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IMPACT

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YOUR FIRST STEPS AS A TEAM LEADER



When you first step into a new supervisor position, everyone around you will be taking special notice to see how you handle yourself and your authority. Given this, it is critical that you get off on the right foot by following the tips below.

Know Who You Are Working With

- Meet with the entire group, and then meet privately with each individual so you can find out about the person's interests, personal goals, and background. Ask each individual how effective he or she thinks the group is, and where improvements could be made.
- Talk about your expectations of the group, your philosophy on leadership, and your past experiences as a leader.
- Locate informal group leaders and support their leadership. Observe how other team members react to these informal leaders, and meet with informal leaders to discuss group needs and ideas.

Stay Available

- Consider an open-door office policy, if not too distracting.
- Continue to meet with the group to discuss vital issues.
- Reiterate that you are available at any time to answer questions or give suggestions.

Think Before Making Changes

- After you've considered what needs to be changed, make the easiest changes first. Continue on to bigger or more controversial changes slowly.
- Invite feedback from the group regarding your changes.

Be Relatable

- Encourage your team to speak to you on a first-name basis.
- Offer your help to the group when needed.
- Be sure that employees know that you are accessible to offer guidance.

Lead with a Positive Outlook

- Explain why you are confident in the group's success.
- Show that you are willing to do what it takes to help the group succeed.
- Demonstrate that you and the group are working together by helping to guide the group as they seek their goals.

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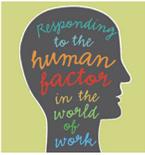
A Message to Managers *from* Claremont EAP

Often, the employee who needs their Employee Assistance Program the most doesn't think to call for assistance.

A manager's referral to the EAP can be an effective strategy for improving an employee's effectiveness, productivity, motivation and morale. A referral to the EAP can also decrease absenteeism, reduce turnover, foster acceptance of change and reduce stress.

An EAP referral can make a difference.

For confidential help, call: **800-834-3773**
or visit **claremonteap.com**



Great Ways to Motivate Your Team

Being a facilitator -- making it easier for your team members to do a better job -- will make you a more competent team leader.

“Rather than telling people what to do, effective leaders help bring out the best in their team members,” says Andrew J. DuBrin, Ph.D., a management professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York, and author of *The Breakthrough Team Player*. “One way to succeed is to perfect your coaching style. As a coach, you can make on-the-spot suggestions and offer team members encouragement.”



Supporting Your Team

Following these tips will help you improve your effectiveness as a team leader:

- Provide specific feedback - pinpointing behaviors, attitudes and/or skills that need improvement will help you coach a team member to perform at a higher level.
- Help your team devise a mission statement.
- Creating such a statement can help team members focus more clearly.
- Be supportive - providing emotional support and encouragement can help a leader improve the work of team members who aren't performing at their best. Just being helpful may be enough.
- Be a model of what you expect - an effective leader spurs others to act appropriately by setting an example. For instance: Cooperating with people from other organizational units will encourage team members to do the same.
- Foster teamwork - promote the attitude that working together effectively leads to success for everyone. Refer to those in the group as team members or teammates instead of subordinates or employees. Make frequent use of the words “we” and “us.” For example: “We achieved the new sales goal.”
- Encourage team members to treat one another as customers - most people treat customers with more respect and concern than they do fellow employees at or below their levels. Encouraging team members to treat each other as customers fosters cooperative behavior and politeness.
- Bring team members together for meetings, meals and occasional parties.
- Schedule most get-togethers during regular office hours so you don't intrude on people's personal time - emphasize that yours is a winning team. Frequently remind team members that their work is important. Help them identify tasks they're particularly good at and promote them as key members of the group. Build the commitment and confidence of each team member. “For the group to develop a strong team spirit, individuals must feel a sense of mutual accountability,” DuBrin says. “Frequently reminding team members of what they're doing right is one way to build commitment and self-confidence.”
- Emphasize group recognition - giving rewards for group accomplishments promotes team spirit by enabling team members to take pride in the entire team's contributions and progress. “Consider creating a display wall for postings of team activities, certificates of accomplishment and upcoming events,” says DuBrin. “If you have room in your budget, you might want to order T-shirts, athletic caps, mugs or key rings imprinted with your team name or logo.”
- Don't keep the best assignments for yourself - doing this dampens team spirit and hampers performance. “Look for opportunities that will allow other team members to perform at a high level,” DuBrin says.
- Welcome all input - team spirit increases when everyone contributes. DuBrin says, “It's especially important that the leader not allow one or two people on their team to do most of the work.”

To access your free and confidential services, call:
800-834-3773
 or visit claremonteap.com