

Column: Qualities of Coach Managers

A number of business people turned out recently at a Greenville Chamber of Commerce seminar on coaching initiatives. Their companies are among those that have learned the old way of top-down management is not the most effective way to manage, motivate, and retain the best people.

Here's a blueprint that outlines essential coaching skills for successful managers, developed by Coach U, Inc. It includes ten areas in which managers can excel.

1. **Personal Balance.** Outstanding managers have a satisfying personal life that doesn't get in the way of their work life. They understand the need for balance between work, rest, and recreation and have developed a system for getting those needs met. Managers who pride themselves on being workaholics need not apply.
2. **High Productivity.** Some of the elements of a highly productive manager are the ability to organize, prioritize, and delegate effectively. They're well trained and have the automated equipment necessary to access all information quickly. This type of manager is always ahead on quotas, deadlines, and projects. He or she prefers staying ahead to running on adrenaline.
3. **Self-Management.** Successful managers know that to manage others well, they must model professional behavior. They master time management, dress well, know their limits, and under promise on results. They do it, delegate it, or dump it. They anticipate problems and operate proactively.
4. **Communication.** The best managers know the different communication styles of their team members, learn to adapt, and train their staff to do the same. They are unconditionally constructive and solution-oriented. Their communication style is assertive rather than aggressive or passive; direct, yet not obnoxious. They have compassion for others.
5. **Healthy Boundaries.** Good managers know how to set boundaries and stick to them. Otherwise they can become victims when everyone "wants a piece" of them. They take responsibility, not blame or shame. They don't let others dump on them or be disrespectful. They're honest with their own supervisors about their workload. They finish work and leave on time regularly.
6. **Quality Work.** High personal standards, accuracy, and innovation are the hallmarks of outstanding managers. They are proud of everything they touch and accomplish. They continually improve their work and add value to their products and services.
7. **Take Initiative.** These managers become "intrapreneurs" so their companies can thrive in a competitive marketplace. They're good problem solvers, unafraid to take risks and make mistakes without being foolish. They're also not afraid to ask for help when they need support. They trust their instinct and intuition.
8. **Manage "Up."** Sounds a little scary, but done right can help their supervisor manage them better. These managers keep their bosses informed and briefed on data, options, and recommendations, always maintaining full communication. They relate to their managers as great coaches and see themselves as equals.
9. **Teamwork.** A great manager is a good team player who knows how to help the staff maximize their strengths. They focus on the "who" not just the "what" and see themselves as collaborators, not competitors. Everyone on

the team works hard, gets along well, and respects each other's individual needs.

10. **Career Path.** This requires a clear plan for ways to get ahead. Successful managers are not afraid to get noticed and shine; they're up to speed on developments in their industry and look for ways to improve their company. They know and support their firm's mission, values, and goals.

A coach manager is a model for others who actually can say, "Do as I do, not just as I say." He/she knows it's not effective to treat everyone the same way, that there's no one management style that guarantees success. Good managers adapt coaching techniques with each staff member which include excellent listening skills, the ability to ask questions that get to the heart of problems, and to make their people right.

To receive a ten-step plan for taking your managerial skills to the next level, send for our free report. Send an email with the words "Coach Manager" in the subject line.

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. She coaches individuals and teams on professional and personal development, communication skills, conflict resolution, and hiring winners. She is a professional speaker and former TV news anchor and radio talk show host. Contact her at coachannette@charter.net or call The Estes Group at 864-244-1156.

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