't think too much of your success : you never did any of it alone !

Doing fabulously well ? Pat yourself on the back and move on. Don't get pompous about your success and think it was YOU who contributed most towards it : it almost always never is you ! So, just be happy about the success you are making : and let others take the credit for it. Most of all, NEVER lose sight of the fact that you can NEVER succeed alone !

3



Don't ever burn bridges

Had a real ding dong inside the board room ? Really let it loose with one of your colleagues ? Told off the boss ? Well... make up.

Don't EVER burn bridges with ANYONE. If there are particularly toxic people, just let them be and stay well clear. You have nothing to prove by getting a one up on them. You are not there to win a popularity contest : NOR are you there to become the moral high ground of the organisation ! Don't EVER make conflict personal. Never burn bridges...

4



Don't hesitate to call it a day if you feel you are not adding value - or if you have nothing really to learn - NEVER stay because of the pay alone

Your job maybe paying you fabulously well : and it may well be hard won. But... LEAVE if you are not growing. Also, LEAVE if you are not really adding value - and your team can really do it all without you. ASK for another challenge : look at a lateral move : worst case scenario - LEAVE. You do yourself no favors by staying put in a place that does not grow you...

5



Don't take YOURSELF seriously : always take the TASK before you seriously !

You are clearly excellent at what you do to keep growing inside an organisation : or plain lucky. Either way, don't take yourself too seriously. Remember : let your WORK speak on your behalf : let your superlative results be your legacy... Let it be enough.

ALWAYS take your WORK seriously : NEVER yourself !

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