10 Things Every Manager Should Know

~ By Gina Abudi

In working with clients over the years to develop programmes for new supervisors/managers - there are some skills, knowledge and competencies that rise to the top of "must haves" for someone in a management role. These are in no particular order, but all are of equal importance to be successful in a management role:

1. **Finance 101**: Understand the basics of finance; know how to read a balance sheet, understand how to create a budget.

2. **Feedback**: Learn how to give constructive feedback; provide those who report to you with feedback on a regular basis about how they are doing.

3. **Influence**: Effective managers can persuade others to accomplish the organisational goals; just telling someone what to do doesn’t work - even if they report to you. The most successful managers are able to influence others to move in the direction they need them to go.

4. **Interpersonal understanding**: Managers must understand those around them; not just their staff, but their managers and the other department heads/employees. The ability to understand how others think and what’s important to them helps to ensure success in accomplishing your goals.

5. **Motivate**: Learn how to motivate those around you - what's important to your staff? Not everyone is motivated by the same things and a good manager understands their staff and what motivates them to come to work each day and do a good job.

6. **Team leadership**: Team leadership requires ensuring the team - whether your own staff or others - understand the mission, goals and objectives before them. A strong team leader builds effective teams that can accomplish the goals of the organisation and enables the team to move toward a common goal.

7. **Planning**: The ability to effectively plan projects is important for any manager. This requires sharing the vision with others, getting them on board, creating plans to implement the vision, and ensuring timelines are met and budgets are managed.

8. **Problem solving**: Effective managers know how to understand a situation completely - they plan, they don't react. Understanding the root cause of a situation is necessary in order to effective problem solve the issue.

9. **Communication - written and verbal**: Strong communication skills is required of everyone, and especially of managers. The ability to effective and efficiently communicate changes, plans, next steps, the direction of the organisation, etc. is required to ensure that staff understands where they need to head and how to get there. Effective communication builds trust.
10. **Organisational awareness**: It's important to understand how things happen within the organisation and how things get done. What are the informal paths involved in meeting goals. What is the culture of the organisation? How do departments work with each other? This "insider knowledge" about the organisation is key to the effectiveness of the manager and ensures the ability to get things accomplished.

In addition, no matter what your role - there are some core values that are of importance for everyone, including:

- Honesty and integrity
- Focus on the customer
- Respect for others
- Cultural awareness

So much more can be added to this list! What would you add? What’s important for managers to ensure they are successful?

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