

Tidewater Group, Inc

The Making of a Manager

A good manager is a company's most valuable asset. No matter the product's unique features, amount of market share or degree of profitability, without good managers, all will eventually diminish or go away. Good managers should recognize the following.

1. **Acknowledge your staff:** When a staff member does a good job, be sure it is recognized by you and make other staff members aware of the superior performance.
2. **Have a Plan:** Most successful companies have a plan. They stick to it unless convinced by circumstances that a change is required. A plan gives all employees clear direction and knowledge of the company's objectives.
3. **Mistakes are OK:** If mistakes are not tolerated, then the staff and operating people will be afraid to experiment and try new things. As a result the company will not grow. Make sure everyone learns from the mistake, but encourage and reward, good risks.
4. **Know your people:** Remember their names, and their wives and kids. If they are having a personal problem, inquire what can be done to help, be supportive. It will pay large dividends. One sales department I know sends every spouse a Christmas gift as a thank you for their support and understanding when the sales person is traveling or working late.
5. **Be Approachable:** Keep an "open door." Encourage employees to come and discuss sensitive issues either inside the office or outside. Make sure you convey, this will not be held against them.
6. **Admit Your Mistakes:** No one is perfect. When employees hear the owner or manager admitting a mistake (they already know the mistake was made), you will be regarded more highly. It is a recognition that you are human also (see #2).
7. **Do not humiliate an employee:** If you are angry or annoyed with a staff member discuss it privately. The best practice is to wait a day for the anger to subside. Write short notes on the issues to be covered, be discrete and give the employee ample time to present their side.
8. **Listen:** An open approachable manner will encourage employees to discuss issues. You might actually learn something. Good managers multiply themselves by learning from and encouraging employees. "Lead, follow or get out of the way."
9. **Be Clear:** Make sure your request or directives are understood. Communicate clearly and frequently. Make sure everyone understands so that everyone is marching in the same direction.

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4019 Bishop Court
Wilmington, NC 28412

Email: wzimmerman@ec.rr.com

Phone: 910-793-9224
Fax: 910-793-9366