

# How to make the move from manager to leader

Do you know the difference between a manager and a leader?

While quite often they share the same job description. When it comes to the way they work, the two differ quite significantly.

- **Managers:** are task focused. They administer, plan, co-ordinate, implement systems, focus on processes and structures, and delegate. Managers tend to ask how and when.
- **Leaders:** are people focused. They coach, provide training and support, inspire action, and invest time in their people to ensure that everyone is working towards the same goal. Instead of how and when, leaders tend to ask why.

The leadership approach brings better staff retention, says Andrew Morris, director at Robert Half.

## Learning the ropes

When you're first promoted to people management there's a good chance that you will need to learn the ropes of a new role. Once you've mastered the basics, it's really worth taking the time to step back and decide what type of leader you want to be in order to get the best out of your team.

## Moving from management to leadership

Whilst some leaders are born, others learn. When the time's right, you too can become a leader who oozes confidence, honesty, great communication and delegation skills, creativity, intuition, and all those qualities that naturally inspire those around you to do the best job they can.

If you need more confidence to take this step, speak to the top leaders in your organisation and you'll find that not all were born running.

**Then it's time to get started with these tips:**

- **Tip 1:** The first thing you need to do to improve your game is understand your current **management style** says Morris. How do you manage your team or department? What do you think makes a great leader? What type of support does your team need?
- **Tip 2:** Ask your manager or HR to assist. They can give advice, and possibly coach you or provide learning materials.
- **Tip 3:** Take a **personality** test such as DiSC or Hogan's Assessment. These tests can really help you learn about your own behavioural style and that of others in your team, says Morris. The more you understand your own behavioural patterns the better you will lead.
- **Tip 4:** Focus on what you do well. Rather than trying to become another person, concentrate on doing more of what you do well, says Morris. Then look at aspects of your leadership that you can improve.
- **Tip 5:** Invest in your people. Look at your team and ask yourself what you can do to grow them as people and employees. The more you empower your staff the greater the payback for you as a leader and your organisation.
- **Tip 6:** Take it one step at a time. You can't become an instant leader. Work on one aspect of your self-development at a time. If you can line up a **mentor** to be an adviser and soundboard, all the better.
- **Tip 7:** Be open to feedback. The best leaders have a symbiotic relationship with their staff where they can learn from each other. Take the time to seek out feedback and digest what's said to you. Think about what you can learn from this feedback and how you can grow.

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