



The Secret to Success - Part II



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In my prior article, I explained that happiness is the main ingredient to success and whilst that holds true, I wanted to focus on the necessary requirements to be successful as a manager. Having worked in the corporate world for more than two decades, I have had the opportunity to work with good and bad managers. I have also had the privilege of managing people and hope that I did the right thing.

One of the biggest mistakes I have seen companies make, is promote someone to manage a team because they were good at their job. In my opinion, being good at your job doesn't translate into being a good manager. Furthermore, most companies don't give any training to these new managers, making the transition not only difficult but the likelihood of failure greater.

Looking back, I know that when I became a manager, I fell into some of the regular pitfalls: I measured people against myself, created unrealistic expectations and underestimated how much people listen to your words more as a manager than when you are just a peer or colleague.

My children remain my inspiration and my best teachers. I have three very diverse children with different passions and different abilities. Through them, I learnt that you need to treat everyone differently and measure them against their abilities; not mine and not of others. Support them, nurture their passions and don't throw them to the lions.

In my opinion, a successful manager recognises the ability of each of their team members and measures them against it. A good manager should manage each member of their team based on their needs and not use a broad brush stroke. Help those that require assistance and use less oversight with the stronger performers.

When someone makes a mistake, remember the buck stops with you, take the blame in front of your client, regardless if whether it is internal and external. Never berate them in public, sit down with them, discuss the error and how to remedy it, so it doesn't happen again.

As a manager you aren't always right and feedback should be encouraged, but not dissent. Always be respectful and treat your team as equals, not subordinates. Elevate your team and give them credit for the successes. Let them ride on your coat tails.

I think some people have an innate management skill, some have the ability to attain it and others should never be made managers. Companies need to do a better job and finding out which category a person fits in, before promoting them. Training should be given, but most importantly, if they become a bad manager and you see that team turnover is high, recognise the error and fix the problem immediately.

I always keep in my mind the adage "People don't leave good companies, they leave poor management" and it I believe this holds true.

Samy Dwek is founder and CEO of White Knight Consulting LLC, a Delray Beach firm that provides professional guidance and outsourced chief financial officer, chief operating officer services to high-net-worth individuals and families.