

ADVERTISEMENT

09-14-16 | HOW TO BE A SUCCESS AT EVERYTHING

# Five Ways The Most Effective Leaders Manage Their Emotions

The best managers know how to keep their emotions in check and focus on building a healthy team.



[PHOTO: H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTS/CLASSICSTOCK/GETTY IMAGES]



---

## LIKE THIS

eful strategies for  
ng your time, energy,

---

BY HARVEY DEUTSCHENDORF

4 MINUTE READ

Soft skills have garnered increasing attention in the workplace over the last 20 years. In fact, emotional intelligence is one of the fastest growing job skills, according to a [report by the World Economic Forum](#).

Ironically, those are the very skills hiring managers say the latest crop of [college graduates lacks](#) as they've focused on honing their technological prowess. Yet [managing our emotions effectively in the workplace](#) is a major component of success for all of us.

Emotions running amok can damage those who work directly with us. Although employees may get away with an occasional lapse in emotional control, leaders are not afforded that leeway. A leader who is not managing his or her emotions well can wreak severe havoc on an organization, seriously damaging employee morale, retention, and ultimately the bottom line. Every reaction—positive or negative—will have consequences for all those who are under them and effect the overall success of the company.

Here are five ways effective leaders manage their emotions.

## 1. THEY KNOW WHEN AND HOW TO SHARE

It isn't necessary or healthy for leaders to be unemotional robots and keep all their feelings inside. Effective leaders are able to use their emotions to connect with others through their ability to share the feelings that enhance relationships with their direct reports.

---

Managing our emotions effectively in the workplace is a major component of success for all of us.

Whether an employee is feeling joy over a successful sales week or sadness over a family member passing, an effective leader is able to express emotions to let that person know they are connecting with them on a heart level.

While their emotions are under control, they know what to express and how much to let out in the circumstance. For example, if someone just lost a family member, the manager could express how they felt when they lost someone close to them and how good it felt to be supported. Then, they could ask the grieving person if they needed anything. Depending on the closeness of the relationship, they could put a hand on the person's back or shoulder, or offer a hug.

## 2. THEY DO WHAT'S RIGHT INSTEAD OF WHAT'S POPULAR

There are many instances when leaders are tempted to make popular decisions as these will bring them instant feelings of relief from a pressing and difficult situation. However, effective managers overcome the urge to give in to what is popular and opt for what is right. This requires a great deal of self-confidence and courage.

If a particular unpopular employee was being subjected to ridicule and being ostracized, the manager could support that employee and confront his or her coworkers in order to stop the behavior. This may cause resentment from the offender, but it enforces the idea that bullying isn't tolerated, and that's more important for effective managers than being popular.

## 3. THEY TRUST THEIR INTUITION

When struggling with a decision, effective managers are able to tune into and use their gut instincts to make decisions, even though there may be compelling reasons for not doing so. That's because they've relied on intuition in the past and trust it will be the best guide when there isn't an obvious answer.

---

They're more interested in using failure as a learning opportunity . . . than spending time and energy looking for scapegoats.

For example, they might make a decision to hire someone outside of the company who they feel would be a great fit instead of promoting someone from the inside who is popular, but doesn't have the vision or initiative to take on the new role.

#### **4. THEY ROUTINELY FIGHT APATHY, INERTIA, AND PROCRASTINATION**

Ever have a day when you felt like doing very little, leaving things undone until later, or the next day? Perhaps you're feeling tired, or just having a bad day or week. We've all had those days.

Leaders share this struggle but don't have the luxury of giving in. Others depend on them to take action and get things done—even when they don't they feel like it. They've disciplined themselves to do whatever it takes, regardless of how they feel. If they need to have a difficult conversation with an employee or customer, they'll go through with it even if they're tempted to put it off for another day.

#### **5. THEY LOOK FOR SOLUTIONS, NOT SOMEONE TO BLAME**

One of the easiest traps to fall into is to avoid responsibility when things aren't going well. Poor leaders look for ways to shift the blame to others when things go wrong. It's easier to avoid responsibility by pinning it on others or on outside circumstances—but that isn't leadership.

---

Effective managers are able to tune into and use their gut instincts to make decisions.

Effective leaders immediately begin to look for solutions. They find out what went wrong to avoid the same problem in the future. They're more interested in using the failure as a learning opportunity and moving on from it, rather than spending time and energy looking for scapegoats.

Often the reason for the problem is a breakdown in communication between leaders and those assisting them. Effective leaders find out where that happened and readily admit that their instructions may not have been clear enough.

This also creates an opportunity to reassure employees who are reluctant to admit they didn't understand for fear of appearing stupid, and let them know their boss won't think less of them for asking for clarification. It's crucial for good managers not to show any signs of frustration if what they thought was a straightforward request wasn't understood at first.

Effective leaders are acutely aware of their feelings and know their responsibilities toward staff, customers, and the organization. This isn't easy—it takes effort. But they've worked on themselves to develop their abilities to keep their emotions in check when necessary and show them when the situation calls for it.