

Enhancing Managerial Effectiveness & Mitigating Early-Stage Managerial Failures

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Abstract: *This paper seeks to investigate the challenges encountered by new managers, and the key abilities and skills required to thrive in the role. Furthermore, it will explore the role of organizations in helping managers make this transition. This paper also addresses a critical issue of poor training for novice managers entering supervisory positions in today's organizations. When these new managers aren't properly trained, then the outcomes fall short of expectations. This research indicates the importance of specialized training interventions to overcome challenges encountered by novice managers. This research fosters the development of critical skills and competencies-including leadership, team dynamics, and self-management-that drive success at both individual and organizational levels. It also improves managerial bandwidth, decreasing the probability of early management failure.*

Keywords: leadership, new manager challenges, Training & Development, Management Excellence

1. Introduction

Management is “the process of communicating, coordinating, and accomplishing action in the pursuit of organizational objectives while managing relationships with stakeholders, technologies, and other artifacts, both within as well as between organizations” (Clegg, Kornberger, & Pitsis, 2005, p. 500). It is a complex process, that comprises of five key components: money, manpower, machines, materials, and method. These components can be further classified as either active or passive. Active components include human beings (i. e manpower), while machines, materials, and money fall under passive category. Having an abundance of passive resources like machines and money is futile without efficient utilization, which requires the active participation of human beings. At the end of the day, manpower makes it happen and to be able to achieve it, a distinctive approach is required to enhance the competency of new managers during their initial stages of growth.

The journey from an aspiring manager to a seasoned leader is fraught with challenges, as early managerial missteps have become a very common issue. It is widely known that most new managers struggle to be productive, and many leadership development programs fall short of their objectives. Even though organizations place a high priority on developing leaders, the majority acknowledge that their programs for identifying and training new managers need improvement [Crane]. As per CEB research, 60% of new managers fail within the first 24 months of assuming their new positions and the primary reason they fall short is that they were not provided with adequate training on how to handle people (both within and outside their team) and lead effectively in the first place. (Arruda, W., 2023) New managers face many challenges as they transition into leadership roles. Several studies found that new managers struggle with the increased responsibilities and ambiguity in their new positions (O'Neil 2017; Hill 1993).

Currently, organizations do recognize the importance of investing in training aimed at developing coaching skills among their managers and leaders (Milner et al., 2018). These investments also aim to facilitate well-being,

performance, and organizational and individual change. (Ellinger et al., 2003; Wright, 2005; Grant & Cavanagh, 2007a). New managers also derive benefits from training that enhances in their interpersonal skills and job performance, a smoother transition into their managerial roles, and successful balancing of work and personal life. Training is progressively becoming a crucial asset in the development of new managers. (Medland J., 2009) There is crucial emphasis on attributes like character, fundamental intelligence, and work ethic, in addition to the requisite knowledge and work experience essential for the role. (Collins, J., 2009).

Overall, a more structured and coordinated approach to organizational training seems necessary. It is important to dispel the notion that all leaders are innately trainable; Instead, these skills need to be acquired and developed over time. Effective training is rapidly becoming an important component in promoting successful leadership and positive workplace culture, as supported by research (Ellinger et al, 2011; Stehlik et al 2014).

2. Objective of Study

This study aims to examine the challenges that managers encounter in today's organizational environment. The research objectives are as follows:

- a) Analyze the areas where new managers fail while transitioning to the new role.
- b) Present tangible solutions that are rooted in effective training methods to equip managers with the necessary skills to navigate and address the complexities posed by these challenges.

3. Literature Review

Receiving a promotion brings excitement, yet navigating the shift into a managerial role presents one of the most formidable hurdles for individuals who are new to leadership. Management is essentially three-part framework that includes, how to lead yourself, build your team, and lead your team. It recommends that before leading the team, managers need to learn to manage themselves. Also, to lead

the team, it is important to learn to keep trust, vulnerability, and ownership in company culture that will help achieve results managers much lead, manage, and coach to be excellent [Hawk, R. (2020)].

One of the main responsibilities of strategic management has evolved into the company's human resource orientation, and human resources play a significant part in all strategic decisions. More and more we recognize that it does not matter, what call "people", "labor", "intellectual capital", "human capital", "human resources" or any other name - there hidden inside them the main riches of the enterprise. They are crucial to strategic success and competitive advantage (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007, p4)

Most of the organizations follow the practice of promoting individuals based on technical expertise instead of focusing on a person's leadership, coaching, or inspiring skills. This is because, even if a person's field of expertise is unrelated to managing people, rising in one's career often entails entering the management ranks. But working in management calls for a completely different set of capabilities. If these skills are not acquired, the individual performance falls short of expectations, and they tend to experience frustration. Consequently, such promotion will only result into failed leadership. (Valcour, M., (2021)

It is noteworthy that nearly half of those stepping into managerial roles for the first-time encounter difficulties. Furthermore, first-time managers are often expected to assume full responsibility right from the outset (AmesonS, 2005). This transition from being an individual contributor to taking on a managerial role is a pivotal moment that profoundly affects both the professional and personal aspects of an individual's life. This shift has the potential to significantly shape the trajectory of a person's career. A career, in essence, is the pursuit of a particular occupation over an extended period, offering opportunities for advancement (Lindberg, 2002). The initial year of assuming a managerial role is particularly formative for first-time managers, as it molds their leadership philosophies and styles in ways that can have lasting consequences for their future careers (Hill, 2007).

During this transition period. first-time managers often encounter disorienting dilemmas, that can trigger transformative learning. These dilemmas are intense personal or external challenges or experiences that compel individuals to question beliefs they once considered unquestionable (Wiessner & Mezirow, 2000). This transition is not easy but with the right training approach, it is simpler than one might think. As a manager, one can benefit from a list of experiences, observations, vision, and other qualities that, if harnessed to overcome passive power, can transform you into an effective, organized leader. Being a manager is the very first step towards leadership and bringing the change and success to the organization. One must allow your true self to emerge by knowing your wants, capabilities, ambitions, satisfying experiences, and personal and organizational values and priorities. (Bennis, W., 1989)

Successful businesses are aware of and respect their workforce. They put in lot of effort to offer competitive

compensation, gratifying benefits, and supportive work conditions because they recognize that the success of any organization depends heavily on its workforce. It has been discovered that when employees are treated fairly and cherished, business prospers [Forbes]. It is the responsibility of organization leaders to manage the people and processes to sustain and improve business outcomes. Unfortunately, sometimes poor leadership practices and habits may undermine team dynamics and hurt performance of the business. Therefore, organizations pour huge resources into developing leadership programmes to unlock potential and achieve the best business performances. (Westfall, 2019).

Effective training strategies are crucial in helping new managers to overcome the challenges that they face when they enter the new role. It has been revealed that a corporate training program aimed at increasing communication between managers and subordinates and improving problem solving was effective against its objectives but time with increased demand for scalable, traceable, and effective executive education comes new competitors. This competition has led to the creation of a variety of training programs for new managers, including coaching, practice courses and e-learning courses. In addition, it is crucial that the effective training must be relevant to managers' roles and responsibilities and delivered in a manner consistent with their learning styles and aspirations.

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research Design

The research methodology employed in this study adheres to a quantitative and qualitative approach. To comprehensively evaluate and solicit insights into various dimensions of managerial challenges and the requisite support, a survey questionnaire was meticulously crafted. This questionnaire comprised of ten questions that encompass both structured and open-ended inquiries.

The questionnaire focuses on:

- 1) Gathering fundamental demographic information from the participants.
- 2) A question entailing the ranking of the following skills/competencies in order of priority:
 - Team Management
 - Prioritization & Time Management
 - Delegation
 - Communication (both written and oral)
 - Performance Management
 - Conflict Management
 - Goal Setting
 - Problem solving & decision-making
 - Customer Focus
 - Relationship Building
 - Emotional Intelligence
 - Creativity & Innovation
 - Strategic Thinking
 - Understanding Business
 - Understanding Budget
- 3) Identifying the top three areas where new managers encounter challenges/difficulties.

- 4) Determining the top three measures that organizations can undertake to assist new managers.
- 5) Seek opinion on any competencies or skills that may have been overlooked but are vital for the success of new managers.

4.2 Participants

This study involved the participation of 35 seasoned professionals occupying senior positions across diverse industries and organizational landscapes. The rationale behind selecting such group was to gather insights from individuals who have directly observed managerial errors and can offer recommendations on avoiding them through appropriate support mechanisms.

4.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected using an online survey that was accompanied by explicit instructions for completing it.

4.4 Data Analysis

Data obtained through the survey questionnaire was analysed using Microsoft Excel. This analysis facilitated the generation of pertinent charts, tables, reports, and, ultimately, interpretations and recommendations based on the gathered data.

5. Results and Findings

The data collected from the survey was analyzed to form a pattern, identifying common and uncommon occurrences. Data was analyzed for ranking question using MS excel to derive the prioritized order of the skills/competences. Open-ended questions were analyzed to gather common feedback and the steps that organizations need to take to support new managers.

5.1 Participant Profile

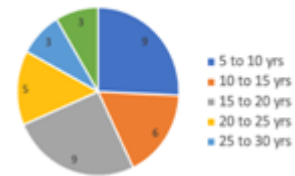
Participants from varied background (listed below) and with considerable experience (minimum 5 + years in a managerial role) provided the inputs.

- IT (e-commerce, SAP, Database, Telecom, Software Development, Software Quality)
- Learning & Development
- Law
- Human Resources

Table 1: Experience level of participants

Experience	Participants
5 to 10 yrs	9
10 to 15 yrs	6
15 to 20 yrs	9
20 to 25 yrs	5
25 to 30 yrs	3
30+ yrs	3
Total	35

Years of Industry Experience



5.2 Ranking of Competencies

Every participant provided rankings for competencies based on their experience and knowledge. Subsequently, this survey data was then analyzed to derive a list of the competencies sorted by the rank.

Table 1: Ranking of Competencies

Competency	Rank
Prioritization & Time Management	1
Communication (written/oral)	2
Delegation	3
Goal Setting	4
Emotional Intelligence	5
Relationship Building	6
Team Management	7
Problem solving & Decision-making	8
Conflict Management	9
Performance Management	10
Customer Focus	11
Understanding Budget	12
Understanding Business	13
Strategic Thinking	14
Creativity & Innovation	15

Below are some of the opinions and suggestions by participants on new manager transition

- 1) New managers tend to over commit to keep everyone happy that ultimately leads to under delivery.
- 2) Manager should learn about the team that includes strengths and weaknesses of team members to get best results
- 3) Balancing authority with fostering team motivation and collaboration can be difficult for new managers, leading to issues with team dynamics.
- 4) Sometimes new managers find it hard to delegate tasks effectively, either micromanaging or delegating too much, which impacts overall team autonomy and performance.
- 5) Managers seem to fear failures. Not big failures, it can be small ones like a team presentation going bad. Such events prevent them from giving a free hand to subordinates. Overly caution attitude is not recommended.
- 6) Letting go of the behaviour associated with being an individual contributor is not easy for some new managers. They need to make a conscious effort to embrace their new role
- 7) Managers may excel in one area but have significant shortcomings in other areas which can disrupt the team dynamics. For example, a manager might be proficient in prioritisation and delegation but struggles when it comes to conflict management or building relationship.

- 8) Starting from day one, new managers are expected to manage a team, deliver results and understand the strategic plan of organization and contribute to its implementation. These things are a lot to handle without any support from organization.
- 9) New managers should be provided with a mentor/guide during their first year to learn the nuances of management. Some organizations take succession plan seriously and invest in individuals before moving to the two manager role
- 10) Most of the time, new managers are not briefed clearly about their role and responsibility which leads to issues in future.
- 11) Shadowing a mentor or senior member of the organization before moving to manager role can be helpful.

6. Conclusion

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that new manager training is one of the most crucial aspects for leadership for any organization. Training offers new managers benefits akin to those experienced by executives. These advantages encompass enhanced interpersonal skills, improved performance, successful adaptation to their managerial roles, and the ability to achieve work-life integration.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Dr. Pranali Lute, PhD, MBA, Dip. TD who supported and encouraged at every step during this journey. It would not have happened without her support.

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