

Organization Design

13 Questions for New Managers

Here is an adaptation of Jill Geisler's 13 questions for new managers, and her advice about how to develop these important qualities.

Please answer the following questions, rating yourself on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most positive score. Use the small line to write your rating.

As a new manager, to what degree do you believe you are:

1. Trusted _____

When you do something that impacts others in the workplace, make sure your employees know what's going on and understand your intentions. Be as transparent as you can be or else they may assume the worst. They must know that you have their best interest in mind.

2. People-oriented _____

Learn how to get out of your comfort zone and find out more about the people you work with. It shows that you care about their lives.

3. An effective communicator _____

Do you rely on email or face to face conversation? Do you know how to "frame" your messages to others? Don't hesitate to recap a conversation and ask what the person you are talking to heard you say, said Geisler. The person may have a different impression of what you said. Recapping gives you the chance to make it clear that you both understand each other. Otherwise, "your best intentions in those conversations can end up being something else entirely," said Geisler.

4. Empathetic _____

Think about how your decisions as a manager impact other people. Listen to people. When you speak with them, it doesn't hurt to restate things and repeat what you heard them say to you.

5. Cool under pressure _____

The way a manager handles a crisis or the stress of an unexpected event can inspire or discourage their employees. When all eyes are on you, your words and actions become the style book for the organization, said Geisler. "People watch you and your competence inspires them."

6. An effective motivator _____

Do you help people see their own potential? Do you help people enjoy their work and help them want to do more? Citing the book *Intrinsic Motivation at Work* by Kenneth Thomas, Geisler said that good managers should aim to build internal motivation in their employees by inspiring a sense of competence, a sense of choice, a sense of

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meaningfulness and a sense of progress in their work. Any one of these factors can help people to get more excited about the work they do, said Geisler.

7. Good at providing feedback _____

It's important that people know where they stand with you. It inspires competence, said Geisler. She stressed the importance of giving people frequent positive and negative feedback throughout the year, rather than just during their annual review. "If we don't have the integrity to talk to people about underperformance" then we won't help them succeed, she said. And when giving positive feedback, be specific. For example, if you tell someone that you liked their work explain why – tell them what about it caught your attention.

8. Optimistic _____

Do not underestimate the power of inspiration. Keeping the faith and "reminding people the importance of what they do helps them come to work everyday," said Geisler.

Do You:

9. Effectively manage performers of all kinds _____

Geisler emphasized the platinum rule, "Do unto others as they would like done unto them." It's important for a manager to be able to deal with different personalities and to have an eye for diversity she said.

10. Work well with other leaders _____

Do you initiate collaboration with or between others? Try to communicate with others who are not directly involved with you on a regular workday basis.

11. Exercise self-control _____

Even if you recognize that you have a quality such as a short temper, are you able to control it? Do you understand when acting assertive or aggressive is the right or wrong thing to do, depending on the situation? If you can manage yourself, you can lead other people, said Geisler.

12. Cope with frustration _____

You could be scared, but do not let it show, warned Geisler. When you are frustrated with a situation, don't just focus on the problems. Look for solutions.

13. Share a vision of success _____

Do you dare to dream out loud? Geisler emphasized that it's not embarrassing to be optimistic or to share your vision with others. It can help people inspire one another.

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