

# New Managers

## Developing Skills & Behaviors for Inspirational Leadership

Becoming a manager is an important milestone in an individual's career, and a make-or-break stage for your organization's talent development. New managers need a host of new skills to succeed, both technical and social-emotional. While training seminars and boot camps can equip new leaders with information and technical skills, coaching with BetterUp helps them develop the interpersonal skills they need to inspire, coach and lead their team.



## Why Developing New Managers Is So Important

1

**Great individual contributors don't necessarily have managerial skills**

The skills that make a strong manager are markedly different from those that make a strong individual contributor. Indeed, new managers must quickly develop new technical managerial skills, like delivering feedback and aligning work streams, as well as social-emotional skills like authentic communication, navigating conflict, and recognition to inspire and motivate their team.

While training and bootcamps can help managers learn the technical skills they need to succeed, social-emotional skills are much harder to develop in a one-time workshop. Opportunities to practice and refine these leadership behaviors are highly situational, and require ongoing accountability, feedback and guidance to develop.

2

**On-the-job learning isn't enough to develop managers**

Most new managers 'fail or flail'. An estimated 50% of new managers fail within their first year on the job.<sup>1</sup> Of the 50% who don't outright fail, most 'flail'—learning by trial and error to move slowly up the competency curve.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that most new managers struggle is not surprising when we look at how new managers are prepared (or not prepared) for their new roles. According to a survey by DDI of 1,130 frontline managers, only 11% said they were groomed to be a leader, and **57% said they learned their leadership skills through trial and error.**<sup>3</sup> In fact, a McKinsey study revealed most companies' training budgets under-fund new manager development, focusing instead on frontline employees and executives.<sup>4</sup>

When managers aren't getting enough support for the technical elements of managing, you can be sure they're not developing the soft skills they need to nurture, coach and motivate their teams.

3

**The cost of manager failure is high**

Across industries, studies show manager effectiveness has a huge impact on team performance, affecting engagement, creativity, productivity and retention. Strong managers boost team performance and retention, and poor managers hamper it.

In fact, **50% of attrition is due to poor managers.**<sup>5</sup> A Gallup study found out of 7,200 people surveyed, over 50% left "to get away from their manager." Another cost of poor managerial skills is that bad managers 'poison the well' of team engagement.<sup>6</sup> Manager effectiveness accounts for 70% of variance of engagement— more than any other factor. This means **poor managers are the single biggest driver of disengagement.**

Industry-specific reports have quantified this effect in monetary terms. One report showed strong manager effectiveness at a Fortune 500 mortgage lender could mean a difference of \$5.7M in pre-tax profit.<sup>7</sup> Another estimates the cost of a failed sales manager is \$4M.<sup>8</sup>

## Leadership and Interpersonal Skills are Critical

Only 10% of senior leaders say their companies' frontline manager training effectively prepares managers to lead. The 10% of companies that do find their training effective **emphasizes leadership and interpersonal skills**, not technical skills.<sup>9</sup> While technical managerial skills are often easier to teach and measure, interpersonal skills drive manager performance equally, if not more. For instance, empathy has been proven as a key driver in manager performance,<sup>10</sup> but empathy is difficult to teach in a classroom setting.

## BetterUp Coaching for Soft Skills That Lead to Managerial Excellence

With so much on the line, companies must ensure their new managers are equipped with technical managerial skills, company-specific protocols, and most importantly, skills to inspire, motivate, and coach their teams. Coaching with BetterUp can augment new manager trainings or bootcamps, to develop relationship skills proven to enhance leadership effectiveness:

### Includes

- Open Communication
- Trust Climate
- Fostering Participation
- Empathy
- Active Listening

### Elevates

- Inspiring your Team
- Coaching
- Recognition
- Encouraging Ownership

### Drives

- Envisioning Goals
- Navigating Conflict
- Delivering Feedback
- Influence

Developing these interpersonal leadership skills and behaviors requires a methodology that matches to the way individuals learn and adopt them. To change or create new behaviors, the BetterUp coaching features:



### Personalized 1:1 relationship with an expert

Just-in-time skill development, to tackle new challenges as they arise, and .... share best practices in new and unfamiliar circumstances.



### Continuous (not episodic) engagement

Interpersonal skills and leadership behaviors are not developed in a single afternoon or during a week-long offsite. Coaches work with new managers in high-frequency, low intensity interactions, so managers can shape and refine leadership skills and behaviors over time.



### Built-in accountability

Without accountability, the desire to be a better leader quickly becomes a good intention that falls by the wayside as pressing day-to-day matters take precedent. Coaches ensure that new managers develop the skills they need, not relying on their old, Individual Contributor ways of getting work done.



### Practice with feedback

A safe space to try on new behaviors, reflect on how the new behavior worked, and receive personalized, objective, development-oriented feedback is the difference between trial and error and real skill development.

Coaching is proven to deliver faster onboarding in new roles, faster leadership development, and higher emotional intelligence.<sup>11</sup> New managers benefit significantly from coaching to develop leadership skills and avoid common pitfalls when entering the new role. By using the most effective tool to develop the critical soft skills that make successful managers, companies can aid this important transition.

## Sources

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## About BetterUp

BetterUp unlocks the potential of emerging leaders with career coaching to build leadership behaviors at scale. The personalized development approach gives these employees accountability, guidance, and feedback to develop skills and leadership behaviors so they can thrive in their current role and hone capabilities for the long term. BetterUp energizes high potential employees, prepares rising leaders for new challenges, drives measurable improvement in workforce KPIs, fast tracks leadership development, and helps enterprise employees find more meaning at work.

For more information on BetterUp, visit [betterup.co](https://betterup.co) or email [getbetterup@betterup.co](mailto:getbetterup@betterup.co)