

# TOP TEN LEADERSHIP



# TIPS

FOR FIRST-TIME MANAGERS

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**The responsibility of leading and motivating** a team to produce first-rate results can be a daunting challenge. That challenge can be even more intimidating for first-time managers.

As an organizational leader, don't let the pressure and inexperience prevent these managers from success.

**Top 10 Leadership Tips for First-Time Managers** offers great tips on how to help your first-time managers learn to successfully manage, motivate, and communicate with their teams.



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# 1

## Develop Yourself

### Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

**Leadership is a talent like any other.** Just like any talent, leadership has to be developed and worked on consistently.

We're sure you have observed someone in your company who is extremely intelligent and gets promoted, only to fail shortly after. Just because someone has great ideas and an analytical mind doesn't make them a great leader. Leadership is more than just a high IQ; it is about Emotional Intelligence as well.

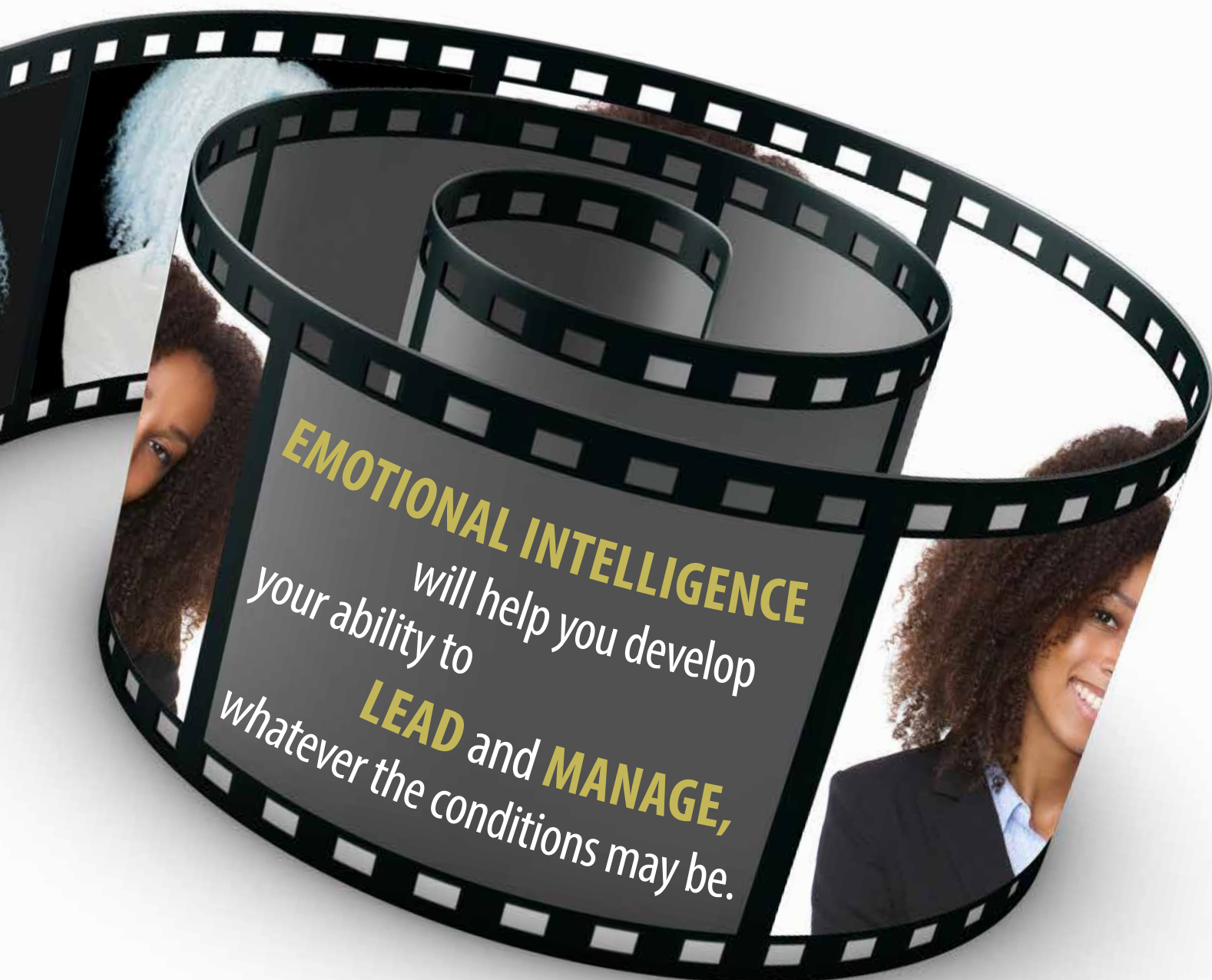
Emotional Intelligence has become an extremely popular topic and has helped innumerable people to understand and develop their leadership skills. Daniel Goleman, author of "Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More Than IQ," said, "IQ tells you what level of cognitive complexity a person can manage in their job: you need high levels for top management, the professions, [and] the

sciences, while lower levels work fine in lower echelons. Emotional Intelligence sets apart which leaders, professionals, or scientists will be the best leaders."

Emotional intelligence will help you develop your ability to lead and manage, whatever the conditions may be. In order to be a great leader, you must understand and know how to manage yourself first. Being aware of the people around you will help you to be a skilled leader. Just because you may have a high IQ does not mean that you will be a skillful leader. A great leader should have a balanced combination of both high IQ and EI.

If you understand who you are and what your strengths are (self-awareness), and you know how to lead yourself (self-management), then you will be a better leader. You will know how to read others and empathize. A good leader excels at leading themselves first. If you





can lead yourself first, then you will be better prepared to lead others. Being able to control your own emotions, behavior, and your own self will allow you to maximize your potential. Self-management is about having the ability to display the right behaviors when your emotions are pointing in a different direction.

Good leaders should also be able to connect the people around them (others-awareness). Employees will follow their leaders if they are able to approach them and relate to them. If the leader has high EI,

employees will feel more motivated and committed. Leaders with high EI generate excitement and enthusiasm within their followers, understand them, and are able to lead and guide their employees.

Leadership is about relationships, which in turn is a highly emotional process. You can use emotional intelligence to build relationships. As a leader, having high EI will allow you to be more compassionate, more understanding, and interact more effectively with others. You will be able to inspire, influence, coach, and handle conflict (others-management).

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# 2

## Set a Good Example

Become a Leader That People Want to Follow



**One of the great debates about leadership centers** on whether leaders are born or made. A study by Biola University found that “the majority of researchers today believe that the origins of leadership go beyond genes and family to other sources. Work experiences, hardship, opportunity, education, role models, and mentors all go together to craft a leader.”

Notice that the study doesn’t disregard the possibility that certain leadership attributes are in-born, just that the fuller picture of leadership involves external factors. Regardless, if you are a leader—or if you aspire to be one—then you need people to follow you; otherwise, you aren’t a leader. You may have the authority that comes with a leadership position; but do people want to follow you, or do they merely snap into lockstep behind you for a payday, some benefits, and the thrill of corporate pursuit? The answer to this question could mean the difference between years of satisfaction and success, or years of struggle and scraping by.

The Biola study also noted that the “raw material essential in people in order to lead is not scarce,” and that “the lack of needed leaders is a reflection of neglected development, rather than a dearth of abilities.” That means you can craft leadership skills—whether you were born with them or not—and become a leader people want to follow. There is no greater leadership responsibility than being able to craft and cast a compelling vision for your organization, and though crafting a vision isn’t easy, when it comes to leadership, only one “vision question” really counts:

Are you a visionary, and are you actively pursuing that vision?

*"People buy into the leader  
before they buy into the vision."*

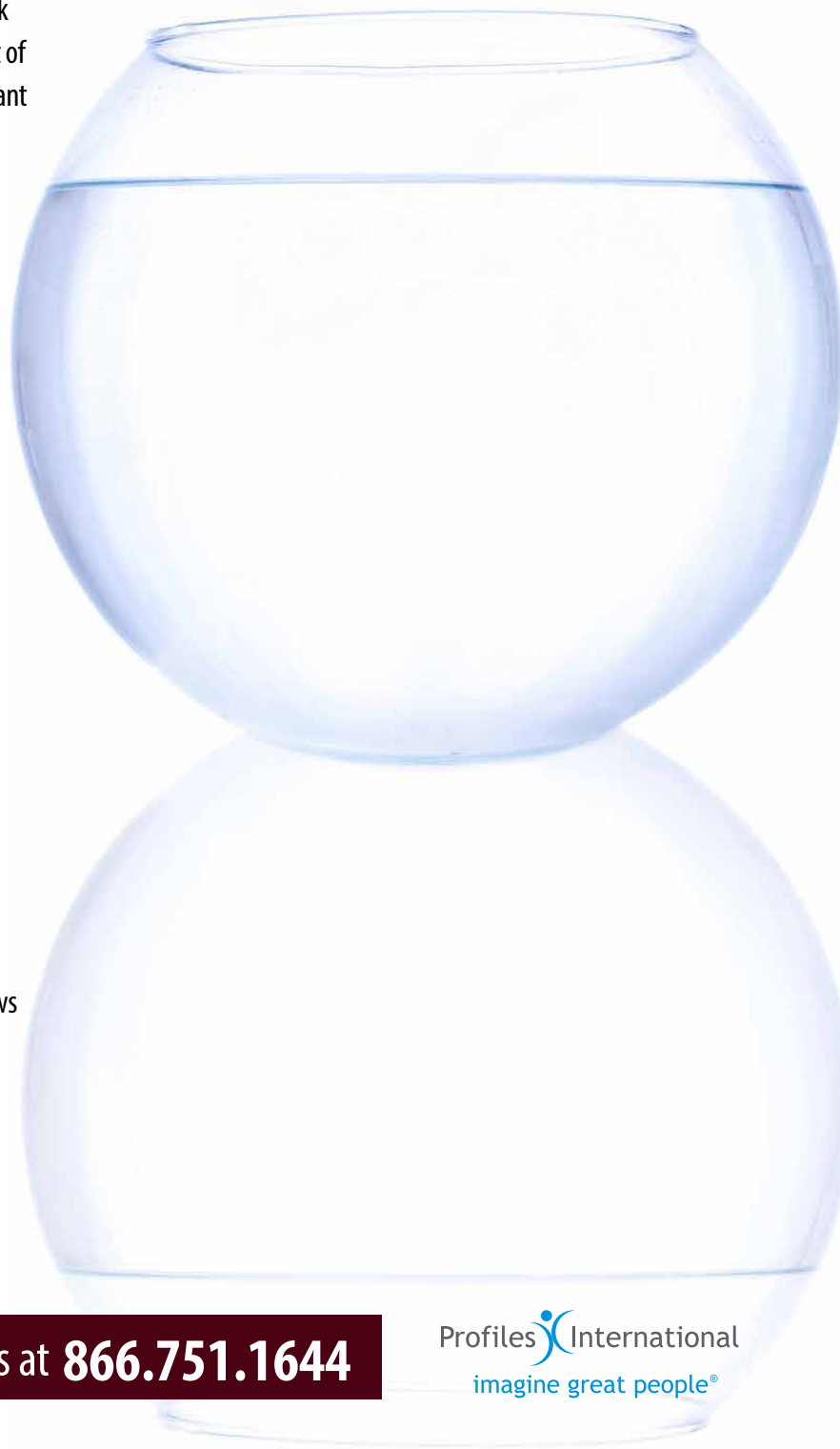
—John Maxwell



Much has been written about the limitations of money and perks to motivate the modern worker (just Google "motivate employees without money" if you don't believe us; Google will return nearly five million results). For better or worse, the global workforce has changed; a paycheck every two weeks isn't enough to get the best effort out of increasingly detached employees anymore. Workers want to feel like they're conquering Wall Street, hoisting the Lombardi trophy, and storming Mt. Doom all at once. In short, they want to feel like their work matters—they desire a vision that will compel them to give their best effort to achieve a seemingly insurmountable goal. That's where vision comes in.

Simply put, vision is a picture of your preferred future. Whether it's making your first million, winning a championship, or destroying the One Ring and freeing Middle Earth, the picture that accompanies that preferred future is the driving force that motivates dreaming, ideating, planning, hard work, and achievement. Effective leaders know how to harness the power of vision to motivate themselves and others when money and perks are tight, or even non-existent.

Leadership guru John Maxwell has said that a leader is someone who "knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way," and that "people buy into the leader before they buy into the vision." Do you have a vision? Do your coworkers and employees know what it is, and do they believe in it—and in your ability to get them there? Everyone likes to ride the rides, but eventually, even the most laid-back people want to get somewhere.



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# 3

## Communication is Key

Gain the Support of Your Team and Provide Clear Direction

### Many companies have made significant cuts to

their workforce, which almost certainly weighs heavily on their remaining employees. To get the job done, organizations tend to rely on a core group of employees whom they trust and believe in. How can you keep these individuals motivated and engaged—and for how long?

According to research by Gallup, organizations with a high level of engagement report 22 percent higher productivity. “Engaged employees are more attentive and vigilant. They look out for the needs of their coworkers and the overall enterprise, because they personally ‘own’ the result of their work and that of the organization,” said Jim Harter, PhD, a chief scientist at Gallup Research. So what does engagement have to do with communication and leadership? A lot!

### Don’t hide from your people

How many managers spend most or all of their time behind closed doors and away from their employees? Think about the amount of distance (literally and figuratively) between you and your employees.

Regardless of a jam-packed schedule, make sure you maintain a culture of dialogue with your people. As we’re sure you know, each person is different, and is motivated in different ways. Rather than employing a one-size-fits-all approach, an effective manager will tailor his or her

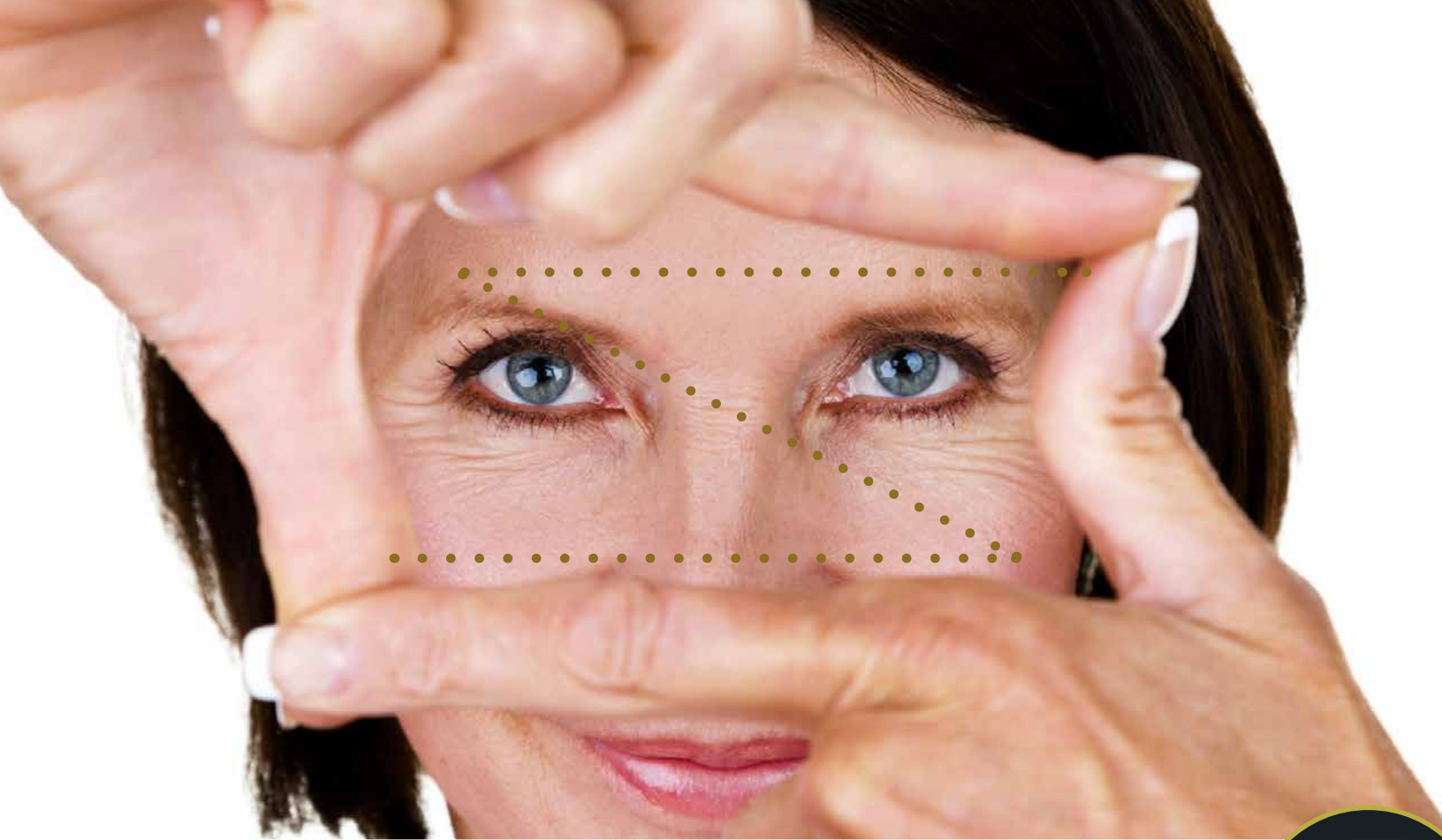
management style

to illicit the best responses from each employee. As a leader, manager, or boss, it is your job to keep the people you’re responsible for engaged and motivated. Recognize that when you’re feeling down and low, chances are your staff is, too. Be careful not to drive a melancholy workforce even lower by mercilessly cracking the whip. Likewise, don’t assume a posture of ignorance by hiding in your office and waiting for the sun to start shining again.

Instead, take that opportunity to talk to your employees. By listening, you’re not only showing them that you care, but you’re also receiving real-time feedback on their concerns and attitudes, which you can then use to either correct problems or find ways to motivate them. The bottom line is that by communicating you’re also engaging your people, which is most important!

If your organization is suffering from disengagement, as was found in the Gallup study, then you have major concerns which should be dealt with by senior leadership and HR. But, don’t wait for that to happen. Realize that each person can influence others positively as well as negatively. Start to change your organization today by connecting with your employees, making a commitment to rise above the negative noise, and doing something positive. This is a trait of an effective leader.





# Help Your Team

# 4

## See the Big Picture

**Take time out to explain to your team how their** assignments and projects fit into the company's larger goals and overall objectives. This will help demonstrate that every task they complete can have an impact on the company's reputation, success, and bottom line. Build a shared vision in your department or organization. This encourages workers to focus on performance and results, and give their work more meaning.

To do this, first look at the why, how, and what. According to the Society of Human Resource Management's HR Magazine:

- **The Why** defines the organization's purpose. Once the "Why" is identified, it is your job as the leader to communicate the purpose, and live by it.

- **The How** is the collection of values that inspire and guide behavior, and acts as the company's guiding principles. Consider what makes your business unique from others doing similar work.
- **The What** is an organization's vision and goals. The "What" provides quantifiable information to measure results.

"When your workplace has a passion for the "why," lives by the "how" and focuses on accomplishing the "what" of your organization, then they see the big picture. They don't need to be micromanaged. Motivated by "why," guided by "how" and targeted to achieve "what," they can evaluate their daily activities to determine what they should be doing and how they should be doing it."

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## 5

# Encourage Feedback

## Actually Have an Open Door Policy

**Want to be an inspiring leader?** Research shows that a key element of becoming an inspiring, charismatic leader is making it a habit of soliciting ideas, opinions, and suggestions from those who work with you.

In the largest study ever undertaken into what makes some leaders particularly inspiring (400,000 employees rated their 40,000 managers on their ability to inspire), we found that formally polling people for their input on a regular basis was one of the most impactful habits a leader can build. Here's how to do it:

Most leaders make the mistake of assuming that they understand what's going on in the minds of their employees. Don't assume. You don't know what your people are thinking! Make it a point to solicit feedback from all of your people on a regular basis, in both one-on-one encounters and in group meetings.

Here are some key points in seeking input from your people:

- **Create a new habit**

Regularly put each of your people in a situation where they have to contribute and they'll come up with input you never expected. When they do so you make them feel bright and valuable—instantly raising your own leadership skills, whilst at the same time getting valuable input that will make everyone's life easier.

- **Involve everyone**

Some people have no problem providing feedback in your everyday meetings and in other public forums—but some will shy away from this. Make it



Now, **STOP** and **THINK**:  
how do you feel when  
**SOMEONE** you **RESPECT**,  
especially someone in  
**AUTHORITY**, looks for your  
input on a key topic?

**Pretty good, huh?**

a point to seek input from those who hold back in group meetings. Most people who hold back do so because of a lack of confidence. Build their confidence by calling on their input every so often in group sessions — “What’s your take on this David?” or “How would you do this, Marie?”

- **Get them one-on-one**

If you still find it difficult to get them to contribute in such forums, then get time with them one-on-one and solicit their ideas. Making another person feel valuable is one of the most charismatic acts of an effective leader, and a critical way of doing so is simply to ask for their input and suggestions. In every conversation, make it a point to ensure that you have taken ideas, opinions, and suggestions from every party to the conversation before you make any decision or determination.

- **Follow through**

If the first time that you receive feedback, you simply nod sagely at the suggestions, and then proceed to do nothing whatsoever to follow up, it will be the last

time you’ll get valuable feedback. The feedback loop may remain open, and effective leaders know to close the loop by taking action. By acting on feedback, you applaud the contributor and encourage more feedback.

- **Feedback**

Even if—having considered someone’s contributions—you must later come back and explain why their feedback did not result in the action they’d have liked, it is vastly preferable than simply ignoring input you do not like.

Now, stop and think: how do you feel when someone you respect, especially someone in authority, looks for your input on a key topic? Pretty good, huh?

Develop a habit of doing this with your team, and watch how you become a much more inspiring leader and how your impact on your people rises dramatically (if you’re looking for practical advice on how to do this, check out “Leadership Charisma”).

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# 6

## Don't Underestimate

### the Power of Recognition

**We get up and go to work every day for a paycheck, right?** Maybe not. Research from Salesforce.com found that it is not always about the money when it comes to careers. Nearly 80 percent of employees said that recognition in their careers is a more important motivator.

But, there is a discrepancy between what employees want for their hard work, and what they receive. Recognition is an easy, effective approach to motivating employees, and effective leaders know this.

There are a number of ways you can recognize your employees' hard work, but these tips should always be kept in mind.

**1. Recognition should be direct and specific.**

The best way to motivate your employees through recognition is to be clear about what action you are praising. General praises such as "you always

work so hard," and "good work this week," are nice, but they do not let employees know which actions to continue. Recognize which specific action was impressive and how it contributed to improving the company's bottom line. Here is an example:

*"Karen, I am so impressed with how you dealt with that upset customer yesterday. You did a great job of calming her down so you could explain why her package was delayed. You were definitely the reason she did not cancel her order. Great job!"*

**2. Recognition should be sincere.**

Do not rush to implement employee recognition programs without considering why employee recognition is important. The purpose of employee recognition is to motivate employees and show them that you appreciate them. It is not a task to simply check off a list. When you attempt to implement widespread employee recognition into



# BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

## with your team members, so you know their personalities, and the BEST WAYS TO PRAISE THEM.

your company in a rush, it can come off as canned and insincere.

### 3. **Recognition should be accompanied by a benefit or reward.**

Tying some type of reward to recognition is a great tactic for motivating your employees to continue their hard work. These rewards do not necessarily have to be cash bonuses or raises. A few ideas are:

- Paid day off after a long project
- Free lunch in the company cafeteria
- A week to work from home

The best way to figure out which non-salary related rewards motivate your employees is to get to know them. What gets them excited? Remember these things when it comes time to recognize and reward their efforts.

### 4. **Recognition should be personalized.**

You cannot motivate every employee with the same approach when it comes to employee recognition. Some employees may love being recognized in public, while others are mortified by the idea. This is where knowing your employees is helpful. Build relationships with your team members so you know their personalities, and the best ways to praise them.

### 5. **Recognition should be everyone's responsibility.**

All of the responsibility for motivating employees

cannot fall on leaders and managers. Employees must take it upon themselves to recognize their co-workers for a job well done too. Praise from both of these groups is necessary. Praise from executives lets employees know how their work contributes to the overall goals of the organization. Coworkers, on the other hand, work closely with employees. Praise from them is important because they can acknowledge the daily sacrifices your employees make. Encourage this behavior when mentoring and coaching your team.

### 6. **Recognition should be simple.**

It is not a show. You don't need to put too much planning or thought into how you recognize someone. The real work comes in keeping your eyes open for people who are working hard and accomplishing great things. After that, a department-wide e-mail or mention during a conference call will do the trick. Remember, recognition should come off as sincere and natural.

Employee recognition is one of the most effective ways to motivate employees. Employees are motivated to work hard for companies that appreciate and acknowledge their contributions. Get to know your employees to find out what rewards and types of praise motivate them. These actions are practiced by great leaders.

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# 7

## Be Decisive

**A quality leader needs to make decisions and stick to them.**

People do not feel comfortable with someone who changes their mind regularly. You only have to look at public opinion and news on corporate executives to see how easily confidence in a leader can be weakened or lost altogether.

The amount of value you add to your organization depends on your ability to make decisions. Employees will gain more respect for you if you confidently and consistently assert your authority in an appropriate way. Hone your expertise, business principles, and communication skills to engage the teams you work with. This will engage your direct reports, and they can easily trust your ability to make decisions in their—and the organizations—best interest. Decisiveness separates a great leader from a procrastinator. So...

- **Exercise sound judgment.** Reserve conclusions about decisions until you have gathered all the necessary facts. Don't act on impulse or emotion.
- **Delegate workload based on employees' expertise, interests, and qualifications.** Don't micromanage employees. This shows that you don't trust employees or fully understand their capabilities.
- **Be accountable for your decisions.** Speak with conviction and see your decisions through.
- **Operate with purpose.** Great leadership decisions need to be value-based and driven with a purpose.

Napoleon wrote, "Take time to deliberate, but when the time for action has arrived, stop thinking and go in."

# 8

## Create an Environment

### of Constant Learning and Development


**Encourage your team to explore new methods of**

reaching their individual goals and those set by the company. Allow them to make and learn from mistakes, and be sure to reward new and innovative ideas. Brian Halligan and Dharmesh Shah, co-founders of HubSpot, have a somewhat radical system in place for motivating and encouraging employees to be innovative: they [may] fire them.

In an article in Inc.com, Halligan regales the story of how in 2008, one of his sales representatives came to him with an idea which, according to Caputa, could "revolutionize HubSpot." It would essentially change HubSpot's entire business model. Halligan didn't like the idea, but he trusted Caputa. He said, "If you want to do it so bad, start doing it nights and weekends and show us your work."

That's what Caputa did, and it was a huge success. So, Halligan fired him. Halligan told his sales rep, "OK, you're fired from your day job. Your nights-and-weekends job is now your new day job. Go get 'em."

Caputa now has his own division within HubSpot which accounts for about 20 percent of its business, and he oversees roughly 30 employees. From that point on, HubSpot implemented a three-step process for innovating new ideas. Encourage the entrepreneurial spirit of your employees. Give your employees the faith and opportunities to pursue their innovative visions. Of course, don't invest a lot of resources into a program that could potentially fail, but do let your high-potential employees know that opportunities are available should they prove their idea to be a success.



*"A mentor is someone who  
allows you to see the hope inside yourself."*  
—Oprah Winfrey

## 9 Provide Professional Guidance

A good manager and leader will also be a mentor. Make yourself available to staff members and show interest in their career development within the company. Don't

overlook the motivational power of positive reinforcement —your staff will appreciate your commitment to their progress.

## Be Patient with Yourself

### Leadership Takes Time

# 10

#### **It may be a little hard for you at first, but remember:**

be a boss not a friend. A great leader doesn't slack on deadlines, or act as the "buddy," an effective leader will challenge employees to grow and exceed their own personal and professional goals.

Developing strong managerial skills takes time—especially as you adjust to your new position. Seek guidance from your colleagues, your boss, or your professional network when you need it. In doing so, you will enhance your leadership abilities and make strides towards becoming a great manager.

To recap, remember to:

1. Always develop yourself as a leader
2. Act how you want employees to behave

3. Communicate and direct clearly
4. Help your team see the big picture
5. Encourage constant feedback
6. Recognize and reward a job well done
7. Be decisive
8. Encourage learning and development
9. Provide guidance
10. Be patient

Try to do something small from the list above every day to develop yourself professionally, then you'll be a big step closer to becoming an effective and powerful leader.

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### **Top Ten Leadership Tips for First-Time Managers.**

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5205 Lake Shore Drive  
Waco, Texas 76710-1732  
866.751.1644  
Website: [www.profilesinternational.com](http://www.profilesinternational.com)



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