

10 Tips That Will Help You Succeed in Your New Leadership Role

As exciting as the thought of being promoted to a new leadership role can be, it can also be a little overwhelming. With increased expectations placed on you from above and below, figuring out where to start can be difficult.

Here's a list of things you can do to make your transition into your new role a lot smoother:

1. Know the difference between a leader and a manager

Management is the act of controlling something, while leadership is the act of inspiring others into action. Your new leadership role will likely involve some managerial duties like being responsible for unit goals, staff members, and projects. These responsibilities can be independent or dependent on one another. It will be up to you to figure out the connections between them and maintain these connections.

Being a leader means you are always leading the charge, investing everything you have into each task. Leading means learning who all your staff members are, figuring out what each person needs to be successful, and providing them with the tools needed for them to grow. A good leader builds a sense of trust with those working for them by leading by example. That in time motivates others on the team to follow suit.

2. Know what you are getting into

More than likely, you were promoted to your new leadership role so a problem could be addressed. Take advantage of every bit of information at your disposal, and study the problem as much as you can. Talk to your team members and get their take on the issue as well. Doing this helps you build trust with those below you since they feel their opinions are valued. It will also give you an opportunity to gather intelligence from those who are right on the front lines.

Compare the information you get from your team members with what you learned from your research to build an appropriate picture of what the problem is. To be a good leader, you need to learn to see things as they really are rather than seeing what you want to see.

3. Go over your objectives

Compare and contrast the information you got from your previous research to the objectives you've been given. This step is almost as important as the assessment stage since the objectives reflect the company's strategy to address the problem at hand. By comparing the two, you will be able to determine if the current objectives are sufficient or insufficient to address the problem. If it turns out to be the latter, you have a golden opportunity to impress your bosses by addressing the areas they overlooked.

4. Find a mentor

There are many who would say this should be the first thing you do if you find yourself in a new leadership role. Find someone who has more experience than you do and works (or has worked) in a higher capacity. Most of all, find someone who is willing to invest their time to impart some of their knowledge on you. Build a relationship with this person, and bring your mentor any questions you can't figure out on your own. Just as importantly, study your mentor's career and learn from the person's

mistakes. That's why it's important to find someone who is actually willing to have lengthy conversations with you. You're going to have lots of questions.

5. Mentor others

Detail your successes and failures, and mentor those below you. This will help you keep track of what works and what doesn't as you grow into your new leadership role. It will also help you develop a service mentality since you would be helping others. The moral of the story? Donate some of your time to others, and you will be helping yourself as much as you are helping them.

6. Fine-tune your time management skills

You need excellent time management skills to be a strong leader. The daily operations of your team depends on your ability to balance project management and other duties. Fight the urge to waste time on things that don't matter, and focus on the tasks that help your team members to succeed.

7. Fine-tune your communication skills

It's impossible to overstate how important communication skills are these days. It's one of the most vital skills you need if you're serious about becoming an effective leader. Be clear about project expectations, status updates, and the individual goals you have lined up for your team members. Learn to listen when team members have suggestions, and make sure you communicate how important all their opinions are to you. Poor communication is arguably the biggest killer of business and personal relationships alike.

8. Don't be an egomaniac

A good leader realizes that his/her success depends on those they serve. This means: going beyond the expectations of your customers, taking the time to know your employees so you can give them the tools they need to succeed, and investing as much time as needed to ensure projects are successful. It's not all about you.

9. Organize team events

A good way to bond with your team members is to organize events outside work. Most people are hesitant to be themselves at work, but those inhibitions tend to go away when they are no longer in a formal setting. However, make sure you do not put yourself in any compromising situations during these events. Remember you are a leader at all times, and your team members are always observing your behaviour.

10. Trust your team

As tempting as it can be at times, resist the urge to micromanage your team. Micromanaging your team members is an indication that you do not trust them to get the job done properly, and that certainly won't go unnoticed. Your job as a leader is to assess your team members and provide them with the right tools so they can do their jobs properly. Once that has been done, step back and let them show what they are capable of. Besides giving your team members an extra boost of confidence by showing them you trust them, taking a step back also allows you to observe who works well within the team and who doesn't. That information is crucial when it's time to figure out who the most productive and unproductive people are.

There you have it, 10 tips that will help you transition smoothly into your new leadership role. Enjoy your new role as a leader and always remember that you wouldn't have been given the job if your managers didn't think you would do an excellent job. This is a good opportunity to take the next giant step in your career. Communicate clearly, be genuine, and always make those you serve are your top priority. Remember, by ensuring those under you are successful, you will also be successful.