

Special Management Series

10 Surprising Leadership Habits Guaranteed To Transform You

This is a series of Training for your
Management TEAM

Presented by J.W. Owens



A Management
Perspective 303 Series

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Let's face it, managing others is difficult. Getting others to satisfy your expectations, perform at the top of their capacity and display desirable behaviors at all times can be a challenge for even the most experienced of managers.

And unfortunately, **few of us are given** the training or mentorship necessary to succeed as leaders.

Few people are born with strong leadership skills – we learn and develop them over time. And as you develop and strengthen your own skills, remember that those farther down in the organization **need to develop those skills as well.**

Here are **10 leadership habits** that are **guaranteed to be helpful for new and experienced managers.** Not only are they worthy of your attention, they are nuggets of advice worthy of those that you manage and mentor.

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1) Never Complain Down

Leaders at every level of an organization will see and experience things that may be frustrating, disappointing or even scary. The strong leader is the one who **keeps these personal concerns** from his or her subordinates.

If you must discuss them, share them with your peers or superiors.

Nothing kills morale, instills fear or creates more fodder for gossip than the complaints of those above us. **This is a particularly important lesson for new managers** who are no longer on the same level as their former peers.

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2) Bring 3 Solutions With Your Problem

People wrongly assume that being a leader means solving all of the organization's problems. In fact, **the strong leader brings subordinates into the problem-solving business.**

The next time someone presents you with a problem or challenge, ask that **he/she provide three solutions** along with it.

Doing so will require that he/she invest time and energy into looking at the problem from a variety of angles thus developing her own analytical and problem solving skills.

That doesn't mean you need to accept all or any of the solutions, but at least he/she's invested time in the process.

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3) Be Mindful Of The Stories You Tell Yourself

The human brain is an amazing organ, working all of the time receiving, interpreting and responding to environmental signals.

Part of its job is to tell us stories about the actions of others – interpreting situations and crafting explanations of those situations – in order to keep us safe.

The problem is, **those stories are usually just that, stories that you've told yourself. And they are often wrong.** Before you become emotionally involved or take action based on a story you've told yourself, remember that they are just stories until you've grounded them in fact.

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4) The Only Person You Can Change Is Yourself

You can't make Beth a better manager or Steve a stronger supervisor or Peggy show up on time for work. **You can only be clear about your expectations and ensure they have the tools necessary to satisfy those expectations.**

Beyond that, **only they can change themselves.** You can direct, guide and provide for others, but **the only person you can truly change is you.**

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5) You Create The Change You Seek

Do you wish your team was more accountable for their actions?

Do you long for a more trusting environment?

Do you feel that communication in your organization is lacking?

If so, the first person that needs to change is you.

- Whether you are working the loading dock or sitting in a boardroom chair, **change begins with you.**
- And expecting it of others without modeling it in your own actions and interactions is a recipe for hypocrisy and distrust.

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6) Feedback First, Final And Frequent

- Giving feedback is hard and takes time, but it is essential to developing top performers.
- According to the Gallup polling organization, “Knowing what is expected of me at work” is one of the top indicators of employee engagement. It is possibly one of the most underrated and most important functions of a manager’s job.
- Start every feedback conversation with positive feedback, end the conversation with positive feedback and **deliver positive feedback as frequently** as possible.
- If your employees know they are satisfying your expectations, they are far more likely to push to continue doing so in the future.

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7) Listen

Most leaders mistakenly believe they win respect by having answers. In fact, most people trust their leaders because they feel their leaders truly listen to their thoughts, ideas, and concerns.

Listening is a **critical management skill** and, for most of us, it is a skill that can be **easily learned and developed**.

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8) Intentions Trump Actions

When we judge the actions of others we can be quick to condemn the action and, with it, the actor.

This quickness to judge is a major **culprit in the breakdown of trust** between individuals and within teams. Despite their negative consequences, few actions are intended to do harm and rarely do people set off on a course to make a mistake or harm others.

As a leader, it is a **powerful thing to seek out the intentions of others and to weigh them** more heavily than their actions.

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9) Never Throw Peers Under The Bus

Whether in an effort to deflect blame or to curry favor, blaming peers for mistakes or mishaps can quickly **sap trust and mutual respect**.

All too often it occurs when dealing with clients or external customers – **by not wanting to be responsible for a problem**, an employee will blame another and then attempt to be the savior by solving the problem at hand. These situations should not be tolerated.

Instead, **create a culture where people take responsibility for problems** that are not necessarily of their own making and are **celebrated for doing so**. It signals to the world that “We are a company that has each other’s backs.”

That’s a powerful marketing tool if there ever was one.

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10) Remember The Golden Rule

Treat others the way you want to be treated. These are words to live by, particularly the more status and power you have in an organization.

And in doing so, you will create a culture within your company where **respect, care and consideration** aren't just words on a website, but are **ways of interacting and relating to each other.**

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As the legendary football coach Vince Lombardi once said, ***“Leaders are made, they are not born. They are made by hard effort, which is the price which all of us must pay to achieve any goal that is worthwhile.”***

This is true for leaders at every level so whether you are developing, or refining your own skills or mentoring others, **remember these 10 leadership tips for transforming your team.**

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Good Selling !



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