

13 Common Mistakes Managers Make That Alienate Employees



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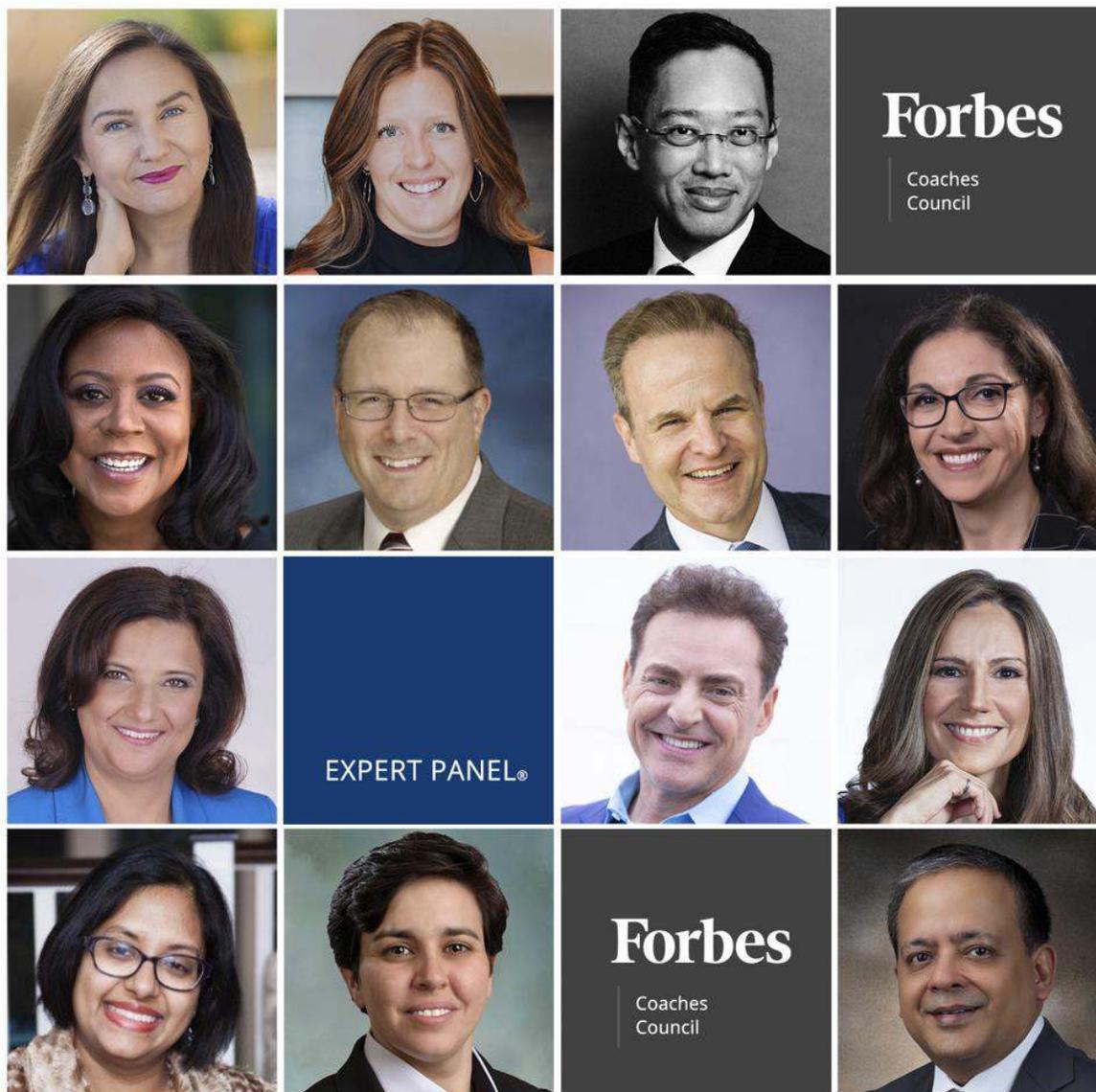
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Leadership

In any company, trust and open communication among team members form the foundation of a healthy, growing business. Managers are critically important, as they are responsible for not only relaying strategic goals and expectations to employees, but also motivating teams to meet them.

Despite their best intentions, if those on the managerial level aren't aware of how their management style affects the people they lead, negative feelings can turn into outright friction. Eventually, poor dynamics may prevent the team from finding success.

To help navigate this issue, 13 members of [Forbes Coaches Council](#) looked at common ways managers inadvertently alienate employees and tips for avoiding these mistakes.



Forbes Coaches Council members explore common mistakes managers make that alienate employees. PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS.

1. Not Providing Clarity Or Access To Information

This is a long-term way to alienate dedicated employees. If you practice and allow knowledge-hiding, your organization will lose money. Since hiding knowledge relates to the fear of losing power, empowerment is the answer. Encourage the team to voice concerns, and work on your delegation skills to give people access to a view of the big picture. - [Inga Bielińska, Inga Arianna Bielinska Coaching Consulting Mentoring](#)

2. Leading With A ‘Know It All’ Approach

The alienation of employees stems from managers dismissing their ideas, not listening or trying to lead with a “know it all” approach. Gaining rapport and trust with your employees by ensuring that they feel heard and supported will ultimately elevate you as a manager in your organization. - [Melanie Towey, Melanie Anne, LLC](#)

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3. Micromanaging Outside Of Office Hours

Micromanaging employees and continually calling them outside office hours to check on progress will alienate employees. Employees want to be trusted. Micromanaging them demonstrates that you don’t trust them! Letting them get on with the job not only makes them feel trusted, but also helps them grow in their role. Manage the outcomes, and let employees know you are there to help if needed. - [Kevin Kan, Break Out Consulting Asia](#)

4. Jumping To Conclusions

Making assumptions and drawing conclusions based on your own experiences can easily alienate and disengage your employees. While your assumptions may turn out to be accurate, validating them with your employees through conversation before acting will confirm or negate your suspicion. This increases engagement with your

employees instead of alienating them. - [Sheila Carmichael](#),
[Transitions D2D, LLC](#)

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5. Playing Favorites

When you play favorites with one or a few employees, you will quickly discover problems in the workplace. If someone on the team is treated differently than others, everyone will feel as if that person is getting better pay, more benefits and greater opportunities, even when it is not true. - [John Knotts](#), [Crosscutter Enterprises](#)

6. Not Being Present, Engaged Or Curious

Does the manager know their employees' capabilities and have a sense of their day-to-day experiences and challenges? Does the manager engage and communicate with their employees, providing direction and feedback? Does the manager know how their employees wish to grow? A manager who is present and seeks to answer these questions will avoid alienating their employees. - [David Yudis](#), [Potential Selves](#)

7. Not Valuing Or Investing In Them

Not valuing employees is the quickest and surest way to alienate them. To avoid this, invest the time to connect with your employees at the heart level by listening to and understanding them. Learn their strengths and weaknesses through different assessments. Empower them with appropriate tools and individual coaching to

raise their performance. When you invest in your people, you show them that they are valued. - [Lillit Cholakian, NewGen Global Leaders](#)

8. Delivering Judgmental Feedback

Standing in judgment while sharing feedback is the fastest possible way to alienate employees. Review the last time you gave feedback. Did you tell them they needed to do X, Y or Z, or did you ask them what they thought would improve the outcome of a task? What did they do well, what could they do differently and what kind of support might they need from you to succeed? Turn mistakes into lessons learned. - [Yamini Virani, Celebrus Business Strategies](#)

9. Interrupting Them

Interrupting them is a common way to alienate employees. Instead, listen and make certain that the other person finishes, then ask, “What else?” two or three times. Repeat what they say back to them without projecting your opinion. If you ask for permission to take notes, they’ll feel even more heard and understood. - [Mike Koenigs, The Superpower Accelerator](#)

10. Not Believing In Their Full Potential

One way I see managers alienate employees is by not truly believing in their full potential. When they doubt that an employee is capable of exceeding expectations, they might not offer the support, feedback or opportunities that will inspire growth. To avoid doing this, managers can ask themselves powerful questions such as, “What if they can do it?” and, “What would it take to help them succeed?” - [Vered Kogan, Momentum Institute™](#)

11. Discounting Their Opinions And Ideas

Discounting opinions and ideas is a surefire way to alienate team members and other employees. Always allow voices to be heard, and offer a thoughtful response, even if it's in disagreement. Let them know if you haven't yet formed an opinion on a matter; and once you've given more thought to the issue, update them in a timely manner. This not only shows your respect for the employee, but also that you are present as a manager. - [Arthi Rabikrisson, Prerna Advisory](#)

12. Being Ambivalent In Your Leadership

Many leaders decide that being directive or authoritarian is problematic and choose to break that mold by not giving clear direction, feedback or answers, hoping that this will make employees feel empowered. This lack of direction can actually make their employees feel adrift and confused. Leaders can provide boundaries and give the gift of feedback without micromanaging and controlling. Balance is key. - [Natalie McVeigh, EisnerAmper](#)

13. Leaving Them Out Of Decision Making

By not involving them in the decision-making process when it comes to their area of expertise, managers risk alienating their staff. Asking for an employee's opinion or advice doesn't mean that you have to follow it. This is important to keep in mind. You can ask and take the answer into consideration. In the end, the final decision is up to you. - [Rajeev Shroff, Cupela Consulting](#)



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