

# From me to we: Becoming a Manager

## Introduction

The transition from front-line worker, technical specialist or sales person to manager can be a tough one. Particularly if you have achieved a high level of personal performance in a field that does not require a team approach.

In many cases, the things that have helped you to achieve great individual performance do not help you become a good manager or leader. Technical skills can get you to the top of your game as an individual, though these skills are only part of the leadership and management tool kit.

There is a common saying that technical people are often "promoted to their level of incompetence". This is usually a result of moving from a technical position into management, which requires a different skill set. It is important that your organisation understands the challenges of this transition, and identifies the training, coaching or mentoring that may be required. Individuals must also admit that they may need help developing the skills to make the transition. If support is not given, you can lose them from the organisation, or destroy their confidence.

One of the big struggles for a high performing individual moving in to management is that they have to achieve results through others. It is no longer what the individual can produce, but what the team can produce. It is a shift from Me to We, which requires a completely different mind-set, and often leads to a feeling of lack of control, and can result in micro-management, or the individual trying to do everything themselves.

The most successful organisations understand that capable middle management is essential in achieving business goals, and this is why the largest companies invest substantial amounts of time and millions of dollars delivering leadership development programs to prepare new managers.

## What are some of the key skills and attributes required for someone moving in to management?

### Essential skills to become a manager

1. Ability to communicate and motivate
2. Coaching
3. Delegation / ability to explain, train and trust
4. Conflict resolution, negotiation and managing expectations
5. Mediating between senior management and staff
6. Providing feedback / performance reviews

### Personal attributes / emotional intelligence

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-regulation
3. Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Social skills

These skills cannot be taught in a day, and management development is an ongoing process.

To help with the successful transition from individual worker to manager, both the individual and the organisation must understand that an additional set of skills may be required, and both must be committed to the individual's development. Without this commitment, it may just be another case of losing an excellent worker, and gaining a terrible manager.

*“A job isn’t just a job, it consumes more than a third of your day – make sure you enjoy what you do and challenge yourself to be creative and do things differently!” Contact [hrinc@hrinc.asia](mailto:hrinc@hrinc.asia) for more information*