

**EBOOK**

# 3 FATAL MISTAKES MANAGERS MAKE WHEN COACHING THEIR TEAMS

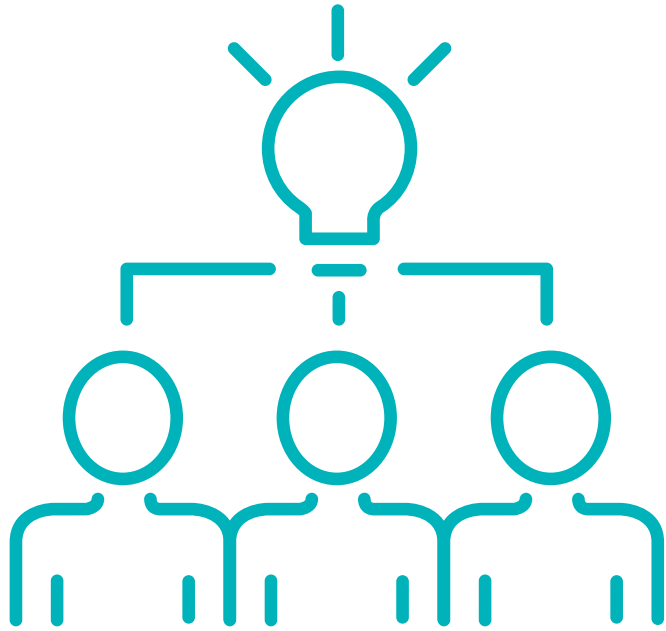
You want to empower your managers and create a positive coaching culture at your company. However, you feel like your managers aren't reaching their full potential.

As a leadership and development professional, your job is to provide your managers with the resources they need to deepen their leadership skills and motivate their people.



When managers are unable to lead and coach effectively, mistakes are made, and sometimes that can be fatal to your organization.

**Here are three common management mistakes and how to avoid them.**



# 1. Failing to Communicate Effectively

Communication is one of the most important facets of successful management. When managers communicate infrequently, they can appear superior or not part of the team. On the other side of the spectrum, managers who communicate too frequently may accidentally share confidential information or become too chummy with staff members.

Successful communication requires balance and transparency. Managers should ask their people for feedback and empower them to share their ideas. They should listen to their employees' problems and make them feel valued.





## 2. Failing to Earn Trust

Managers should maintain a strong level of trust with their team. When managers don't trust their employees, they erect a wall between themselves and their people.

## Here are a few common signs of distrust:

- **Micromanaging employees:** Hovering over employees is not only demoralizing and frustrating, but it can also hinder an employee's growth and performance.
- **Controlling freedom:** When managers control their staff's freedom, they thwart collaboration, development, and the flow of good ideas. Managers should encourage autonomy. That also means giving employees the freedom to make mistakes.
- **Acting superior:** If you act like you're better than your staff, you will not only hurt their morale but you'll also lose respect and trust. Be a role model for your employees and treat them as you would want to be treated if you were in their position.
- **Acting unfairly:** It's impossible to think of every employee as being the same. However, you should treat them all equally. Playing favorites will not earn you respect or trust. It can also cause resentment and unhealthy competition within your team.

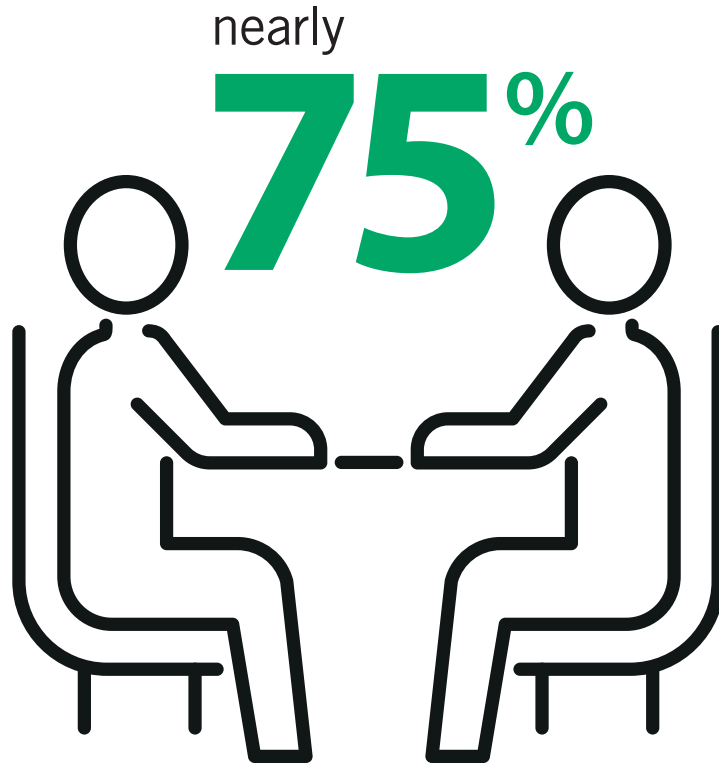


### 3. Failing to Coach

There's more to being a manager than managing; managers must know how to coach, too. Providing day-to-day coaching is one of the most important qualities of a great manager.

Coaching is essential when it comes to your employees' performance, productivity, and overall happiness. It has a positive impact on their

- **Sense of trust**
- **Emotional outlook**
- **Sense of value**
- **Passion for work**
- **Company loyalty**
- **Company advocacy**




of organizations  
recognize coaching  
as a necessary  
leadership capacity.





**Yet only 5 percent claim to have trained their managers in coaching behaviors.**

*(Study conducted by Arnott and Sparrow [2004] with 1,153 organizations, and The Ken Blanchard Companies with 100 organizations)*



When leaders coach their people,  
it has significant positive effects  
on employee development,  
performance, and productivity.

# Nearly half of managers spend less than



**percent** of their time coaching others—that percentage should be much higher.

*(Source: 2014 study by the Conference Board)*

## Managers Who Can Coach Make All the Difference

Behind every great employee is a great manager. In fact, the single most important managerial competency that separates highly effective managers from average managers is coaching, according to the 2015 *Harvard Business Review*.




But it's not just your managers who are relying on you to provide them with the resources they need to coach effectively—your company is, too.





When Blanchard asked employees of 100 organizations in a 2016 study what their number-one concern was, respondents said it was **getting their managers to be more coach-like.**



A photograph of two men in business suits standing by a large window. The man on the left is younger, with dark hair, and has his right hand raised with fingers spread, looking out the window. The man on the right is older, with grey hair, and is looking at the younger man. A semi-transparent green box with white text is overlaid on the bottom half of the image.

Your company has invested in your managers and you want them to be effective leaders. So how can you ensure your managers have the resources and tools they need to become great coaches?

# FOUR KEY COACHING SKILLS

Coaching takes place through conversations. When training managers to be more coach-like, organizations should consider these four essential skills:

Listen to Learn



Inquire for Insight



Tell *Your* Truth



Express Confidence



# Skill 1: Listen to Learn

Listening is one of the most essential skills any manager can have. It makes direct reports feel valued and heard, and it builds trust.

Good listeners avoid offering advice (unless it's solicited) and they don't derail the conversation by offering up a time when they were in the same situation (again, unless it's solicited).

They know it's important to be fully present, so good listeners don't multitask during a conversation. They also focus on what the other person is saying and respond in ways that make others feel heard and valued. In any interaction, managers should:

- Listen with the intent of understanding the other person
- Set aside distractions
- Focus on the person and give their undivided attention



## Skill 2: Inquire for Insight

Great managers draw their people out. They ask questions that allow employees to share insights and ideas that can benefit projects, tasks, and the team as a whole. And it helps the manager to understand the underlying motivations in regard to what drives behavior.

When inquiring for insight, focus on moving forward rather than on the past, and avoid placing blame. Managers should:

- Ask open-ended questions
- Emphasize *what* and *how* rather than *why*
- Encourage the direct report, once the conversation comes to an end, to recap in order to check for understanding



## Skill 3: Tell *Your* Truth

Because the goal is to create purposeful action through clarity, managers must learn that telling their truth is an opportunity to shift gears and give feedback when needed to accomplish goals.

Being honest builds trust and authenticity; it allows managers to share information that's needed to help their employee move forward. Many managers are afraid being honest will hurt others' feelings, but in all actuality, a truthful exchange can empower others. When telling their truth, managers need to:

- Be brave, honest, and respectful
- Be open to other perspectives
- Avoid blame or judgment while they focus on forward movement



## Skill 4: Express Confidence

When managers express confidence in their people, it builds employees' self-assurance and enthusiasm. In conversations with others, managers should:

- Highlight relevant qualities or skills
- Point out previous successes
- Offer support as needed

These skills will help managers interact with their people more effectively and promote clarity and positivity.

If you want your managers to deepen their leadership skills, you must teach them to use coaching skills and encourage a strong coaching culture within your organization. Help them transform from being OK managers to being winning managers by signing them up for our Coaching Essentials program, which will provide your managers with the mindset of an effective coach, the coaching process, and effective coaching skills that will help their teams accelerate their performance.





To learn more about how to implement a successful coaching process at your organization, visit  
**[www.kenblanchard.com/coachingessentials](http://www.kenblanchard.com/coachingessentials)**  
or call **+1.760.233.6725**



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