



Managers: Be a Leader

Being a Manager isn't easy, it's challenging, sometimes frustrating, yet, it has its rewards. Not necessarily monetary rewards, but rewards like fulfillment, respect and pride. How does one attain these rewards? Through hard work, patience, communication and being a leader that others can look up to. There used to be a saying "you are not a good manager until you see your name on the bathroom wall". Back in the day, being a manager or supervisor sometimes meant being a dictator, but today that kind of approach will not gain the respect a good leader requires to be effective. I am not saying that there are not times when the hardline approach is needed, but those times should be that rare exception and not the norm.

The best approach to demonstrate leadership is to set an example. Most plants and production environments have a problem with housekeeping. An approach I once started with my supervisors and fellow managers, was to bring back at least one piece of refuse when they go into the production areas. Soon, everyone was picking up, thus the space became cleaner and a safer place to work. The additional benefit gained was, a new found respect for the supervisors and managers. The idea is not to use the approach "do as I say, not as I do". In other words, you need to lead by doing whenever possible. Attending some of the same training for example will show that you are interested in what they learn. Appearances also leads to gaining respect. Make frequent rounds of the facility, coaching and mentoring whenever possible. Whenever, touring the facility; maintain a good appearance with proper clean clothing, pay attention to hygiene, and use only appropriate language. It's alright to use some of the local slang terms, but foul language never gained respect for anyone, contrary to what you may believe.

Assist whenever you can (unless prohibited by contracts or agreements) and only if you know how. Never give direction to anyone, unless you know it is right. Try and lead others into making the right decision, instead of making it for them, but by no means, let them proceed in the wrong direction. Have patience when doing this, as sometimes others need to think a little longer to make the right decision. This approach will go a long way to gaining that respect you are looking for. Show gratitude in the open whenever appropriate and reserve those occasional correcting sessions for a private setting.

Hold town hall meetings with the masses, field questions and always come up with answers, even if they are provided later. Obtain certifications such as Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional (CMRP), and then encourage others to do the same. Learn how to use technology such as the tools for Predictive Maintenance (PdM), and encourage others to believe in the results. Remember, you are only as good as those that are doing the work. There are no poor technicians, only poor leaders. If you do your best, others will follow.



In short, use mutual respect and good leadership, and you will see a difference in the attitude of your direct reports, gain the respect you deserve and have an organization you can be proud of.

Provided By:

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