



6 Steps to Strengthening Your Managers

Expectations of managers have changed dramatically in the past few years. From onboarding through exit, managers define and drive the employee experience. Yet, many are struggling under the weight of new demands, hybrid and remote work, and a dearth of support resources.

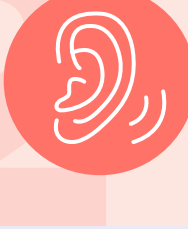
Take these steps to help your managers be their best, and reignite engagement and productivity to cultivate a thriving workforce.

#1 Go deep with manager training

What are the hallmarks of an outstanding manager?



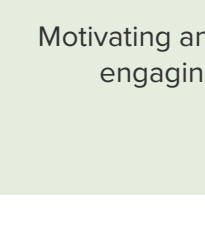
Guiding and coaching.



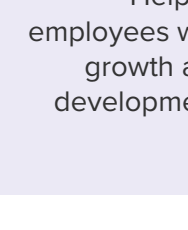
Listening, problem solving, and advocacy.



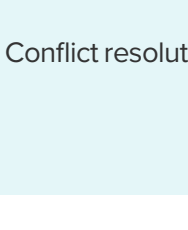
Providing clarity and eliminating obstacles that throttle performance.



Motivating and engaging.



Helping employees with growth and development.



Conflict resolution.

Developing these qualities takes time. Help managers through:

- Long-term mentorship programs with other highly skilled managers.
- Management and leadership apprenticeship programs that provide practical job skills.
- Courses on soft skills.
- Scenario training.
- Manager peer-support groups.
- Reducing managerial responsibilities not related to people for first-time managers to prevent burnout.
- More frequent check-ins between people managers and their managers.

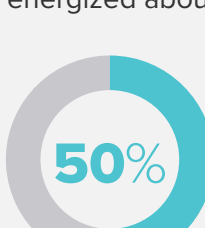


70% of a team's engagement is influenced by managers¹

#2 "Quiet quitting" or "loud quitting?" Help managers to be more effective.

Who are "quiet quitters?"

Employees who decide not to go above and beyond at work. They are still engaged but not energized about work.



Quiet quitters are 50% of the workforce²

Who are "loud quitters?"

Employees who are actively disengaged.



Loud quitters are 18% of the workforce²

Beware: This number has grown since 2021, especially among people under 35 and managers!

Did you know?

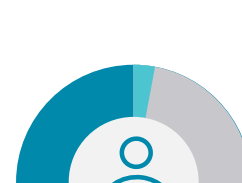
The least effective managers have **3X-4X** as many people in the 'quiet quitting' category compared to the most effective leaders³

Now what?

Uncover what's happening in your workforce:

- Conduct anonymous longitudinal and pulse surveys.
- Engage senior leadership in being transparent around issues.
- Start an anonymous employee suggestion box — read, report, and act upon the recommendations.
- Gather/analyze data from your performance management system to determine the health of manager-employee relationships and the links between goal accomplishment, productivity, and engagement.

...and follow steps 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6!



62% of employees who rank their managers highly are willing to go the extra mile and only **3%** are quietly quitting³

#3 Pull back and focus on relationship-building

Business leaders are worried about declining productivity. Determine the real impact to your organization in the long-term. Maybe letting employees retreat to recover from the trauma and burnout of the past few years is a better short-term strategy than adding more pressure to constantly go the extra mile. **Focus on:**



Strengthening relationships through frequent check-ins between managers and employees.



Encouraging continual conversations between managers and employees about professional development and helping employees find ways to learn and grow.



Having managers conduct stay interviews.



Reimagining your culture as one of **collaborative community**.



Supporting managers with their own growth and development.

0.5X-2X cost to replace an employee based on their salary⁴

#4 Senior leaders: lean in to your middle managers

Top performers promoted to management don't necessarily have the mix of skills to be good managers. Many managers feel ill-equipped, inadequately supported, and burned out.

Among managers...

1/3 are stressed out much of the day

40% have too many competing priorities

8% strongly agree that performance reviews encourage them to improve⁵

6 ways to strengthen your managers:

- Have frequent 1:1 conversations: What are they experiencing? Struggling with? Where are they seeing success and why?
- Involve upper management in learning skills around conflict resolution, coaching, adaptive learning, and change enablement.
- Help them set goals tied to development of soft and hard skills required for leadership.
- Pair them with a mentor.
- Assign skip-level managers as accountability partners for new managers.
- Provide technology tools that offer guidance, insights, and templates so they can be the best versions of themselves with their employees.

39% higher engagement among managers who work for engaged leaders⁶

#5 Work on building trust

...especially between managers and their direct reports.

Retaining and engaging employees rests heavily on the relationship the employee has with their manager, as well as their team. **What matters most?**

No. 1 quality for senior leaders: **Trust⁷**

No. 1 quality for managers: **Authenticity⁷**

Employees are more likely to stay when their work priorities are clear and they receive regular feedback, but...

<1/3 receive clear guidance from their managers

Ongoing communication is critical in an era of hybrid and remote work.

Managers play a leading role in helping employees:

- Understand the business strategy, how they contribute, and role expectations.
- Connect expectations to team goals and overall business strategy.
- Adjust goals as needed, stay focused, and maintain the right priorities.
- Feel valued and recognized for their work.

#6 Give managers the tools they need to coach and develop their employees

Betterworks 2022 State of Performance Enablement Report shows that employees want more...

- > frequent check-ins
- > development conversations
- > collaboration with their managers

But get less...

33% receive coaching on goal progress twice yearly or less

53% don't discuss career/growth opportunities more than once a quarter

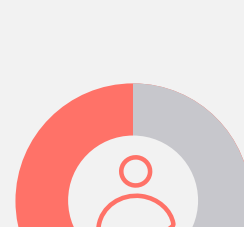
Employees want check-ins with managers to be more focused on...

33% Career growth

31% Goals

30% Collaboration

Empower managers with guidance and technology that promotes ongoing conversations in the flow of work and provides a way to capture performance and development conversations in a consistent and measurable way. Help your managers deliver and build the trust they need to help their teams excel.



54% increase in engagement among employees who have weekly 1:1s with their manager⁸

Empower your managers to have better and more effective conversations. Download **The Manager's Ultimate Guide to Great Conversations** to learn how.

[Download the Guide](#)

Discover Betterworks

Companies like Colgate-Palmolive, Intuit, Freddie Mac, and Udemy rely on Betterworks as their performance management infrastructure — enabling great performance through dedicated people technology.

Betterworks' best-in-class HR talent management solutions are designed to drive exceptional performance by putting employee experience at the heart of how companies align, motivate, retain, and develop their people. Unlike legacy HR technology, Betterworks is a lightweight, enterprise-ready solution that integrates with the tools employees use every day.

Endnotes:
1 How to Improve the Employee Experience, Gallup
2 Is Quiet Quitting Real?, Gallup

3 Quiet Quitting Is About Bad Bosses, Not Bad Employees, HBR
4 This Fixable Problem Costs U.S. Businesses \$1 Trillion, Gallup
5 The Antidote to Manager Burnout, Gallup

6 15 Skills Senior Leaders Must Master to be Great Managers of Managers, Lighthouse
7 Microsoft Work Trend Index Pulse Report
8 Managers Can't Do It All, HBR