



Management Roles

Managers play several roles and are tasked with a great deal of responsibility. Which of the following do you see as the major roles you play? Are there any that you do not currently play? Is there anything that is missing from the list? What do you see as your most important role?

1. Hiring/firing. With great talent, the rest is easy. Managers often take short-cuts when it comes to screening and selection. On the flip side, many managers hold on to poor performers for far too long. A strong staff is your strongest asset. Do all you can to hire and maintain this strength.

2. Managing performance. This is a broad category, and includes clarifying and setting expectations and goals, coaching, measuring, and monitoring employees' work, addressing performance problems, providing feedback and recognition, coaching, developing, training, and conducting performance reviews. To be a strong leader, this must be the focus of your job.

3. Developing the team. In addition to individual employee management and development, a manager is responsible for the development of a high-performing team. An interdependent team is more productive than a group of individuals working independently.

4. Setting overall direction. A manager sets the long and short-term direction of the team. This includes the vision, mission, goals, and objectives. All of these should involve others, particularly your team members.

5. Being an important and supportive team member. You are not just the leader of your team; you are a member of it. This requires a delicate balance and a constant assessment of boundaries, but it is important that your staff sees you as one of them, rather than an "us vs. them" scenario.

6. Doing unique work that no one else can do. Every manager has their own set of individual responsibilities. Managers should be careful to make sure that they are *really* doing work that only they can do, not work that they like to do, are good at, or don't trust their team to do.

7. Managing resources. Managers must make sure the team has the resources they need to do their work, while at the same time making sure that a team does not overspend or waste resources.

8. Improving processes and quality. While individuals should take responsibility for the quality of their own work, managers are usually in the best position to see the overall workflow and adjust and improvements.

9. Developing self. Managers are not just responsible for the development of their employees and teams – they are responsible for their own development as managers as well. This includes participating in management training, seeking mentors, asking for feedback, and reading about management and leadership. By doing so, you are modeling for your team continuous improvement and awareness that there is always room for growth.

10. Communicating information. Strong managers make sure information is flowing from above, sideways, and upwards. They are *never* the bottleneck in the information highway.