



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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Do not be Baffled!!

Being a team leader is a challenging job. If you are new at it, chances are you might end up with mixed feelings - exhilaration and bafflement! On top of that, you need to successfully conduct your first team meeting. Experts identified four action items that should be at the top of a new leader's to-do list.

The first issue to be addressed is team expectation. Setting appropriate expectations is a prerequisite for leading. At your first meeting, explore two simple questions.

- What should people expect from you?
- What do you expect from them?

Teamwork guru Kimball Fisher, who learned his first leadership lessons as head of Procter & Gamble's Downy Fabric Softener team, recalls, "It was an opportunity to strike a contract about what we could and couldn't do. I look back at that list to this day."

The first issue to skip is status reviews. Status reviews, no doubt, are an efficient way to speed things up. They're also counterproductive, insists Boeing's Bruce Moravec; at least until the team has learned to work with its leader. "You're supposed to be helping them, not the other way around. It's better to start with team building," he says.

The first document to create is a team charter. Establishing a clear mission is critical. Unless you have one, you and your team won't know where you are going. For Kerry Shampine, first formal team leader at Northwest Natural Gas, writing a charter was a way to put everyone at ease with a new way of working together. "We also mailed the charter to key people in the company so they knew what we were up to," he explains.

The first ally to recruit is a mentor. Effective leaders manage higher-ups as well as down the line employees. However, they learn horizontally from their peers by gathering advice about the professional and emotional challenges of running a team. Boeing's Moravec had hundreds of potential mentors to choose from inside his team-obsessed company. However, Kerry Shampine had to search outside his company.

Now that you have the four commandments of your first team briefing, go ahead and become the best team leader ever!