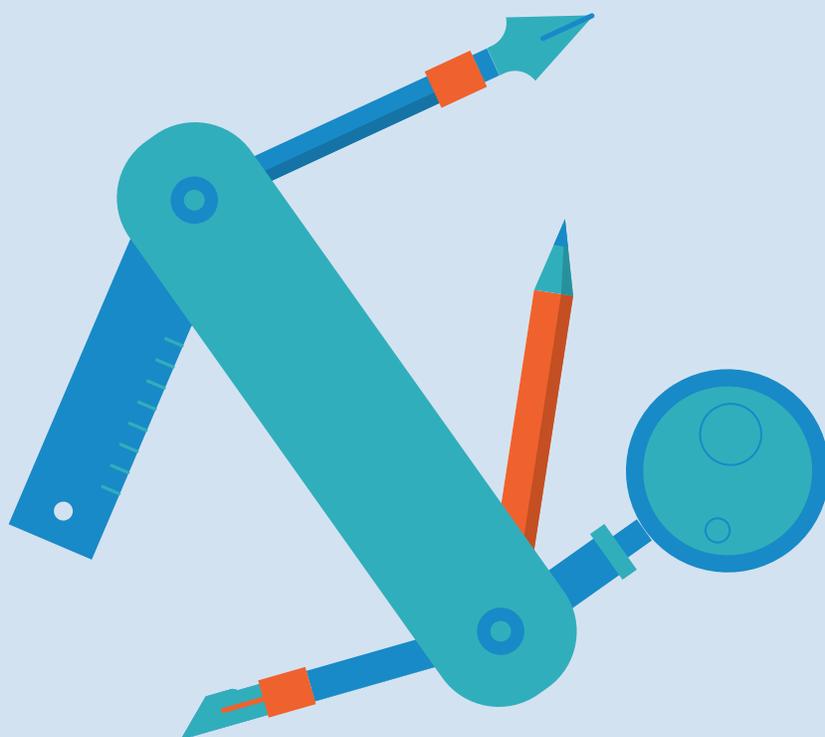


Developing gender-sensitive competencies: **Quick tips for managers**



(ADAPTED FROM UNAIDS' COMPETENCIES)

MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES

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Introduction

As marked in the United Nations Competency Development – A Practical Guide¹, one of several keys for the success of the United Nations is the strength, quality, and commitment of UN staff members. Staff members should be guided the organizational core values and equipped with core competencies.

Organizational core values are the shared principles and beliefs that underpin the work of an organization and guide the actions and behavior of its staff. Core competencies refer to

the combination of skills, attributes and behavior required of all staff, regardless of their level or function. Managerial competencies are the additional skills, attributes and behaviors required of those who manage other staff.

It is of utmost importance that staff members contribute to their maximum potential with high performance and excellence to prepare the United Nations to meet the challenges of the 21st century and its global commitments to human rights for all.

Under the un competency framework, three organizational core values are:

INTEGRITY

Refers to:

- Upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter.
- Demonstrating the values of the United Nations, including impartiality, fairness, honesty and truthfulness, in daily activities and behaviors.
- Acting without consideration of personal gain.
- Resisting undue political pressure in decision-making.
- Not abusing power or authority.
- Standing by decisions that are in the Organization's interest even if they are unpopular.
- Taking prompt action in cases of unprofessional or unethical behavior.

PROFESSIONALISM

Refers to:

- Showing pride in work and in achievements.
- Demonstrating professional competence and mastery of subject matter.
- Being conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results.
- Being motivated by professional rather than personal concerns.
- Showing persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges.
- Remaining calm in stressful situations.

¹ Office for Human Resources Management, <http://www.un.org/staffdevelopment/viewPage.asp?selMenu=unc.asp>

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Refers to:

- Working effectively with people from all backgrounds.
- Treating all people with dignity and respect.
- Treating men and women equally.
- Showing respect for, and understanding of, diverse points of view and demonstrates this understanding in daily work and decision-making.
- Examining own biases and behaviors to avoid stereotypical responses.
- Not discriminating against any individual or group.

As a United Nations staff member, the key commitment is to promote, protect, and fulfill **human rights for all** through realizing global and regional normative frameworks. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment is a significant element for achieving human rights and human development.

As a United Nations Staff member, committing to **gender equality** and **women's empowerment** calls for:

- Some understanding about gender concepts and theories,
- Knowledge about some gender issues both at the local and international levels,
- Awareness about key international normative agreements and frameworks for promoting gender equality and women's human rights,
- Knowledge of the UN gender-related policies and strategies,
- Ability to analyze information, evidence, and socio-political context from a gender-lens,
- Familiarity with methods, tools, and techniques for a gender analysis in order to integrate gender into policies and programmes,
- Knowledge and skills to mainstream gender into communications and advocacy, policies and programmes,

This document is a work in progress. It does not provide an exhaustive list of competencies nor has a comprehensive information about UN competencies. It is built upon

- Engagement with women's and girls' rights and social justice movements and civil society,
- Reflection on self's gendered power practices, perceptions, beliefs and attitudes, and
- Advocacy for gender equality practices at work place as well as in day-to-day life.

The Managerial Competences are intended to provide a series of "Quick Tips" for managers. Being in a managerial role in the UN system requires the ability to encourage and build a positive organizational and/or office environment which supports each person to work to the best of her/his ability and has equal opportunity for advancement. Managers also are responsible for ensuring a culture of inclusivity that fosters open communications and recognizes individual differences as equally contributing to the success of the team.

Managers are with leadership skills that do not create dependency, but instead assure others will also become leaders. Managers should not use the competencies to become superior, but to support and work with others so we can all be on the path to achieve human rights and gender equality both as an organization as well as individuals.

the UNAIDS' competency tips. It is thus considered as a living document that will continue to be strengthened.

Scan the big picture

“Focus your vision on human rights for all and gender equality.”

Some say that vision is not a dream but a reality that has not yet come into existence. A vision must be combined with strategic thinking and action for it to become reality. The foundation of the organization is grounded on human rights and gender equality principles. This must be reaffirmed strongly and regularly so that we do not lose sight of what we are doing. And a key step in thinking strategically is maintaining broad situational awareness - a clear view of the big picture.

Keeping the big picture in mind requires you to constantly illuminate your environment with a mental floodlight. This lets you scan the context for potential risks and opportunities. Being acutely aware of your situation within and beyond the organization will enable you to avoid pitfalls and may help you recognize subtle factors that could have critical impact on your strategic situation.



Are you being strategic?

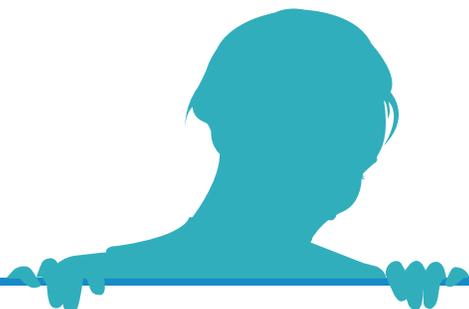
Contemplate a recent situation in which strategic thinking was required. Ask yourself if you used the following techniques of good situational awareness:

- Holistically envisioned the organization’s mission and priorities
- Kept in mind all stakeholders and beneficiaries, especially women and girls
- Reviewed relevant international agreements/instruments, policies and precedents
- Considered all viable alternatives available, including out-of-the-box ones

- Looked over the time horizon for significant new trends and developments
- Recognized situations that demanded rapid action
- Spotted unique opportunities offering exceptional benefits
- Foresaw any likely chain reactions or organizational consequences
- Anticipated downsides, obstacles and push back
- Identified potential allies and adversaries

Don’t be dismayed or discouraged to discover you haven’t yet mastered the art of total situational awareness. It is an ideal that is rarely achieved in the midst of the stressful work life of the typical manager. Nevertheless, periodically pausing to

do an honest assessment of your situational awareness is an excellent way to gradually establish a focus on the big picture as part of your regular strategic thinking.



Some ideas for maintaining a big picture focus

- **Expand your perspective:** Taking the time to learn about multiple stakeholders, especially women and girls, who have an interest in your decision, or upon whom the decision will have impact, will enable you to make a better decision. Thinking about decisions from the perspectives of others and reflecting upon the values of human rights and gender equality will help you make your decision within the larger framework of the goals of the organization.
- **Look ahead:** Look over the time horizon for significant new trends and developments. You need to have a big picture - in distance, scope and time - to get most big things done. Focus on the future implications of decisions made now.
- **Foresee likely systemic repercussions:** We seldom make decisions that don't cause chain reactions. Think about the possible systemic organizational consequences of a decision you are about to make.
- **Network:** Increase your situational awareness by building and participating in outside networks of people and organizations, particularly women's rights movements, activists, advocates, and researchers. Tap their knowledge and viewpoints on the decisions you need to make. Don't limit yourself to your thinking alone.
- **Identify allies and stakeholders:** An important part of situational awareness is the ability to determine who is likely to be for and against your idea. Be sure to think in terms of the particular idea and not yourself personally.
- **Spot unique opportunities:** A broad scan of your environment may enable you to identify unusual opportunities of which you might otherwise be unaware. A focus on the big picture can let you see possibilities you would miss if you were to concentrate primarily on details.

Think about your work and your vision of what you are doing and why. Ask yourself whether you are focusing on the bigger picture of inspiring the world in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, as opposed to merely finishing a report, completing a requisition, or chairing a meeting. Do you operate with broad situational awareness in your everyday work?



Remember, your ability to maintain awareness of the big picture has a significant impact on your strategic thinking.

Does your team balance results and relationships ?

“ A good team needs to address both its results and relationship needs.”

Management experts have studied the key characteristics of effective teams. A great deal of analysis has gone into looking at whether teams ought to concentrate purely on the task before them or they should emphasize improving the relationships among team members, or the team’s ‘climate’.

Some teams seem to concentrate on climate—the quality of the relationships among team members. Others are preoccu-

pied with task and expend all their energies on getting the job done—whatever the cost. Neither extreme is likely to produce a truly effective team. Rather, a good team needs to address and balance both its climate and task needs.

Analyzing how your team functions in relation to the following characteristics will help you determine how well your team addresses and balances climate and task needs.



Evaluate your team

Divide a piece of paper into two columns, one labelled **Task** and the other **Climate**. Jot down your ratings for each item listed on the following pages, in the proper column. For each item below, give your team:

- 2 points for an excellent job
- 1 point for an acceptable job
- 0 points for a poor job

| <i>task</i> | <i>climate</i> |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <i>Problem solving and decision-making 2</i> | <i>Equal power relations 2</i> |
| <i>Understanding of roles and authority 1</i> | <i>Participation 2</i> |
| <i>Diversity and creativity 2</i> | <i>Work-life balance 1</i> |
| <i>Self-assessment 1</i> | <i>Open communication 1</i> |

Task characteristics

- **Problem solving and decision-making**

The team strives for decisions acceptable to everyone. Differences in opinion are discussed openly and taken into account.

- **Understanding of roles and authority**

Team members understand their roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities.

- **Diversity and creativity**

The team draws upon the knowledge and experience of the diverse profiles and backgrounds of its members including gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, sexual orientation, and other areas of diversity. All views and opinions deriving from diversity are considered and encouraged.

- **Self-assessment**

The team stops periodically to assess how well it’s functioning and what might be improved.

- **External relations**

The team develops important outside relationships and networks to build credibility with key stakeholders.

- **Output/impact**

The team’s productivity and the quality of the work it performs are both high.

- **Clear purpose**

The vision, mission, or goal of the team is understood and embraced by all members. There are clear plans that are implemented with optimism.

Climate characteristics

- **Equal power relations**

All team members are valued, respected, and treated equally regardless of job level, gender, race, and age. Power can be shared, and team members should be empowered to fully utilize their knowledge, capacities, and competencies.

- **Participation**

All team members feel they are valued contributors to the team's output. No one is marginalized or ignored.

- **Work-life balance**

All team have equal access to work-life balance policies and can exercise work-life balance entitlements. Creative opportunities are provided for team members for whom work-life balance is important to fully participate in the team, without fear of discrimination.

- **Open communication**

Team members express their opinions and feelings openly without hidden agendas. Active listening and direct feedback are practiced consistently. Team members are aware of potential differences in communications from gender and cultural perspectives. All team members have their voices heard equally; team members encourage full participation

- **Energy and creativity**

The team is creative, imaginative and not afraid to take risks. Team members gain strength and energy from one another.

- **Constructive disagreement**

Team members give and receive constructive and non-aggressive criticism without fear of offence. They discuss their relationships openly.

- **Human relations**

Each member feels respected and cared about. They are at ease in each other's company. The work environment is enjoyable and not tense.

- **Learning**

Team members continually look for better ways of working together and learning from each other. Individual professional development is encouraged and supported.

- **Team member fulfilment**

Team members derive a high level of satisfaction from their role in the team. They feel comfortable on the team but also challenged to develop and grow.

Scoring

Total your ratings in each category. The maximum score in each category is 14. Look at the difference in scores between your ratings for TASK and CLIMATE. If the difference is greater than 6, your team is probably out of balance and should be

placing more emphasis on developing the weaker side. If you gave either area fewer than 7 points, it indicates that work is needed in that area.



Remember, the most effective teams balance their focus on getting the job done with care and how team members treat each other.

Lead your team with empathy and assertiveness

“ Good team leaders are caring and understanding while also being strong advocates.

When deciding how best to engage constructively with team members, managers often face a dilemma between being assertive and being empathetic. Although the two approaches may seem to be at odds with each other, in reality, they are

complementary and both are essential to building sound relationships. A good team leader is both assertive and empathetic.



Can you recognize the difference?

Which of the following statements are assertive and which are empathetic? Check the correct column for each.

| | Empathetic | Assertive |
|--|------------|-----------|
| 1. Yolanda, I think when Ahmad was trying to say something just now, you cut him off. | | |
| 2. Pierre, how're you feeling today? You were particularly quiet in today's meeting— not your usual self. | | |
| 3. Sue, I know it's your partner's birthday today and you wanted to get out of here on time. I'd be happy to finish that up for you. | | |
| 4. I know that you'd both prefer it the other way, but it's essential that we follow the guidelines. Sorry. | | |

(Numbers 2 and 3 are examples of empathetic statements, while numbers 1 and 4 are both assertive.)



Empathy means entering the perceptual world of others without judging them.

It's a value-neutral term and does not mean agreement. It requires exploring another's worldview without judgment. Taking the perspective of others is valuable because it allows you to truly understand them, their interests and needs. Being empathetic enables you to:

- Correct potential misperceptions
- Address the other person's need for acknowledgement
- Show others that you have concern and respect for them.

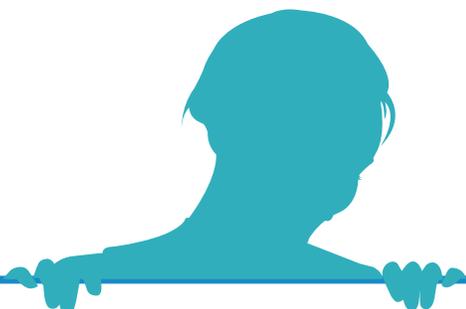
Assertiveness presupposes that you know your own interests very well and that you can articulate them.

In addition, it requires you to listen well in order to be sure that the person you are speaking with accurately understands what you want and what your priorities are. Assertiveness assumes that you are entitled to express your interests just as others are.

Concerns about empathy and assertiveness

Some managers hesitate to use assertiveness or empathy either separately or together. They worry that their empathy might be misunderstood as showing weakness, or that their assertiveness might be likened to bullying. To use empathy and assertiveness effectively, it is important to separate them

from the notions of weakness and strength. When used together well, assertiveness and empathy can change the attitude of those with whom you interact by fostering openness and mutual respect. Both empathy and assertiveness skills are important elements of any manager.



Remember, both empathy and assertiveness are key to leading a team effectively.



For applying empathy and assertiveness

An effective team leader exerts assertive direction while maintaining empathetic relationships with all of the team members. A lack of assertiveness can make the manager seem indecisive or weak. Most team members appreciate thoughtful, firm, assertive leadership—as long as it comes from a caring, empathetic manager who takes their feelings and needs into consideration.

- 1 Most of us show a preference for either assertiveness or empathy; one tends to come easier and more naturally than the other. Identify your own least favored trait and consciously choose to demonstrate it at least twice daily.
- 2 Ask a close colleague or friend for blunt feedback. Are you more likely to be overly assertive or overly empathetic? Can he or she provide you with examples?
- 3 If you need to work on empathy, try this with one person today:
 - Listen attentively and without judgment
 - Show interest with your face and body
 - Reflect on what the other person said
 - Validate the other person: “I can understand how you’d feel that way” etc.
 - Offer personal support
- 4 If you need to work on assertiveness, try this:
 - The next time you start to apologize, ask yourself if it is appropriate. Some people apologize more than is fitting or necessary.
 - The next time you are unhappy about something someone did, choose to speak up politely, rather than remaining quiet for fear of a reaction.
 - The next time you disagree with something being said, express and stand up for your views respectfully and without apology.

Help your team resolve conflicts

“ Conflicts can be constructive or destructive, thus must be managed well.

Conflict is not something to fear. It is an inevitable part of any workplace. By learning to manage it effectively, a team can become more creative and efficient. In organizations where multi-cultural teams are common and valued, conflicts may arise based upon socio-cultural differences. Multi-cultural teams need to learn to recognize, understand, and address

conflicts that may arise from their differences in order to resolve them and continue to work toward the team goals. A team with strong interpersonal relationships can develop the ability to manage many of its own internal conflicts. Here are some ways that you can start helping your team to do just that.

Turn the responsibility back on the complainer

As a leader, you need to be ready and willing to intervene in serious team conflict. Yet, you don't want to become the 'parent' to whom staff members come with petty disagreements and complaints about each other on a regular basis. One way to prevent that from happening is to turn the responsibility back on the complainer. You can do this by using questions such as the following:

- “What have you done to address your concerns with (the person's name)?”
- “What do you think is causing the conflict?”
- “How can you word your concerns fairly and constructively?”
- “What kind of solution would you like to see to the conflict?”
- “When are you going to speak with (the person's name)?”
- “After you've met, could you come to see me and let me know how you two worked it out?”

When you turn their complaints back into questions about what they are going to do, you give your team members responsibility for solving their own interpersonal problems. They will soon learn to deal with their concerns directly rather than always coming to you to mediate. However, while many areas of conflict among team members are best resolved by the parties themselves, as a manager you will need to be able to discern when your intervention is appropriate and/or necessary. This is especially important if conflicts are about discrimination, sexual harassment, or other serious issues of this type. Managers should be fully aware of the guidance found in the Code of Conduct and organizational policies on conflict resolutions.

Identify if there are some hidden causes of conflict

Encouraging individuals to identify the source of their conflict can be a good first step toward getting them to resolve it on their own.

Could there be hidden organizational issues?

Are there any structural issues underlying conflicts in the team? For example, a shortage of resources such as office space or equipment may lead to disagreement. Likewise, ambiguous or overlapping responsibilities frequently create friction between staff members. For example, when assigning two people to a project, define their roles clearly to avoid possible conflict. Another hidden issue can be power imbalance created by hierarchies. Focusing both parties on these underlying structural causes of conflict can help team members cooperate to resolve a problem that exists outside of their particular personalities and their negative perceptions of each other's motives and behaviors. Together they may be able to propose practical ways to improve the sharing of limited resources or create more clarity in their role expectations.

Could there be hidden gender or power imbalance issues?

Gender relations and power dynamics are complex within any organizational setting, and are difficult to manage. There can be misunderstandings, resistance, anger that accumulate over time and may surface explicitly or implicitly.

Set some team rules for resolving conflict

Help your team devise their own set of rules for dealing with internal conflict. This is best accomplished during a team meeting when they are facing a disagreement that must be resolved. Some of the rules that other teams have found useful include:

- Openly discuss how gender relations and power dynamics may impact both the source of the conflict and the ways in which it is being addressed.
- Ensure that rules created to address conflict are inclusive of individual differences and not just reflective of the rules preferred by the dominant group.
- If we are unable to resolve an issue between the two of us, we will ask another team member whom we both respect and trust to mediate.
- Let things cool down first. We will discuss our disagreement when we are not caught in the emotion of the moment. We will make an appointment to talk about the disagreement later.
- When the disagreement is in regard to an issue that involves the whole team, we will discuss it with all team members present. We will not exclude anyone by talking in small groups.
- We will maintain civil, polite, and gender-sensitive language that reflects our respect for one another even when we have differences.



Remember, you model for others how best to resolve conflict!

Be a role model

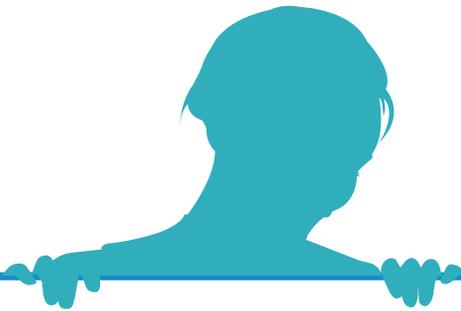
Be sure that as the manager you serve as a good role model by dealing with conflict directly yourself. Let your team see that you never complain about others, but take your issues directly to the people concerned. Lead by example. Importantly, as the manager, it is important to demonstrate fairness and equality in your management and leadership.



How to give constructive feedback well

“ Make sure your feedback is always clear, candid and constructive to motivate and build confidence.

A skilled manager is also a coach and mentor - someone who can deliver constructive feedback in a way that it is welcomed and acted on. The purpose of providing feedback is always to encourage improvement. (And never to blow off steam!)



To give constructive feedback effectively

- 1 Examine your planned feedback through different lenses to ensure that your feedback is not biased or perpetuates gendered power imbalance.
- 2 Ask for input by stating what you observed, and listen carefully to any explanation. Perhaps the recipient already understands the problem and it was just a slip-up that won't be repeated. Or perhaps he or she had a valid reason for certain behaviors.
- 3 Provide specifics by stating the behavior with as many details as possible. Not, "You need to work on your writing" but rather "Your report lacked cohesiveness; it jumped around from one subject to another and was difficult to follow."
- 4 Be direct and sincere by getting to the point. Sincerity means saying exactly what you mean with care and respect. Avoid "yes, but..." messages such as "Omar, you worked hard on this project but..." What follows is the real point of the message, which needs to be stated clearly and directly.
- 5 State observations, not interpretations. Observations are factual and nonjudgmental. Stick to observed behavior, not your analysis or opinion of it.
- 6 Just-in-time. Feedback should be given in real-time, as close as possible to when the performance incident occurred so that the events are fresh in everyone's minds. Of course, if you are upset, give yourself time to cool off so that you can be calm and respectful.
- 7 Be accurate and be sure of what you observed; check with others if necessary.
- 8 Be private. Praise in public, correct in private. If you criticize someone in front of others, the recipient is likely to focus on the embarrassment rather than the content of what you say.



Test yourself

What makes one of these examples good and four of them poor? Check each of the examples against the tips above to find the good one!



Samora that was a terrific job you did this morning at the meeting. Thanks!

Poor. The feedback should be more specific. What did Samora do at the meeting that was so good? She can't repeat the fine performance if she doesn't know exactly what she did well.

Paolo, I don't remember that dent in the vehicle before. Did you have an accident? And, by the way, a few weeks ago someone said they'd seen you speeding on the way to the office.

Poor. The feedback is not timely. If you got a report of Paolo speeding weeks ago, it should have been addressed then. Also, two different behaviors are mixed here. It would be better to be specific by addressing them separately.

You know, Hans, your report was good but quite short. You could make it more impressive if you'd use longer and more complex sentences, throw in a few Latinisms, and so on. See if you can add an *inter alia*, *sine qua non* or *de jure* somewhere..

Poor. It's not accurate! Principles of good writing require avoiding long, complex sentences and Latinisms. Before you criticize Hans, be sure you're correct!

I know I've never mentioned it before, Fey, but I've thought for a long time that you're one of our most effective clerks. I was especially impressed with the way you helped train the new assistant last month.

Poor. It is neither timely nor specific. It would have been better to provide feedback closer to when Fey trained the new assistant. Also, "you're one of our best" is not specific enough. She needs to know exactly what she's been doing that you recognize as making her "one of the best".

Claudia, I got a call yesterday from headquarters saying that your expenditure totals for this month didn't match what was reflected in the ERP data. This is the third time now, and when we talked about it last time you said you'd be sure to double check. What do you think happened?

Excellent. This was the good example. The feedback is specific, backed up with objective data, and asks for an explanation rather than just telling Claudia what is wrong. (Let's assume the feedback was given in private.)

Recognize and inspire others

“ Sincere recognition is one way managers can greatly motivate and inspire.

Recognition from others significantly affects not only how people feel about themselves but also serves to validate their work. It motivates and encourages desirable behaviors in both the recognized staff and others who seek similar validation. Recognition can range from direct praise to more indirect forms like asking staff for their opinions, involving them in decisions,

and supporting them when they make a mistake.

Michael LeBoeuf, author of 'How to motivate people', says it is really not that complex. Staff will be motivated when it is clear to them what behaviors are expected and recognized. He drew insight from the following fable:

A fisherman looked over the side of his boat and saw a snake with a frog in its mouth. Feeling sorry for the frog, he reached down, gently removed the frog from the snake's mouth and let the frog go free. But now he felt sorry for the hungry snake. Having no food, he took out a flask of bourbon and poured a few drops into the snake's mouth.

The snake swam away happy, the frog was happy, and the man was happy for having performed such good deeds. He thought all was well until a few minutes passed and he heard something knock against the side of his boat and looked down. With stunned disbelief, the fisherman saw the snake was back with two frogs.

The fable carries two important lessons:

1. You get more of the behavior you reward, you don't get what you hope for, ask for, wish for or beg for. People tend to do the things that they believe will benefit them most.
2. In trying to do the right things, it is easy to fall into the trap of recognizing the wrong behaviors and ignoring the right ones. The result is that we hope for A, unwittingly reward B and then wonder why we get B.



Look around your workplace, are you recognizing the wrong behavior, instead of the right behavior? For example do you:

- Need better results, but praise those who look the busiest?
- Ask for new ideas, but always support staff who agree with you.

Establishing the links between performance and recognition is key to improving individual and team performance for the right results.

A recognition checklist

According to LeBoeuf, these are some things to remember when you are recognizing another person:

- **Recognize solid solutions instead of quick fixes.**

Too often we tend to recognize short term, patchwork solutions that ultimately creates more problems than they solve. Solid solutions require time, foresight, patience, sacrifice and discipline. Encourage those who give you long-term solutions, instead of those provide you with a “quick fix” or simple solution today.
- **Recognize risk taking instead of risk avoiding.**

Are you always reinforcing the message ‘Don’t do anything wrong’. For improvement, reassure your team that making intelligent errors are vital for progress. Encourage your team to take smart risks.
- **Recognize innovation instead of mindless conformity.**

Check if you are just paying lip service to creativity. Are you asking for new ideas and then finding excuses not to support them? Make sure you praise members of your team who dare to think differently.
- **Recognize decisive action instead of evading action**

For most projects, it is important to plan and analyze contexts. For some this translates to holding long meetings, writing reports, analyzing facts and figures, which become more important than deciding on a course of action. Recognize staff that are willing to take prompt action.
- **Recognize smart work instead of busy work.**

The key to working smarter is distinguishing between motion and direction. Sometimes being busy becomes the goal. The solution is to make sure you have the right person for the job, define the results, give them the tools and then commend people for achieving results and not just looking busy.
- **Recognize quiet heroes.**

Most teams have them and every organization needs them. Reliable people who know their jobs and do them without calling a lot of attention to themselves. Sometimes they might be overlooked, so make sure you seek out your quiet heroes, recognize their quietly effective behaviors, and spend time encouraging their efforts.
- **Recognize quality work instead of hurried work.**

Are you always pushing for ‘How can we do it faster or cheaper?’ and ignoring ‘How can we do it right every time?’ Fostering a commitment to quality, could be as simple as asking the person who does the job, how to improve it.

- **Recognize working together instead of against each other.**

Teamwork rarely, if ever, happens by accident. It occurs when managers make it priority and structure the work and the team in ways that require cooperation. In short, if you want team players, reward teamwork.
- **Recognize different practical and strategic gender needs of women and men.**

Men and women have different practical and strategic needs in order to learn, perform, grow, benefit, and/or enjoy the work, and ultimately to enjoy equity, equality, and fairness.



When should *i* delegate?

“ Delegate when you need help or when those you supervise need a development opportunity.

There are two reasons for delegating tasks for which you are responsible:

1. When you need help
- or
2. When those you supervise need a development opportunity.

Delegate when you need help

Delegating is a legitimate and effective way to lessen your own workload as long as you are not overburdening someone who reports to you. In fact, if you can delegate a challenging assignment, it may be welcomed by the staff member as a growth opportunity, while you gain time.

While delegating tasks because you need assistance is valid, 'dumping' never is. Dumping is giving routine, time-consuming tasks to a supervisee who has little to learn from doing them. With careful planning, you may be able to get help for yourself at the same time you provide development opportunities for others. But if you focus only on the first objective, you might be tempted to merely 'dump' instead of 'delegate.' Don't!

Delegate for development

A delegated task that is truly developmental:

- Is within the area of interest and/or work responsibility of the person to whom it's delegated.
- Fits the person's time available. If they are already over-worked, don't add to their stress by providing what you see as a developmental opportunity, unless you can reduce their workload in some other way.
- Meets the person's capacity to succeed. The task needs to be difficult enough to be challenging, and yet within the growth capabilities of the staff member.
- Allows you to coach the person as needed. Make yourself available, but don't provide more advice than is wanted. of others with different work and communication styles, etc., sometimes based upon gender or cultural background. Care must be taken to be aware of the unconscious bias about preferring to work with and trust important tasks to those with whom we are the most comfortable. This preference leads to systematic exclusion of many others, leading inequality and discrimination.

Steps for delegating



1. Match the task and the person

Appropriately matching the task to be delegated to the correct person is critical. Be sure he or she is able and willing to do what is requested and has the time available. Resist the temptation to delegate to the person you always depend on — instead, assess the ability of others and give the task to someone whose skills you want to develop. Be intentional about including all employees for consideration.

2. Explain thoroughly; demonstrate if appropriate

Be sure your instructions are completely clear. Check for understanding. Ask “What do you feel is the best way to handle this?” Determine the exact time frame of the task. Ask when they feel that they can complete this. If the time they choose isn’t appropriate, ask what would have to happen for the task to be completed sooner. Be sure that any differences in communication styles, especially based upon gender and/or cultural differences (including language skills) are taken into account during this step.



3. Delegate with authority

While you let your staff choose methods and strategies that they feel will best allow them to complete the assignment, delegate the necessary authority along with the task. When you clarify the assignment, examine how much authority is required and inform your staff of the range of discretion you are giving them. Be clear about constraints and limits that you are granting and the boundaries involved.

4. Coach if necessary and monitor progress

Delegating is not about giving a job to someone and walking away—it requires patience and encouragement. Assure the person to whom you delegated that you are available for support, assistance, and feedback. Delegation is an ongoing process and communication is essential to its success. Most importantly, monitor progress to help avoid problems before they arise while still giving the person enough leeway to do the job alone.

5. Provide feedback on completion

Let the person know how he or she did. Give thanks and a positive response along with any suggestions for next time.



Empowering is not patronizing. Empowerment calls for transforming power-over, and strengthening power-to, power-with, and power-with.

Coaching with questions

“ You must know the right questions to ask and how best to ask them.

One of the most valuable coaching tools is the ability to ask the right question at the right time. This Socratic Method, described over two thousand years ago, is still the best way for you to help your staff members identify goals, potential problems and roadblocks, and new plans of action for themselves. By using self-discovery, you'll find that they show greater cooperation, understanding, and commitment than they would

if you merely told them what to do and how. In addition, by discovering their own solutions, they will feel more empowered and self-confident.

The most successful managers use questions to help staff members open up and share their feelings. However, you must know the right questions to ask and how best to ask them.

Kinds of questions

Basically, all questions are either closed (can be answered with yes, no, maybe, either-or) or open (require an explanation). To get the people you are coaching talking so that they can discover the solutions to their own problems (rather than your solutions to their problems), you primarily need to ask open-ended questions.

Reasons to coach with questions

Why ask questions? The obvious answer is to get information. But there is an even more important reason: questions promote communication. By asking a question, you open the channel to begin verbal interaction. You show the staff member that you're truly interested. Once you've opened the communication channel and established good rapport, you can begin to use questions for other purposes.

- **Gain information**

By asking questions about the staff member's needs, goals, problems, and evaluation of the current situation, you can gain the necessary information to better focus the direction of your coaching.

- **Uncover motives and gain insight**

By using questions skillfully, you can understand the staff member's frame of reference, motives, and objectives. This gives you an insight into both the person and the situation.

- **Gain participation and build rapport**

Occasionally the person you are coaching will seem uncommunicative. Asking open-ended questions on a topic of interest to the person may get them talking and volunteering information. Don't try to 'get down to business' until you have established a comfortable, interactive give and take.

- **Start the staff member thinking**

Questioning that requests opinions and suggestions can get the staff member thinking. It also acknowledges the person's ability to contribute something of value, which builds trust.

- **Guide the discussion**

Well-chosen and well-timed questions can non-intrusively help the person you're coaching focus on key issues. Examples include "Can you expand on that?" or "How does that relate to... ?" Another technique is to simply repeat a key word the person has used with a questioning intonation and then wait for a fuller explanation.

- **Check your understanding**

Questions provide you the critical feedback necessary to make sure that the two-way communication is on track. Questions allow you to verify that you've captured the true essence of the message—feelings as well as the content. This type of check for understanding usually begins with a statement such as "Let's see if I can summarize your main concerns..." or "If I understand you correctly..."



**It is essential that you then add, “Am I on target?” “Or “Is that correct?”
This accomplishes three purposes:**

1. It shows that you’re making a real effort to listen.
2. It proves by your response that the message is important to you.
3. It gives the other person a chance to correct any misunderstanding on your part.

Elicit reciprocity

By asking questions and listening attentively to the responses, you are setting an expectation that the person you are coaching will also listen to your contributions and comments.

The irony is that the more you speak, the less you are apt to be heard.



Weighing choices

“ You need to exercise sufficient self-awareness to prevent your own biases from unbalancing your choices.

A basic requirement for exercising sound judgment is to carefully balance various options, tradeoffs and values. Making the choices that prove to be the best ones, considering the challenges you face and the circumstances in which you find yourself, is frequently difficult. Often there are several options that have different problems or benefits associated with them. Nevertheless, the ability to choose

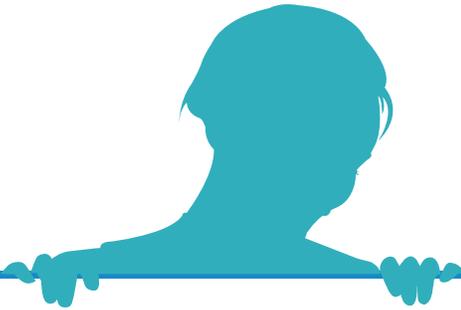
wisely between options is one of the most essential attributes of an effective manager. It is a competency that underlies many others and upon which they depend. Unsound judgment calls inevitably undermine, and often defeat, perfectly well-intentioned decisions and actions. Sound ones lay a solid foundation for success.

Do you usually exercise sound judgement?

Think of an up-coming situation in which you will be required to exercise sound judgment. Consider whether you have effectively utilized the following techniques for weighing your choices:

- Consider the cost of doing nothing versus making a difficult decision.
- Compare any opportunity for long-term gain against temporary sacrifice or pain.
- Weigh the positive and negative impact on all stakeholders.
- Seek input and/or advice from those stakeholders who will be affected by your choice.
- Evaluate the trade-offs implied for organizational values and priorities.
- Balance your own emotion and compassion with dispassionate analysis.
- Avoid both over-reactive snap decisions and procrastination/paralysis.
- Be satisfied with a reasonable and adequate, rather than ideal, amount of information.
- Maintain a realistic (neither overly optimistic nor pessimistic) viewpoint.
- Consider how best to ‘sell’ your choice to others.





Remember, how well you balance the various factors involved in making choices has a significant impact on the soundness of your judgment calls.



For making good judgements

1 Consider costs and benefits

Achieving optimal cost-benefit balance requires the weighing of alternatives until you identify the one with the most benefits and fewest costs. The key lies in identifying all the benefits and the hidden costs for each alternative. Begin by asking whether the risks and costs implicit in implementing any significant change merit it. The alternatives being considered should contain ‘no change’ as an option.

One area easily overlooked is how each option will affect everyone concerned. Do the benefits tend to accrue to one group and the costs to another? Is there anyone or any group that will be particularly negatively impacted by each option? Look at all costs for each option—not just financial. Be sure to identify any perceived harm that will be felt by different people. And when you ‘run the numbers’ be sure to run all the numbers. Look for hidden costs. For example, it may be less expensive to print health information in a neighboring country, but would the transportation costs justify it? Another area to examine is when the costs and benefits will be felt. Is it ‘pay now and reap the benefits later’ or will the payoff be immediate? Or will a small sacrifice now result in large long-term benefits?

2 Be aware of your motivations

Self-awareness is crucial for good judgment. The process of weighing choices is an innately subjective one. It draws on beliefs, values, assumptions, emotions, and preferences as a human being, which is highly appropriate in an organization working to promote human rights and gender equality. However, you need to have sufficient self-awareness to prevent any preconceptions, biases or prejudices from unbalancing your choices. It is naïve to claim purity in your motivations since everyone is biased in some ways. Conscious awareness of your motivation in selecting one option over others is a safeguard against making unsound judgment calls.

3 Communicate your thinking

Usually you need to be able to justify to others the cost and the potential benefits that will result from the choices you make. Making your thinking process explicit and keeping detailed records of the underlying factors you evaluated and how you weighed them will give you tools for helping others understand and accept your decisions. It is helpful to think in advance how your choices are likely to be received and to develop a strategy for communicating them effectively. In some cases, letting others know what you have in mind before you make a decision will enable you to fine tune your message. They may be able to help you avoid unsound judgment calls.

Expand your internal network

“ Focus on what you have to give as well as what you want to get from your network contacts.

Cultivating mutual relationships as well as technical skills or functional knowledge is of vital importance for organizational development. Using an internal network offers three important advantages as following:

1. Access to information

An organization naturally holds detailed information in a dispersed rather than a centralized way. Through your contacts in other parts of the organization you can access data not easily available to you.

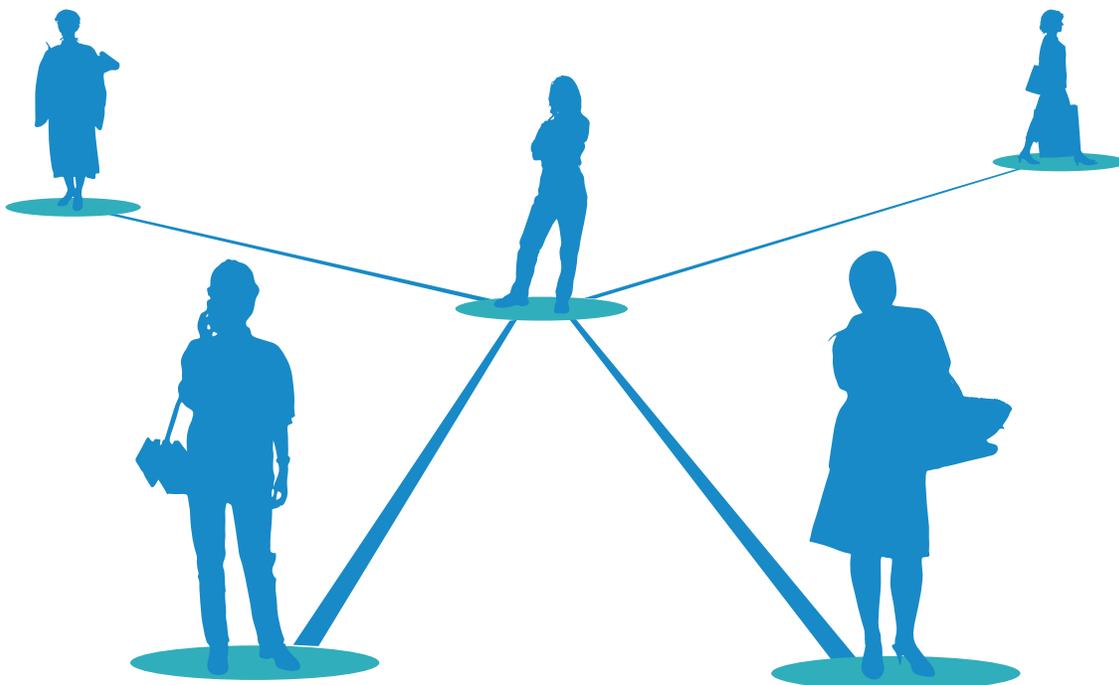
2. Additional support

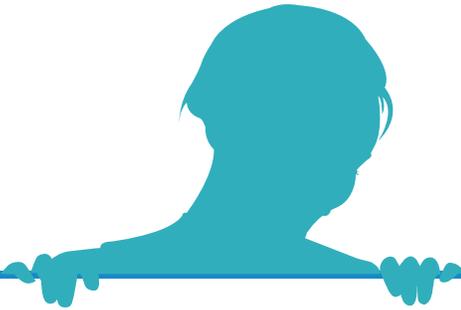
An internal network allows you to tap the knowledge, experience and assistance of people throughout the organization areas that otherwise would not be easily accessible to you. The more diverse your network, the better it will be for developing an unbiased, comprehensive view of the issues and

your options. In addition, trading information and skills with other people broadens and deepens your mutual resource base.

3. Increased influence

Networks increase your influence by helping you become known beyond your immediate work group. It is important to network with other teams within your organization to enhance work synergies and coordination.





Work on building an internal network of contacts that is broad, diverse, and mutually beneficial!



TIPS

Three specific ways to expand your internal network are:

1 Identify brokers

Most personal networks are highly clustered. For example, your friends are likely to be friends with one another as well. In a large organization, many clusters exist around commonalities such as function, gender, common interest, and national origin or language. Brokers are those people who have friends in several different clusters. Brokers are especially significant because they connect disparate clusters, stimulating contact and collaboration among people who otherwise would have little interaction with one another. To expand the extent of your network, identify and cultivate your contact with key brokers!

2 Make it mutual

An effective network is one in which everyone is both a provider and a recipient of information, interaction, and favors. One of the best ways to initiate a contact is through sincere inquiry—questions aimed at truly getting to know the other person. Try to follow up by providing something meaningful and helpful: information, an article, or even a sincere compliment. When you are known as a valuable resource. For others, they will turn to you for suggestions, ideas, names of people, etc. This will keep you visible and enlarge your network. Focus on what you have to give, and not just on what you want to get from your network contacts. Doing so becomes natural if you learn to enjoy the sense of satisfaction that comes from being useful to others.

3 Overcome commonality and proximity

Many of us build our network according to the commonality principle, primarily choosing as contacts people who are similar to us in experience, principles and values, world view, and background. This is understandable, since it's easier to build trust and get along with those who view the world through the same lens we do. Also, like-minded people tend to confirm our point of view and thus gratify our egos. However, as pleasant as it may be, having our contacts primarily among those similar to us limits access to new information, meaningful criticism, and challenging questions that are so important for growth and good decision-making. Don't relate only to your admirers!

Likewise, it's easiest to populate our networks with those we see every day—following the proximity principle. But those with whom we work most closely tend to be performing similar functions or be in the same department, and therefore are not able to offer us the advantages brought by people from a broader range of backgrounds and interests. If we just follow our natural tendency to build a limited network based on proximity and commonality, we will only be creating 'echo chambers' that repeats our own thoughts, views, and ideas—without the enrichment of diversity.

Developing gender-sensitive
competencies:

Quick tips for managers

(ADAPTED FROM UNAIDS' COMPETENCIES)

