

BY VAL RIES

6 MISTAKES MANAGERS MAKE

... AND HOW TO FIX THEM

WELCOME!



I'm so excited that you chose to download this mini-guide today!

I know from my own personal experience that **being a leader can be challenging.**

I have over twenty years experience transforming teams, and **understand exactly the hardships many leaders face.** Thrust into a leadership role with no training or support, I had to figure out on my own how to create top performing teams.

Using my Ideal Leadership formula **we teach unique methods** that are **proven to turn around departments, retain top talent** and **increase revenue.**

Fortune 500 companies have partnered with Executive Muse to transform their culture, increase employee engagement, and reach their full potential.

Enjoy and let me know if you implement any of these tips!

VAL RIES

MY STORY...

In 2005, I was placed into my first management role. Like most managers, I'd been promoted because I did well as an individual contributor. Like most individual contributors chosen to move into management, **I was expected to just “know” how to lead others.**

But I didn't.

I quickly learned that I couldn't expect my new team to just do things the way I had always done them. Without the right tools, resources, and training, I became increasingly frustrated.

After one particularly difficult quarter, I was fed up. I took out a piece of paper and just began to write everything that was on my mind. All the blame, irritation, and resentment toward my team just spewed onto the page.

When I reviewed what I'd written, I couldn't believe how frustrated, judgmental, and angry I had become! Underneath all the judgment, it was clear: **I was terrified to fail.** Ironically, the more my fear of failure increased, the more distant and punitive I behaved toward my team—ouch!

I came to this realization: *If I wanted to be a real leader and get great results, I had to start treating my people as valued assets. If I helped them grow, enjoy their work more, and reach their personal goals, they would thrive.*

Right then and there I stopped being consumed with deadlines, meetings, and housekeeping. **I switched my focus to my people.** I vocalized more frequently what I appreciated and valued in them. I spent time understanding what they needed and empathized more.

That team became the highest-performing in the company and increased revenue by 66%.

And I've made it my mission to help leaders get the training and support they need to rise into their full potential in their role.

Over the years, I've seen plenty of different leadership styles and the 6 mistakes found on the following pages are so common! I hope this mini guide can help you avoid or correct them in your own leadership so **you can build a cohesive, powerful team, regardless of how hopeless the situation seems**

READY? LET'S DIVE IN...

MISTAKE:

BEING EVERYWHERE BUT HERE

Leaders are busy. We have meetings, distractions and various priorities. However, we need to cut through the chaos to be present with our team when they need it. When we continually put our team on the back burner, they can get discouraged waiting for answers and solutions, especially when all they need is just a quick moment of our time.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Even if your mind is swirling from the size of your to-do list, it's important to make your employee the only priority in the moment.
- ✧ Put down the phone and computer, push aside the million distractions and give them your undivided attention... even if it's just for a minute.
- ✧ If you're stretched for time, it's OK to let them know, *“I only have 2 minutes right now, but if you need more time, let's schedule something.”*

MISTAKE:

TRYING TO BE THE HERO



Many leaders feel their job is to answer all the questions and take everything on. I want to relieve you of this burden. It's OK not to always be the problem solver and have all the answers. Not only does this put too much on your shoulders, but it also doesn't allow your team the opportunity to shine.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Allow the employee to be the hero, even if you have the answers.
- ✧ Trust the team to develop the solution.
- ✧ If they're struggling, ask open-ended questions like, *“what are your thoughts on this,”* or *“what do you think is the best answer?”*

NOTE: I know there will be times when leaders **do** need to offer the solution for efficiency's sake, but make this the exception, not the rule.

MISTAKE:

PROVIDING TOO MUCH SYMPATHY & NOT ENOUGH EMPATHY

Many leaders care about their employees. That care is so important, except when having compassion also means having more sympathy than empathy. Sympathizing pulls the leader into the drama and personal problems of their employees. They may find themselves over apologizing or allowing employees' personal challenges to become an excuse for lack of productivity.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Observe the employee's challenge from the theater seats rather than getting up on stage with them.
- ✧ Acknowledge and validate the problem (*"It seems this event has been really frustrating"*)
- ✧ Ask the employee for the solution. ie. *"what do you need to do to move forward?"*

NOTE: Except with occasional need for sympathy (like in times of grief), remain more empathetic to challenges.

MISTAKE: #4

AVOIDING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Performance reviews... disciplinary discussions... bringing up customer complaints... Most leaders dread these every time they come up. As uncomfortable as these conversations might be, they are necessary. Left unaddressed, problems go unsolved, bad behavior or attitudes continue unabated, misunderstandings grow, resentments build, and continued poor conduct harms customer service and costs money. Challenging conversations may not be comfortable, but the sooner you have them the more quickly you'll see the changes in behavior.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Be proactive; have the difficult conversation sooner rather than later.
- ✧ If you feel triggered, try to first understand what's really bothering you. Is it a deep-rooted belief about yourself (*if this person is mean then I must be failing*), a judgement about the other person (*this person is just rude, insecure, and lazy*), or something else?
- ✧ Write down all the areas that need improvement for the employee along with things that they are doing very well. Then, have a conversation from this head space.

MISTAKE: #5

OUTWARD FRUSTRATION OR AGGRESSION

Some managers may find themselves frustrated with their teams more often than they'd like to admit. They realize they are often demanding things like: *What are you thinking? Why would you do that? That's not how things work around here.* Employee discipline isn't a matter of dominance or punishment. The more approachable you are, the more engaged your team will be.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Strive to create a safe, pleasant, and effective work environment for your team.
- ✧ Employees want to know that it's OK to make a mistake. It's important to reframe the mistake as a lesson learned and an opportunity for growth.
- ✧ Be mindful, not only about *what* you say but *how* you say it.

MISTAKE: ***OVER EXPLAINING***



At times leaders may feel unheard. When this happens, they might think they need to over-explain, repeat themselves, or just give too much information in conversations or emails. This can lead to a tuned-out team and messages that don't hit their mark. The more succinct and clear you are in your communication the more productive your team will be.

QUICK SOLUTIONS:

- ✧ Proofread your emails before you send them. Remove filler words.
- ✧ Place the most important points into bulleted lists that are easy to browse and understand.
- ✧ Ask the employee to repeat back what they heard for clarity vs. you explaining again.

Integrating these tips into your daily leadership will help you lead a highly-engaged team that everyone wants to join.

To receive more leadership support, be sure to check out my leadership courses, training and coaching options. Or book a free 20-min call to discuss your team goals.

Connect or stay in touch with me at:

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