

COACHING TIP

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GETTING PEOPLE TO FOLLOW YOUR LEAD

Members of your team will not necessarily follow your lead just because you've been given the title manager or supervisor. Unless you earn their respect, you might get insincere agreement, passive resistance, or a minimum effort. With their respect, you can have motivated team members who go the extra mile, initiate work, follow through, and contribute creative ideas for improvement.

Listed below are actions you can take to earn the respect of your team members, co-workers, and bosses:

- **Be Credible** – say what you will do and do what you say.
- **Be Trustworthy** – tell the truth, even if it is painful (to you).
- **Be Respectful** – treat others the way you would like to be treated; or, better yet, treat others the way they want to be treated.
- **Be Consistent** – most people have a strong fear of the unknown. When team members aren't sure how you will respond in a given situation, it causes a degree of fear and they do not do their best work in an aura of fear. Conversely, when you are consistent and team members can predict your reaction, they will feel safe and be more likely to perform at an optimum level.
- **Be Supportive** – you are a resource for your team members. Your job is to help them perform at a high level and being productive so they will be successful for the organization. Being supportive by providing resources and removing obstacles is a big part of your responsibility.
- **Be Appreciative** – your team members trade their performance for your appreciation, approval, and applause. It doesn't take much time or effort to say "thank you" or to comment on someone's work. This attentiveness will pay big dividends in team member loyalty, motivation, and performance.
- **Be Humble** – encourage team members to feel that you can identify with them by using some form of self-disclosure. For example, "I felt the same way when that happened to me;" or "A similar thing happened to me;" or "I ran into a similar problem on one of my projects."

Managers tend to overestimate the control they have by position authority and underestimate the influence they have by treating people with dignity and respect, being supportive, showing appreciation, and by being credible, trustworthy, consistent, and humble.

Rate yourself in the areas listed above and set goals to improve in those areas that you wish you could have rated higher. Then, enjoy the benefits of having people follow your lead because they want to, not because they think they have to.