

Stepping into management is a game-changer

This powerful transition involves achieving your goals through others

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AS AN INDIVIDUAL contractor you are excellent. Your skills are professional in nature, and your scope of accountability is limited to your technical performance.

So you perform. And before you know it, you are promoted to a first-time manager. Suddenly the rules of the game change, and the attitudes, behaviours and skills that made you successful as a technical specialist are not necessarily the default passport to management success.

The transition can be painful. If you are in or moving into a first-time management role, consider: do you have the leadership mindsets, skills and behaviours that will enable you to step up to the plate in an impactful and credible way?



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While management development for new and potential leaders is acknowledged as a critical organisational priority, organisations often fail in designing and delivering the developmental strategies to ensure the success of first-time managers.

We at The Consultant Power-

house share the following tips and strategies from our From Technical Specialist to Manager learning intervention, a practical process that assists supervisors and team leaders to make an effective transition to their first management position. Strategies to make a positive and powerful transition:

Conduct a gap analysis – with an understanding of what constitutes effective management in your organisation, coupled with what made you a high performing technical specialist – identify your transition and leadership goals.

Be sure to identify what aspects of your thinking and practice will no longer serve you in a management role, and be honest with how willing and/or reluctant you are to change.

As a manager, one of your key responsibilities will be managing the relationship your team has with the organisation.

This places fundamental expectations on how you act as a role model. This implies a proactive attitude and the intentionality that

all your actions and messages communicate your standards and professionalism.

Now that you have to achieve goals through others, your understanding of others and your ability to connect and engage becomes critical.

In fact, current research shows that one of the failures of new managers is the inability to build relationships.

This means being skilled at working with people individually as well as within groups.

Relationship management skills and emotional intelligence will be vital tools to assist you to connect and communicate with leadership presence.

As a manager you will also need to manage relationships with multiple stakeholders.

While teams and partners are obvious priority groups, managing your boss will also be a key success factor.

This comes down to getting a clear sense of priority from your boss, making your boss feel secure

with regard to the work delegated, and being immediate in both giving and asking for feedback.

Now that you are no longer working alone, and no longer solely responsible for tasks that you were confidently proficient in, delegating as a strategy is going to be key.

While you will more than likely be able to do the job better than most, you need to work against this natural temptation and default position.

As an individual specialist, it is your own talent that makes you successful, and your own growth becomes your sole priority.

As a manager, your responsibility lies in a firm commitment to developing others, key to which is creating growth opportunities for them and providing constructive feedback.

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