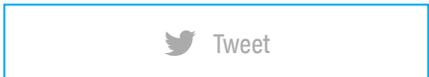




HOW TO BECOME THE TYPE OF MANAGER PEOPLE *ACTUALLY* LIKE WORKING FOR, ACCORDING TO BOSS BABES OF WELLNESS

GOOD ADVICE

by ERIN BUNCH, MARCH 16, 2018



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If you have a pulse and a career history, chances are you've encountered bosses that are good^{1/4} and, *ahem*, not so good. Experience with the latter can add an extra layer of anxiety to that new promotion; after all, no one wants to be the boss getting badmouthed after work at the bar (*er*, barre).

To help you avoid this fate, some seriously successful boss babes weigh in on how to conquer the imposter syndrome most first-time managers experience and become the type of leader that your team (it's *your* team now!) would be excited to work for.

Keep reading for tips on how to successfully transition into a management role.

GET STARTED

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Photo: Studio Firma

1. Avoid micromanaging

Stephanie Horbaczewski, founder and CEO of the Marketing Services Agency and Media Company StyleHaul, first and foremost calls out an all-too-familiar misstep she's watched new managers make: micromanaging. "The most consistent misjudgment I see in managers is not recognizing when to have enough confidence in their teams to work autonomously to produce great results," she says. To remedy this, she suggests allowing individuals to have more ownership and accountability for their own projects. "When team members grow, the company does, too," she says.

Leland Drummond, co-founder of the public relations company AZIONE, admits that she's at times struggled with letting go in this way. "At some point you realize, however, that you can't do everything on your own and still be successful," she says. "It's important to not only have faith in the people that you hire but also to empower them." If you let them spread their wings, she adds, you will almost always be surprised.



Communication, my boss babes say, is also key. “One of the biggest management challenges is [learning how to be] radically candid, or giving feedback that is direct, thoughtful, and ongoing,” says Katerina Schneider, founder of the buzzy supplement company Ritual. “I’m still learning how to do this, but the best mentors and leaders I’ve ever encountered are masters at helping their team constantly evolve and grow through feedback that is honest *and* caring.”

When it comes to opening these dialogues, she further recommends doing so sooner rather than later. “Many new managers wait too long before they give any feedback on performance, which is why it’s important to create a culture of ongoing loops,” she says. “You want your team to feel comfortable calling you out, just as you want to feel comfortable telling someone when they can do better at any time, not just in an annual review.”

To regularly enable this type of open conversation, Create+Cultivate founder Jaclyn Johnson tells me she’s a fan of scheduled check-ins with her employees. “So much gets done in that 30 minutes,” she says.





Photo: Stocksy/GIC

3. Tailor your management style to each person

It's also important to recognize that cookie-cutter techniques may not be the most efficient way of dealing with individuals, says Sakara Life co-founder Danielle DuBoise. "Each person needs to be managed in their own unique way, and you have to adapt your communication styles accordingly," she says. "This way of building a team is very effective because people feel seen and heard as individuals, rather than as worker bees." Getting to know a person's specific strengths and weaknesses will also, she says, help you to assign projects accordingly.

Michele Thomas, co-founder of AZIONE, agrees. "The biggest challenge when it comes to managing others is understanding how to work with each individual personality and work ethic," she says. "You can't assume that everyone will react like you do to a given situation, and it's impossible to predict how people will take your direction—no matter how specific it might be." So, she says, you truly have to tailor your approach and understand your team both as individuals and as a unit. "People will thrive when they feel like they are understood and appreciated," she says.



4. Teach, don't tell

Meanwhile, Meg He, co-founder of Aday, posits that the most effective communication sometimes involves less talking and more doing. “Telling rather than teaching [is a big mistake I see new managers make],” she cautions. “This approach does not enable an employee’s growth.”

5. Allow others to be “smarter” than you

He further recommends positioning yourself as a pupil, regardless of your rank. “Asking questions and getting to the right answer *together* is how both parties advance,” she explains. “It might take much longer [to get things done], but I’m a huge fan of this Socratic management style.”

Whitney Tingle, co-founder of Sakara Life, agrees with this approach. “One of the biggest mistakes I see managers make is thinking they have all the answers instead of asking the right questions,” she says. “True leadership isn’t about having all the answers; it’s about surrounding yourself with amazing and intelligent people and making sure all that effort is aligned with the company’s mission.”





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6. Start slow

Bandier founder Jennifer Bandier, meanwhile, cautions against a management mistake that can rankle a new team right off the bat. “New managers tend to come in and want to create immediate change; however, I believe that you should first learn about the existing processes and listen to your teammates and employees,” she says. “Get to know the new environment first, and then make changes where fit.”

7. Celebrate success

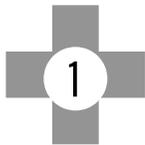
In today’s fast-paced work environments, it can be tough to slow down enough to appreciate progress, Aday co-founder Nina Faulhaber says. She tells me that she loves to be “in the weeds” with her team, from creation to execution of a project or idea, but that sometimes she’ll move on too quickly once a project’s been completed. “This means I often forget to celebrate wins,” she says. “I’m so grateful when our team reminds us of successes and the moments we should cherish together.”



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