qLegal
The small print for BIG IDEAS

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TIPS FOR MANAGERS: *This online publication explains major universal tips for managers working with any kind and size of company.*

1. GOOD MANAGEMENT PRACTICES:

- <u>Encourage 1 on 1 meetings</u> - Where managers can create a safe as well as open and comfortable space for their team members for sharing their accomplishments and concerns. It will encourage the employer as well as the staff to be more open and honest with each other.
- <u>Allow your team to cultivate purpose</u> - Managers must make the team feel empowered and motivated. If the team is motivated to find purpose in their work, that purpose can then translate into creativity, innovation or continued professional development.
- <u>Focus on what your team should and shouldn't be doing</u> - Focusing on what work needs to be done is important and also realising what activity isn't necessary for better time and effort management.
- <u>Seek out trouble</u> - The manager should be alert all the time for any ongoing problems in the company or among the staff.
- <u>Be true to yourself</u> - While managing others, it is your duty to be true to yourself about your strengths and weaknesses, so that you can improve yourself and support others in areas where you excel.
- <u>Do not micro-manage</u> - Make a proper plan with deadlines and supervise the work done by the employees, but do not try to control every activity. Have trust in their work and correct them if needed.
- <u>No secrets</u> – Transparency is key. If there is transparency, it is more likely that there will be trust between the management and the employees. Problems like bad job fit or lack of training, performance issues, bullying, harassment etc. tend to arise in the work environment. It is the duty of an employer to conduct regular meetings with the staff and make sure that every problem is resolved.
- <u>Adopt a complaints, grievance and disciplinary policy/procedure</u> – It is important for every company to have a written policy or procedure in place for resolving any dispute among employees or employees and employer. Employers can refer to sample policies/procedures that can be found on websites like *example; Discipline & Grievance Procedures (Acas) or Employee Grievance Policy Template (Workable)* and many more. Grievance policies can only work if they are implemented properly. Thus, it is manager's duty to make sure there is proper implementation. No policy is useful if it isn't implemented.

2. **MANAGERS NEED TO BE OPEN TO SUGGESTIONS AND WILLING TO CHANGE COURSE:**
Companies are surrounded by various different sources of advice, including paid professional advisors, board members, spouses and friends, as well as social media and big data. Despite the different sources of advice that are available to them, managers usually fail to capitalize on the advice to improve the quality of their decisions and outcomes. (a) Managers should be open to suggestions and willing to change because today's world is emerging and evolving on the fastest pace ever. Thus, it becomes important for every organisation to adapt constantly to the changes happening around them, otherwise the organisation might have to suffer huge losses or difficulties. (b) Managers should seek or welcome advice and suggestions openly from each stakeholder because they might not alone be able to notice the changes happening around them and might not even have sufficient capability of adapting to those changes. A manager should welcome new ideas and suggestions from each stakeholder of the organisation for the growth and development of the organisation. Managers must ensure that these suggestions are properly implemented.

3. **WELLBEING AND TRAINING PROVISIONS FOR YOUR TEAM:** Employee wellbeing is one of the most important factors to be considered by the manager for the survival and growth of a company. As organisations survive on teamwork, it is crucial that all team members are taken care of in terms of wellbeing and training too. Employee wellbeing includes work satisfaction, respectful behavior, employer care and non-intrusion of work in their private lives as well as good work-life balance. For example, making policies like work from home if needed, or not working past work hours, or a policy of not calling employees after work hours or at home. Regular checks on employees' physical and mental wellbeing are also very important and would be a great initiative. With rapid growth in the field of technology, it is important to train the employees accordingly, for them to catch up with the new technologies. Training and development are key strategic tools for the enhancement of employees' performance. Organisations should keep increasing their training budget every year with the belief that it will yield them a competitive edge. The survival of any company lies in its ability to train its employees to be creative, innovative and good problem solvers.

4. **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE: This phrase means: equality is treating staff and customers equally, regardless of their backgrounds; diversity means hiring and working with people from diverse backgrounds; and inclusion means making everyone feel welcome and included.** (1) According to "Equality Act, 2010," every organisation must adopt a good Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy; the act states the need and obligation for employers to have diversity in the workplace meaning employing a workforce comprised of different genders, religion, race, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, education, and other attributes, without any discrimination and to treat all members equally and make them included. (2) It is important to ensure that such policy by the organisation is followed and not just merely adopted. Managers must tailor a template policy which suits best for their organisation and a copy of such policy must be provided to the staff. It is necessary that people are trained according to the policy and that the policy is enforced entirely. For example refer to this sample *policy on "Equality" by Acas*. While

managing a diverse group of individuals, a manager should take care of certain things like: (a) not to have any favourite members – a manager should understand everyone on his team regardless of their age, gender, nationality etc. and find out how well each one of them can contribute in different tasks assigned; (b) just because you have visited a place once doesn't mean you are completely familiar about the culture of that place; with each passing day, you get to know an individual in a better way so it is advised not to have any presumptions beforehand; and (c) a manager must treat all her team members equally.

5. **HOW TO HAVE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS WITH TEAM MEMBERS:** One of a manager's most difficult challenges is to have difficult conversations with her team members. Some conversations are difficult because we don't want to upset the other person as well as our own unconscious anxiety about not being confident enough to handle the conversation that well. However, difficult conversations can be handled by keeping the following four points in mind:

- A shift in the mindset from seeing difficult conversations as a hurdle to seeing them as a resource. A difficult conversation, if handled well, can actually strengthen the personal bond between two people and allow team members to grow both professionally and personally. It can be really hard to have such conversations and this whole idea may seem like a hurdle, but once you try to understand the employee's problem or issue, and try to come up with a solution, it can really turn out to be a useful resource to the organisation. An employee's issue, if resolved, will really help him do better. An overview of this can be found here - _3 Tips for Having Difficult Conversations (Ideas for Action - Idealist)_.

- Mastering the skill of regulating your emotional response in difficult conversations – you don't need to make the conversation devoid of emotion, but you have to swallow and control your own pride or anger in order to have a smooth conversation. It is important to think practically, specially while having professional conversations because they are likely to affect the entire organisation. But on the other hand, there should be some emotions involved for both parties to be in a comfortable environment and to be honest with each other. For example, when an employer has to fire an employee, it doesn't have to be harsh even if the employer is frustrated. It can be done in a respectful manner. There are lots of online resources that suggest ways to have emotions in control while having such conversations, one of them is _- A Manager's Guide to Having Difficult Conversations at Work (Lumina Learning)_.

- The ability to tell it 'AS IT IS', without any waffle yet with compassion; one must stick to the point by being direct yet empathetic. Emotions are important to maintain respect and avoid being harsh. But it is essential to get straight to the point. Getting too emotional is always a bad idea.

- Creating psychological safety - Appreciation shown by a manager can be used as a well-known dialogue tool to make a team member comfortable during a risky conversation. For example, letting the employee know that you value them as an employee in your organisation and telling them or asking them the reason for the conversation first before discussing the issue at hand. It is important for both the employer and the employees to feel sufficiently comfortable and safe to discuss an issue openly. The whole point of a comfortable environment is that no one should feel nervous while having the conversation.