



## **Top Ten Ways To Improve Your Management Skills**

By: H. Frank Sauls, Jr., CPA

Human resource issues will always be a major concern to employers. If the manager fails to properly manage employees, the result will be a breakdown in office productivity and efficiency. In addition, there will be a decline in employee morale. Most employees are trying to achieve their highest performance level, but at the same time, they wish to have an enjoyable workplace. Both can be attained if everyone has a clear understanding of what is expected, and from whom it is expected.

Unfortunately, most supervisors/managers have had very little training in management and supervision. There have been many excellent books written on the subject, including "Leadership by The Book" by Ken Blanchard and "The One Minute Manager" by Blanchard and Spencer Johnson. However, many of us have never taken the time to read, study, and learn from this vast information base. Most of us learn by doing, making mistakes, and, hopefully, learning from those mistakes. This method can be costly in terms of employee morale and productivity.

Since the whole world is following David Letterman's example of coming up with a top ten list for everything, here is my list of the top ten ways to improve your management skills. This list is by no means a complete list, the only list, or the best list, but it is something to consider as you go about your daily work routine.

1. Delegate. Don't waste time on details or work that should be done by others. It is their job - not yours.
2. Coach employees on how to perform their jobs. Then, get out of the way, and let them do it.
3. Realistically assess your own performance, and find ways to improve it.
4. Set a good personal example for your people to follow. Be the person you want all of your employees to be.
5. Strive to be respected rather than liked. There is a difference.
6. Respect and take advice from your subordinates. They do their job everyday, so they know more about how to do it than you will.
7. Take the time to praise your employees. Everyone likes an unsolicited but well-deserved compliment.

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8. Keep your criticism constructive and specific to the problem. There are times in every employee's career when he or she must be given criticism of behavior that needs to be modified. Keep the correction focused on the problem.
9. Communicate with your employees. Let them know what is happening in the business and why it is happening
10. Train someone to take your place. Doctors have a saying that fits well here – "See one, do one, teach one." Pass along your skills, be a mentor.

Putting this list into action will not solve all your management problems, but, it may eliminate some before they occur. At least it will give you something to think about tomorrow on the way to work.

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