

March 2023

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Small Business Newsletter

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Successful Management 101

Managing people is a critical aspect of any organizational structure; a company's success relies heavily on the effectiveness of its people management. So, what constitutes effective management in broad terms? The creation of an environment where individuals can perform at their best, achieve their goals, and contribute to the organization's overall success.

A good starting point is to set clear expectations for each individual in your organization, including defining their role and responsibilities, setting goals and objectives, and establishing performance standards. Setting clear expectations lets individuals know what you expect of them, which helps them to focus and prioritize their efforts. It also allows managers to hold their team members accountable for their performance and take corrective action when necessary.

Good communication is vital for ensuring all parties are on the same page and working towards a common goal. Managers should actively listen to their team members, provide feedback, and encourage open and honest communication. Active listening creates a culture of transparency, trust, and collaboration, which is essential for the success of any organization.

Successful people management requires the development of strong leadership skills. Leaders play a critical role in creating a positive work environment and inspiring their team members to perform at their best. Ensure you are a strong role model. Provide guidance, support your team, and foster a culture of continuous learning

and development. Motivate your team members, provide recognition and rewards for their efforts, and help them develop a sense of purpose and meaning in their work.

In addition to these critical components, successful people management involves managing diversity and inclusivity in your workplace. Create an environment where all your employees feel valued and respected, regardless of their background, ethnicity, gender, or other personal characteristics. Carry this philosophy over to your sub-contractors and suppliers.

Effective managers consider each team member's unique strengths, skills, and experiences and find ways to leverage these to benefit the organization.

Finally, people management involves ongoing performance management and development. Practically, this means regular performance evaluations, feedback, coaching, and professional development and skill-building opportunities. Helping individuals grow and develop in their roles ensures they can continuously contribute to the organization's success.

To summarize, managing people successfully is a complex and multifaceted process requiring various skills and strategies. Follow these five steps, and you will be well on your way:

1. Set clear expectations.
2. Communicate effectively.
3. Develop strong leadership skills.
4. Foster diversity and inclusivity.
5. Provide ongoing support for performance and development.

By focusing on these critical components, you will be able to create a positive work environment, build a high-performing team, and drive the success of your organization.



Is Success the Ultimate Goal?

Success is often considered the ultimate goal, something most people strive for. We work hard, sacrifice time with family and our hobbies, and hopefully achieve success, which is usually defined as wealth, status, power, or recognition. But why, despite these achievements, doesn't success always bring happiness? In fact, in some cases, success can lead to unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

One reason is that people create unrealistic expectations on the journey to success. They fool themselves into believing that their lives will be perfect once they have achieved success and will be happy ever after. The problem is goalposts change along the way. Remember when you bought your first new car or house? You probably thought you'd reached the pinnacle of achievement, but after a year or two, your car felt small, underpowered, and less of the status symbol it had been, and your colleague's houses seemed more prestigious and in better neighborhoods. Success has a habit of drifting farther away just when you think you have it in your grasp.

Success depends on how you personally define it. There is no one-size-fits-all definition of success. Financial success doesn't bring everyone happiness; fulfillment is more important for some people. For others, success is defined by being in a healthy relationship and having a comfortable home life rather than working long hours climbing to the top of the career ladder.

However you define it, success does not guarantee happiness; realizing this can bring disappointment and lead to emptiness, boredom, and a persistent sense that something is missing. Striving for success requires

dedication, hard work, and long hours, and this can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. You may feel like you are on top of your career or have reached what you felt was your ultimate success goal, but at the same time, you feel alone and that no one understands what you are going through or that you have no one with whom to share your success.

Success is a slippery bedfellow; the more you try to maintain your position, the more anxiety and stress you may experience. When success is defined by material things such as money, possessions, or career progression, there is constant pressure to perform and succeed. This can be overwhelming and lead to feelings of burnout and exhaustion. Even when you feel that you have achieved your goals, a lack of motivation can kick in if you don't see the point of striving for more.

Personal fulfillment comes from within. It is related to your values, relationships, and sense of life purpose. When you achieve success but do not have these internal dynamics, you are likely to feel empty and unfulfilled. Focus on what truly brings you joy, not external markers of success; only then will you be able to lead a fulfilling and happy life, which is the true measure of success



Coach's Corner - Beyond Active Listening

I read an article in MIT Sloan Management Review (September 21, 2022) by Nancy Duarte, a communications executive, and specialist, in which she outlined four adaptive listening styles that lie beyond active listening.

Adopting these styles will significantly improve and enhance your communication with others, whether in your business or personal life.

In most situations, there are four reasons why a speaker wishes to be heard and understood. If you adapt your listening style to respond to their needs, you will be more effective and helpful to the speaker. You are aligning your listening style to the specific goal of the speaker, that is, how they want you to deal with what they are speaking about.

In short, the four adaptive listening styles are as follows.

- **Immersive.** This is where a speaker is asking you to listen without judgment or comment. The clue is that they are trying to update or inform you of a situation or project. Ask clarifying questions that help you understand what they are saying, and do not pass judgment.
- **Discerning.** In this situation, a speaker asks for feedback or another point of view regarding a specific project or problem. Sometimes they are simply asking you whether they are on the right path.
- **Advance.** When a speaker is pressed for time and wondering how they will move a project along, they ask for your assistance in helping advance the project. They may be seeking a decision to be made and asking for your help in making that decision. It could also be that they are stuck and require assistance from you or another team member.
- **Supportive.** When a speaker is experiencing either high or low points in their emotions, the listener needs to provide that support by empathically listening and validating their feelings. Celebrating the high points and acknowledging the low points is critical for the speaker to feel they are being heard and understood.

These adaptive listening styles will strengthen your role as a leader in the same way you need to consider an individual's learning and behavioral styles. Each style, whether listening, learning, or behavioral, will affect your interactions and how you communicate with each person more effectively.

When listening to a person, you should ask yourself: how do they want me to respond to what they are saying?

Paul Abra, Motivated Coaching

GREAT Managers...



Connect people to purpose

Create a clear connection and line-of-sight between the work of the individual, the team, and the larger company purpose



Give feedback

Build mutual trust and demonstrate investment in employee growth by giving timely and impactful feedback, and encouraging them to do the same



Support career development

Provide tailored guidance, support, and opportunities to help each individual grow as a professional and person



Communicate effectively

Inform, connect, and engage team members through consistent and open communication

What is your company doing to create great managers?



Building effective organizations where both the business and the people thrive.

“Define success on your own terms, achieve it by your own rules, and build a life you’re proud to live.”

— Anne Sweeney



Small Business Newsletter

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