# Most
# Regrettable
# Business Decisions

## ERRORS - MISSED OPPORTUNITIES - PITFALLS - TAKEAWAYS

# Leadership Lessons: Authenticity, Accountability, and Effective Delegation

Throughout a managerial career, it becomes clear that addressing mediocrity, staying true to one's values, and practising effective delegation are crucial for leadership success. Reflecting on these lessons reveals their significant impact on teams and organisations, offering valuable insights to help others become more effective leaders.

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## key points

- Address Mediocrity: Leaders must tackle poor performance and behaviour directly to maintain team standards and a positive culture.
- Value Authenticity: Staying true to personal values enhances decision-making and fosters genuine employee engagement.
- Delegate Effectively: Proper delegation prevents manager burnout, empowers team members, and promotes skill development.
- Learn from Mistakes: Reflecting on and learning from past errors is crucial for continuous leadership improvement.
- Foster High Performance: Courageous, value-driven leadership and effective delegation are essential for sustaining a high-performance culture.
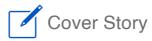
During my career as a manager, I have faced numerous situations that required me to make decisions crucial to my professional development. Upon reflecting on these experiences, I realise their significant impact on my team, my organisation, and myself. I have learned the harmful effects of tolerance, the importance of being true to my values, and the vital significance of effective delegation. Despite being sometimes hard, each of these lessons has been invaluable. I hope to share my experiences to help others become more effective and fulfilled leaders without going through the inevitable challenges that come with the learning process.

## The Cost of Tolerance: Why Leaders Must Address Mediocrity

Tolerance is the enemy of every leader. Tolerating mediocrity, either in performance or in behaviour, is the biggest mistake I made in my managerial decisions. Early in my management career, I encountered employees whose performance and, worst of all, behaviour consistently fell below expectations. Instead of addressing the issue directly, I chose to overlook their shortcomings, thinking that the potential disruption to the team dynamics and daily work wasn't worth it. However, this was far from reality, as in doing so, I communicated the wrong message. In fact, tolerating a high performer with a bad attitude is even more detrimental to a team than any disruption that would come from cutting ties with this individual.

The critical lesson highlighted here is that leaders should not prioritise tolerance when it comes to managing their team. It is crucial to address performance or behaviour issues promptly and decisively. Having the courage to make tough decisions early on is essential for maintaining a high-performance culture. Looking back, I now understand that the discomfort of having difficult one-on-one conversations, creating development plans, and even letting go of team members is significantly outweighed by the long-term benefits of

staying true to one's principles and fostering a culture of excellence.

## The Power of Authenticity: Staying True to Your Values in Leadership

While working in a complex multinational organisation, one often finds themselves in situations where they are asked to communicate decisions that have already been made without necessarily agreeing with or supporting them. In one particular instance, I was tasked with conveying a decision that I did not believe in. Instead of challenging the decision or voicing my own beliefs, I went ahead and communicated it. As a result, I found it difficult to defend the decision or provide a convincing explanation when faced with challenges.

Following that experience, I realised the importance of being authentic and genuine to my own values. I made a commitment to myself to never engage in decisions that did not align with who I am as a person and that I could not wholeheartedly defend. I believe that authenticity and staying true to one's values not only improves decision-making but also fosters genuine engagement among employees. Leaders acting consistently with their values motivate and encourage their teams. This approach ultimately contributes to a positive organisational culture, leading to sustainable success and personal fulfilment for both managers and their teams.

## The Crucial Role of Delegation in Leadership Success

Understanding the importance of delegation is essential for the success of any team and its leader.

Reflecting on my own journey, I have come to realise the pivotal role of effective delegation. Early in my career, my insecurities made me hesitate to properly delegate tasks. As a result, I found myself overwhelmed with an excessive workload, ultimately becoming the bottleneck for my team. This not only led to my own exhaustion but also hindered team members from assuming their responsibilities.

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I learned that when leaders immerse themselves in every small task, crucial aspects of leadership, such as strategic thinking and seizing future opportunities, tend to suffer. Similarly, team members miss opportunities to develop their skills and garner valuable experience, resulting in decreased engagement and a prevailing sense of dependency. Over time, this pattern can lead to burnout among managers and a disengaged, underutilised team, ultimately impeding the organisation's growth and success.

## Conclusion

All of us will inevitably make mistakes when leading a team. It's crucial to take the time to reflect on these experiences and learn from them in order to avoid repeating similar mistakes in the future.

For those in management roles or aspiring to lead, I believe having the courage to address both performance and behavioural issues directly is essential. It's equally necessary to ensure that your decisions align with your values and beliefs. Effective delegation plays a crucial role in enabling leaders to focus on their primary responsibilities – guiding and leading their teams through present and future challenges.

The journey of management is an ongoing process of learning and development. Embracing our mistakes, critically evaluating our choices, and making necessary adjustments are all vital in the pursuit of becoming better leaders. While we can't change the past, my commitment now lies in applying these valuable lessons to create a more positive and successful future for both myself and my team.

## Conflict of Interest

None