



**HELIOS HR**  
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# DEVELOPING YOUR MANAGERS MAKES CENTS

**A**ccording to Jim Collins, author of *Good to Great*, on why some companies make the leap and others don't: "People are not our most important asset; the right people are." Perhaps you can recall an experience where not hiring the "right" person turned out to be a disaster.

At a minimum it's a time-consuming distraction when someone is not a fit within our organization; yet what if our mistake was far worse? What if the person we hired is unable (or unwilling) to meet our performance expectations or perhaps even proves to be a toxic employee? Is your organization capable of hiring the "right" people? Are managers able to address poor performance on their team?

It is not uncommon for strong individual contributors to be rewarded with management positions. Offers of advancement tend to occur more frequently during the rapid growth stages of an organization. We take strong technicians, analysts, practitioners and subject matter experts and welcome them into the role of manager. But how often do we prepare them for this transition?

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) Retention Study reports that 21 percent of voluntary employee exits are due to poor management. If I asked you to recall a good manager, their attributes may vary broadly. However, those "good managers" have many similar attributes. Strong managers demonstrate the ability to:

- Clearly communicate performance expectations, ensuring employees know what is expected of them at work.
- Persuade, understand, instruct and stimulate action.
- Give and receive timely feedback to reduce error in communication.
- Recognize the appropriate media for communication.
- Leverage their interpersonal influence in developing and motivating direct reports.
- Take accountability for how their behavior affects interaction internally as well as with clients, colleagues and partners.
- Hold themselves and their employees accountable.

- Effectively build teams and utilize the synergy created by them.
- Manage conflict, both with their teams as well as with clients, colleagues and partners.
- Generate results.

Additionally, the Gallup organization interviewed over 1 million employees over a 25-year period. From this data, it extracted 12 common components of "workplace strength." Buckingham & Coffman refer to these in their book, *First Break All the Rules*. We must develop our managers and emerging leaders to ensure these elements exist within our organizations. The number one finding of workplace strength: Employees know what is expected of them at work.

**21 PERCENT OF VOLUNTARY EMPLOYEE EXITS ARE DUE TO POOR MANAGEMENT, ACCORDING TO THE SOCIETY OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT RETENTION STUDY.**

- Additionally, employees need:
- The opportunity to do what they do best every day;
  - Recognition or praise for doing good work no less than every seven days;
  - A supervisor who cares about them as people;

- Someone at work who encourages their development; and
- Respect for their opinions.

**THE NUMBER ONE FINDING OF WORKPLACE STRENGTH: EMPLOYEES KNOW WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THEM AT WORK.**

The above were just half of the 12 points of workplace strength. You see how critical a manager is

in providing this level of support.

Developing our managers will go a long way in building strong, cohesive, results-oriented teams; better hires; and stronger retention within our organizations. As your organization scales or is faced with transition, relying on strong leadership and managers will make the difference in your ability to scale and continue to deliver a quality service offering.

Kathy Albarado is President and CEO of Helios HR, a human resource outsourcing and consulting firm serving some of the nations top small and mid-sized companies. In 2006, Helios HR created the Emerging Leader Institute (ELITE) enabling employers the opportunity to offer targeted management skills training to their key, high-potential managers. Additional information can be found at [www.helioshr.com](http://www.helioshr.com).