

How to become a great manager

by **Matthew Gambrel**

Leadership In Action

Management is more than a title. Management is leadership in action; and a great manager is one who's not afraid to lead from the front. If you've spent any time working in the corporate world, you've no doubt run across many different types of managers, most of whom have different styles of managing.

One of the key elements to becoming a great manager is understanding your role as a manager in your organization. Is your role to increase the bottom line? Is your role to control information and personnel? Is your role to create and maintain a healthy, safe environment for your co-workers? Is your role to develop people by helping them reach their goals?

In most businesses, the answer to all of those questions is a resounding 'yes'. I'd like to focus on the latter, which is developing people by helping them reach their goals. A great manager understands the importance of this activity. This means you have to know what those around you want and need. Understanding these needs is imperative to achieving the best results. It's your job as a manager to help your team set and achieve specific goals. Balancing those goals with the right activities becomes the task of the manager.

If individual or team goals aren't being met, ask yourself this question: Are our goals and activities in balance? Simply put, are we engaged in the proper activities or do we need to change our goals? Don't be afraid to jump in with your team and get your hands dirty. Great managers won't ask their team to give something they themselves aren't willing to give.

In my years as a manager, I've had the pleasure of working with hundreds of people. Last year, I met an extraordinary individual who helped me gain some perspective on becoming a great manager. She shared with me her 8 Simple Rules, which I've listed below. Not only have these rules helped me reach my management goals, they apply to many different areas of our lives.

- 1) Do something - be willing to do things others won't
- 2) Be persistent - keep doing something until you achieve the desired results
- 3) Don't take it personal - we all have choices to make
- 4) Do something different - if you aren't happy with your results
- 5) Don't be so hard on yourself - be proactive...not reactive
- 6) Learn from your experience - grow as a leader with every new task
- 7) Look for and create opportunities - give yourself a chance to become great
- 8) Fail forward fast - if you're going to fail, do it now...so tomorrow you can start fresh and become the leader you know you can be

In summary, the greatest managers are those who care about people and are willing to take action, lead from the front and help others reach their goals.