

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

manager isn't you.

Paul McDonald • Mar. 16, 2020



Do people really leave managers, rather than firms? Research from staffing firm Robert Half suggests there's some truth to this old saying. Nearly half (49%) of the professionals polled in a recent survey said they'd quit a job because of a bad boss.

Whether you run a small accountancy firm or serve as a manager for an international CPA firm, being in charge is no easy task. So how can you make sure "that" manager isn't you? Here are my top 10 tips:

1. **Communicate effectively.**

You might be an expert tax professional, but unless you can get your point across well, you'll never be a great boss. Setting clear objectives is a critical leadership

skill. Make sure your team knows what the company and departmental goals and

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

Many managers forget that communication is a two-way street. You may have years of experience, but your team has unique skills — that's why you hired them. Rather than dismissing their thoughts and ideas, be open to fresh points of view. Successful leaders listen attentively to others and welcome different perspectives.

4. Be supportive.

Yes, you're the boss and the buck stops with you, but cracking the whip only builds resentment. If your staff are struggling, don't write them off. Find out what they need to do their jobs better — perhaps they've been assigned too many clients or maybe they need a refresher course in new lease accounting regulations.

5. Empower your team.

A good manager focuses on the “what” not the “how,” allowing their team the autonomy to come up with their own solutions for completing a task. Unless an individual is under-performing, resist the urge to micromanage. Your aim should be to build a team of confident workers who can think for themselves rather than blindly following orders.

6. Lead by example.

Your behavior and attitude set the tone for the rest of your team, so make an effort to be upbeat and enthusiastic. Try to do this even when you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed to avoid coming off as erratic. Set achievable targets so your team can celebrate wins. When delivering feedback, be specific so your praise or advice feels constructive and genuine.

7. Build personal relationships.

Your staff spend a big part of their life at work, so help them feel good about being there. This is the differentiating factor of truly great leaders. Let employees pick out their own ergonomic furniture. Surprise them occasionally with morning bagels or pizzas at lunch time. During tax season, offer free in-office massages or concierge services. Brainstorm ways to be generous and show your appreciation for their hard work.

8. Encourage work-life balance.

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us

performance and productivity areas where you could improve. Whether you know to write supportive emails to recognize staff on achievements or how to deliver critical feedback one-on-one, a management training course is a great way to level up your leadership skills and help your team run more efficiently.

9. Be human.

When it comes to being the boss, honesty, decency and empathy are critical if you want people to trust and respect you. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses and to pretend otherwise will only make you seem inauthentic. If you've made a mistake, for example, admit to it rather than pushing the blame onto others. Your team will be gratified to see that you're human after all.

For some people, leadership comes naturally; others have to work hard at it. But never underestimate the effect your role has on others. As well as taking charge, you need to be a mentor, coach and supportive guide. You won't get it right all the time, but if you make the effort to listen and learn, you'll soon fine tune your skills and get the best out of your team.

=====

Paul McDonald is senior executive director at [Robert Half](#), the world's first and largest specialized staffing firm. He writes and speaks frequently on hiring, workplace and career-management topics. Over the course of 35 years in the recruiting field, McDonald has advised thousands of company leaders and job seekers on how to hire and get hired.

Firm Management • Payroll

Hello. It looks like you're using an ad blocker that may prevent our website from working properly. To receive the best experience possible, please make sure any blockers are switched off and refresh the page.

If you have any questions or need help you can email us