

What is a manager? A manager/supervisor is usually a person in a designated position. Managers have a job position or title that lets others know they are in charge. They are the people who make things happen and get things done. They take the leader's vision and organize whatever needs to be done to make the vision a reality. The ability to manage well is more a 'left-brain activity', involving structure and organization. As Peter Drucker says, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." There are many qualities and skills managers must possess in order to do their job well.

GOOD MANAGERS:

- **Are available** to their staff. They maintain an openness that encourages communication, and they know how to listen well and respond to what's being said.
- **Are organized.** Managers are able to prioritize, delegate and direct their team. They create schedules to insure that all duties are covered during operating hours. This includes but is not limited to scheduling work shifts, in-service education, and team meetings.
- **Focus on systems and how people fit into them.** Good managers understand and create systems and know which ones will work best to enable their team to be most effective and efficient.
- **Focus on daily, weekly and monthly schedules designed to accomplish specific goals.** Effective managers look at the time and motion of how employees function, and determine ways to make them most effective.
- **Engage in dialogue and debate, not coercion.** Managers seek input from employees in order to best discuss issues and determine outcomes. Ask their opinions and validate their participation. They learn what their team's needs are by asking questions, listening, and considering ideas before making decisions.
- **Give credit** at every opportunity for successes and a job that is well done. Pass on compliments.
- **Accept responsibility** for things that go wrong. Ultimately it's your responsibility to insure that you have the right staff members in the right positions, and that they are well trained. If something goes wrong it's because this hasn't happened.
- **Let people know how they are doing.** Offer praise often. Verbally appreciate people in private and in front of others. If

correction is needed, give it privately and with respect, and focus on the positive and your belief in their ability to improve.

- **Set goals** which reflect the mission statement of the organization, the needs of your clients/customers, your vendors, the community and the needs of your staff.
- **Delegate tasks.** Effective managers direct staff to complete tasks in the most time and financially efficient ways possible. This requires knowledge of each individual team member's abilities, preferences, and learning needs. They give clear, complete instructions designed to communicate to each employee based on their experience and ability. A good manager is able to speak the language of their team members and to meet them at their level.
- **Solve problems without blame.** Good managers face situations realistically and deal with them immediately. They deal with issues, not emotion, and focus on what was learned from a situation and how it can be done differently next time. This helps to move their staff members forward rather than keeping them stuck in mistakes.
- **Listen, ask questions and respect answers.** Good managers are effective communicators. They are approachable and believe that each person has a right to an opinion, something to offer the team, and has a right to be heard.
- **Respect the abilities of their staff** as licensed personnel to make decisions and be responsible for their behavior. When a manager assigns a task to a team member s/he demonstrates faith and respect in the ability of that member to do the job to the best of their ability.
- **Are aware of the specific personalities and learning needs of each of their employees.** An effective manager meets with each team member to discuss job satisfaction and goals for personal and professional growth. Together the manager and employee create action plans to move the team member toward the goals.
- **Have the ability to multitask and keep track of a lot of things at once.** Effective managers keep detailed daily notes about all that happens on the unit. With the help of these notes they are able to make decisions, delegate, create schedules, and monitor work climate. A good manager is in touch with all that is happening in the unit on a 24-hour basis.

- **Carry out the mission of the institution.** Everything a good manager does is with the overall mission of the institution in mind.
- **Be flexible and able to move quickly from one role to another.** A good manager wears many hats, and may be required to switch from counseling to educating to delegating within a short period of time.

Many of the qualities required of a good manager are also those possessed by good leaders. Although people in leadership roles don't have to possess management skills to be effective, it's necessary for a good manager to also have many skills associated with being a good leader.