MANAGING YOUR FIRST TEAM

Clear roles, regular feedback and building trust, for founders becoming bosses for the first time.

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AT A GLANCE

- Good managers make expectations **clear**, give **regular feedback**, and **support** their team.
- Short, regular **one-on-one check-ins** prevent most problems.
- Address problems **early, privately and specifically**.

Why it matters

People leave managers, not just jobs. Turnover is expensive: you lose time, training and customer relationships. A team that understands what's expected and feels respected works better and stays longer.

The basics

Practice	What it looks like
Clear roles	Each person knows their responsibilities and what "great" looks like
Written expectations	Job description, checklists, policies
Regular check-ins	15 to 30 minutes, every week or two, with each person
Feedback	Specific praise and specific corrections, close to when things happen
Recognition	Thank people for good work, publicly and privately
Fair treatment	Same rules for everyone, including friends and family
Growth	Training, new responsibilities, a path to raises

A simple one-on-one

1. **How are things going?** Let them talk first.
2. **What's working well?**
3. **What's getting in the way?** How can you help?
4. **Feedback** from you, if any.
5. **Goals** for the next week or two.

Giving feedback

Use a simple pattern: **what happened, why it matters, what to do next.**

> "This morning, the opening checklist wasn't finished. That meant we opened 15 minutes late and lost two customers. Tomorrow, please finish it by 7:45. Is anything making that hard?"

When there's a problem

1. **Talk early and privately.**
2. **Be specific** about the behavior and its impact.
3. **Listen** to their side.
4. **Agree on a plan** and a timeline.
5. **Write it down** and follow up.
6. **If it continues,** take further steps according to your written policies, and get HR or legal advice before letting someone go.

> EXAMPLE
>
> **Marisol's** first manager kept forgetting to order supplies. Instead of doing it herself, she sat down with him, explained how the shortages affected the kitchen, and built a simple ordering checklist together. She checked in weekly for a month. Shortages stopped, and he later trained new staff on the checklist.

Common mistakes

- **Doing everything yourself** instead of teaching.
- **Only giving feedback when something's wrong.**
- **Avoiding hard conversations.**
- **Different rules for friends and family.**

Your checklist

- ☐ Write clear responsibilities for each person
- ☐ Schedule regular one-on-ones
- ☐ Give one piece of specific praise this week
- ☐ Write basic policies: schedule, time off, conduct
- ☐ Plan a training or growth step for each person

Where to go next

- **O-06 Systems and Checklists: Running the Business Without Doing Everything Yourself**
- **S-09 Pacing Yourself: Building Without Burning Out**
- **G-09 Building a Leadership Team**

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