

Managing Global Teams

BRUCE MOMJIAN

This presentation highlights the challenges of motivating and managing a global team of employees or volunteers.

<https://momjian.us/presentations>

Creative Commons Attribution License



Last updated: August, 2020

My Remote-Worker Background

- Worked from home since 1992
- Worked for managers in distant cities since 2000, including Japan
- Helped manage Postgres development since 1996

Outline

1. What is Management and Leadership?
2. Types of Leadership
3. The Challenges of Remote Management
4. Suggestions for Management and Staff

What Is Management?

The 19th Century View

1. Forecasting
2. Planning
3. Organizing
4. Commanding
5. Coordinating
6. Controlling

This assumes a static, well-defined goal.

Henri Fayol (1841–1925)

Leadership is also required.

Managers can't possibly anticipate or direct the many decisions required by workers.

Old World Management

A foreman in an industrial-era factory probably didn't have to give much thought to what he was producing or to the people who were producing it. His or her job was to follow orders, organize the work, assign the right people to the necessary tasks, coordinate the results, and ensure the job got done as ordered.

Our World

But in the new economy, where value comes increasingly from the knowledge of people, and where workers are no longer undifferentiated cogs in an industrial machine, management and leadership are not easily separated. People look to their managers, not just to assign them a task, but to define for them a purpose. And managers must organize workers, not just to maximize efficiency, but to nurture skills, develop talent and inspire results.

The Knowledge Worker

With the rise of the knowledge worker, “one does not ‘manage’ people,” [Peter] Drucker wrote. “The task is to lead people. And the goal is to make productive the specific strengths and knowledge of every individual.”

One Thing for Leadership?

No

Parenting isn't "one thing", so how can "leadership" be?

Leadership Styles

- Charismatic (Oprah Winfrey)
- Innovative (Steve Jobs)
- Command and Control (football coach)
- Laissez-Faire (Mahatma Gandhi)
- Pace Setter (Jeff Bezos)
- Servant (J. W. Marriott, Jr.)
- Situational (George Patton)
- Transformational (Jack Welch)

Different industries need different types of leaders. No leader has all of these strengths.

<http://www.asaecenter.org/Resources/ANowDetail.cfm?ItemNumber=241962>

Servant Leadership Expert: John Maxwell



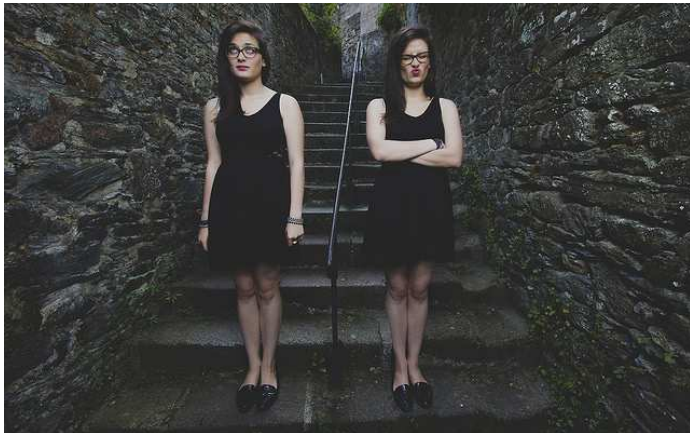
<https://vimeo.com/81518443>

Maxwell's Five Levels of Leadership

1. **Position:** People follow you because they have to.
2. **Permission:** People follow because they want to, they like you
3. **Production:** People follow for what you have done for the organization.
4. **People Development:** People follow you for what you have done for them.
5. **Person-hood:** People follow because of who you are and what you represent.

<http://www.whamond.net/4/post/2012/01/five-levels-of-leadership-john-maxwell.html>

How Does Distance Affect Management and Leadership



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicolaslegruiec/>

I Have Remote Workers, Now What?

I have a position of leadership. How do I:

- Develop a **relationship** with my staff?
- Learn about their **skills**?
- **Monitor** their progress?
- **Motivate** them?
- **Discipline** them?

Three Types of Workers by Distance

- In office (simple)
- In remote office (harder)
- At home (hardest)

What Are We Lacking With Distance? Sharing



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/johnjoh/>

Training Opportunities



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/ngi197w/>

Team Spirit



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/statefarm/>

How Does This Work at a Distance?

For workers in remote offices, sharing, training, and team spirit can easily be built. Assigning a manager in the remote office can often supply a relationship, training, monitoring, motivation, and discipline.

On-Site Management Often Isn't Possible

- Knowledge workers must work with remote management and customers
- Home-based workers

Time to Get Creative: Meet In Person ASAP

The nuances of communication are much clearer when people have met in person.

- Have new employees spend their first 2–3 weeks in the main office
- Conferences meetings are ideal
- Spend money on meals and entertainment
- You are *dating* your employee
- Learn about the employee's family and culture

You have limited time with the employee, so make the time count, and show you have planned to make the meeting special.

Communication

You have to be deliberate about communicating with remote employees, because you are not going to bump into them at lunch:

- Email
- Chat
- Voice
- Video chat
- All-company and per-group chat channels
- Schedule periodic all-staff or per-employee virtual or in-person meetings

Play To Remote-Worker Strengths

- Schedule flexibility, time zone variances
 - more flexible personal time
 - better work coverage outside business hours
- Opportunities for travel
 - home-bound workers often enjoy traveling more than office-bound workers
- Most/all communication is electronic
 - easier to add remote team members
 - easier to harness remote worker skills with minimal disruption, e.g., chat channel
- Hiring
 - global talent pool
 - lower wages

Remote Team Challenges

Remote workers can feel:

- Isolated
- Under-appreciated
- Not engaged in the company goals

Time to implement the previous suggestions.

Tips for Remote Employees

- Be super-responsive
- As a remote worker, you have more flexibility than most
 - do not forget that
 - be extra-flexible in adjusting your personal time to match management needs
- Over-communicate in a way that is not disruptive
- Be self-disciplined, or you will fail

Conclusion



<https://momjian.us/presentations> https://www.flickr.com/photos/1_sparky/3131883713/