

# Notebook - The Making of a Manager

kindle

Zhuo, Julie

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## Page 9 | Highlight

(Crucial Conversations

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High Output Management

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How to Win Friends and Influence People),

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## Page 11 | Highlight

This is a book about how someone with no formal training learned to become a confident manager.

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A MANAGER'S JOB IS TO ... build a team that works well together, support members in reaching their career goals, and create processes to get work done smoothly and efficiently.

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This is the crux of management: It is the belief that a team of people can achieve more than a single person going it alone. It is the realization that you don't have to do everything yourself, be the best at everything yourself, or even know how to do everything yourself. Your job, as a manager, is to get better outcomes from a group of people working together.

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what he looked at was my team's results—did we achieve our aspirations in creating valuable, easy-to-use, and well-crafted design work? The other half was based on the strength and satisfaction of my team—did I do a good job hiring and developing individuals, and was my team happy and

working well together? The first criterion looks at our team's present outcomes; the second criterion asks whether we're set up for great outcomes in the future.

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problems with coordination and motivation typically chip away at the benefits of collaboration." Hackman's research describes five conditions that increase a team's odds of success: having a real team (one with clear boundaries and stable membership),<sup>3</sup> a compelling direction, an enabling structure, a supportive organizational context, and expert coaching.

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sorting neatly into three buckets: purpose, people, and process. The purpose is the outcome your team is trying to accomplish, otherwise known as the why.

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The first big part of your job as a manager is to ensure that your team knows what success looks like and cares about achieving it.

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understanding and believing in it yourself, and then sharing it at every opportunity—from writing emails to setting goals, from checking in with a single report to hosting large-scale meetings. The next important bucket that managers think about is people, otherwise known as the who. Are the members of your team set up to succeed? Do they have the right skills? Are they motivated to do great work?

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manage people well, you must develop trusting relationships with them, understand their strengths and weaknesses (as well as your own), make good decisions about who should do what (including hiring and firing when necessary), and coach individuals to do their best. Finally, the last bucket is process, which describes how your team works together. You might have a superbly talented team with a very clear understanding of what the end goal is, but if it's not apparent how everyone's supposed to work together or what the team's values are, then even simple tasks can get enormously complicated. Who should do what by when? What principles should govern decision-

making?

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For managers, important processes to master include running effective meetings, future proofing against past mistakes, planning for tomorrow, and nurturing a healthy culture. Purpose, people, process. The why, the who, and the how.

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As the team grows in size, it matters less and less how good she is personally at doing the work herself. What matters more is how much of a multiplier effect she has on

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team.

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If I spend all my time personally selling lemonade, then I'm contributing an additive amount to my business, not a multiplicative one.

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Your role as a manager is not to do the work yourself, even if you are the best at it, because that will only take you so far. Your role is to improve the purpose, people, and process of your team to get as high a multiplier effect on your collective outcome as you can.

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Remember what I said before: great managers are made, not born. But there is one caveat, and that caveat is this: you have to enjoy the day-to-day of management and want to do it.

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Do I Find It More Motivating to Achieve a Particular Outcome or to Play a Specific Role?

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A lot of this work is unglamorous. But because it's important, it must be done, and if nobody else does it, then it falls to you.

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adaptability is a key trait of great managers.

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What they have in common is that their number one priority

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adapt to become the leaders that their organizations need. Do I Like Talking with People?

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Can I Provide Stability for an Emotionally Challenging Situation?

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the best outcomes come from inspiring people to action, not telling them what to do.

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So to be a great manager, one must certainly be a leader. A leader, on the other hand, doesn't have to be a manager.

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If you can pinpoint a problem and motivate others to work with you to solve it, then you're leading.

Leadership is a quality rather than a job.

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This is an important distinction because while the role of a manager can be given to someone (or taken away), leadership is not something that can be bestowed. It must be earned. People must want to follow you. You can be someone's manager, but if that person does not trust or respect you, you will have limited ability to influence him.

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Only when you have built trust with your reports will you have the credibility to help them achieve more together.

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Your path here probably took one of the four routes below: Apprentice: Your manager's team is growing, so you've been asked to manage a part of it going forward. Pioneer: You are a founding member of a new group, and you're now responsible for its growth. New Boss: You're coming in to manage an already established team, either within your existing organization or at a new one. Successor: Your manager has decided to leave, and you are taking his place. Depending on your path, different things may be easy or hard for you in your first three months. Choose your own adventure below to learn more about what to expect.

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It can feel awkward to establish a new dynamic with former peers.

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make sure that you're spending time calibrating with your new team on what your group's goals, values, and processes ought to be.

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How do I make decisions? What do I consider a job well done? What are all the responsibilities I

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took care of when it was just me? What's easy or hard about working in this function? What new processes are needed now that this team is growing?

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What qualities do I want in a team member? What skills does our team need to complement my own? How should this team look and function in a year? How will my own role and responsibilities evolve?

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The life of a pioneer is filled with adventure and solitude.

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The biggest advantage of being new is that you have a window of time, usually about three months, when everyone recognizes that you're the new kid on the block.

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You start with a blank slate. Did you have a reputation for being indecisive or stubborn in your last role? Now that you're coming in fresh, you have a chance to form new ties and reset your identity.

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To make the most of having a blank slate, give everyone the benefit of the doubt, no matter what you're told.

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What did you and your past manager discuss that was most helpful to you? What are the ways in which you'd like to be supported? How do you like to be recognized for great work? What kind of feedback is most useful for you? Imagine that you and I had an amazing relationship. What would that look like?

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One of the biggest mistakes new bosses make is thinking they need to jump in and exert their opinions right away to show that they are capable.

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In your first few months, your primary job is to listen, ask questions, and learn.

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“Our last manager left big shoes to fill, and while I’ll do my best, I expect I’ll go through a few bumps along the way. I want to ask you for your help and support during this period.”

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“How long will it take to feel like I know what I’m doing?” I reply quite honestly, “It took me about three years.”

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Andy Grove points out in his classic High Output Management. He flips the question around and asks: What gets in the way of good work? There are only two possibilities.<sup>1</sup> The first is that people don’t know how to do good work. The second is that they know how, but they aren’t motivated.

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“You must trust people,<sup>2</sup> or life becomes impossible,” the writer Anton Chekhov once said.

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is that if your reports don’t tell you how they’re really feeling, you can’t help them.

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You’ve accomplished this if the following three statements are true. My reports regularly bring their

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biggest challenges to my attention. A hallmark of a trusting relationship is that people feel they can share their mistakes, challenges, and fears with you.

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My report and I regularly give each other critical feedback and it isn't taken personally.

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My friend Mark Rabkin shared a tip with me that I love: strive for all your one-on-one meetings to feel a little awkward.<sup>3</sup>

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My reports would gladly work for me again. One of the truest indicators of the strength of your relationships is whether your reports would want you as their manager in the future if they were given the choice.

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You can also get an approximate reading by asking your report, "What are the qualities of a perfect manager for you?" and evaluating how you compare to the description you get back. (Asking directly, "Would you work for me again?" definitely clears the bar of being awkward but doesn't set you up well to receive completely honest responses.)

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"remember this: managing is caring."

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If you don't believe in your heart of hearts that someone can succeed, it will be impossible for you to convey your strong belief in them.

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I recommend no less than a weekly 1:1 with every report for thirty minutes, and more time if needed.

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One-on-ones should be focused on your report and what would help him be more successful, not on you and what you need.

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The ideal 1:1 leaves your report feeling that it was useful for her.

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Remember that your job is to be a multiplier for your people. If you can remove a barrier, provide a valuable new perspective, or increase their confidence, then you're enabling them to be more successful.

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Discuss top priorities: What are the one, two, or three most critical outcomes for your report and how can you help her tackle these challenges? Calibrate what "great" looks like: Do you have a shared vision of what you're working toward? Are you in sync about goals or expectations? Share feedback: What feedback can you give that will help your report, and what can your report tell you that will make you more effective as a manager? Reflect on how things are going: Once in a while, it's useful to zoom out and talk about your report's general state of mind—how is he feeling on the whole? What's making him satisfied or dissatisfied? Have any of his goals changed? What has he learned recently and what does he want to learn going forward?

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a coach's best tool for understanding what's going on is to ask.

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Your job as a manager isn't to dole out advice or "save the day"—it's to empower your report to

find the answer herself.

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Identify: These questions focus on what really matters for your report and what topics are worth spending more time on. What's top of mind for you right now? What priorities are you thinking about this week? What's the best use of our time today? Understand: Once you've identified a topic to discuss, these next questions get at the root of the problem and what can be done about it. What does your ideal outcome look like? What's hard for you in getting to that outcome? What do you really care about? What do you think is the best course of action? What's the worst-case scenario you're worried about? Support: These questions zero in on how you can be of greatest service to your report. How can I help you? What can I do to make you more successful? What was the most useful part of our conversation today?

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No one is perfect, and managers are no exception. You will make mistakes. You will let people down. You will have moments where you say the wrong thing and make the situation worse rather than better. When that happens, don't fall into the trap of thinking that because you're the boss, you can't admit your shortcomings or weaknesses. Instead, apologize. Admit that you screwed up, and take meaningful action to do better in the future.

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People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel,

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When we are going through tough times, the thing that's often the most helpful isn't advice or answers but empathy.

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Brené Brown, research expert in courage, shame, and empathy, begs to differ. She proposes that there is enormous power in expressing vulnerability: "Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage.<sup>4</sup> Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness." These days,

I try to admit when I don't have the answers or when I'm working through my own personal challenges. I'll say things like the following: "I don't know the answer. What do you think?" "I want to come clean and apologize for what I did/said the other day...." "One of my personal growth areas this half is ..." "I'm afraid I don't know enough to help you with that problem. Here's someone you should talk to instead...." I've found that by showing up authentically, with my fears, mistakes, and uncertainties out in the open rather than swept under the rug, I've been able to build better relationships with my reports.

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"Remember that you have good values."

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We humans are wired to see the bad more clearly than the good. It's an evolutionary advantage, after all.

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Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton in *Now, Discover Your Strengths* and Tom Rath in *StrengthsFinder 2.0*.

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"There is one quality that sets truly great managers apart from the rest: they discover what is unique about each person and then capitalize on it,"

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"The job of a manager ... is to turn one person's particular talent into performance."

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Don't let the worst performers dominate your time—try to diagnose, address, and resolve their issues as swiftly as you can.

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Good CEOs know that they should double down on the projects that are working and put more people, resources, and attention on those rather than get every single project to the point of “not failing.”

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are. Instead of a multiplier effect, you get a divider effect: the presence of this person makes the rest of your team less effective.

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The No Asshole Rule. He defines an asshole as someone who makes other people feel worse about themselves or who specifically targets people less powerful than him or her.

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if you disagreed with him and you were less senior, he'd dismiss you as being terrible at your job.

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the team actually becomes better off when brilliant assholes leave. Yes, you lose out on their individual contributions, but the fog lifts for everyone else. They can let their guard down. Collaboration becomes more honest and productive, so the work of the team as a whole improves.

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You can and should hold the bar high for collaboration. These people are out there. Don't compromise your values for someone who thinks it's okay to bully others. You and your team deserve better.

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assholes can change if the culture you set is clear that it won't tolerate them.

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The two of them had very different values and working styles, and they'd both be happier if they weren't on the same project.

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personal and organizational values play a huge role in whether someone will be happy on a given team.

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Each of us ought to be working in an environment that we love with the people who share our passions.

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We've already discussed the main reasons why someone might not be doing great work: they aren't aware of what "great" looks like, their aspirations aren't a fit with what the role needs, they don't feel appreciated, they lack the skills, or they bring others down.

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She operated best in highly structured environments that offered strong project management support; however, at our organization, we take a bottom-up approach where all employees are expected to manage their own time effectively.

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At the end of the day, if you don't believe someone is set up to succeed in his current role, the kindest thing you can do is to be honest with him and support him in moving on.

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"What I think is brutal and 'false kindness' is keeping people around who aren't going to grow and prosper. There's no cruelty like waiting and telling people late in their careers that they don't belong."

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For a leader, giving feedback—both when things are going well and when they aren’t—is one of the most fundamental aspects of the job.

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the feedback inspired you to change your behavior, which resulted in your life getting better. Feedback, at its best, transforms people in ways they’re proud of.

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There’s a whole swath of things beyond “suggestions for improvement” that can inspire someone to take positive action.

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the feedback process should begin before any work does. At that point, you should agree on what success looks like—whether for a given project or for a given time period—get ahead of any expected issues, and lay the foundation for productive feedback sessions in the future.

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What a great job looks like for your report, compared to a mediocre or bad job What advice you have to help your report get started on the right foot Common pitfalls your report should avoid In your first three months on the job, I expect that you’ll build good relationships with your team, be able to ramp up on a small-scale “starter” project, and then share your first design iteration for review. I don’t expect that you’ll get the green light on it right away, but if you do, that would be knocking it out of the park. Here’s what success looks like for the next meeting you run: the different options are framed clearly, everyone feels like their point of view is well represented, and a decision is made. Give Task-Specific Feedback as Frequently as You Can

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Task-specific feedback is most effective when the action performed is still fresh in your report’s memory, so share it as soon as you can.

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Share Behavioral Feedback Thoughtfully and Regularly

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Asking this question about themes helps you reflect on your report's unique strengths or areas of development as shown in his patterns of behavior. Behavioral feedback is useful because it provides a level of personalization and depth that is missing from task-specific feedback. By connecting the dots across multiple examples, you can help people understand how their unique interests, personalities, and habits affect their ability to have impact.

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Behavioral feedback helps people understand the reality of how others see them, which may be different than how they see themselves.

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When people ask you questions about your work, your tone is often defensive. For example, when Sally left a comment on your code, you replied with "just trust me." This disregarded the substance of her feedback and made you appear less trustworthy.

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Collect 360-Degree Feedback for Maximum Objectivity

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Every quarter, for each report, I send a short email to a handful of his or her closest collaborators asking: a) What is X doing especially well that X should do more of?, and b) What should X change or stop doing?

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EVERY MAJOR DISAPPOINTMENT IS A FAILURE TO SET EXPECTATIONS

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The review isn't fair. If things really were so dire, why hasn't this come up until now? This must be a mistake. The review is fair, but my manager was negligent and didn't realize I was underperforming until the end of the half. The review is fair, but my manager wasn't honest in sharing feedback with me along the way, so I didn't have a chance to improve.

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Managers who pop in out of the blue and throw down new requirements can breed resentment with their team (just Google the term "Swoop and Poop.") But managers who proactively lay out what they care about and how they want to engage in projects rarely encounter those tensions.

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By setting expectations that you'd like to hear about any concerns with the launch date as soon as possible, you establish that it's safe to talk about problems even in the early phases. It's impossible to expect perfection. We are only human. Failures will occur, projects will miss deadlines, and people will make mistakes. That's okay. But when these things happen, readjusting expectations as quickly as possible helps people recover from errors with grace. You demonstrate care and maturity when you preempt bigger issues down the road. Whenever you find yourself deeply disappointed, or disappointing someone else, ask yourself: Where did I miss out on setting clear expectations, and how might I do better in the future? YOUR FEEDBACK ONLY COUNTS IF IT MAKES THINGS BETTER

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The mark of a great coach is that others improve under your guidance.

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Am I Giving Feedback Often Enough?

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into the nitty-gritty of the how, the first step is simply to give feedback more often and remind yourself that you're probably not doing it enough. Every time you see one of your reports in action—delivering a project, interacting with a customer, negotiating a sale, speaking up in a meeting—see if there's something useful you can tell her.



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The second most common ask from reports is: “Give me more feedback related to my skills and my career trajectory.”

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If you find that your frequency of feedback is low, one tactic I’ve found helpful is to devote a single 1:1 every month to just discussing behavioral feedback and career goals. Is My Feedback Being Heard?

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What you intend to say and what the listener hears are not always the same.

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Ed Batista, an executive coach and instructor at Stanford Graduate School of Business, explains that part of the reason feedback doesn’t stick is that the recipient often views the conversation as a threat, so his adrenaline-fueled fight-or-flight instinct kicks in. When feedback is given, Batista writes, the listener’s “heart rate and blood pressure are almost certain to increase,<sup>1</sup> [accompanied by] a cascade of neurological and physiological events that impair the ability to process complex information and react thoughtfully. When people are in the grip of a threat response, they’re less capable of absorbing and applying your observations.” The best way to make your feedback heard is to make the listener feel safe, and to show that you’re saying it because you care about her and want her to succeed.

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When you do have critical feedback to share, approach it with a sense of curiosity and an honest desire to understand your report’s perspective.

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“Okay, let’s make sure we’re on the same page—what are your takeaways and next steps?”

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“Would you be comfortable sharing that feedback directly with X?”

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1. Make your feedback as specific as possible. When I told George, “Your presentation was complicated and people had a hard time understanding it,” I was assuming that his definition of complicated and mine were the same.

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Use clear examples that get at the why so it’s easier for the recipient to know what you mean.

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2. Clarify what success looks and feels like.

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3. Suggest next steps.

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Be clear about whether you’re setting an expectation or merely offering a suggestion.

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You’re such a screwup. What am I going to do with you? Your work is terrible, and I need to know how you’re going to fix it. I’m concerned about the quality of work that I’ve been seeing from you recently. Can we talk about that? Your last few deliverables weren’t comprehensive enough to hit the mark, so let’s discuss why that is and how to address it. I have a few questions about your latest work—do you have a moment to walk me through it?

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Don’t engage when you are upset.

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The best way to give critical feedback is to deliver it directly and dispassionately. Plainly say what you perceive the issue to be, what made you feel that way, and how you'd like to work together to resolve the concern.

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If you need a template, try this: When I [heard/observed/reflected on] your [action/behavior/output], I felt concerned because ... I'd like to understand your perspective and talk about how we can resolve this.

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I find this ineffective—lobbing over a few superficial words of praise to temper a hard message comes off as insincere.

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Hey, nice job bringing up the point about budgeting in the last meeting. By the way, try not to use your phone so much next time, as it can be distracting. But those next steps you took us through were really well framed! Hey, I noticed that when you use your phone in meetings, it's distracting because it suggests that the meeting isn't worth paying attention to. Can we agree to no phones in the future?

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Own the decision. Be firm, and don't open it up for discussion.

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The problem was, if nothing my report said could convince me to change my mind, it's insincere to act as if she had had a say.

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Keep in mind that some decisions are yours to make. You are the person ultimately held accountable for the output of your team, and you may have more information or a different

perspective on the right path forward.

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on. “I recognize that you may not agree with my decision, but I’m asking for your cooperation in moving forward.”

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“It’s brutally hard to tell people when they are screwing up,”<sup>2</sup> writes Kim Scott, a former Google manager and the author of *Radical Candor*. “You don’t want to hurt anyone’s feelings; that’s because you’re not a sadist. You don’t want that person or the rest of the team to think you’re a jerk. Plus, you’ve been told since you learned to talk, ‘If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all.’ Now all of a sudden it’s your job to say it. You’ve got to undo a lifetime of training.”

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Being a great manager is a highly personal journey, and if you don’t have a good handle on yourself, you won’t have a good handle on how to best support your team.

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Imposter syndrome is what makes you feel as though you’re the only one with nothing worthwhile to say when you walk into a room full of people you admire. Imposter syndrome is what makes you double-, triple-, or quadruple-check your email before hitting Send so that nobody finds any mistakes and figures out you’re actually a fraud. Imposter syndrome is the sensation that you’re teetering along the edge of a sheer cliff with flailing arms, the whole world watching and waiting to see when you fall.

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“Ask any new manager about the early days of being a boss—indeed,<sup>1</sup> ask any senior executive to recall how he or she felt as a new manager. If you get an honest answer, you’ll hear a tale of disorientation and, for some, overwhelming confusion. The new role didn’t feel anything like it was supposed to. It felt too big for any one person to handle.” Why does imposter syndrome hit managers so hard? There are two reasons. The first is that you’re often looked to for answers.

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The second reason is that you are constantly put in the position of doing things you haven't done before.

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The key is to understand what works best with what you have.

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How would the people who know and like me best (family, significant other, close friends) describe me in three words?

MY ANSWER: thoughtful, enthusiastic, driven What three qualities do I possess that I am the proudest of?

MY ANSWER: curious, reflective, optimistic When I look back on something I did that was successful, what personal traits do I give credit to?

MY ANSWER: vision, determination, humility What are the top three most common pieces of positive feedback that I've received from my manager or peers?

MY ANSWER: principled, fast learner, long-term thinker

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If a magical fairy were to come and bestow on me three gifts I don't yet have, what would they be?

MY ANSWER: bottomless well of confidence, clarity of thought, incredible persuasion

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Calibration matters because it doesn't do me any good to think that I'm one thing when the world views me as another.

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Ask your manager to help you calibrate yourself through the following two questions: What opportunities do you see for me to do more of what I do well? What do you think are the biggest things holding me back from having greater impact? What skills do you think a hypothetical perfect person in my role would have? For each skill, how would you rate me against that ideal on a scale of one to five? Pick three to seven people whom you work closely with and ask if they'd be willing to share some feedback

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the most—I promise nothing you say will offend me. Feedback is a gift,

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Ask for task-specific feedback to calibrate yourself on specific skills. For

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“I’m hoping to improve my speaking skills. What do you think went well with my presentation? What would have made it twice as good?”

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It took me years before I got comfortable asking for feedback from others (outside of formal reviews where I had to). Why? It goes back to the imposter syndrome. Because I constantly worried that I wasn’t good enough, I shied away from doing anything that might confirm that view.

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It’s like stressing out more about your exam grade than about whether you’re actually learning the concepts being taught. On the other hand, if I approached challenges with the belief that I could get better at anything if I put in the effort, then the vicious cycle of anxious self-evaluation would be broken.

**Page 117 | Highlight**

In her influential book *Mindset*,<sup>3</sup> pioneering psychologist Carol Dweck describes how the two

different mindsets—which she calls fixed and growth—make a huge difference in our performance and personal happiness.

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Page 117 | Highlight

SCENARIO: After completing an assignment, your manager gives you a few suggestions for improvement. FIXED MINDSET: Ugh, I really messed that up. My manager must think I'm an idiot. GROWTH MINDSET: I'm thankful my manager gave me those tips. Now all my future assignments are going to go better.

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Page 117 | Highlight

SCENARIO: You're asked if you'd like to take the lead on a risky and challenging new project. FIXED MINDSET: I'd better say no. I don't want to fail and embarrass myself. GROWTH MINDSET: This is a great opportunity to stretch, learn something new, and gain the experience needed to lead other big projects down the road.

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Page 118 | Highlight

The perspective you have changes everything. With a fixed mindset, your actions are governed by fear—fear of failure, fear of judgment, fear of being found out as an imposter. With a growth mindset, you're motivated to seek out the truth and ask for feedback because you know it's the fastest path to get you where you want to go.

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Page 120 | Highlight

Which six-month period of my life did I feel the most energetic and productive? What gave me that energy? In the past month, what moments stand out as highlights? What conditions enabled those moments to happen, and are they re-creatable? In the past week, when was I in a state of deep focus? How did I get there? The flip side of the coin is understanding which situations do the opposite—that is, they trigger an intensely negative reaction that derails your effectiveness. What separates triggers from normal negative reactions is that they have an outsize effect on you specifically.

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Page 120 | Highlight

What are the things that push your buttons, but maybe not someone else's? That's when you're

**Page 120 | Highlight Continued**

most at risk of being seen as irrational.

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**Page 121 | Highlight**

Some people are triggered by those who come off as arrogant or self-serving.

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**Page 121 | Highlight**

When was the last time someone said something that annoyed me more than it did others around me? Why did I feel so strongly about it? What would my closest friends say my pet peeves are? Who have I met that I've immediately been wary of? What made me feel that way? What's an example of a time when I've overreacted and later regretted it? What made me so worked up in that moment?

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**Page 123 | Highlight**

I felt terrible. I knew our relationship needed to improve, but how? Was I the one in the wrong? Maybe I really didn't know what I was talking about.

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**Page 124 | Highlight**

Repeat After Me: "The Story I Have in My Head Is Probably Irrational"

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**Page 124 | Highlight**

"We were worried X's strong views would steer the conversation off course.")

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**Page 125 | Highlight**

Brain imaging studies show that when we picture ourselves doing something, the same parts of our brain are engaged as if we were actually doing that activity. Why does this matter? Because we can trick ourselves into getting some of the benefits of an activity simply by closing our eyes and imagining it in our heads.



**Page 126 | Highlight**

Imagine the anxiety, fear, and confusion you're feeling as not being personal to you, but universal things that everyone faces.

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**Page 126 | Highlight**

Imagine yourself succeeding wildly at something you're nervous about.

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**Page 126 | Highlight**

Imagine a time in the past when you took on a hard challenge and knocked it out of the park.

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**Page 127 | Highlight**

Imagine a room full of your favorite people telling you what they love about you.

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**Page 127 | Highlight**

Imagine what your day would feel like if you were out of the Pit.

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**Page 127 | Highlight**

Ask for Help from People You Can Be Real With

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**Page 127 | Highlight**

Admitting your struggles and asking for help is the opposite of weakness—in fact, it shows courage and self-awareness. You are saying that you care more about getting yourself to a good place than you do about your ego.

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**Page 128 | Highlight**

Celebrate the Little Wins

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**Page 129 | Highlight**

Practice Self-Care by Establishing Boundaries

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**Page 130 | Highlight**

scheduling a fifteen-minute activity at the beginning and end of the day that isn't related to work. I'll watch a TED Talk, play an iPhone game, do a crossword puzzle, exercise, or read.

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**Page 131 | Highlight**

How can I be twice as good? Then maximize your learning through the following.

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**Page 132 | Highlight**

"I'm working on making sure my point is clear in the first three minutes. Did that come across? How can I make it clearer next time?" Always thank people for feedback.

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**Page 132 | Highlight**

Treat Your Manager as a Coach

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**Page 133 | Highlight**

see 1:1s with my manager as an opportunity for focused learning,

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**Page 134 | Highlight**

Make a Mentor Out of Everyone

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**Page 134 | Highlight**

Nobody wants to be asked, "Will you be my mentor?" because it sounds needy and time-consuming.

**Page 134 | Highlight**

Whatever the skill, don't be afraid to ask, "Hey, I'm really impressed with the way you [do X]. I'd love to learn from you. Would you be willing to grab a coffee with me and share your approach?"

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**Page 135 | Highlight**

Set Aside Time to Reflect and Set Goals

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**Page 135 | Highlight**

works best for you. Personally, I like to schedule an hour on my calendar at the end of every week to think about what I accomplished, what I'm satisfied or dissatisfied with, and what I'm taking away for next week. I then jot down some notes in an email to my team, as an easy way to keep up the habit. I also set personal goals and do bigger look-backs every six months, which gives me a longer time frame to tackle ambitious projects and learn new skills.

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**Page 137 | Highlight**

Take Advantage of Formal Training

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**Page 138 | Highlight**

When you think about formal training, the question to ask isn't Is this worth doing right now given all the other things on my plate (or all the other things I could spend money on), but rather One year from now, will I be happy I did this? When framed that way, the choice tends to be clearer. When you invest in your personal learning and growth, you're not just investing in your own future but also the future of your team. The better you are, the more you're able to support others.

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**Page 138 | Highlight**

"How to be the best leader I can while staying true to who I am."

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**Page 142 | Highlight**

You leave them feeling the same way every time: The meeting was a great use of my time. I learned something new that will help me be more effective at my job. I left with a clearer sense of what I should do next. Everyone was engaged. I felt welcomed.

**Page 143 | Highlight**

WHAT IS A GREAT OUTCOME FOR YOUR MEETING?

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**Page 143 | Highlight**

**Making a Decision** In a decision meeting, you're framing the different options on the table and asking a decision-maker to make a call.

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**Page 143 | Highlight**

You don't need consensus, but those whom the decision affects should feel that the way it was made was efficient and fair.

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**Page 144 | Highlight**

While people may have different opinions about the best path to take, part of working well together is placing trust in decision-makers and in a fair process.

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**Page 145 | Highlight**

Gets a decision made (obviously) Includes the people most directly affected by the decision as well as a clearly designated decision-maker Presents all credible options objectively and with relevant background information, and includes the team's recommendation if there is one Gives equal airtime to dissenting opinions and makes people feel that they were heard

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**Page 146 | Highlight**

A great informational meeting accomplishes the following: Enables the group to feel like they learned something valuable Conveys key messages clearly and memorably Keeps the audience's attention (through dynamic speakers, rich storytelling, skilled pacing, interactivity) Evokes an intended emotion—whether inspiration, trust, pride, courage, empathy, etc. Providing Feedback Often known as a "review," the purpose of a feedback meeting is for stakeholders to understand and give input on work in progress.

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**Page 147 | Highlight**

A great feedback meeting achieves the following: Gets everyone on the same page about what

success for the project looks like Honestly represents the current status of the work, including an assessment of how things are going, any changes since the last check-in, and what the future plans are Clearly frames open questions, key decisions, or known concerns to get the most helpful feedback Ends with agreed-upon next steps (including when the next milestone or check-in will be)

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**Page 148 | Highlight**

Preparation and good facilitation is key. A great generative meeting does the following: Produces many diverse, nonobvious solutions through ensuring each participant has quiet alone time to think of ideas and write them down (either before or during the meeting) Considers the totality of ideas from everyone, not just the loudest voices Helps ideas evolve and build off each other through meaningful discussion Ends with clear next steps for how to turn ideas into action Strengthening Relationships

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**Page 148 | Highlight**

Sometimes, you may decide to get a group of people together for the simple purpose of focusing on relationships.

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**Page 148 | Highlight**

A great team-bonding meeting isn't about the number of hours spent together or the lavishness of the event. Instead, it enables the following: Creates better understanding and trust between participants Encourages people to be open and authentic Makes people feel cared for

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**Page 151 | Highlight**

“the curse of knowledge”—the cognitive bias that makes it difficult for them to remember what it's like to be a beginner seeing the content for the first time.

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**Page 151 | Highlight**

The change we made to our decision and review meetings was to ask the organizers to send out any presentations or documents the day before so that everyone got the chance to process the information in advance.

**Page 152 | Highlight**

Sending out an agenda ahead of time shows a level of care and intentionality in helping the group stay focused.

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**Page 152 | Highlight**

In the last few minutes of a meeting, get into the habit of asking, “So before we break, let’s make sure we agree on next steps ...”

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**Page 153 | Highlight**

Or when I had a good enough relationship with the other folks present to know that they wouldn’t actually think I was incompetent, even if I said something stupid. If you are a meeting organizer trying to generate ideas, make a decision, or create stronger relationships, you will get better results if you can get your entire group to contribute. This is why it’s so important to foster a welcoming environment for questions, discussions, discourse, and dissent. If you present what you think is a brilliant idea but most of the room secretly thinks it’s ridiculous, it doesn’t help you if nobody feels comfortable telling you how they really feel.

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**Page 154 | Highlight**

Be Explicit about the Norms You Want to Set If you want everyone to participate in your meeting, sometimes the easiest tactic is just to say that directly.

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**Page 154 | Highlight**

But to be honest, I don’t get the sense that I’m hearing all of your top concerns. So I want to say this up front: Hard questions are good! Get them off your chest! I promise to be as transparent as I can.”

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**Page 155 | Highlight**

An unstructured group discussion means that participants choose if and when they speak. If you have an introverted set of people, you might struggle with getting them to voice their thoughts. If you have extroverts, they might dominate the conversation.

**Page 155 | Highlight**

Be on the lookout for interruptions. If someone starts making a point but another loud voice cuts her off, provide cover by saying, “Hang on, Ann wasn’t finished.” As an added bonus, I’ve found that doing this also bolsters your own credibility.

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**Page 156 | Highlight**

the key to getting great feedback is being specific about what you want to know and making it safe for the person to tell you her honest opinion.

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**Page 157 | Highlight**

SOME MEETINGS DON'T NEED YOU AND SOME DON'T NEED TO EXIST AT ALL

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**Page 158 | Highlight**

Be on the lookout as well for meetings that don’t seem valuable for anyone.

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**Page 159 | Highlight**

Our group hadn’t yet established trust with each other, so every debate felt high stakes and unproductive.

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**Page 164 | Highlight**

At a growing organization, hiring well is the single most important thing you can do.

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**Page 164 | Highlight**

hiring is not a problem to be solved but an opportunity to build the future of your organization.

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**Page 164 | Highlight**

hiring isn’t just about filling holes. If you approach it that way, you’re not going to bring in the best people.

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**Page 164 | Highlight**

In addition to contributing their talents, our favorite coworkers teach us new things, inspire and support us, and make going to work a whole lot more fun.

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**Page 165 | Highlight**

The solution to both a healthier diet and a better team is to plan ahead.

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**Page 165 | Highlight**

One exercise I do every January is to map out where I hope my team will be by the end of the year. I create a future org chart, analyze gaps in skills, strengths, or experiences, and make a list of open roles to hire for.

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**Page 167 | Highlight**

Let me quickly disabuse you of that notion. No recruiter can possibly know what an ideal candidate looks like for your team.

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**Page 167 | Highlight**

Write the job description yourself and be specific about the skills or experiences you are looking for.

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**Page 168 | Highlight**

We also agreed that I should send out the introductory email instead of the recruiter so the experience felt personal right off the bat.

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**Page 169 | Highlight**

Deliver an Amazing Interview Experience

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**Page 169 | Highlight**

because the interview process felt so attentive, focused, and fast. It gave them confidence in our



company and the team they would be working with.

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**Page 169 | Highlight**

Making this happen requires a strong manager–recruiter relationship.

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**Page 169 | Highlight**

We'd message each other multiple times a day about the details—did all the interviewers have the background notes? Who was assessing which skills? Could we find an interviewer who'd relate well to the candidate, like Anne, who came from the same previous company, or Dixon, who was also new to the city? Who was going to reach out and thank the candidate for his time?

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**Page 169 | Highlight**

When you decide to extend an offer, it's as much your job as it is the recruiter's to make the candidate feel that you want her to say yes.

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**Page 170 | Highlight**

The more senior the candidate, the more critical your involvement is in the close because that person likely has many options, and you are looking for her to play a leadership role within your team. Paint a vivid picture of how you see her having impact. Help her understand why the role is exciting and why she's the perfect person to tackle these big problems. **HIRING IS A GAMBLE, BUT MAKE SMART BETS**

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**Page 170 | Highlight**

The first is that it's impossible to re-create the actual working environment of a team in a thirty-minute or hour-long meeting.

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**Page 171 | Highlight**

Second, interviewers bring their personal biases into the evaluation.

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