



Five Common Management Mistakes

There are many management pitfalls but with a positive attitude, an ability to listen and learn we can all up our game to become managers that our staff respect and follow. Here is just a selection of common management failings:

Failing to Define and Communicate Clear Business Goals

An organisation without clear and measurable goals is rudderless and adrift. It's part of the management role to define and effectively communicate these to all staff so that they're clear about their, and their team's, contribution. Too many business plans are over complicated and wordy. One page plans are perfectly possible for quite complex organisations. Clarity over clutter!

Rash Recruitment Decisions

We've all seen it. A post becomes vacate and there's an immediate rush to fill it. But is it still a necessary post? Is it still a full time post or can it be covered by a part-timer or shared across other existing staff? Should the role content be changed or tweaked? Just a few (of many) important considerations before you rush to fill it.

Possibly worse is recruiting someone with the wrong skills and behaviours for the organisation. This can cause significant disruption and often lead to a rapid exit resulting in the process starting over again. A costly mistake. Similarly, just because someone is technically brilliant doesn't mean they'll make a good supervisor or manager. People management/supervision requires a very different skill and knowledge set.

Failure to Delegate

OK, so you're good at doing lots of things but too many managers try to keep doing them instead of delegating. The old argument of "It's quicker to do it myself. By the time I've shown them....." True, it can take a bit of time first off but, done well, that's time that's recoverable later, leaving you to get on with more important, higher level work. Give clear direction, set parameters and provide appropriate support so that they know what they're doing. There might be some mistakes but persevere and keep an eye on the situation until and you have the confidence to let go.

Not “Walking the Walk”

Managers must act as role models if others are to follow. If it's a case of “Do as I say not do as I do” then there's little chance that staff will respect their manager. Indeed, there's a strong probability that some will mimic their manager's poor behaviours. That's what they see so surely that's acceptable round here! Set clear expectations for all managers' knowledge, skills and behaviours. It's not just about getting the job done – it's about *how* it's achieved too.

Delaying Feedback

If something not's gone well then don't bottle it up. It'll build and build until there's either unhealthy stress or there'll some sort of uncontrollable outburst, often with damaging results. It's important to tackle issues quickly but carefully. Ensure you understand the situation before steaming in. Did you explain it properly? Were there factors outside of the individual's control? Was sufficient training or support available? If a reprimand is required then handle it in private. Don't leave it until appraisal time – deal with it soonest.