

Connected Leadership

How to invest in your management teams



01

Balancing Inspiration and Operation

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Are employees in your organization satisfied with their leaders' ability to get things done and keep everything running smoothly? Do they also view their managers as strong team leaders, and show confidence in the vision and direction of the company?

It can be too easy for managers to focus on operations and forget to be leaders. The reverse is also true, where inspirational leaders don't spend enough effort on operations, stopping further success and growth in the organization when operations fall apart.

Connecting the skills involved in both leadership and management takes an intentional development effort, but investing in your managers in this way can improve both morale and performance at your organization through a variety of factors.

In this ebook, we'll show you how to identify the skills your managers need, how to identify the people primed for leadership, and what it takes to develop a well-rounded team that keeps your organization moving onward and upward.

**“Management is doing things right;
leadership is doing the right things.”**

- Peter Drucker

02

Identifying Skills

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Several core skills fall into the wheelhouse of both management and leadership. These skills take time to develop and master, but that's OK. *There is always going to be room for improvement.*

Communication

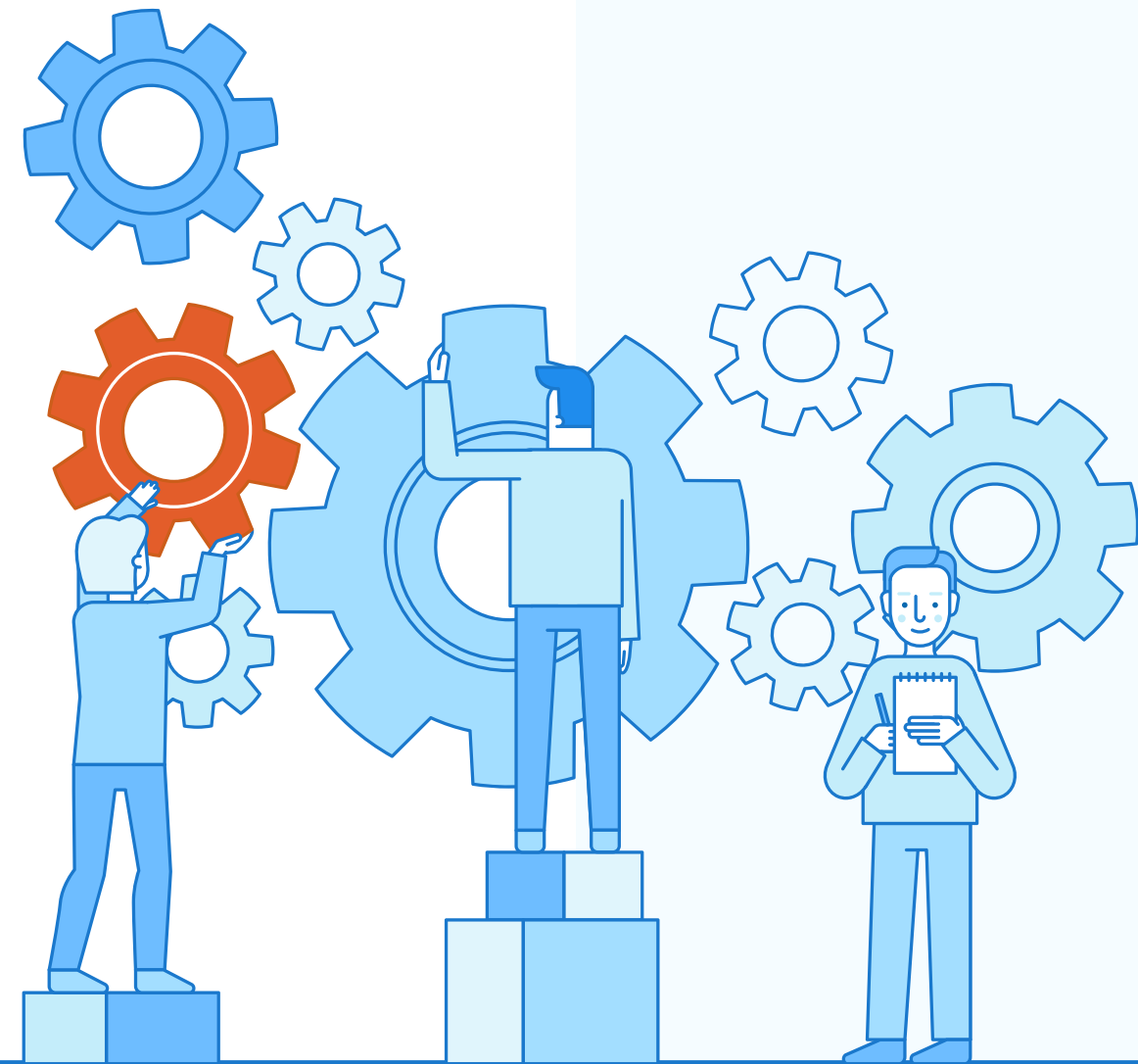
Communication skills include active listening, courageous conversations, good written communications, emotional intelligence, and follow-up.

Communication skills are the first step toward taking leadership and management theories and putting them into practice.

Coaching

There's a difference between knowing how to do something and teaching someone else how to do it. Coaching requires a greater degree of mastery.

Teams find success when their leader understands how to give feedback on both the technical and motivational aspects of their work.



Collaboration and Teamwork

Leading collaboration is different than being an individual contributor. Leaders need to recognize the contribution of each team member and encourage their participation.

Good managers and leaders listen more than they talk, facilitating conversations around ideas and strategy instead of giving commands.

Goal Setting

Goal setting is a fine art—balancing difficulty with achievability is tough, but it's a highly valuable way to motivate the team and individual employees.

Your organization needs both management and leadership skills to build its capacity, maintain smooth operations, and improve its outlook. Connected leadership means keeping the smallest parts and the largest processes cohesive so that growth and success continues.

03

Identifying People

Gallup found that *managers account for 70 percent of the variance in employee engagement*—for better or worse. Employee engagement in your organization can vary from team to team, all depending on the people in the management roles.

Source:

http://www.gallup.com/services/182138/state-american-manager.aspx?utm_source=gbj&utm_medium=copy&utm_campaign=20150421-gbj

Finding the right person for the role of leader is a crucial first step to having a team with high productivity and engagement.

In many cases, the potential managers with the greatest possibility are already on your payroll. Succession planning, or *identifying and preparing people for leadership*, can give both the employee and the organization a huge leg up when the time comes for them to take on those responsibilities.

Here are the basic steps of succession planning for leadership roles:

Identify your organization's current and future needs

Work with senior leadership to define overarching goals, potential pressure points, and perform a cost/benefit analysis of structural changes.

Assess your employees' current skills and potential

Do your potential managers want to be leaders, or do they just want a salary increase? Separating compensation decisions from leadership decisions helps ensure that you promote effective leaders while retaining skilled members of your teams.

Potential leaders need both the tactical skills they use in their current roles and a demonstrated ability to think strategically.

Connect the right employee with the right career path

If you want to keep every employee in your organization engaged with their work, then you need to provide a clear picture of how they can grow in their current position. This includes re-evaluating compensation and responsibilities to recognize the value each person provides to your organization, whether or not they're in a leadership role.

Communicate with employees about available growth opportunities. When your employees understand what it takes to be a leader, they can develop their skills and prepare well before you post the position.

Your best employees want to improve their skills and move forward with their career, both in salary and responsibility. If these opportunities aren't available at your organization, then they will look elsewhere.

When you're open and honest about progress and possibilities, you help your employees feel valued and know that they have a future with your organization, whether their career path leads through management positions or to the heights of their chosen field.

Connected leadership is about an ongoing succession plan that connects well-thought-out strategy with informed employees, leading to growth and progression for everyone involved. If you don't make these connections, your employees will make their own. Handling leadership decisions correctly can make all the difference in your levels of employee engagement.

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04

Empowering Engaging Leaders

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It should be a given that high employee engagement is beneficial to a company, but why is that? Here are just a few reasons:

Engaged employees are twice as likely to help others.

They're two-and-a-half times more likely to stay late.

They're three times more likely to do something good, even if it's not expected of them.

They're five times more likely to recommend a job with their employer to others.

Engaged employees generate better business results across the board, and they stay longer with a company when they're satisfied with the leaders and the development opportunities.

According to Carnegie, 80 percent of people who quit were dissatisfied with their manager. And 70 percent lacked confidence in their senior leadership.

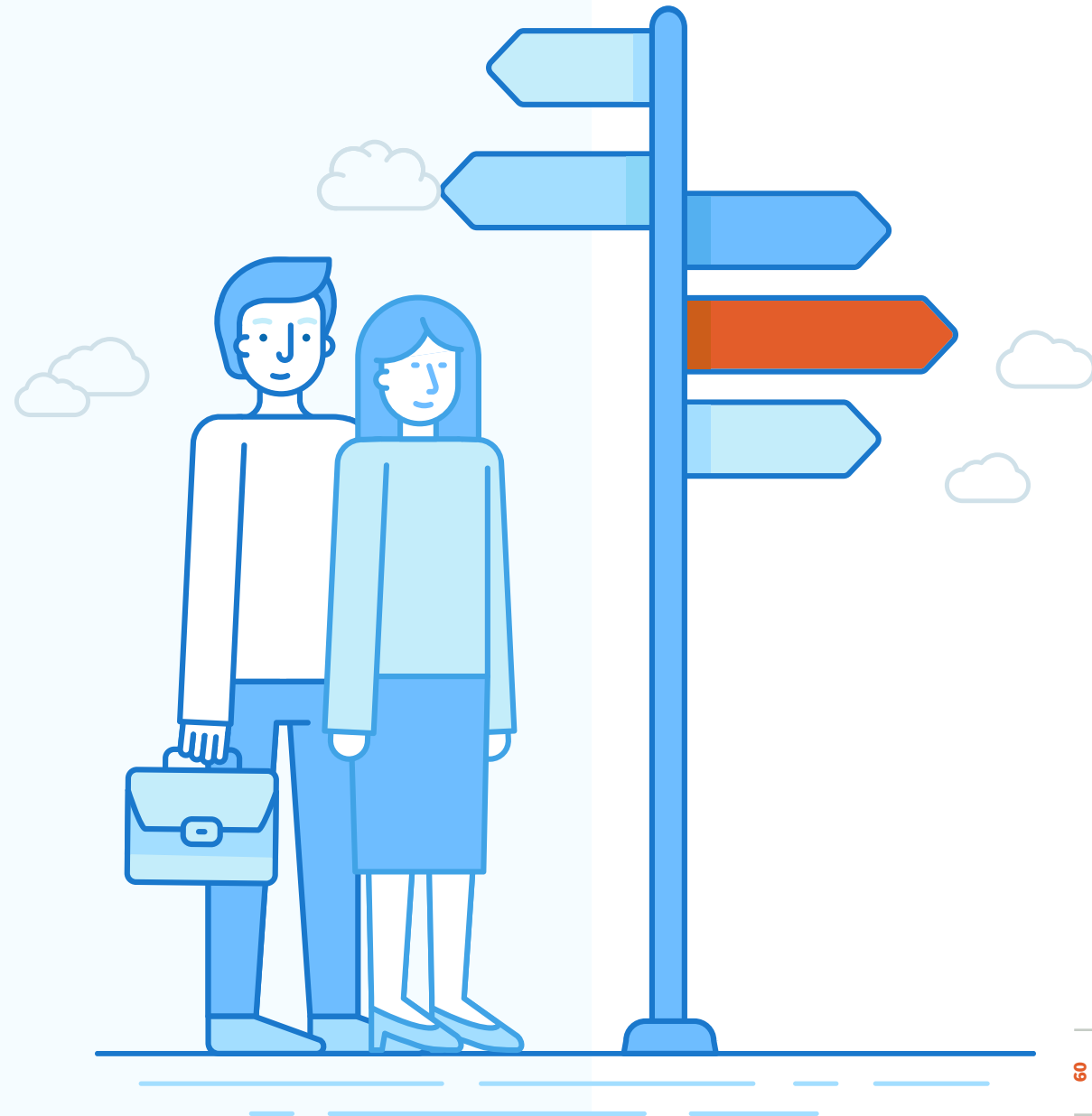
Those numbers are important because they highlight the high correlation between manager effectiveness and employee engagement. It shows the importance of having highly trained leaders who have garnered the respect of their subordinates, and who foster an environment that engages employees and produces loyalty.

So, how do we develop this kind of leader in our organizations?

First, think about the desired outcomes—what characteristics and skills do your managers need to be successful? Assess their current skills, and where there are opportunities for improvement. Once you've identified which skills your manager needs to build upon, choose one to focus on.

You'll want to fill the most important gaps first. Don't overwhelm your new managers by pointing out every area where they need to improve. Identify the skill that will have the greatest impact on their specific role, and start there. This could be teaching a technically advanced employee better delegation skills, or helping an up-and-coming leader develop presentation skills to improve communication.

When you've chosen leadership or management skills to focus on for each individual, then you can set them on a path for improving those skills and seeing greater engagement from their teams.



05

Developing Leaders Through Formal Training

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Providing formal training for your managers helps them improve these important managerial and leadership skills. Training also gives them a framework for processing their previous work experience, letting them develop effective, meaningful insights to inspire their team members in the future.

While there's no substitute for experience, new leaders need more than a trial-by-fire training when learning new skills. Formal training provides a space to get them the feedback they need to improve as a manager and leader.



Think about the skills your individual managers need to develop, and how you can use each of these training methods and opportunities to help them build those competencies.

Technology

Train your managers in the specific technological tools you use in your organization, including communication platforms, project management platforms, reporting tools, etc.

Mentoring/Coaching

Connect managers with an experienced mentor who can give them honest feedback and provide managerial and leadership tips.

One-on-ones

Don't let feedback wait for performance reviews! Set up the process of formal one-on-one meetings between upper management and your managers at fixed intervals. Use the time to make sure that your managers are on the same page, and to provide additional coaching.

Performance Reviews

This is a great time to review your managers' long-term goals. Talk about what's going well and what needs work.

Peer Feedback

It's a great idea for the leadership in your organization to get together and give one another feedback and coaching. Encourage them to share tips and tricks that are necessary at their level, whether it's frontline, mid-level, or senior leadership.

Individual Development Plans

Create a plan for each manager that asks:

What are my objectives?

What activities should I participate in?

What resources will be helpful?

How am I going to measure success?

What am I going to get done?

This style of formal training forms better connections between leaders and their teams, their peers, their own career and personal development, and the company as a whole.

Connected leadership holds your organization together as it grows and changes. It connects every part of your strategy. It makes connections with new talent to drive the organization forward, and it breaks connections when an employee's goals no longer align with the opportunities and benefits you have to offer. As you refine your strategy and use the right tools to help your employees develop, your organization reaps the benefits of an engaged, productive team.



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