

# Self-Evaluating Your Supervisory Competencies

## Building Management Skills for Prevention Professional Video Series



New England (HHS Region 1)

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**PTTC**

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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At the time of this publication, Miriam E. Delphin-Rittmon, Ph.D, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

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# **The Supervisor's Key Roles & Responsibilities,** *An Overview*

## **Assign and distribute work**

Set priorities on what will get done, organize the work into reasonable assignments to make the best use of your people's talents, and assign the work so that some individuals are not overloaded while others have nothing to do.

## **Monitor and control performance**

To ensure quality work being done through safe work practices, you must get out and see what is going on. Do not wait until someone complains or gets hurt before checking into what your people are doing.

## **Review and evaluate performance**

You must decide who will be recommended for promotion, who will be recommended for a pay increase, and who will have to be laid off or fired. To be fair to everyone, these decisions must be based in part on performance evaluation. Additionally, most people like to hear how their work is evaluated. Take time to let them know how they are doing.

## **Train and develop employees**

Your experience is a valuable resource to your work group, but do not get hooked into doing someone else's work. See that everyone in your group is properly trained on the job. Do not assume that they know how to correctly do their jobs, just because they have done similar work elsewhere.

## **Lead your group**

Leadership involves getting everyone to work together to achieve a common goal. Work with your team to coordinate individual and team efforts and to build motivation to do a job well. Leadership is demonstrated in the decisions that you make, in the way that you treat and work with your team, and in the type of relationships that you develop with your team.

## **Communicate**

A manager must communicate to get the job done. Let your people know what needs to be done, as well as policies and decisions that affect them. Notify your own boss of any problems that you expect as well as the general level of morale in your group. Advise other groups of what you need from them, as well as the things that your team does that will affect these other groups.

## **Handle administrative duties**

Keep paperwork and records up to date. Your job will be much easier if the information that you want is current and readily available. This includes your Employee Observation Forms and Coaching Logs.

# The Supervisor's Roles & Responsibilities, Self-Assessment

**Instructions:** Please add or change the roles and responsibilities below, to accommodate additional items that we added in our large group. Then, as a new or future supervisor, how confident are you that you are prepared to do/or continue to do the following well? Use a scale of 1 – 10 (with “1” being the lowest score, “5” being average, & “10” being the highest score).

## **Assign & distribute work or delegate tasks**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

## **Monitor & control performance**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

## **Review & evaluate performance**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

## **Train & develop employees**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
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## **Lead your team**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

## **Communicate**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

## **Handle Administrative duties**

Low/No Confidence -- 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Highest Confidence  
Average  
Confidence

# The Supervisor's Roles and Responsibilities, Action Plan

**Part One Instructions:** Next, based on your previous assessment, please identify your top 3 areas of strength & your top 3 areas for improvement:

| Top 3 Areas of Strength | Top 3 Areas for Improvement |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                         |                             |
|                         |                             |
|                         |                             |

**Part Two Instructions:** For each Area for Improvement, what will you do to improve your necessary skills, by when, and what/who will help you?

| Area for improvement | How will you improve in this area? What will you do? | By when will you do it? | Who or what will help you with these improvement plans? To whom will you talk? |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                      |                                                      |                         |                                                                                |
|                      |                                                      |                         |                                                                                |
|                      |                                                      |                         |                                                                                |

## **Strategies for Making the Transition to Supervisor as Smooth and Easy as Possible:**

### **Find out what management expects of you, so you can define your role**

This is the first and most important step you should take as a new supervisor. If your manager does not explain expectations clearly, press the point further until you have a solid understanding of what you and your team are supposed to do. You might ask, “In six months, how would you know if I were succeeding as supervisor?”

Make sure you understand your new role's responsibilities, goals, and objectives. Study your job description and use it to develop a plan that will turn those objectives into actionable results. If it is vague, or nonexistent, you might need to write your own.

If possible, talk to the person who held your position before you. What were their primary responsibilities? What did they consider to be their most important objectives? Go back to the job posting or old job descriptions. What responsibilities were listed? Were any performance goals outlined? If so, are they still relevant?

Finally, talk to the people you'll be managing. How do they see your role? What kind of guidance do they need?

Consider writing all this down and show the job description you have created to your boss or mentor, to see if they agree with it.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

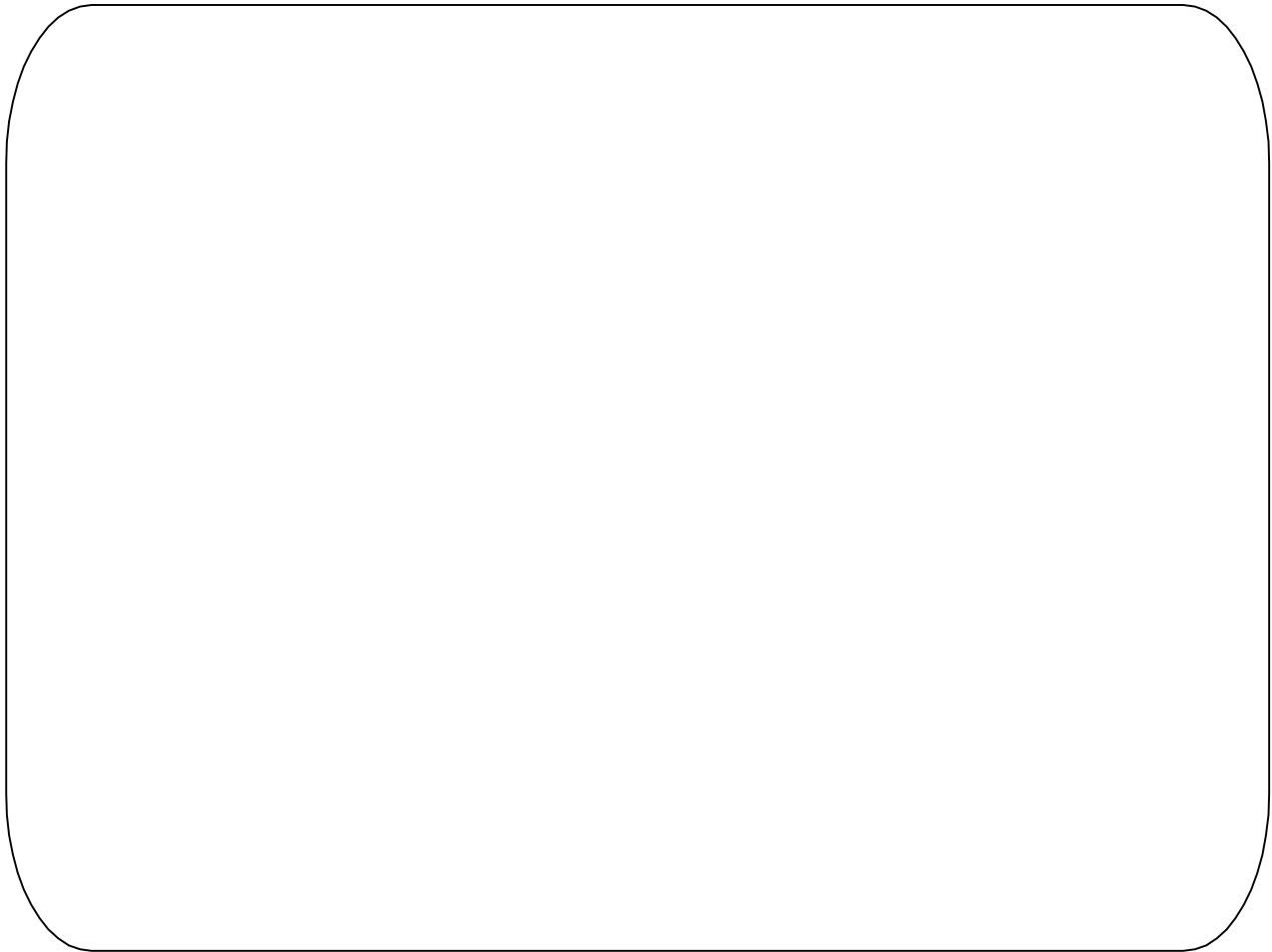
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## **Talk**

Communicate with your team right from the start. As far as you can, share your concerns about the transition, and invite them to comment.

You may also have to address the hurt feelings of those who also wanted your new position. This can take a great deal of diplomacy, sensitivity, and understanding. Acknowledge the awkwardness. Push the Focus to the Team's Operations.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

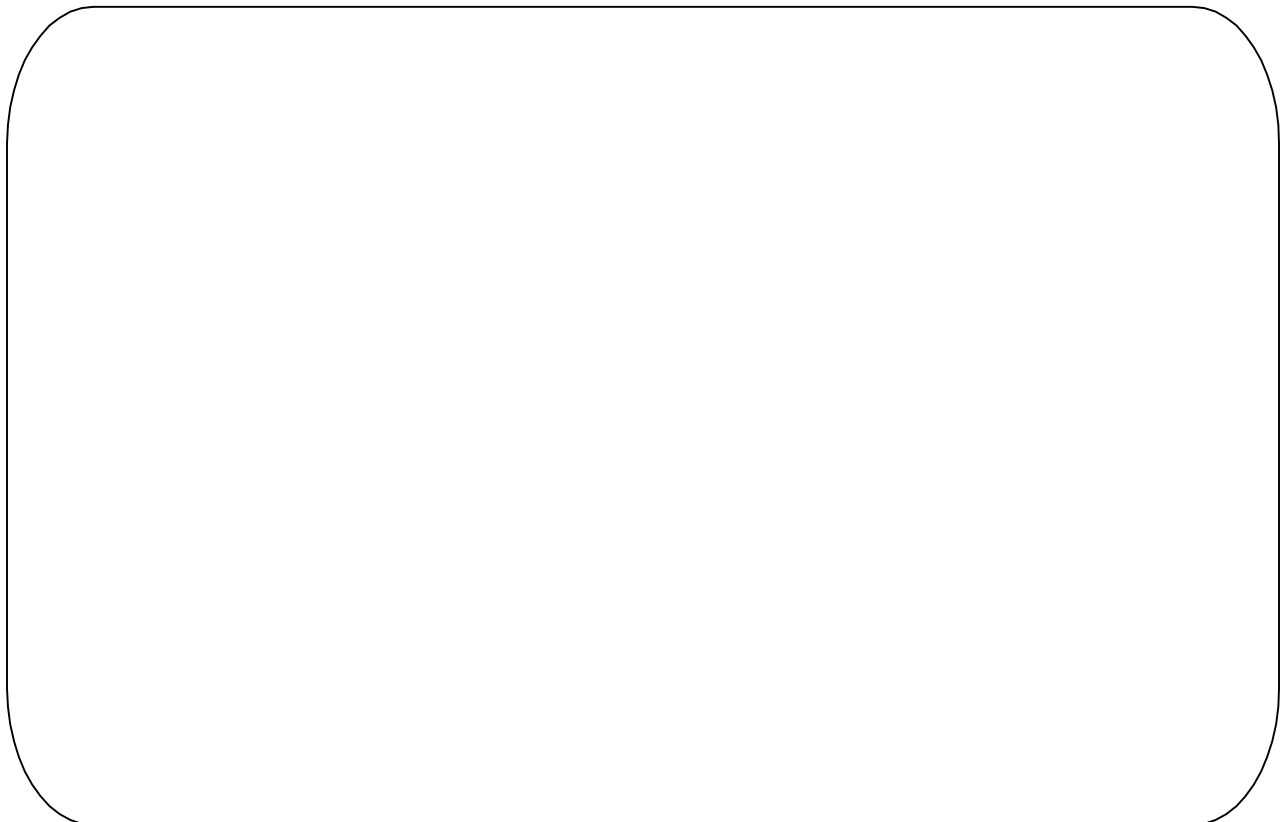
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## **Listen / Get to know your people**

Ask them what they think about their jobs and listen to what they have to say. The best way to get your employees on your team is to find out how they think their jobs should best be done, and to implement their suggestions when appropriate. Remember you can use your employees' ideas to improve your team's performance, give your employees credit for their ideas, and make a hit early on with management.

Consider using the 3-Question Meeting technique. Schedule a one-on-one meeting with each team member and ask three questions: What's working? What's not? What do you need from me to help you and our team strengthen our performance? Use this meeting for your education and your employee's opportunity to share their ideas, frustrations, and requests. Listen hard and resist the urge to take over the discussion. This meeting may be a critical component to moving beyond any awkwardness from the relationship change. It shifts the focus to what people care about in their working environment and arms you with valuable insights that might not have been as visible as a peer. Plan to share the results of the meeting (without naming names or announcing who said what) with the group at-large. A series of quick decisions on some of the easier issues will show goodwill. Placing the group in charge of fixing the bigger issues will earn credibility.

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## **Get to know your operation**

Take a long careful look at your employees and the operation you are supervising to see what really needs to stay the same and what really needs to be changed. Remember that your employees may feel insecure during the transition; try as much as you can to encourage stability. Remember also that the first few actions you take will have a massive impact on your employee's perception of you, so your first decisions should be good.

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## **Begin building good relationships**

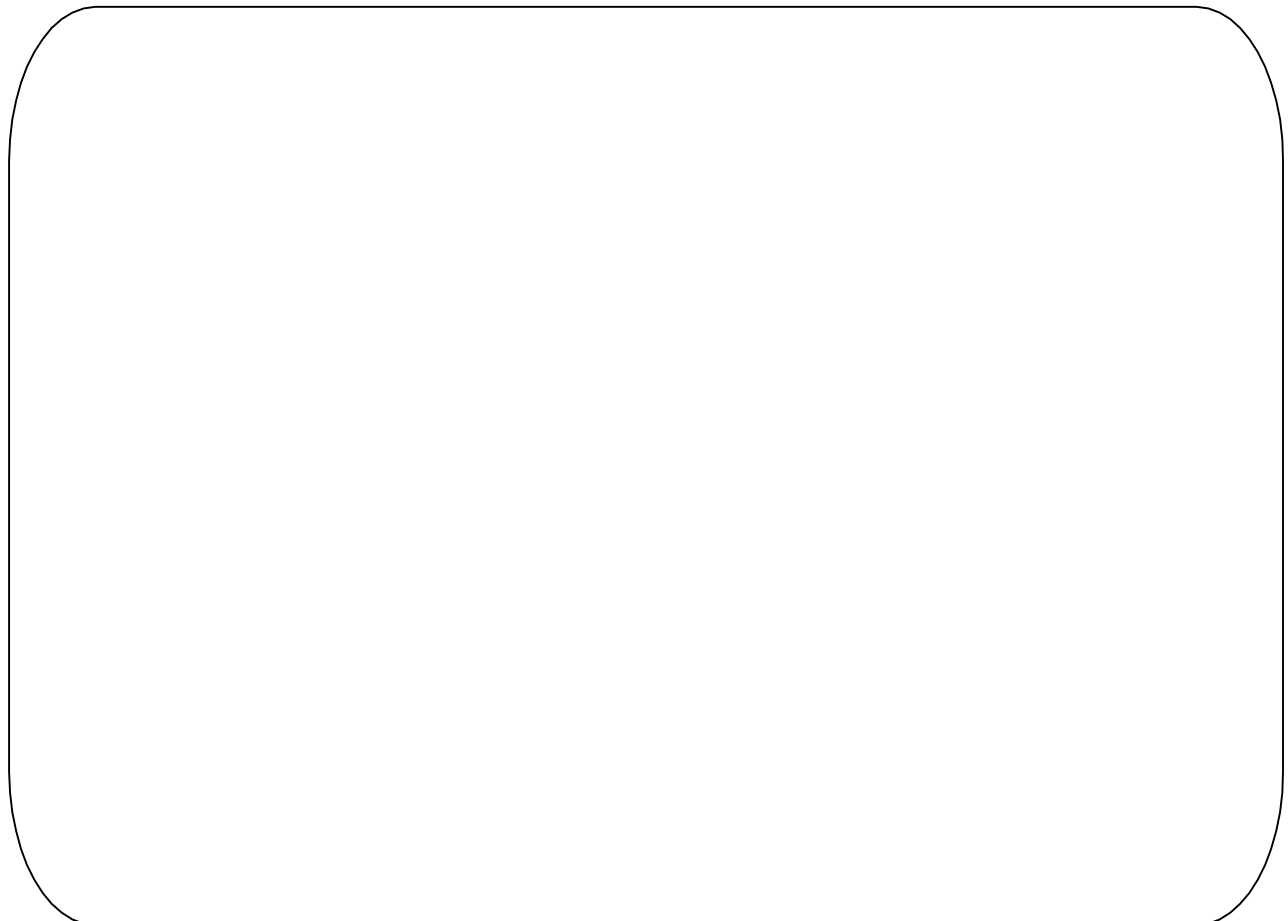
Being a great manager isn't all about being a brilliant strategist or an inspirational speaker. Many believe that the most important part of a manager's role is their ability to make an authentic, personal connection with the people on their team.

As a manager, you can't expect to be everyone's friend. Your first responsibility is to be a leader, and to do that you need to take a balanced approach to relationships. Yes, you want to be on great terms with your team, but you need to be a guide for them as well.

Be open with your new team about your past business experience and why you took this position, to help gain their trust. Don't be afraid to share mistakes you've made along the way (just as long as they aren't too serious!). Handled sensibly, self-disclosure like this helps your team understand who you are, why you're there, and why they can trust you, which is important if you want to have a happy and motivated workforce.

Connect with team members by respecting their individual differences. They may have diverse cultural or generational characteristics or have widely differing levels of experience. Allow their diversity to encourage spirited discussion and new ideas. Mutual trust and respect are critical.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

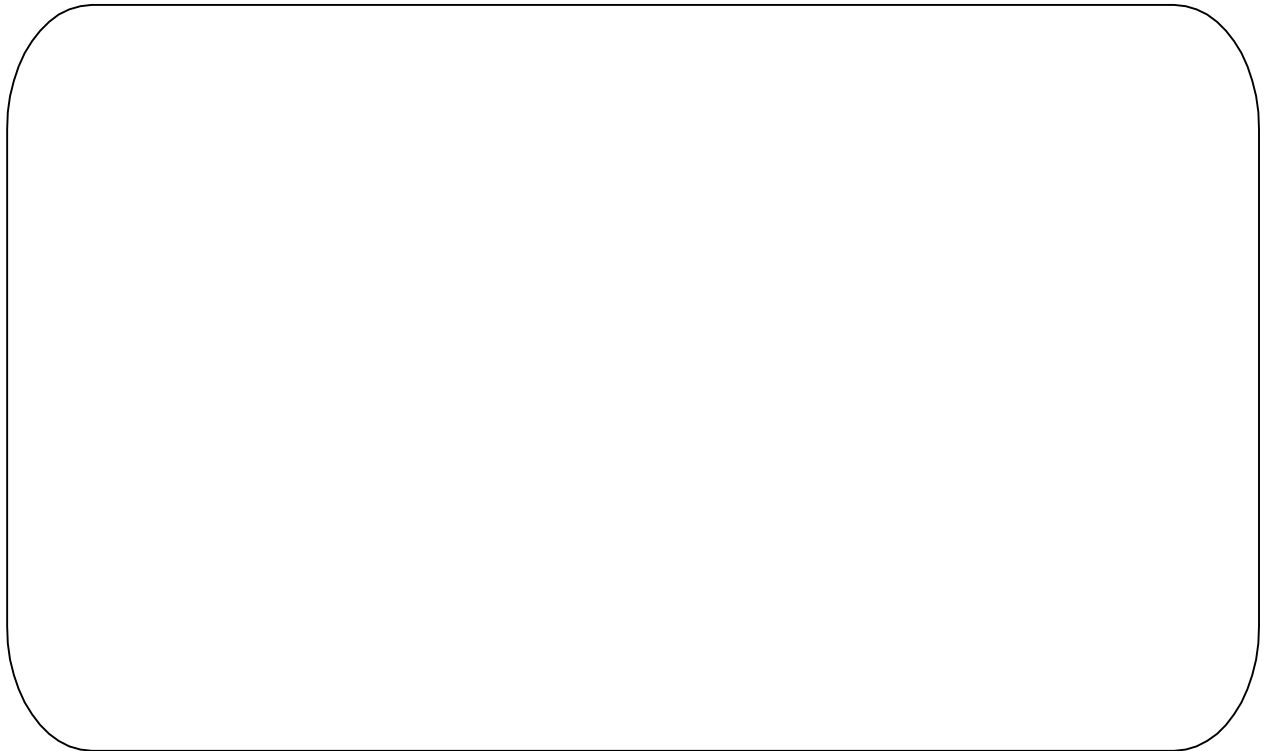
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## **Be humble**

Accept that you will make mistakes and be willing to admit your mistakes. It is also important that you do not boast about your new position or success. People can brag or show off in subtle ways, so be careful.

An unfortunate reality is that some people may choose to focus on, and enjoy, your mistakes. You may even encounter outright resistance or sabotage. Watch out for these behaviors, and deal with them immediately and proactively. As much as we would like to believe that professionals do not behave this way, experience tells us otherwise.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

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## **Establish your authority**

You should expect a certain amount of complaining and resentment when you step into the job. The most important thing for you to do is to give yourself permission to be the supervisor and act like the supervisor. That means it is within your right to direct people, to monitor them and, when necessary, to discipline them. Remember that you are setting precedents in your first days on the job, so be sure that you understand clearly what the impact of your decisions will be. People may resent you at times, they may not always like you, but it is critical that you gain their respect.

When moving from peer to boss, the most important thing is to give up the comfort of being liked. In the past, you have said many things about your bosses to your colleagues, family, and friends. Similar things will now probably be said about you. That is OK – if you continue to earn respect. You will likely achieve this by treating people honestly and by trusting them.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

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## Communicate your expectations

If management has not given you a clear and immediate directive, take your time with this step. Start the process by talking with key employees about your expectations; see what they think of your ideas and try to minimize the shock of any major change. Then, put your most important standards and expectations in writing, so your employees know where they stand. Be sure to set up a meeting early on to discuss your expectations and get feedback from your employees.

**Be Transparent About Your Agenda.** Your only agenda should be on better aligning your function and team with your organization's priorities and then striving to get the right people in the right positions armed with the right tools and processes. Preach and practice this daily.

Your new team is not used to working with you as a boss. Figure out your routine and let them know what to expect. Will you have regular team meetings? Will you have an "open door" policy? What are your priorities? How will you communicate? What are your objectives? How will they be evaluated? Clarify and regularly update your expectations. The sooner you start a pattern of open communication, the better.

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## Identify and communicate goals

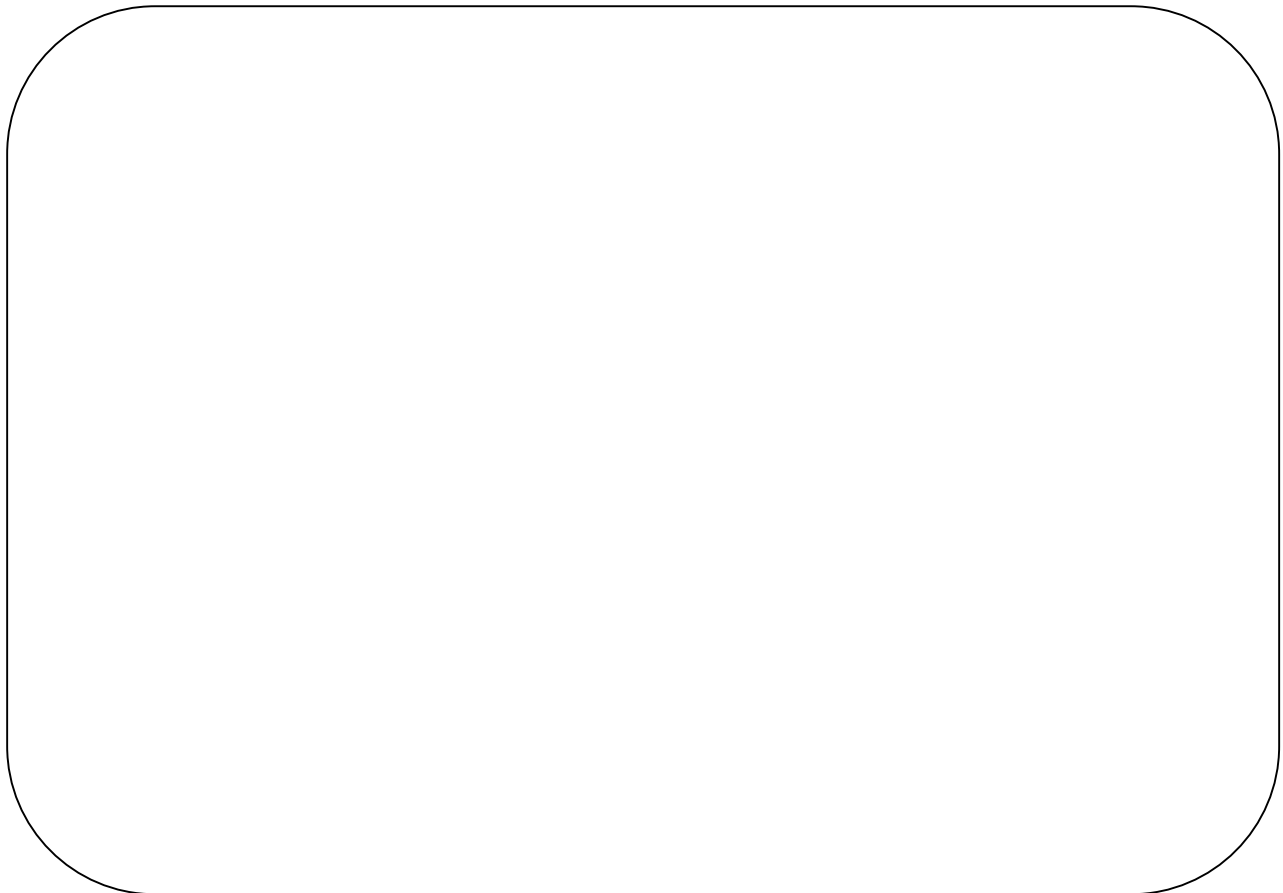
If you've suddenly found yourself in charge of a team, after years of being led by someone else, you're probably full of new ideas for improving its practices and procedures. But try to curb your enthusiasm -- at least for a little while.

"New broom syndrome" (sweeping away all the "old ways" as soon as you arrive) is guaranteed to create resistance and even resentment aimed at you and your changes. Take some time to settle into your role before you make any major changes to the way the team works. Observe its performance from a leadership perspective and talk to people about how things work.

Once you've settled in, write a team charter that defines what you're all there to do. Next, set performance goals for each person on your team. Make sure these goals are aligned with those of your organization. Having identified some meaningful goals for your team, communicate them regularly.

You should also set yourself some personal goals, including developing any new skills you need to work more successfully in your new role.

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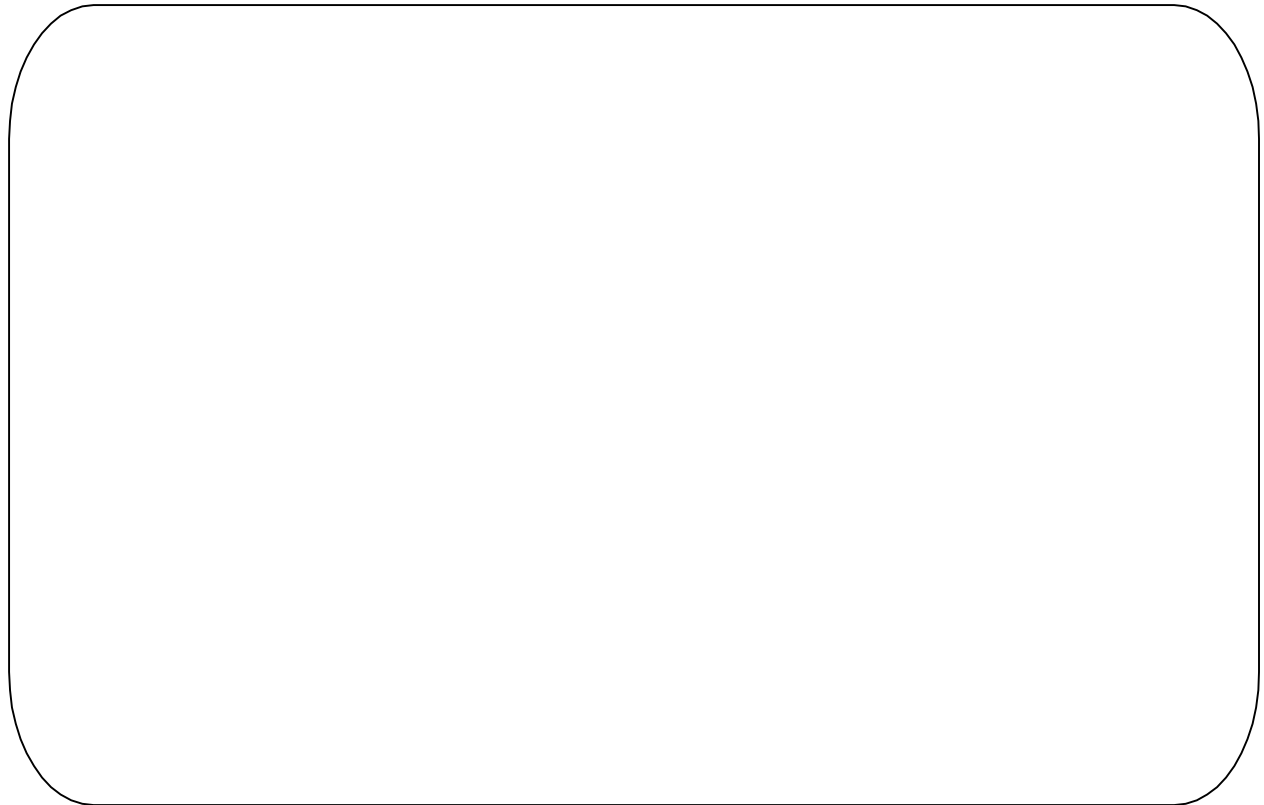
## Delegate

As a new leader of former peers, your job has changed from "getting things done" to "managing people to get things done", so it's extremely important that you delegate effectively. Do not make the mistake of thinking that you can do it all because you are the boss. You still have the same skills and abilities as yesterday (when you were one of the team). However, by not delegating, you may unintentionally communicate, "I don't trust you to do as good a job as I do."

Delegating is empowering. It is motivating, and it builds trust. The quicker you can establish trust, the stronger your new team will likely be.

There is another reason that you **must** learn to delegate: If you do not, you will quickly get overloaded and stressed, which probably means that you will be ineffective.

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## **Provide timely feedback**

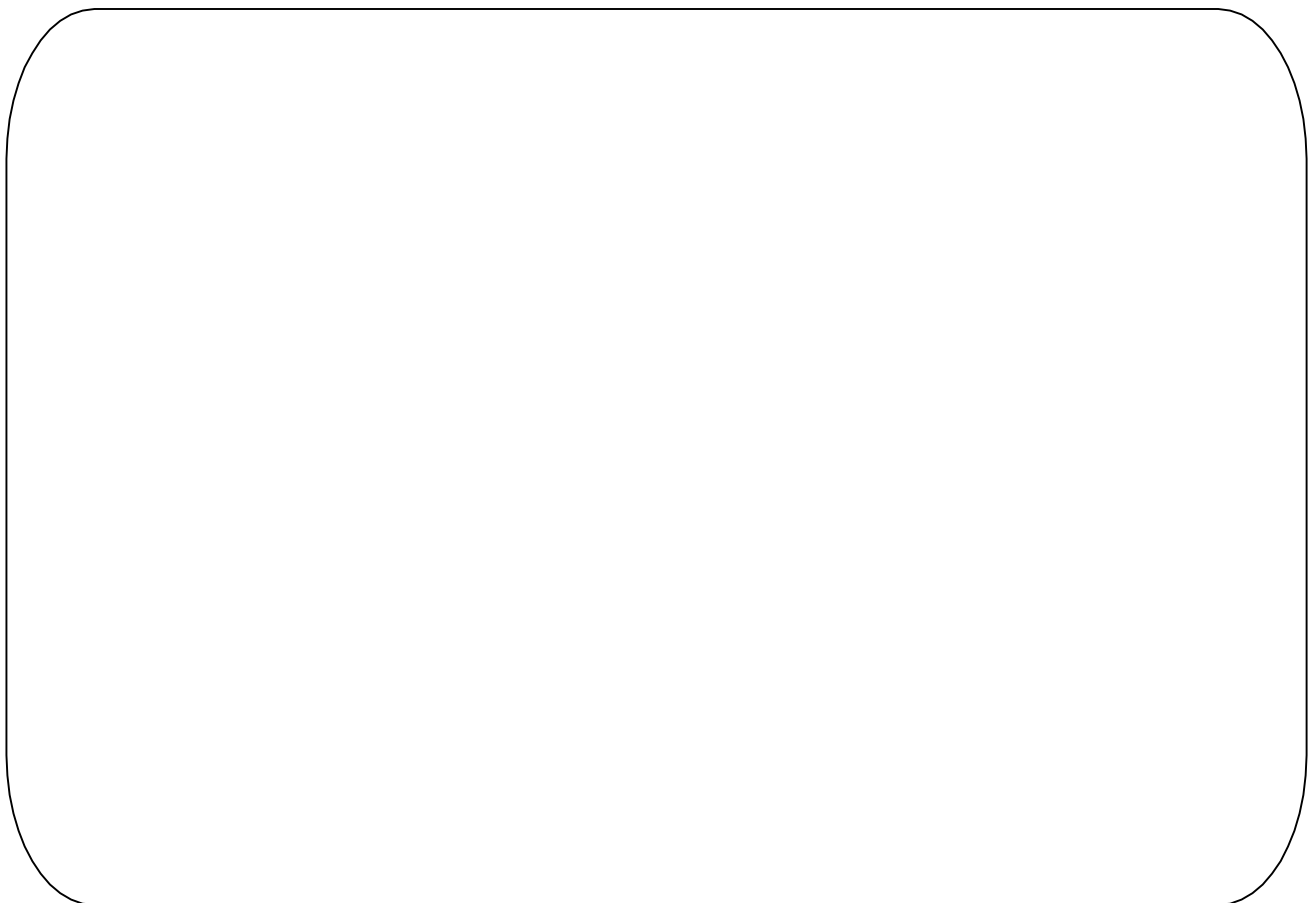
Your people can't improve if they don't know what they need to work on. And they won't stay motivated unless you praise their hard work and successes along the way. Therefore, constructive feedback and timely praise is so important. Without them, your team . s no idea how they are doing.

Try to give feedback as close to the event as possible. It's important to find the right balance between helpful, negative feedback for performance improvement and constructive positive feedback to reinforce team success.

Be consistent in your feedback. Practice frequent informal feedback discussions as performance happens. Formal weekly or monthly feedback sessions will be more productive than annual ones, so try to discuss performance frequently. This way, individuals can improve incrementally, which will lift your entire team's performance and productivity.

Also, use good judgment and sensitivity when giving feedback. Always address performance issues privately.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

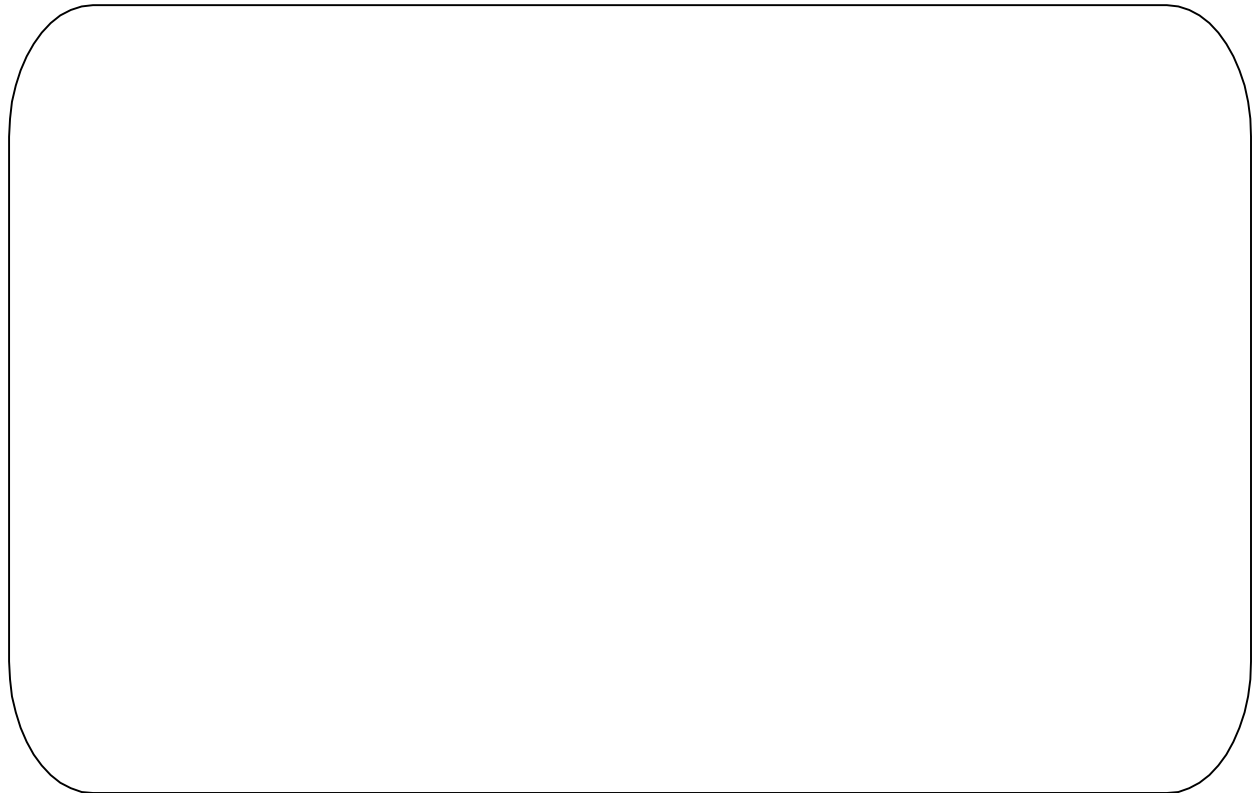
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## **Establish boundaries**

You know that you cannot be everyone's friend the way that you were before. Think about what this means and how your relationship with others will change. Give everyone equal attention – avoid spending time with just one group of people. Attend team social functions but leave early so the team can talk freely among themselves. Build a social network with your new peers (your former bosses). Dress differently – this can be a subtle indication that your position is now different. Because you know your former peers, you should be able to find ways to have conversations. Not everyone responds to openness in the same way, so remember to be sensitive to these differences, and adjust your style accordingly.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

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## **Be careful about what you say**

Unfortunately, you probably cannot be as free with your opinions as you used to be. When you express dissatisfaction with something, you may influence your team. If you say that you do not like someone, you may affect your team's attitude toward that person. As a boss, you should watch what you say and understand that your words have the power to influence the opinions and behavior of your team members.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

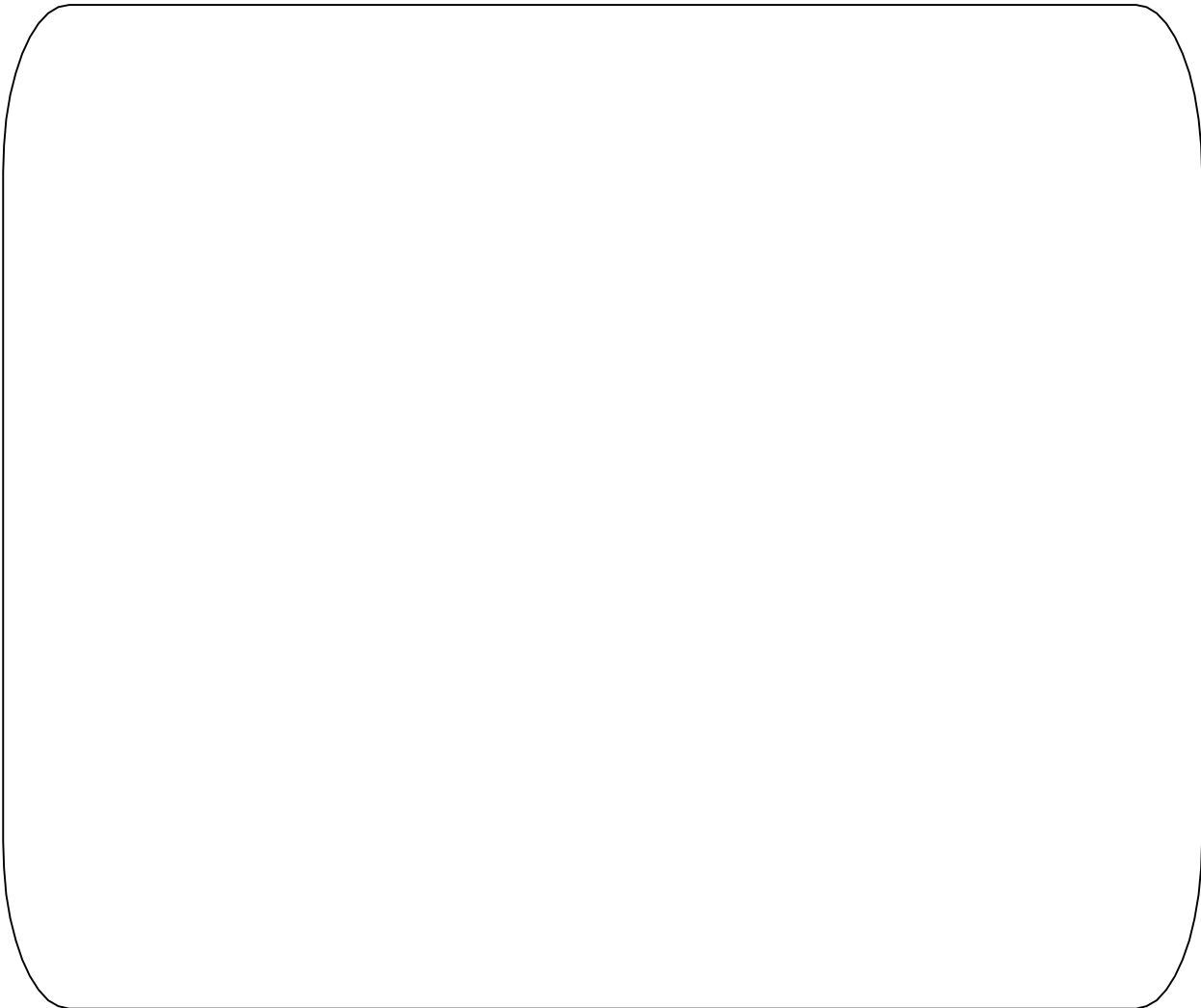
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## **Be a good role model**

As a manager, you need to be aware that your team looks to you to set an example of how to behave at work. If you want to shape team members' behavior, improve performance, and build good habits, you need to lead by example.

Show them, by your words and actions, that you mean what you say. For example, if it's important that everyone shows up for Monday morning team meetings, make sure that you never miss one yourself. If you want people to start trusting each other, demonstrate trust by sharing information about yourself. By building expertise in your team's role, and practicing what you preach, people will trust your judgment and your decisions, and feel more inclined to follow your lead.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

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## Stay flexible

Management is not a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Different situations require you to wear different hats, and the most effective managers know intuitively when they need to switch hats and change roles.

For example, sometimes you'll need to be an inspirational leader for your team. At other times they'll need you to be a mediator, a coach, or a negotiator.

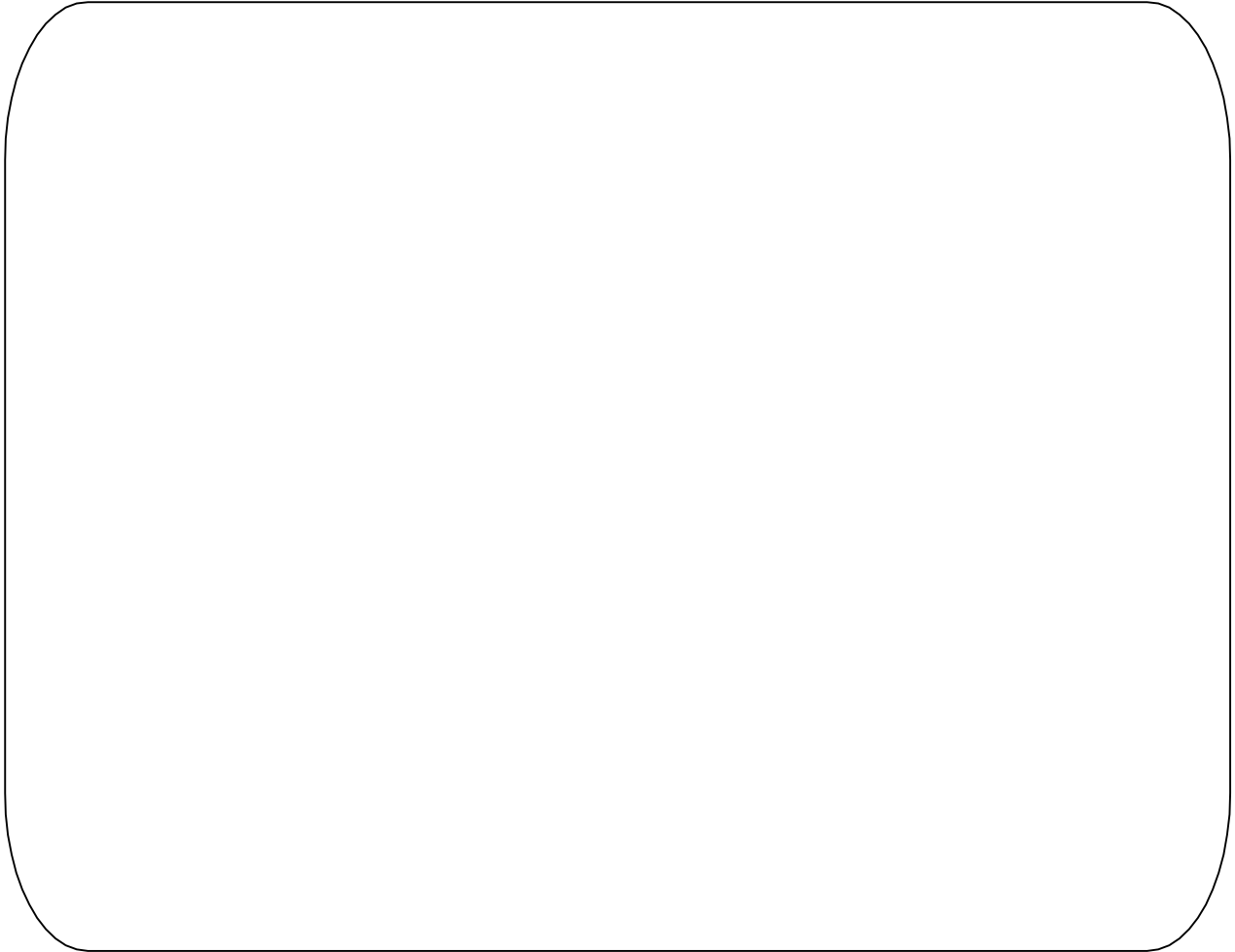
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## **Ask for training**

All too often, new bosses are left to sink or swim on their own, with no guidance – on-the-job training is not the best teacher, here. Ask for formal training, if available. Look for someone to mentor you. Be proactive in your own development and look for opportunities to improve your leadership and management skills.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

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## Work with a mentor

When you're starting out in a new role, it can be very helpful to work with a mentor who can give you feedback on your performance and coach you on the specific skills you need to be successful. They can provide invaluable advice and guidance in your new role and boost your self-confidence with support and encouragement.

To start with, write down exactly what you'd like to gain from a mentoring relationship. For example, you might want to develop expert knowledge, work closely with someone who can motivate and inspire you, or bounce ideas off someone.

To find a mentor, look within your organization first. Are there any senior leaders from whom you'd like to learn? What about leaders in your wider network?

Keep in mind that mentoring is a two-way relationship. You need to have something to offer your mentor in return for their expert advice. That might be a fresh perspective on the industry, familiarity with new technologies, introductions to other professionals you know from your previous roles, or, if they benefitted from having a mentor when they were starting out, the chance to give something back.

*To accomplish this, what do you need to do?*

