

10 Leadership Qualities to Look for When Hiring a Manager





Managers have the power to make or break their organizations. While great leaders encourage their employees to reach their full potential and help their organizations surpass their goals, terrible dictators discourage workers to the point they want to jump ship.



And many of them do. According to the [Wall Street Journal](#), nearly half of employees who leave jobs do so to get away from their bosses. Since you don't want to lose your best employees, it's critical that you do everything you can to ensure you fill managerial positions with the right people in the first place. As you go about your search for a new manager, keep in mind that great ones usually possess these 10 leadership qualities.

1. Honesty

The moment a team stops believing their leader is telling them the truth, things start to fall apart. Why should workers follow their bosses with any level of confidence if they've come to find out their leader has been less than honest?

In the business world, honesty is critically important. When hiring a manager, look for candidates who understand the importance of openness and transparency. Leading by example, honest managers inspire the rest of their teams to be similarly truthful.



2. Communication skills

We found in our [previous research](#) that one of the biggest pain points employees reported to decrease productivity is poor communication from the management. It's one thing for managers to know what needs to be done. It's a whole different thing for them to be able to clearly communicate those priorities to each member of their team — all of whom are responsible for different tasks.

Great managers have excellent communication skills. They are able to get their team on the same page so that everyone works toward the same objective — not seven different interpretations of that objective. Managers need to be able to communicate verbally, but the best ones are also able to communicate via the written word just as effectively.



3. Decisiveness

Whether they work for themselves or manage enormous departments, in addition to those routine decisions, all managers have to make tough choices regularly. To make your business more efficient, look for candidates who understand that the buck stops at their desk and aren't afraid to act swiftly when they need to. Strong leaders are able to make difficult decisions quickly, after doing their due diligence and assessing all of their options.

The average person makes as many as 35,000 different decisions each day; managers probably make at least a few more. Select an indecisive manager, and your company moves more slowly — it's that simple





4. Confidence

To retain the support of their teams, managers need to be confident that the decisions they're making are the right ones. After a tough decision is made, managers need to be able to convince their teams to move forward — even the employees who would have made a different choice. Candidates who project confidence are much more likely to inspire all of their workers.

From time to time, all businesses suffer setbacks. A court might rule against you. A new competitor might enter the market and gain traction. A new product release might not be well-received by your customers. In any such situation, managers need to remain confident so they can lead their teams forward.



5. Responsibility

Great managers understand that they're the ones in charge, meaning they're responsible for everyone's performance — the successes and the failures. To this end, they keep tabs on all of their employees to see what they can do to help them become better workers and develop professionally.

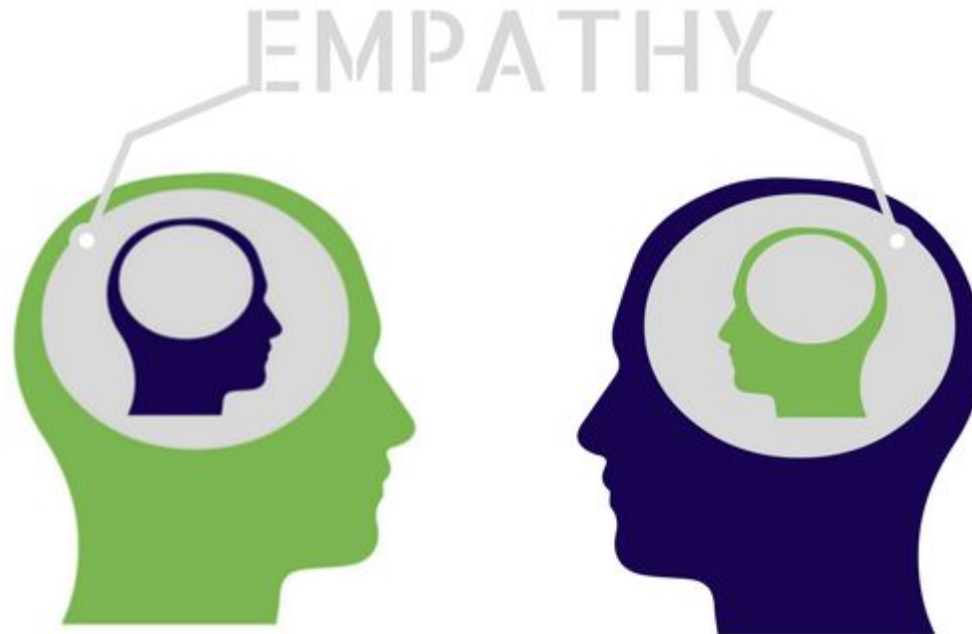
According to our [2019 Employee Engagement Report](#), more than half of the employees said their promotion and career path were not clear to them. That figure leaves a lot to be desired because many workers place a high value on professional development.

Managers who are invested in their employees and committed to helping them grow professionally will almost assuredly keep their staffs engaged.

6. Empathy

Back to that stat about people quitting their bosses: if employees are drowning in work — and 70% of them feel like they are, according to our report — managers need to be understanding. They need to be able to put themselves into their staff's shoes and imagine what it's like to do their jobs.

Look for managerial candidates who understand the importance of empathy. When managers don't listen to their employees and understand where they are coming from, bad things can happen.





7. Focus

Any given company has an enormous amount of competing priorities. Many initiatives move forward simultaneously, and there's a lot to keep up with. For businesses to succeed, managers can't lose sight of something because they're too busy dealing with something else.

It goes without saying managers need to be aware of the big picture. But they also need to have a laser-like focus on the smaller things, too. Look for candidates who've demonstrated they're able to wear many hats at once. Great managers have a track record of successfully seeing multiple projects through from conception to completion.

8. Creativity

Want to take your company to the next level? Hire a manager who has a knack for thinking outside the box and coming up with amazing ideas.

Decisions aren't always so black and white. Sometimes, creative solutions are required to solve problems.

As you search for managerial candidates, look for applicants who have demonstrated their ability to solve complex problems creatively. Great managers tend to be creative people. They are known for thinking about new ways to improve operations and serve customers better while also making their employees happier.

If you consider candidates who have spearheaded projects, helped conceive new products or services, and figured out ways to improve productivity, you're likely to wind up with a great manager.





9. Optimism

Everyone can struggle at work from time to time. And in some cases, a majority of workers can struggle at the same time. Just think of a company overhauling its tech infrastructure and all the resulting headaches.

It's easy to get frustrated at work. When managers openly express their disgust about something when everyone else is struggling, it can bring the team down even more. Great managers understand this, which is why they try their best to remain optimistic and positive at all times.

10. Commitment

Managers who view their roles solely as stepping stones to other, more lucrative positions probably won't do much to boost the team's morale when they take another gig in 18 months.

Great leaders tend to stick around – they're in it for the long haul. Maybe they have their sights set on climbing the ladder. But they're not looking to land the next job they can find. They're committed to the cause and are looking to get promoted and move up the ranks.



It may be hard to find someone who has all 10 of these traits, but they do exist. Worst case, settle for the candidate who has a majority of them, and you should do just fine.

