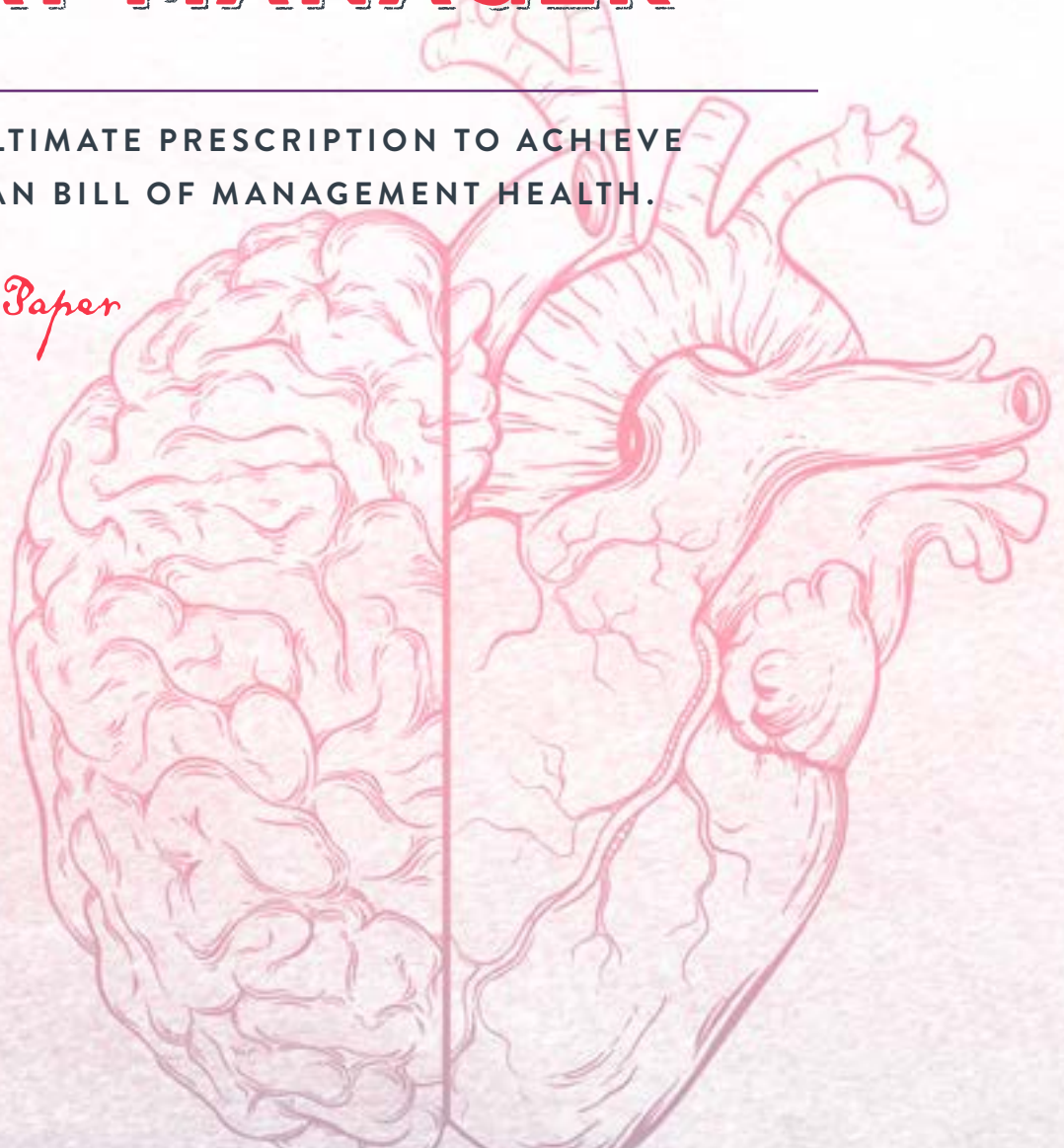




THE ANATOMY OF A MODERN- DAY MANAGER

THE ULTIMATE PRESCRIPTION TO ACHIEVE
A CLEAN BILL OF MANAGEMENT HEALTH.

White Paper



Viventium Software, Inc. | 1.800.729.7687

VIVENTIUM



IN COLLABORATION WITH APTITUDE RESEARCH PARTNERS

THE ANATOMY OF A MODERN-DAY MANAGER

WE TEND TO THINK OF MANAGERS IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER PEOPLE.

A good manager has good people, and we measure a manager both by the output of their team, and by their ability to grow and retain their team. But so very often a manager has no control over the circumstances that drive employees to leave. People tend to say that employees don't leave companies, they leave managers. And they do leave managers, but not necessarily because of them. People get offered their dream jobs or significant pay increases, or they get tired of their commute. The modern-day manager needs to be adaptable and resilient to get the most out of whatever team is in front of them every day.

“PEOPLE TEND TO SAY THAT EMPLOYEES DON'T LEAVE COMPANIES, THEY LEAVE MANAGERS. AND THEY DO LEAVE MANAGERS, BUT NOT NECESSARILY BECAUSE OF THEM.”

Being a great manager requires you to look at yourself and your organization and to ensure that your own internal systems are prepared to get you through the challenges that lay ahead. Just as your body must sense and respond to the challenges you face in the world every day, managers need to maintain foundational systems as well. This report will look at five key body systems as a metaphor for the skills and behaviors that you, as a modern-day manager, require.

- **MUSCULOSKELETAL** – the foundational system and framework on which all other systems are built. In the body, this comprises the bones and tendons that form the core shape of a human. In a manager, this is the motivation and energy that you bring as a foundation for all of your interactions.
- **CIRCULATORY** – the system of pathways that keep nutrients, oxygen, water, and other essential elements moving through the body. In the body, the blood keeps all of these pieces moving, but for a manager, the ability to communicate and set expectations is the lifeblood of your success.
- **IMMUNE** – the system that protects your body from foreign substances, cells, and tissues. This is a system that works constantly and automatically to keep your body safe and free from infection. For a manager to stay safe and avoid toxic teams, you need to balance understanding and execution of company policy and regulatory compliance with your intuition as to where problems may be lurking.
- **NERVOUS** – the system that senses and responds to stimuli of all types. Managers are faced with different personality types, communication styles, and the tensions that arise from human beings sharing space and responsibilities. Developing a strong sense of emotional intelligence (EQ) and resilience allows managers to respond in a caring way, while also not letting these interactions consume them.
- **RESPIRATORY** – the system that brings essential oxygen that powers our ability to think, move, and grow, the most basic activities of life. For managers, the ability to be self-aware, and to use that self-awareness to build trust, is the oxygen that keeps teams strong.

And not everyone can or will enjoy meeting the trials of management. But for any leader feeling challenged, the goal of this white paper is to offer some insights to help diagnose where you may have issues, as well as to provide exercises and resources to help you build your capabilities in each area.

THE WORLD IN WHICH A MODERN-DAY MANAGER OPERATES

THERE ARE SO MANY DECISIONS TO MAKE, but a limited amount of time in which to make them – and in particular, a limited amount of time to make these decisions before something else changes. What do we choose to focus on? For many companies, focus is shifting to employee engagement and career-pathing as important initiatives that will help to retain their best talent. With that shift, a debate emerges: to manage, or not to manage?

This question can only be answered in context. The business world continues to change at a rapid pace. Gone are the days of a single, widely-practiced hierarchy in business, in which employee reports to manager, who reports to vice president, all the way up the food chain. Our expectations of organizational charts have evolved, as have our expectations of other people. Author Peter Sheahan outlines the compression of time and space in our workplace in his book *Flip*. We compress time by expecting everything to happen faster than it has in the past. Whether it's an overnight delivery of an Amazon package or an almost immediate response time to an email or text message, human beings are becoming increasingly more impatient with the rise of technology. This same technology compresses space by making geography a non-issue – in other words, by rendering us perpetually available thanks to our smartphone notifications (Sheahan, 2007).

The development of this virtual world has changed the game not just for business operations in general, but specifically for managers. We all know the heavy burden that is on managers today. As a manager, you need to manage expectations up and down the organization, motivate individuals, provide coaching and feedback, counsel employees in times of crisis, act as the front line of policy enforcement, and maintain the health of the organization.

The desire to become a manager in today's workforce is no longer only about company advancement and greater pay – especially considering that individual contributors can often achieve greater pay with less responsibility, depending on their role within the company. Being a manager today means that you enjoy the responsibility of coaching, mentoring, counseling, and training others. It is about the realization that you find satisfaction and fulfillment in leading others to greatness.

So, what does it take to be a successful manager in 2018? It's an interaction of many factors that work together to make the manager successful. In fact, the evolution of the manager has in many ways mirrored the way the human race has evolved for survival. Without the five major systems the human body has developed to keep us safe, strong, and able to respond to the daily challenges of our environment, we would not be able to survive the regular challenges of human life. Likewise, as a manager today, you need a similar set of systems to keep your sanity safe, your energy strong, and your resilience focused to respond to the challenges that we face every day.

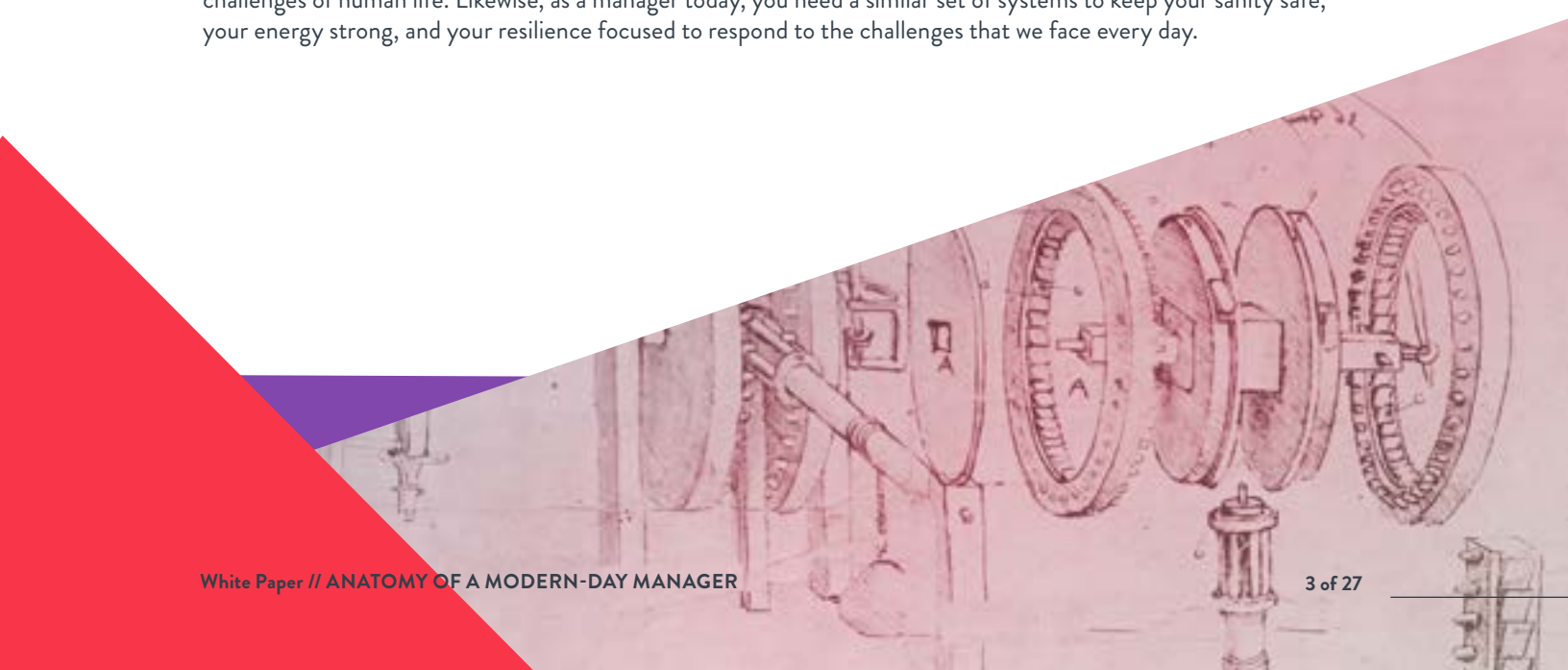


TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM – MOTIVATION & ENERGY // 5

- DESCRIPTION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS // 6
- THE BUSINESS IMPACT // 7
- DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT // 8
- THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM AT WORK // 8
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES // 8

THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM – COMMUNICATION & EXPECTATIONS // 9

- DESCRIPTION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS // 10
- THE BUSINESS IMPACT // 11
- DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT // 12
- THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM AT WORK // 12
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES // 12

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM – SAFETY & INTUITION // 13

- DESCRIPTION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS // 14
- THE BUSINESS IMPACT // 15
- DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT // 16
- THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AT WORK // 16
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES // 16

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM – EQ & RESILIENCE // 17

- DESCRIPTION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS // 18
- THE BUSINESS IMPACT // 19
- DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT // 20
- THE NERVOUS SYSTEM AT WORK // 20
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES // 20

THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM – TRUST & SELF-AWARENESS // 21

- DESCRIPTION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS // 22
- THE BUSINESS IMPACT // 23
- DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT // 24
- THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM AT WORK // 24
- ADDITIONAL RESOURCES // 24

CONCLUSION – MIND, BODY, & SOUL // 25

The Aptitude Research Partners data used in this report comes from two major surveys:

The HR Impact Survey – 2018 // Conducted between December 2017 and February 2018, this research surveyed over 500 organizations primarily headquartered in North America on key HR trends and technologies. Respondents represented a large cross-section of industries, with healthcare, state and local government, retail, nonprofit, hospitality, and manufacturing the most frequently cited. 67% were SMB organizations (fewer than 2500 employees) and the rest were Enterprise.

Hire, Engage, Retain – 2018 // Conducted between February and March 2018, this research surveyed over 340 organizations primarily headquartered in North America on strategies and technologies to help them find, grow, and keep great talent. Respondents represented a large cross-section of industries, with healthcare, retail, public-sector, manufacturing, and hospitality the most frequently cited. 64% were SMB organizations (fewer than 2500 employees) and the rest were Enterprise.



Motivation & Energy

MUSCULO SKELETAL:

THE INTERNAL FRAMEWORK UPON WHICH ALL
OTHER SYSTEMS ARE BUILT.

DEFINITION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

The musculoskeletal system is the base of the human body; comprised of bones, muscles, cartilage, tendons, ligaments, and joints, this system is the core framework that provides support and stability, allowing the body to move and function (Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2016). Maintaining its function is essential for life. It also serves as a protective barrier for the body's organs.

For the modern-day manager, this is the motivation and energy that you bring every day as a foundation for all of your interactions. Being a manager requires the ability to practice self-care in order to maintain and restore your different types of energy, from physical to mental to emotional. Failure to manage your motivation and energy can have a serious impact on business results. ***Without a strong frame, the other systems will not be sufficient to sustain you.***

Common symptoms of failures in your foundational core include:

- **SUNDAY NIGHT DREAD.** If you get that slow churning in your stomach that starts about 3 o'clock on Sunday afternoon at the thought of heading back into the office on Monday morning, your work may be draining your energy instead of invigorating it.
- **NOT SWEATING THE DETAILS.** If you find yourself turning in work that is "good enough" more often than not, you may have lost your underlying motivation to excel.
- **APATHY.** If you're finding it difficult to even muster up the energy to be upset about things you normally would be, you may be completely draining your energy.
- **LOOKING AT GREENER GRASS.** If you find yourself thinking about responding to a recruiter or exploring other job options, you may not have the right balance of energy and motivation in your current role.
- **TUNNEL VISION.** If you can only see what you need to get done and you're not paying attention to the other projects and people around you, you may be lacking the energy to make decisions for the good of the organization as a whole.
- **YADDA YADDA YADDA.** If you have no interest in asking about the people around you and don't share anything yourself, your lack of energy may be disconnecting you from others.
- **EMPTY GAS TANK.** If everything, from small to large tasks, just feels like a total drain, like you are running on empty before you even begin, you may not be taking the right steps to recharge your energy.

“WITHOUT A STRONG FRAME, THE OTHER SYSTEMS WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT TO SUSTAIN YOU.”

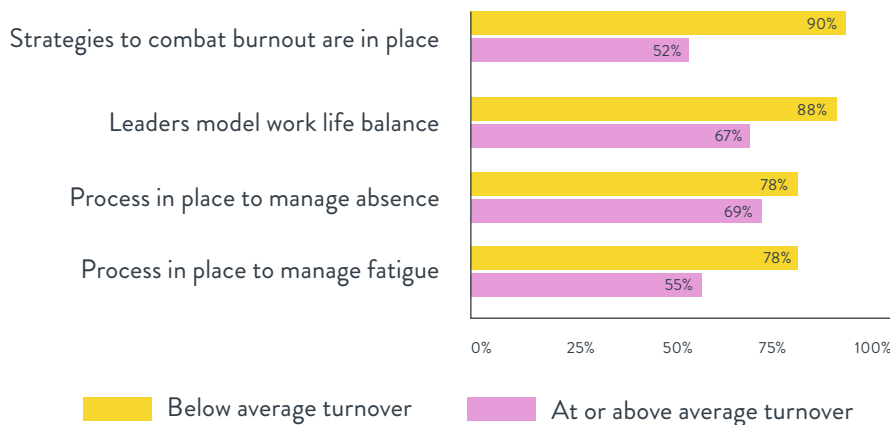
THE BUSINESS IMPACT

People who are exhausted, overwhelmed, and no longer able to focus on the things they are good at and enjoy about their work create a difficult situation for themselves and for their team. ***In Aptitude's recent HR Impact Survey (2018b), respondents said that just over half (53%) of their employees are currently affected by fatigue or burnout.*** And burnout can be contagious. ***Organizations that have above-average rates of burnout are 66% more likely to lose top performers than their competitors.*** Burnout is not just about one person's activity; it's about the ripple effect created throughout the entire organization, for employees and for customers.

Managers as Models

When managers put focused attention on modeling the right behaviors and communicating around critical issues, it has an impact on both the individual employee and the business overall, helping to retain critical talent.

The Impact of Managing Energy on Turnover



Source: Aptitude Research Partners. HR Impact Survey, 2018. N-508

Like engagement, disengagement – and the conditions that influence it – is personal. As a manager, you need to pay attention to your own energy and how it may be impacting those around you. You need to be on the lookout for signs of fatigue and actively work with strategies to mitigate burnout. And you need to model the strategies and practices. It's not enough to say "use your vacation" or "raise your hand if you need help." Yesterday's managers may not have been expected to share how they personally manage energy, but today many employees, especially millennials, are looking for role models not only in skills necessary for job success, but also for managing a busy life schedule. Watch out in particular for your high performers. They tend to be driven and may be more prone to burnout, so they may be looking closely for evidence that taking time off or looking for balance is really permissible. Managers must therefore model this behavior by sharing how they manage their own energy, and by helping individuals clear the work-related hurdles that are preventing them from taking care of themselves.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

The following three questions will help you understand what may be behind your lack of energy and motivation, and offer tips on how to reset your foundation for success.

- **WHAT IS MY ENERGY LEVEL?** What kind of experiences and interaction give me energy, and which ones take it from me?
 - » This is more than a question of introversion and extroversion, although an understanding of your tendencies for each can be helpful. It's about understanding how you can manage your energy in stressful situations. You need an understanding of what restores you, so you can plan for those activities after interactions that deplete you.
- **IS MY WORK ALIGNED WITH MY VALUES?** Has something changed either in me or in my job that no longer makes it as meaningful as it used to be? Do I feel like I'm connected to a whole?
 - » Motivations matter and sometimes it's important to take stock of whether or not you are living your values. Sometimes things may have subtly shifted over time to the point where you are working in ways you don't recognize. Taking a moment to realign and recalibrate can bring back your motivation.
- **AM I TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ENERGY?** Am I leading by example when it comes to managing my physical, emotional, and mental energy?
 - » It's important to be checking in with your team on their energy levels and motivation, but it becomes more meaningful when they see you taking the steps required to manage it as well. Are you truly taking responsibility for your own energy? Are you showing a genuine interest in your team and helping them build a solid foundation as well?

THE MUSCULOSKELETAL SYSTEM AT WORK

What motivates you when work gets difficult? For Olympic athletes, the answer is often their coaches. Such is the case for Olympic swimmer Michael Phelps, whose coach Bob Bowman shaped his career through his motivation and relentless energy. Bowman used – and continues to use – a ten-step process called the Method to train his athletes. Obviously, part of the Method focuses specifically on the development of swimming skills, and Bowman knows what he is doing when it comes to the technical aspects of coaching. But more important to the development of his Olympic athletes is his ability to push them just a little bit more every day – to challenge them, to get them to continuously set the bar higher for themselves, and to achieve excellence every day. Bowman's exercises, like swimming freestyle for a hundred yards following fifteen minutes of sprints, push his athletes beyond what they've imagined they can do and teach them how to deal with inevitable challenges in every aspect of their lives. Bowman realizes that there will always be setbacks, as he did when he dealt with Michael Phelps's personal-life struggles and negative press. By continuously driving Phelps and his other swimmers to be better and pursue their passions, while acknowledging and helping them work through their setbacks, Bowman has become the quintessential coach – and manager (Roberts, 2016).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you have 5 minutes // [Download](#) the 10% Happier: Meditation for Fidgety Skeptics app for three and five-minute guided meditations.

If you have 20 minutes // [Watch](#) Shonda Rhimes in her TEDTalk sharing her journey through her “year of yes” and find out how she got her “hum” back.

If you want a deeper dive // [Read](#) The Power of Full Engagement: Managing Energy, Not Time, Is the Key to High Performance and Personal Renewal // Jan 3, 2005 by Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz

Communication & Expectations

CIRCULATORY:

THE PATHWAYS THAT KEEP ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS MOVING
THROUGHOUT THE BODY.

$$ax^2 + bx + c = a(x - x_1)(x - x_2)$$

$$m_b = h_b = f_b = \sqrt{a^2 - b^2/4} \quad \vec{F} \cdot \Delta \vec{V}$$

DEFINITION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

In the body, blood travels through the circulatory system, transporting oxygen and other essential nutrients continuously (Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2016). Blood flows in and out of the heart via veins and arteries and interacts with the body through two sub-systems: the systemic circulation, which provides blood to organs, tissues, and cells, and the pulmonary circulation, which injects fresh oxygen into the blood and releases carbon dioxide. The circulatory system in all its aspects is crucial to the continued functioning of individual organs and the body as a whole.

Managers are the circulatory system of the organization, keeping information flowing. As a manager, your ability to communicate and set expectations is the lifeblood of success, and you must also keep the flow of information moving both up and down the organization. Despite the importance of this communication role, many organizations don't train managers on how to give effective feedback or how to have difficult conversations – both essential for strong communication.

Common symptoms of failures in your communication practices include:

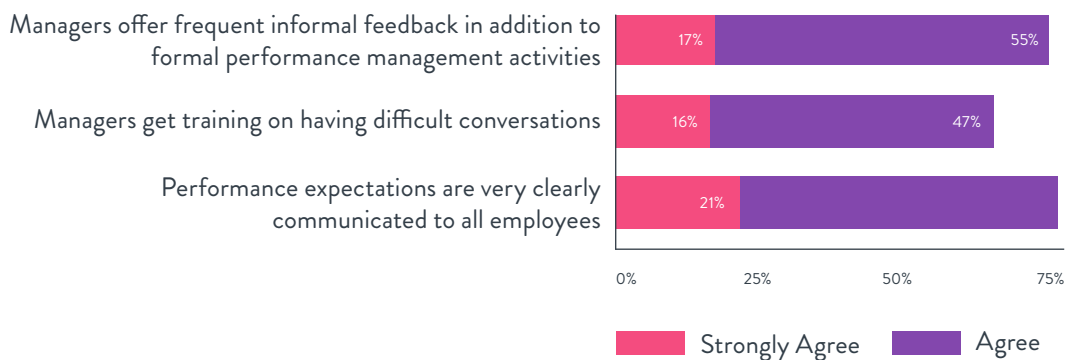
- **PERFORMANCE SURPRISES.** If you have to give negative feedback and it blindsides the listener, you likely have not been communicating properly along the way. ***Nothing should come as a surprise to an employee in a performance review.***
- **MISSING DEADLINES.** If your team continuously misses project deadlines, or delivers work that is not aligned with expectations, information has not been flowing properly.
- **THE INVISIBILITY CLOAK.** If none of your boss's peers, or your boss's boss, know who you are and generally what you do, it may be time to work on articulating your value in different terms.
- **TWENTY QUESTIONS.** If when you give direction, your team seems confused or comes back to you multiple times for clarification, somehow the message is not getting through. Just because it was clear to you doesn't mean it is clear to them.
- **NO ONE SPEAKS YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE.** If no one seems to get your love language right, you may have neglected to give them the right information on how to make you feel valued.
- **IF LOOKS COULD KILL.** If you notice your team's faces changing as you talk to them, your words may be eliciting an unintended reaction. Words matter and so do looks.

“NOTHING SHOULD COME AS A SURPRISE TO AN EMPLOYEE IN A PERFORMANCE REVIEW.”

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

Performance management – the process of setting performance goals and coaching your team in achieving them on an ongoing basis – is the heart of a manager’s job. The word *manage* is right there in the name. Although traditional performance management has come under scrutiny in recent years, with more people emphasizing frequent conversations over an annual performance review, **what really matters is the quality of conversations, not how often they happen**. Clear communication in setting expectations and in giving feedback are essential managerial skills. Yet only about a third (38%) of organizations say that their managers receive training on giving effective feedback (Aptitude Research Partners, 2018a). This is potentially a huge missed opportunity; even if you have tools and processes to ensure frequent feedback and review cycles, the frequency won’t matter if the conversations are not productive.

Strong Communications Are Still Not the Norm



Source: Aptitude Research Partners. *Hire, Engage, Retain*, 2018. N-317.

Organizations that are supporting managers with training on feedback and critical communications see differentiated results in several critical areas. According to Aptitude (2018a) survey data, **these organizations are 57% more likely to indicate that they have above-average levels of productivity** (66% vs. 42%). And organizations that help managers learn the skills of feedback are 36% more likely to indicate they had improved their employee experience over the past year (64% vs. 47%).

Managers are often the key translation point between leadership and front-line employees. Yet a quarter of organizations don’t agree that they have clearly communicated performance expectations to all of their employees (Aptitude Research Partners, 2018a). Supporting managers in developing the skills of aligning their teams around organizational strategy and culture through better feedback is an essential component of success.

Communication is a skill we begin to develop from the moment we are born that serves us in all aspects of life. And there is an important distinction between communication and merely speaking, given that we also communicate with our tone, our expression, our stance, and even our breathing. We know when a baby cries, it is hungry; when your mother raises her eyebrow, she is not pleased; and when your brother kicks you under the table, he wants you to shut up. Much of our communication style is developed unconsciously as we grow up, based on our home life, our geography, the national or regional culture we were born into, and every other experience that has shaped us. All of these factors shape our communication style, and admittedly it takes conscious effort to change or modulate it. But if we’re not able to get through to our team using our current style, it will lead to frustration.

It’s also important to remember that listening is key to communication. George Bernard Shaw said, “the biggest problem with communication is the illusion that it has occurred.” As you work with new team members and different people, your old ways of communicating may no longer work, and it’s important to check in with yourself and your team members to make sure communication, not just talking, is actually happening.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

The following three questions will help you evaluate your communication on a personal, team, and company level and offer tips on how to modulate your communication as needed.

- **WHAT'S MY COMMUNICATION STYLE?** How do I naturally tend to communicate, and how do I prefer others to communicate with me?
 - » This is a deceptively simple question, but many of us meet new team members or coworkers and never give them a single clue as to how best get our attention or make sure we understand them. By simply pausing to be aware of when you are most comfortable receiving information and sharing that insight with those who work with you, you can build trust and be more effective working together.
- **DO I REALLY KNOW WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO MY MANAGER OR LEADERS?** Have I thought about what drives my organization's revenue? Do I know how my boss is measured? And have I explained to my team how I am measured?
 - » Communication at work is usually about finding common ground to get things done. If you understand how your boss measures the business, or is measured by the business, you can find ways to help them see how your work gets them to their goals. And by communicating to your team, you give them the ability to understand how their role contributes to company success. Drawing the lines between what each person does every day and the ultimate goal of the business is critical to alignment and organizational success.
- **WHAT'S THE LANGUAGE OF OUR BUSINESS?** Am I communicating in this language?
 - » Most senior leaders have a number or metric by which they evaluate the general health of the business on an ongoing basis. Depending on the leader and the organization, this could be same-store sales, profit margin, new store openings, or on-time product launch. But almost every individual and leader has a core "number" or aspect of the business they use to gauge the relative day-to-day health of the organization. Learn what this is for the leaders above you and use it to shape your communications with both your leaders and your direct reports.

THE CIRCULATORY SYSTEM AT WORK

Few businesses have enjoyed as much success as Virgin Group, the powerhouse conglomerate with a widespread portfolio of companies spanning virtually every industry. At the helm of the Virgin Group is entrepreneur Richard Branson, whose beliefs and practices on management permeate every aspect of the various organizations under the Virgin umbrella. A key element of the group's success lies in senior management's focus on effective communication. Virgin Group managers emphasize clear communication, particularly during times of high stress. They make a point to stop, regroup, and simply talk with their teams in order to make sure everyone still has the big picture in sight. In Branson's view, a period of extreme busyness is the worst time for communication to fall through – and the best time for management to set an example of keeping a clear head and not falling victim to stress. By maintaining open, clear communication across the organization, managers empower employees to do their best work and drive the company toward achieving its goals (Lunderstedt, 2015).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you have 5 minutes // [Read](#) this Inc article on How to Communicate Employee Expectations Effectively.

If you have 20 minutes // [Listen](#) to this "We're Only Human" podcast: The Secret to Great Team Performance May Surprise You.

If you want a deeper dive // [Read](#) Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking // Jan 29, 2013 by Susan Cain



Safety & Intuition **IMMUNE:**

THE SYSTEM THAT AUTOMATICALLY PROTECTS YOUR BODY
FROM FOREIGN SUBSTANCES, CELLS, AND TISSUES.

DEFINITION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

The immune system keeps your body safe and free from infection. It is designed to identify bad actors that try to disrupt the healthy operation of your body, and to then deploy an immune response to stop - or at least minimize - the impact (PubMed Health, 2016). As your body is exposed to new environments and organisms, it learns the right immune response to particular situations. This response adheres to very specific chemical and biological interactions, but it happens on an unconscious level, kicking in whenever the adverse conditions appear. In addition to this regulated response, you can also do things to boost your immunity such as avoiding germs, handwashing, and covering your mouth and nose when you cough and sneeze.

Managers, you also have a prescribed set of responses you are responsible for – ensuring that your team is safe and compliant at all times. The past decade was one of the most prolific when it came to new labor regulations, and while many of these addressed much-needed changes, they still may not be fully implemented. Managers need to understand policies, but you also need to understand the broader mission and intent of the organization. Because when situations arise that aren't in the handbook, it is intuition and alignment with business priorities that will allow managers to make the right decision. Intuition in business can be just as important in keeping an organization healthy as data and analytics can. The first step in company safety is following the rules; the second step is following your gut.

Common symptoms of failures in listening to your intuition include:

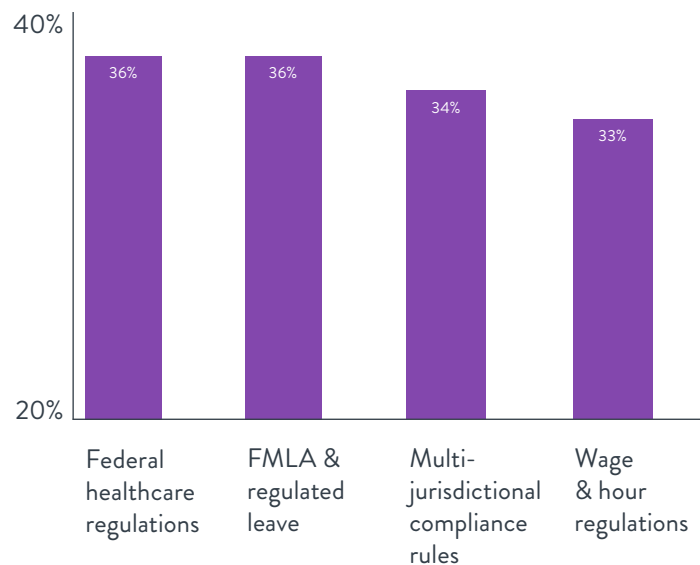
- **US VERSUS THEM.** If mistrust exists between management and staff, particularly around issues like pay and scheduling, it may be a sign that policies are not well understood or not uniformly applied.
- **STOMACH CHURN.** If you experience behavior that explicitly violates policy, or just see something that doesn't sit right, trust your gut, that feeling in the pit of your stomach. It's your intuition clueing you in to potential problems.
- **TURNING A BLIND EYE.** If little things start getting missed, inappropriate comments go unchallenged, the rules get relaxed and no one seems to be bothered, it can be a surface symptom of a deeper toxic culture.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA BACKLASH.** If you start to see things posted on social media that you don't recognize, it may be time to look deeper – there are so many places for employees to anonymously share feedback today.
- **RING, RING, HR CALLING.** If you hear from HR constantly about employee issues, there could be an underlying reason you need to look into.

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

In order for managers to stay safe, they need to embrace compliance as it relates to the employer-employee relationship. Managing compliance is a necessary task for any business. There are federal, state, and local compliance reporting requirements. There are organizational policies and standards. And in some professions, there are issues of tracking compliance with licensure rules. It's important for managers to understand what the ground rules are for your organization, geography, industry, and role, and to understand how to create a culture that supports those policies. ***If an organization is ever in a lawsuit over compliance issues, the courts will look at not only the written policy, but at how the policies were lived within the organization,*** and managers play a big role in bringing policy to life.

Of course, there are many other types of rules, reporting, and policies to be aware of, and in the results of Aptitude Research Partners' HR Impact survey (2018b), ensuring compliance and enabling compliance reporting was number three on the list of HR investment drivers. And of the top four compliance issues on the list, two relate directly to managers – your role in tracking leave, and in creating schedules that don't violate wage and hour rules.

Most Significant Compliance Concerns in 2018



Source: Aptitude Research Partners. HR Impact Survey, 2018. N-508.

No manager will be expected to memorize every bit of FMLA legislation, or every wage and labor regulation. But having an understanding of what rules impact your team, as well as a plan for creating a culture that supports those rules, is a big part of how you can ensure that your individual and organizational immunity to disruption is maintained. Understanding your team is also crucial to compliance success, and your intuition is what will tell you if your people are following the rules or if something is off. And if a manager spots something that is setting off their immune response, they don't have to handle it alone. ***Just like you go to the doctor when you have symptoms of the flu,*** managers need to have the radar to know when to bring in help from HR or other parts of the business.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

The following three questions will help you understand what is driving disruption and offer tips on how to bolster your ability to respond.

- **WHAT HAPPENS WHEN INAPPROPRIATE TALK OR ACTIONS TAKE PLACE?** Is there uncomfortable silence, laughing it off, private feedback later?
 - » Disruptive behavior can take many forms, from discrimination and harassment to financial misdeeds. One effective strategy to implement is “see something, say something,” by correcting people in the moment, in front of the same group (Steinberg, 2018). It may cause some discomfort at first, for you and others, but quickly the idea of accountability will spread through the system, replacing disruption.
- **HOW KNOWLEDGEABLE AM I IN THE AREAS OF HR COMPLIANCE?** Have I had training? Do I know where to go with questions?
 - » Managers, and particularly new managers, often fall victim to the “code of silence.” You don’t want to ask too many questions because, hey, they must think you know what you’re doing if they put you in the role! And people around you may assume you know, or not realize that you don’t have all the information you need. If training on handling compliance isn’t offered, most organizations will be glad you asked, because it keeps them in compliance too.
- **DO I PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT I AM FEELING?** Do I ask myself why I might be feeling a particular way as it relates to a person or situation? Will I ignore or explore this feeling?
 - » Humans are hardwired to sense danger. Our minds are trained to ignore the familiar so that we can focus on any new potential threat. The threats today aren’t saber-toothed tigers, but they could be signals that the situation you are in or person you are with has the potential to create danger for you. It’s important not to outwardly exhibit the “fight or flight” response, but ask yourself why you are inclined to feel one way or another. Then, you can use your judgment coupled with your intuitive feelings to make a sound decision.

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AT WORK

In a world of science and data, it may seem a little difficult for intuition to make its mark in the workplace. But one industry in particular is focusing on maximizing the power of intuition: the U.S. Military. Referring to intuition as “premonition” or a “sixth sense,” scientists in the Navy and Marines are using modern technology and biofeedback techniques to understand how intuition works among soldiers who exhibit the trait most strongly in combat. Stories of soldiers using intuition to avoid loss and make incredible real-time decisions on the battlefield stretch across military history, from a 2006 incident in Iraq when a staff sergeant was able to prevent carnage in an IED incident all the way back to an officer’s instinctual ability to avoid traps and ambushes in the Vietnam War. Not only has the U.S. Military acknowledged the power of intuition, but they are also training their soldiers to improve these precognitive skills, which continuously prove to be an asset for active-duty military in the field. Understanding and trusting their intuition certainly saves lives; but it is also allowing the military to build a stronger, more effective organization (Jacobsen, 2017).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you have 5 minutes // [Read](#) this letter from Martin Lindstrom to the world’s CEOs.

If you have 45 minutes // [Listen](#) to this EntireLeadership Podcast with Kristen Hadeed—Learning to Lead.

If you want a deeper dive // [Read](#) Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking **//** by Malcolm Gladwell

EQ & Resilience

NERVOUS:

THE SYSTEM RESPONSIBLE FOR SENSING, INTERPRETING,
AND RESPONDING TO STIMULI.

DEFINITION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

The nervous system is critical for navigating the world. It is the system that allows you to sense what is happening around you through multiple inputs, interpret those inputs, and create thought and movement in response to those inputs (Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2016). It is a powerful but also a vulnerable system, which is why it's important to utilize it frequently to help the brain – which controls the nervous system – understand how to avoid danger and self-repair from minor damage.

Managers are faced with a huge variety of physical, mental, and emotional inputs every day, from interactions with your team to cross-departmental meetings to handling the next crisis that lands on your desk. Developing a strong sense of EQ (“Emotional Quotient” – your ability to understand and interpret emotion) and resilience allows managers to respond in a meaningful and thoughtful way, while also not letting these interactions consume you.

Common symptoms of failures in your EQ and lost resilience include:

- **LAST TO KNOW.** If you are always last to know what's happening in the office – rumors of a layoff, of the interns dating, of someone up for a big promotion – you may not be paying attention to your sensors.
- **GEE THANKS.** If your efforts at recognition fall flat, it may be a sign you are not paying attention to the signals from previous interactions with your team members.
- **NOT MY PROBLEM.** If you are able to sense and interpret what's going on, but don't respond, you are not fully engaged in your role; as a leader, everything is your problem.
- **UP ALL NIGHT.** If you continually obsess over interpersonal issues at work, you're not helping your team and you may be damaging yourself. Being able to sense and respond is a positive thing, but doing it too often can leave you drained and unable to self-repair.
- **ONLY SQUEAKY WHEELS GET GREASE.** If the only people getting your attention are the ones loudly demanding it, you may not be in tune with your entire team.
- **IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM.** If you can only focus on the particular person or situation in front of you, you may be losing sight of the big picture.

“MANAGERS ARE FACED WITH A HUGE VARIETY OF PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL INPUTS EVERY DAY.”

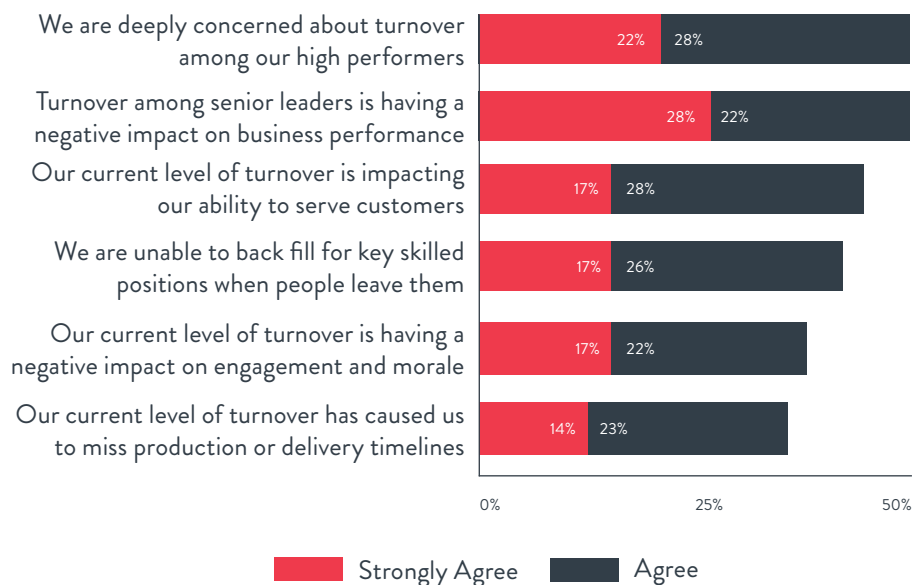
THE BUSINESS IMPACT

The phrase “it’s business, nothing personal,” does not apply to today’s manager. While you do have to protect your time and energy, for many people work is an emotional investment that requires daily resilience. That emotion helps them to gauge when to keep fighting the good fight, and also when to leave the ring and get ready for the next. And it’s important not to confuse an emotional investment with effusive behavior, hugs and candy, and all that “soft” stuff. When you invest in the work, people can see and respect that, even if you may need to address some emotionally tricky situations.

It’s also important for managers to look out for themselves. Managers and high performers are often the most in-demand members of an organization, so being able to read the early signs of fatigue and frustration is an important skill. ***This beginning level of frustration is much easier to fix than one that has festered for years – which is when frustration turns into disengagement.***

Aptitude Research Partners’ latest survey (2018b) found that **67% of respondents have experienced productivity or quality issues due to employee disengagement**. This concern around turnover is also disproportionately, but perhaps appropriately, focused on senior leaders and high performers. Managing your own response to various stimuli that come your way is an important part of learning to lead.

Most Pressing Turnover Concerns



Source: Aptitude Research Partners. HR Impact Survey, 2018. N-508.

Disengagement and dissatisfaction can be difficult to identify, but managers play a critical role in both identification and response. ***The most critical factors driving burnout identified by survey respondents were an individual’s workload, work environment, schedule, and level of performance*** (Aptitude Research Partners, 2018b). Having the ability to understand your team’s emotional response to these circumstances, and the tools to help them navigate that emotional response, is critical to managerial success.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

The following three questions will help you understand EQ and offer tips on building resilience for yourself and your team.

- **DOES MY TEAM RESPECT ME AS A LEADER?** Am I truly able to lead or am I trying to be one of the crew?
 - » A big part of EQ and resilience is understanding what people are going through, while still maintaining a leadership position within the group. Being warm, friendly, and sincere may be what your team needs, or they may need a different emotional response and support. But if you find yourself invested in the details of their weekend or involve yourself to the point where the employee is uncomfortable, it's time to dial it back. You can be friendly, but you are still their leader.
- **AM I RESILIENT?** How do I reassure myself when doubt creeps in?
 - » It's important to flex your resilience muscle – not necessarily by going through things, but by at least running through the scenarios in your head or having a plan of what to do when you are stuck with a big decision or quandary involving your team.
- **DO I HAVE A SUPPORT SYSTEM?** Can I depend on other colleagues or friends to help me keep balance when tension is rising? Who is my truth-teller?
 - » We all have that friend or colleague who will tell you the truth when you're being a whiner and need to get it together and move on, the one who will tell you when you're being a jerk, the type of friend that will always be on your side, even when they're pushing you to be better.

THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AT WORK

EQ and resilience often surface in the workplace when it comes both to scheduling and to assigning roles and projects. The manager of Walgreens' 4000th store in Redondo Beach, California found herself needing a way to schedule her team into shifts that would minimize clashing among diverse personalities while creating the most productive environment possible for individual employees with varying skill levels. In her case, it required some creativity and innovation in dividing roles. For example, Walgreens store employees typically have a job description that splits them between customer assistance and other more solitary tasks like arranging merchandise and maintaining one aisle of the store. However, one of this manager's employees was not very good at interacting with customers. So instead of giving him the typical job breakdown, she capitalized on his analytical nature and gave him full-time responsibility of "resets" – stocking the aisles with new merchandise for major seasonal changes – and "revisions" – making weekly changes to merchandise arrangement to attract customers to specific products. The manager's ability to be in tune with her employees' emotions and abilities, as well as her resilience in making decisions and adapting to her team, gave her store's team the groundwork for success (Buckingham, 2005).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you have 5 minutes // [Read](#) this blog on The 4 Traits of Resilient Leaders.

If you have 30 minutes // [Download](#) this e-book from 6 Seconds: The Emotional Intelligence Network.

If you want a deeper dive // [Read](#) The Power of Resilience: How the Best Companies Manage the Unexpected **//** by Yossi Sheffi



Trust & Self-Awareness

RESPIRATORY:

THE SYSTEM RESPONSIBLE FOR FILTERING VALUABLE
OXYGEN FROM THE AIR WE BREATHE IN.

DEFINITION AND COMMON SYMPTOMS

The respiratory system is responsible for the most basic activity of life – breathing in air and filtering out the life-giving oxygen from the other gases in the air around us (PubMed Health, 2016). It is responsible for the transfer of oxygen from outside our bodies all the way into our circulatory system, where it powers our ability to think, move, and grow. The respiratory system is an involuntary system that can also come under voluntary control. This means that we will continue to breathe even if we don't pay attention to it, and our lungs will constantly be transferring oxygen to the blood, but we can control the input to the system, our breath, when we choose to.

For managers, the essential element you must deliver to the organization is the ability to create trust from the atmosphere around you. Ideally, the flow of trust within the organization is ongoing, but the self-awareness to understand your role in building that trust is something of which managers need to be aware and take control.

Common symptoms of failures of trust and lack of self-awareness include:

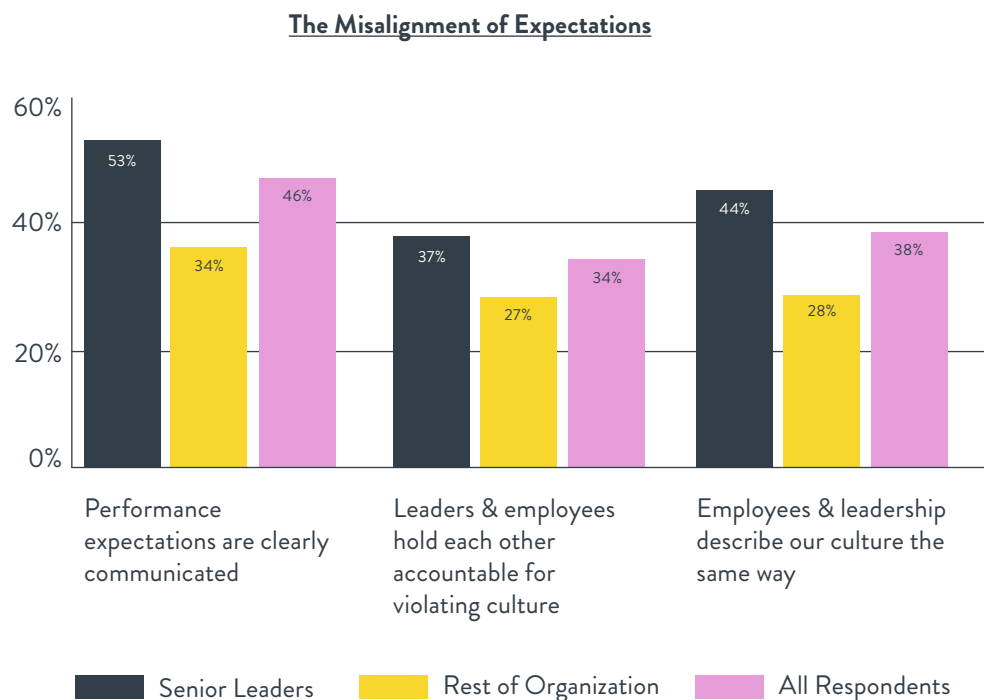
- **WAIT IT OUT.** If you see people acting reluctant to take up the cause when there is a new initiative or project started, it could be that they have seen over time that most initiatives don't stick around and would rather hold back before buying in.
- **YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND.** If you commonly get feedback that people have misinterpreted your tone or how you meant something you said, you may not be aware of how you're coming across.
- **TURF WARS.** If managers or functional leaders start hoarding talent, don't share resources, or even stop reporting their own success, the organization can turn into a battlefield of tiny kingdoms, each one out for themselves.
- **BURN ME ONCE.** If you find yourself unable to trust your team to do their jobs, keep things confidential, and maintain a professionalism at all times, you have every right to ask more questions, remind more frequently, and share any doubts you may have. The trust door swings both ways.
- **NO MAN IS AN ISLAND.** If you find yourself never sharing any information with your team, you may have developed an environment of unhealthy trust issues.
- **DATA'S WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS.** If you are leading a poor-performing team, you may need to look at trust within the team as a potential cause for low success.

“FOR MANAGERS, THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENT YOU MUST DELIVER TO THE ORGANIZATION IS THE ABILITY TO CREATE TRUST.”

THE BUSINESS IMPACT

We talk about the breath of life, or taking one's last breath, often enough to know that breath is critical. We don't always think about it, but it safely keeps us going. Building trust, up and down the organization, will enable every other action you want to take. So how do you build trust? It is a simple – but not easy – answer. You tell someone what you are going to do, and then you do it. And then you repeat that over and over and over. When your team knows they can count on you, they will jump through hoops for you.

Aptitude Research Partners' (2018a) recent research has shown that for many organizations, the perception of the organization's values and culture varies widely throughout the organization. Even more telling is the fact that not only do many organizations believe they don't have a common view of culture, but **leaders are out of touch with their employees when it comes to the perception of how badly out of line things are**. As illustrated in the figure below, senior leaders are much more apt to think that they have clearly communicated performance expectations, culture, and behavioral norms. Many leaders may lack the self-awareness to realize that while they may believe they said something, it is not truly being understood or embraced by the rest of the organization. Part of building trust is being open to the perception of others, and to the possibility that your views might have been perceived differently than you intended.



Source: Aptitude Research Partners. Culture Survey, 2016. N=355.

Misalignment of Expectations

The survey also found that approximately one third of organizations feel that leaders and employees don't hold each other accountable for violating their cultural norms (Aptitude Research Partners, 2018a). In order for accountability to exist, it is important to build trust through a common understanding of culture and behaviors. Part of that trust is knowing that the culture will self-correct and call out violations of trust and behavioral norms so they can be realigned by any member of the team. This self-healing culture also helps individuals be more self-aware because they know what is expected of them, and this environment starts with leaders modeling the type of behaviors they expect.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

The following three questions will help you self-assess and identify how you may impact your environment as it relates to trust, and offer tips on becoming more self-aware.

- **DO I HAVE APPROPRIATE SELF-AWARENESS?** Do I tend to be aware of how others are reading my interactions, and can I modulate to fit various situations?
 - » This can be difficult to assess and may require a conversation with a trusted friend or coworker. Because if you're not self-aware, you will likely be the last to know. But by at least starting to explore the possibility that you are being interpreted in a way different than what you intend, you can begin to better understand how to get the outcomes you want by communicating in the most effective way possible.
- **AM I HOLDING MYSELF AND OTHERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR MY BEHAVIOR AND VIOLATION OF CULTURAL NORMS?**
 - » Part of being in a trusted system is not only behaving in a trustworthy way yourself, but also taking responsibility to call out bad behavior in others. It's not about being a tattletale, but rather about setting and pointing out the example of what trusted behavior looks like. You must be self-aware and help ensure that others become self-aware as well.
- **HAVE I ASKED FOR FEEDBACK RECENTLY?** Am I being honest with myself about my behavior and performance?
 - » We all want to be better, but that requires a willingness to hear feedback and make adjustments. We need trusted advisors to help us gather and interpret feedback from those around us so that we can understand and manage our own behaviors and recognize how they may be building or eroding trust.

THE RESPIRATORY SYSTEM AT WORK

The establishment of trust in the workplace, throughout the organization, creates an environment conducive to high productivity and success. Trust has allowed global science company 3M to perpetuate its three-team organizational structure for decades. While every 3M employee has a specific job title like "scientist" or "engineer," employees are also organized into one of three buckets: Scout, Entrepreneur, or Implementer. Scouts are project hunters, who look for the next problem for the company to solve; Entrepreneurs develop a solution to the problem; and Implementers actually build the solution, test it, and bring it to market. These teams are project-based, rather than department-based, which allows them to come together for a specific project and then disassemble and recombine for the next. Employees are also allowed to spend up to 15% of their time working on projects of their own choice through 3M's "15% culture." This organizational method works for 3M because of the trust the organization has built with and among its employees, allowing them to play to their respective strengths and move between the three designations as necessary (Scholz, 2017).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

If you have 5 minutes // [Read](#) this article from Forbes – "Great Leadership Begins with Self-Awareness".

If you have 20 minutes // [Watch](#) this video on "Why Good Leaders Make You Feel Safe".

If you want a deeper dive // [Read](#) Triggers: Creating Behavior That Lasts--Becoming the Person You Want to Be // by Marshall Goldsmith

MIND, BODY, & SOUL

The health of the team is only as good as the health of the manager. Regular check-ups are required.

Check Your Vital Signs

- **THINK ABOUT THE PAST 3 TO 6 MONTHS.** Have you had more days where you felt energized than not? Have you been actively seeking to re-energize yourself when you are depleted?
- **HOW HAVE YOUR INTERACTIONS WITH TEAM MEMBERS BEEN?** Are you having productive conversations? Are you giving performance feedback? Have you actively sought feedback on your communication?
- **WHAT'S YOUR COMFORT LEVEL INTERACTING WITH YOUR TEAM?** Are there behaviors you are becoming uncomfortable with?
- **HOW SOLID IS YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM?** Are you checking in with them? Do you need backups? Do you feel you have a support network you can go to with questions?
- **IS YOUR TEAM ACTING CONFIDENT AND SELF-ASSURED?** Do you feel like they have a clear sense of what is expected of them, and are energized to execute?

MIND

Being a manager is a conscious choice and requires significant investment of time and energy. Because management requires patience, understanding, coaching, and sometimes difficult conversations, we need to give ourselves permission to recharge during the day – whether it's a ten-minute conversation not relating to work, a brief walk outside to clear your mind, or even sitting down for thirty minutes and enjoying your lunch, rather than wolfing it down during a meeting.

BODY

While we don't typically think of management as a physically taxing job, our physical being deals with the effects of our job every day. When there is a lot going on in your head, stress can manifest itself in your body, impacting nearly every system. Exercising to release endorphins, meditating to clear your mind, and even the simple things in life like smiling, taking a walk, and getting a good night's sleep are just a few simple steps you can take to help refresh your being.

SOUL

Reality check: you have a life outside of your job. If you are neglecting your hobbies, your relationships, or other obligations outside of work, that may be a sign that your energy is off-balance, or that you need additional support in one of your systems. Just as we need to take care of our physical, mental, and emotional health, we need to take care of our work activities, our own intellectual pursuits, and our relationships outside of work. We need to nurture our passions outside of work in order to bring our best, most passionate selves to our jobs.

“BEING A MANAGER IS HARD WORK, BUT KEEPING YOURSELF IN TIP-TOP SHAPE CAN MAKE IT JUST A LITTLE BIT EASIER.”

REFERENCES

- Aptitude Research Partners (2018a). *Hire, Engage, Retain* [Data file].
- Aptitude Research Partners (2018b). *HR Impact Survey* [Data file].
- Buckingham, M. (March 2005). What great managers do. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2005/03/what-great-managers-do>
- Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care. (August 2016). How does the blood circulatory system work? *Informed Health Online: Current Medical Knowledge*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0072434/>
- Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care. (August 19, 2016). How does the nervous system work? *Informed Health Online: Current Medical Knowledge*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMH0072574/>
- Jacobsen, A. (April 3, 2017). The U.S. military believes people have a sixth sense. *Time*. Retrieved from <http://time.com/4721715/phenomena-annie-jacobsen/>
- Lunderstedt, H. (May 13, 2015). How to communicate as effectively as Richard Branson's senior team. *Entrepreneur Magazine*. Retrieved from <https://www.entrepreneurmag.co.za/advice/business-leadership/leading/how-to-communicate-as-effectively-as-richard-bransons-senior-team/>
- Roberts, M.B. (May 25, 2016). Olympic champion Michael Phelps' Coach reveals the secrets to the swimmer's success. *Parade*. Retrieved from <https://parade.com/479871/m-b-roberts/olympic-champion-michael-phelps-coach-reveals-the-secrets-to-the-swimmers-success/>
- Sheahan, P. (2007). *Flip: How to turn everything you know on its head - and succeed beyond your wildest imaginings*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.
- PubMed Health. (August 1, 2016). Immune System. *PubMed Health Glossary*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0025680/>
- PubMed Health. (August 2016). Musculoskeletal system. *Informed Health Online: Current Medical Knowledge*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0027058/>
- PubMed Health. (August 1, 2016). Respiratory System. *PubMed Health Glossary*. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/PMHT0022181/>
- Scholz, M. (July 10, 2017). The three-step process that's kept 3M innovative for decades. *Fast Company*. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/40437745/the-three-step-process-thats-kept-3m-innovative-for-decades>
- Steinberg, M. (January 12, 2018). Here is 1 new form of harassment training HR is employing to fight sexual harassment and boost performance. *Inc.* Retrieved from <https://www.inc.com/matthewsteinberg/the-best-way-to-stand-against-sexual-harassment-this-type-of-workplace-trainingwillhelp.html>



Viventium Software Inc. is a transformative, living, and purely cloud-based HCM solution for business management that provides a remarkable user experience and design anyone can use with ease, unbeatable analytics, and insight into your business. No one dares to provide HCM client service like Viventium — we are truly in it with you. We notify our clients about potential problems and areas for improvement before they even know issues within their companies exist. Our unmatched software is built with you and for you, so you get a truly one-of-a-kind, remarkable experience that enables you to fulfill your company's true potential.

Viventium Software Inc. Bringing HCM to life — one remarkable experience at a time.

[VIVENTIUM.COM](https://www.viventium.com)

VIVENTIUM
in it with you