

The One Minute Manager Summary

By Ken Blanchard

Do you know how many people leave their jobs, or want to leave their jobs because they dislike their boss? The simple truth is that having the right management style, and being responsive to employees, is something that many people take for granted.

The One Minute Manager provides a solid and comprehensive methodology for good management skills. It explores three practical secrets, sixty seconds each, that transform how we manage teams. It's about setting one-minute goals, giving one-minute praise, and holding employees accountable through one-minute reprimands.

Leadership expert Ken Blanchard, and author Spencer Johnson, co-wrote *The One Minute Manager* to explore how anyone can improve their management and leadership style. And this leads to mutually beneficial outcomes. The authors outline how three deceptively simple but effective techniques can drive positive change within an organization. And the bonus is that each strategy takes a minute or less to implement.

So, briefly, we'll look at what it takes to be an effective manager, and introduce the three strategies, how to apply them, and why they work.

What Kind of a Manager Are You?

How would you define your management style, and what do you think your blind spots are?

Generally, there are two distinct categories when it comes to managers. The first group only seems to care about the company, and getting definitive and measurable results. They treat staff as just another resource to get the job done, and don't consider employee well-being.

Then there's the second group that only cares about people. This easy-going type of management style may seem like the right approach, but if you've watched *The Office*, you'll know that this need to be popular isn't always the best way to lead and inspire. Managers who focus too much on their popularity and likeability, are often preoccupied with getting their employees to like them, and while they may be happy at work, they often struggle to hold employees accountable for poor performance. This management style isn't only bad for the company; it also deprives employees of the opportunity to learn and grow.

Most effective managers fall somewhere in between these two extremes. The trick is to find a balance between results and people. Effective managers are able to inspire confidence in their employees, because they understand that confident employees will produce results. Furthermore, helping people to learn, to grow, and to feel good about themselves, is crucial to achieving results effectively and quickly.

So how can we get a step closer to achieving our goals?

One-Minute Goals

The one minute manager philosophy is built on one-minute goals.

In many companies, employees don't have a specific set of

responsibilities. This means that the only way they can measure their own performance, is via a manager's feedback. Unfortunately, this feedback is mostly negative, as often managers tend to focus on mistakes. However, defining specific goals for an employee, in under sixty seconds, can create lasting positive change. Goal setting clarifies what should be focused on and provides a way to measure performance. Goals set the standard for all subsequent interactions between managers and the employees, and become the gold standard, against which all subsequent feedback, both positive and negative, will be measured. Anything that can be measured becomes easy to classify as a success or failure. And, once a deadline is added, it becomes a goal.

One-minute goals are very effective because success is clearly defined. It also encourages the employee to be accountable for specific results. When employees know precisely what's expected of them, it motivates them, and makes them responsible for their own success. Being aware of expectations results in employees becoming self-starters, without any need for their manager to micromanage them. There are many demands on a manager's time, and not having to guide employees every step of the way, is a clear win for them.

The question is, how do we set one-minute goals?

Before an employee can be expected to perform well, they need to know exactly what's expected of them. This is done through a one-minute goal setting, where a 250-word goal is created for each new task. This ensures that the manager, and the employee, are on the same page. The manager knows what has to be achieved, while the employee knows what they need to do without continually asking for more input and direction.

Just remember, these goals should be readable in a minute or less. The goals must be specific and measurable, and must also contain deadlines. There must also be a clear definition of what success will look like. Both the employee and the manager should retain their own copy of the goals for easy reference. Also, keep in mind that less is more. If you set too many goals per employee, it'll become complicated to keep track of them all. A rule of thumb is to have a total of between three and six goals per employee.

One-Minute Praise

Are you the type of person who enjoys receiving recognition for things that you've done well? Most of us tend to need a certain amount of praise because it keeps us motivated. Here's where it's crucial for a manager to step in. When an employee does something well, a one minute manager delivers thoughtful praise immediately.

Many employees only tend to receive negative feedback. It's easy for managers to hone in on things we do wrong, or more gently stated as our "key areas of development." Placing so much emphasis on negative behavior, can quickly dampen employee motivation. On the other hand, genuine positive feedback, offered in the right way, at the right time, fuels employee motivation and work ethic. Employees get a boost in confidence and a sense that they're meeting goals and are doing well.

How do we give one-minute praise?

It's vital that when one-minute praise is given, it is done immediately. Managers using old-fashioned autocratic styles, typically try to catch their employees doing something wrong and then rebuke them. One

minute managers turn this paradigm upside down by continually looking for good performance and behavior, and then praising it immediately. A good one minute manager uses specific praise consistently, and explains how the employee's conduct has contributed to the organization's goals. Specific praise is then followed up by encouraging the employee to repeat this type of behavior. This re-emphasizes that the manager wants the employee to succeed.

An employee, realizing that their manager cares about their work, is encouraged to try to do even better next time. Having this type of motivation has a knock-on effect, and ultimately leads to an outstanding performance that's virtually automatic. For new employees, the manager must offer them praise quickly, for small achievements. This action helps to build their confidence, and will help them to achieve even bigger goals later on. As the praise is focused on a specific achievement and is given immediately, the employee can associate the praise with their positive performance.

If we compare this approach with that of a manager who delivers hazy feedback slowly: the employee won't be sure what they did correctly, and will therefore not be able to repeat it. One-minute praise also motivates employees, and they will start catching themselves when they do things well.

As it only takes one minute to praise an employee, it should also never take more than one minute to reprimand them when mistakes are made.

One-Minute Redirects

Nobody likes to be criticized, but constructive criticism is one of the most

valuable ways to learn and to improve.

A redirect, holds an employee accountable for substandard performance and helps the employee get back on track and meet goals. A good one minute manager should deliver quick redirects, that are both specific and consistent, when an employee who should know better, makes a mistake.

One-minute redirects should link to the one-minute goals mentioned above. And crucially, a manager should never hold an employee accountable for not doing something they weren't aware needed doing.

This is how we conduct an effective one-minute redirect. The first step is for the manager to tell the employee that they're disappointed in the employee's performance. This disappointment may be because a specific deadline or a particular goal was not reached. In this case, the manager needs to show the employee why the mistake has harmed the organization.

It's vital that the redirect is given immediately after the mistake, and it needs to be specific to the error. The aim here is to help people learn from their mistakes, so that they aren't repeated. However, This won't happen if a redirect is general and vague.

How do you feel after you've received criticism? For many of us, we don't like being criticized because it seems to linger over us, and is brought up repeatedly. It's important to note that when a redirect is over, it's done. The manager should never carry any lingering malice, and should treat the employee the same as before. Providing the same mistake isn't made again; there should be no need for harboring any ill-feeling.

When a manager does a redirect in this way, employees understand that you didn't criticize a personality flaw that they can't change, but a behavior they can improve. This prevents them from feeling that they have been mistreated, and they won't view you as an enemy. Generally, employees appreciate openness and honesty. They'll understand if they're being held accountable immediately after making a mistake, rather than being caught unawares months later at a performance review. A redirect allows the employee to improve immediately. Redirects also give negative feedback in pieces that are easier to manage: gradually, as it happens, instead of all at the same time, months after the event.

If used correctly, redirects are educational, never punitive. Creating teaching and learning moments, allows the manager to show employees the discrepancy between their performance, and their goals, without making them feel as if they're stupid or incompetent. Having confident and respected employees results in people seldom making the same mistake twice.

Hence, employees will start driving their own corrected behavior, knowing that their manager is confident in their abilities. This, in turn, leads to employees wanting to work harder to prove to themselves and their manager that they can move past the mistake and live up to expectations.

But what can managers do when one-minute redirects don't work? Unfortunately, we don't live in a perfect world, and there will be times when redirects don't work. At some stage, a manager will come across an employee who doesn't have the ability or mindset to learn from mistakes. Hence, they repeat the same mistakes, and the manager has to give one-minute redirects about the same issue repeatedly.

This is when the manager needs to ask themselves the difficult question of whether it's worth keeping an employee around who won't, or can't learn from their mistakes. In this case, the manager may need to demote, transfer, or even terminate the employee.

In Conclusion

Good leaders inspire people, and can bring out the best in the people around them. A good manager should focus on developing their employees' full potential, which is the most effective way to improve a company's performance. To do this, managers should use three practical management tools, namely, one-minute goals, one-minute praise, and one-minute reprimands. Furthermore, one minute managers should invest in the organization's people, as they know this is its most important asset. They know that the best minute they can spend, is the one spent on investing in people.

Being a good manager has never been as important as it is today. New communication tools and technologies are changing the way organizations function every day. An organization has to be nimble to survive. The truth is that the old command-and-control, top-down management style is way too unresponsive and slow to keep organizations adaptive and agile. One minute managers succeed where

other managers don't, because they empower their employees to manage themselves and take responsibility, with minimal direct input required. This saves valuable resources and time. And nowadays time is one of the most essential currencies.

So, in one minute or less, how do you plan to inspire your employees, boost their productivity, and effect lasting positive change within your organization?