

Transitioning from Peer to Boss

Whether you take the lead on a project or accept a promotion to the supervisor or manager level, you will likely continue to interface with those who were your peers.



As the needs of the workplace change, you may find yourself with an opportunity to take on more responsibility.

Keep these tips in mind to make the transition smooth for you as well as those working for you.

Treat everyone with dignity, respect, and courtesy. Others' goals and feelings of self worth are as important as your own. Adopt the mindset that being a supervisor does not mean that you are superior. Strive to set the tone of a workplace where everyone is important.

Lead by example. Model the performance and conduct that you expect from others. Show people, through your daily behaviors, what it means to have integrity, a strong work ethic and a commitment to your organization's mission and values. In other words, "walk the walk."

Listen. Hone your listening skills. Focus on understanding the message your team sends you. Demonstrate that you care what others think, feel and have to say by following through on what you have heard.

Get them involved. Whenever practical and appropriate, involve direct reports in decision-making and problem-solving. Solicit their suggestions and ideas. Delegate tasks and responsibilities when appropriate and give credit where it is due.

Respect their time. Remember that your employees have important jobs to do and priorities to manage. Don't expect them to drop whatever they're doing every time you want something or whenever you feel the need for a meeting. Be helpful when it comes to employee time management.

Be firm, fair and consistent. Hold everyone, including yourself, equally accountable for following the rules, exhibiting appropriate behavior, meeting job responsibilities and achieving desired results.

"Own up" to your shortcomings. When you make a mistake, admit it and then fix it. When you don't know something, say so and then find the correct answer. Leadership does not mean having all the answers or being perfect. Transparency and truthfulness will take you far.

Focus on their success. Provide employees with information, direction, resources, feedback and support they need to be successful. Create opportunities for them to learn, grow and develop. Be a teacher, be a coach, and "catch them" doing something right.

Show your appreciation. Acknowledge employees' efforts and contributions. Let employees know that good work is truly important — and that good employees are valued and appreciated.