

7 Steps to Train a New Manager

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Topic: HR Risk and Employment Practices

The transition from individual contributor to manager can be one of the toughest times in a person's professional life. Leading others requires skills people might not have developed working independently. But many people can become outstanding managers. New managers' supervisors play a huge role in their success. Here's a seven-step plan to help the new managers at your nonprofit make a great transition into managerial roles.

1. **Share basic expectations with new managers from the start.** Many new managers get thrown into challenging situations right away, with no training or guardrails. Make sure to instruct new managers right away on their legal and policy responsibilities in hiring, references, supervision, and more. Managers should never be confused on what is and isn't allowed.
2. **Help managers identify their leadership strengths and challenges.** Work with them to create a plan to build skills in the leadership areas where they struggle. Help them connect with an experienced manager in your organization or industry association to build specific skills. Encourage new managers to find inspiration and learning from courses offered by third parties; assure them that your nonprofit will cover the cost to register and that participation is permitted during regular work hours.
3. **Work with managers to help them better understand the organization.** New managers might have been heads-down as individual contributors, focused narrowly on the goals and expectations of a team or function. Now, they need to understand and appreciate the organization's biggest threats and opportunities, including internal challenges around talent and morale. Capable managers bring a big picture view to their work as leaders; to inspire and support that view you must expose them to and invite their perspectives on big picture issues and challenges.
4. **Help new managers improve their time management.** Often, individual contributors only need to manage their own time. Managers need to keep track of department, group, and individual team member deadlines as well as their own. Work with new managers to identify their time management strengths and problem areas. Coach them on strategies and tools to organize their time so important tasks, deadlines, and conversations don't slip through the cracks.
5. **Teach managers how to become coaches.** A new manager can no longer rely on their knowledge and skills. They need to learn how each employee works best, their employees' strengths and challenges, and how to help employees succeed without micromanaging. Coaching has replaced controlled as the heart of modern management. Teach new managers to invest time in employee feedback at regular one-on-one meetings—and to request feedback on their management skills and style from their team members, too.
6. **Coach new managers on how to interact when managing former co-workers.** Managers who were promoted internally might now supervise co-workers who competed for their position. New bosses will need to strike a balance between remaining collegial with their former peers and making supervisory decisions. Teach the new manager to approach these difficult situations head-on with frank conversations.
7. **Work with new managers to build their communication skills.** Managers need to be able to communicate when something would be ideal and when it's required. They need to clearly state expectations for tasks and assignments. They need to be straightforward but diplomatic, as at times they will have to deal with unhappy employees, clients, and vendors. When those situations arise, take time afterward to talk with the new manager about what they feel worked and what didn't. Offer strategies for how they can continue to improve their communication.

Additional Resources

- [How to Train New Managers – SCORE](#)
- [3 Challenges New Managers Face and How Training Can Help – Society for Human Resource Management](#)
- [A Guide to Training Managers – Indeed](#)
- [8 Ways HR Can Help Develop Better Managers – Qualtrics](#)