



THE 4 PILLARS OF BETTER MANAGEMENT

Becoming a BetterManager



www.bettermanager.us



Becoming a BetterManager
does not happen overnight.

It is a lifelong journey of
exploration & discovery!



Overview

You were just promoted to Manager and will be leading a team for the first time; or maybe you are an experienced leader and are seeking to get the best out of your team.

We'd like to help you in your quest to become the best manager you can be by introducing you to the 4 Pillars of Better Management. We believe if you follow the 4 Pillars, you will become better equipped to manage yourself, your team members, your team and your organization.

BetterManagers do not “wing it”. They strategize and plan, analyze and have a framework to guide their actions. The 4 Pillars provide that framework.

THE 4 PILLARS OF BETTER MANAGEMENT INCLUDE

PILLAR



SELF

5

Understand yourself and your role as manager.

PILLAR



TEAM MEMBERS

7

Understand your direct reports and build trust.

PILLAR



TEAM

10

Lead your team with a vision and a plan.

PILLAR



ORGANIZATION

14

Manage your network.

BetterManager has reviewed research and has extensive experience in working with managers. This has resulted in the creation of the **4 Pillars of Better Management** which are critical to your development as a manager. Each pillar is foundational, interdependent, and consists of behaviors and practices the best managers have learned to apply and perfect.

SELF



Know Thyself

This means understanding who you are, including your strengths, challenges and emotions. It also means observing how you manage yourself as you manage others. Here are 3 questions to help you evaluate how well you know yourself.

1 What have you learned about yourself?

Perhaps you have taken some self-assessments over the years to discover your personality type or behavioral style. Typically, there are parts of the management role that you might prefer over others. You may prefer tasks over people. Or, you might be more of a big picture person rather than someone who works best with details. One is not better than the other. It simply is a reflection of who you are.

Our values play into our management role as well. Think about what is most important to you in your life. It might be honesty or family or independence. As a manager, you tend to bring these values into the workplace. The more you understand yourself, the better able you are to empathize and work with others. This makes you a BetterManager!

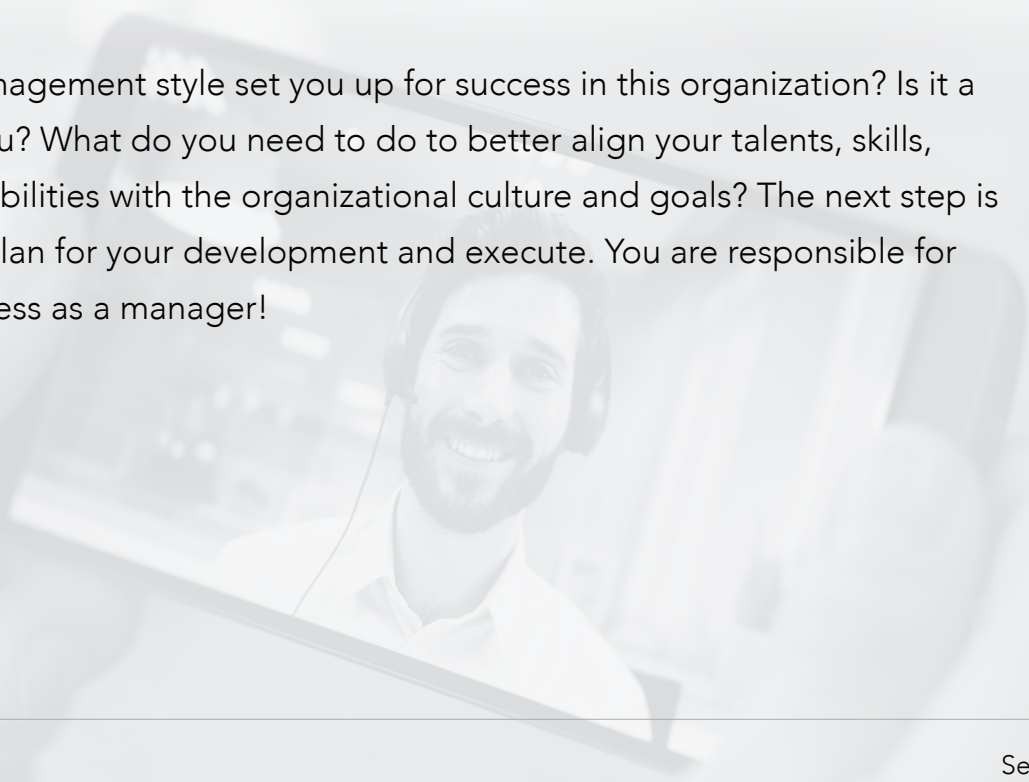
2 What self-management strategies would you like to learn?

Before you can effectively manage others, you will need to manage yourself. Do you tend to react or respond in a crisis? Are you open to feedback or are you defensive? Do you strive for excellence or do you pursue perfection? Are you in control of your time, or does time control you? These are just a few examples of how managers need to a) be self-aware and b) manage themselves for maximum results. Knowing what additional skills and competencies you would like to learn puts you on the path to being a BetterManager.

3 Who are you as a manager?

How would you describe your management style? Have you adopted a coach approach, or do you tell rather than ask questions? Or would you consider yourself a “laid back” kind of manager – giving employees complete autonomy to get the work done? Next, take a look at your organization’s culture. If the culture could talk, what would it say it needed? For example, if your culture values results, you would need to be a “hands-on” manager. Do you need to allow employees to exercise independent thinking (with oversight of course)?

Does your management style set you up for success in this organization? Is it a good fit for you? What do you need to do to better align your talents, skills, attitude, and abilities with the organizational culture and goals? The next step is to develop a plan for your development and execute. You are responsible for your own success as a manager!



TEAM MEMBERS



BetterManagers make good hires

Having a well-tested and constantly evolving recruitment process, which involves all members of the organization, is key. Every employee knows what qualities and characteristics the organization looks for in a team member and, as a result, participates in recruiting. And once the hire is made, every member of the organization participates in the onboarding process to ensure the team member is successful.

Your relationship with your team members is a key success factor in your role as manager. Have you built trust? Do you listen more than talk during your one-on-ones? Do your team members feel “safe” in bringing problems and challenges to you? Do your team members seek your advice and counsel on a variety of issues? If the answer to these questions is **YES**, then you are well on your way to becoming a BetterManager!

1 What Team Members Need

In today's knowledge economy, being a team player is essential. As a manager, it is up to you to develop your individual team members. A good way to start the conversation is to ask your team members what they aspired to be when they were younger. **Using a coach approach** will lead to a conversation about career paths and additional aspirations. Know their strengths. Identify their challenges. Leverage their strengths whenever possible. Listen more than talk. Team members want to know their manager: a) understands what they do; and b) **is truly interested in their success and well being**. This includes being available when they need your advice and counsel. Team members also want to know that it's safe to make mistakes, as long as a lesson is learned and the mistake is not repeated. If your organization values innovation and change, it is critically important that team members be willing to take risks.

Members of your team expect to be treated with dignity, respect and fairness in all situations. As previously mentioned, building and maintaining trust with team members is critically important. Some managers will automatically trust team members while other managers expect their trust to be earned. How do you approach the issue of trust? What are trust builders for you and what are trust breakers? Equally important is what team members consider trust builders and trust breakers. Take an inventory and make sure this information is communicated to your team.

Team members also need to know you know and appreciate their strengths. **Leveraging employee strengths** rather than focusing on their challenges is a valued management competency in today's fast-moving organizations. Getting more done with less is the norm. Knowing and leveraging these strengths can set you apart from others.

2 What Team Members Want

Some managers find it easier than others to delegate. If you trust people easily and quickly, you are more apt to delegate regularly. If you believe that trust is to be earned, delegating is a more challenging task for you. One is not better than the other; it's simply different. What is important to note is that when you don't delegate, you are depriving your team members of the opportunity to grow. We tend not to look at delegation through the lens of professional development, but it's important to do so. Think back to your own experience. Individuals grow through opportunities to succeed and fail. Are you creating these opportunities for your team members? BetterManagers are productive and results-oriented. Delegation is a tool to achieve this.

BetterManagers do not micromanage, they empower their employees instead. Give your employees the tools they need to get the job done. Break down barriers to their success in completing assignments. Then, step back and watch the magic!

3 What Team Members Expect

When the team is producing exceptional results, BetterManagers will **recognize excellence and praise it**. However, when a team member is struggling, it can negatively impact the entire team. As a manager, team members expect you to have the **key technical skills** which enable you to ensure that all team members contribute individually towards the team's vision and strategy. This means addressing team member performance issues directly and swiftly and giving regular feedback. Of course, timing is everything. But we often see managers waiting for the right moment to deal with a team member performance issue. This can result in a lost opportunity for growth and development – both for the team member and for you as the manager! Remember, if you have taken the time to build strong, trusting relationships with your team members, they will be more likely to identify issues and challenges long before they become performance issues.

THE TEAM



Direction & Leadership

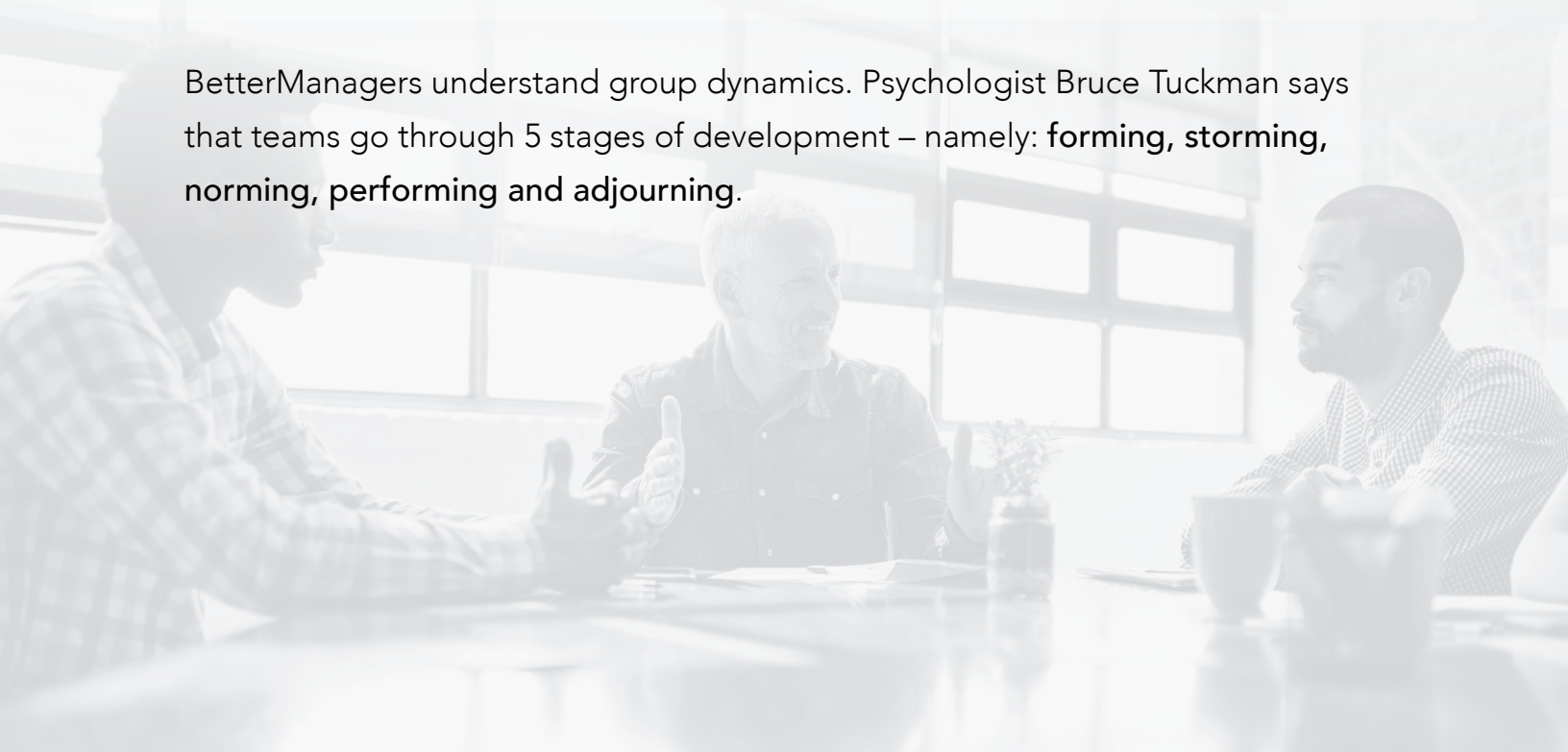
As a manager, your responsibility to the team is to provide direction and leadership. Are you clear on the **vision and strategy** for your team? Does your vision and strategy align with the organization's culture, beliefs and values? Do all team members know what the vision and strategy for the team are? Do all team members understand the team culture – in other words, “how we get things done around here”? Do all team members understand the impact on the team if they do not perform? BetterManagers **set clear expectations**. They **communicate and listen to the team**. These are important considerations as you lead your team towards the finish line.

Here are a few questions team members, along with the team leader, can ask themselves and one another as they strive for excellence in building their team:



- Do I have a “we” mindset? Do I model the “we”?
- Do we, as team members, readily and eagerly accept new assignments?
- Is the work evenly divided amongst team members? If not, do we have a process in place to ensure the work is evenly distributed? What sort of corrective action will we take if this is out of balance?
- Do we treat one another with respect and dignity? Do we encourage diverse perspectives and discuss openly, without rancor? Do we agree too readily without disagreement to one another’s ideas?
- Do we understand it is our TEAM’s responsibility to help those who are struggling. We understand that our team is only as strong as it’s weakest link.
- Do we hold one another accountable for individual and collective results?
- Do we live and breathe our team values? Examples may include flawless execution, research, facts vs. opinions, etc.

BetterManagers understand group dynamics. Psychologist Bruce Tuckman says that teams go through 5 stages of development – namely: **forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.**



FORMING

Forming is when the team first assembles and is finding its balance. Think of a mobile on a baby's crib. When you pluck one of the pieces of the mobile off, it takes time for the mobile to regain its balance. Similarly, when a team member leaves and another joins, the team tries to find its balance. The team's shared purpose (best done collectively) is established during this phase, and individuals assume team roles. These roles can include the promoter, the persuader, the analyzer, the director, etc. For a manager, this stage is rather easy to manage.

STORMING

Storming is when team members are struggling to translate the team's purpose into actionable items. It's the "how" part of achieving team goals. Team members often have different approaches. They are getting to know one another and trying to see how they fit into the bigger picture. This is probably the most difficult stage of team development for the manager to manage. According to Tuckman, this stage needs to happen. The manager can best manage this stage by encouraging open communication and ensuring that all members are treating one another with dignity and respect.

NORMING

Norming is when the team finds its balance and begins to work according to an agreed-upon set of rules. These rules may be explicit or implicit. This is where progress begins to be made towards achieving the team goals. Team "norms" are established and the team moves forward. The manager's role during this stage is to ensure that the norms are appropriate and conducive to moving the team's work forward.

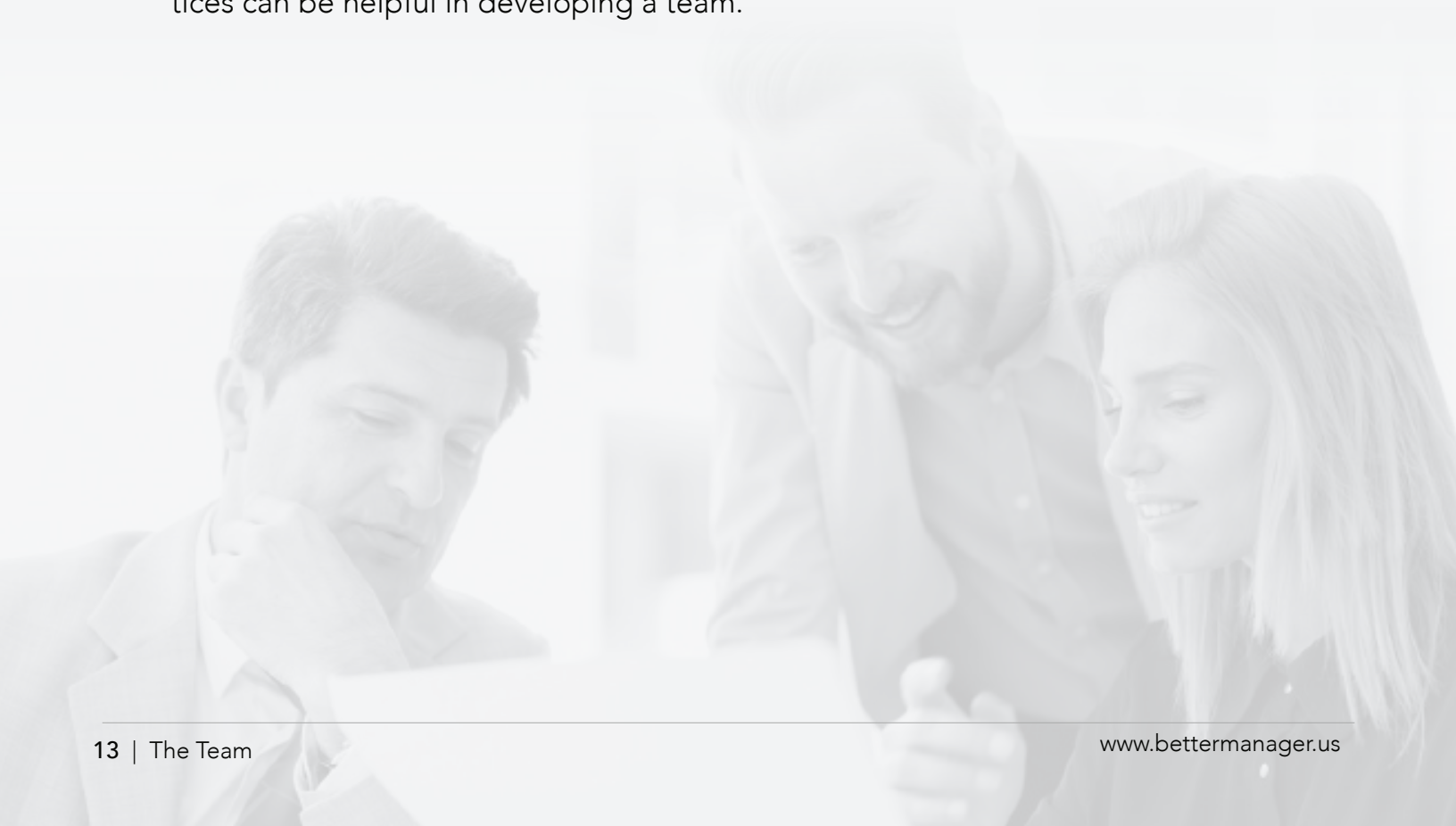
PERFORMING

Performing is where team members form relationships, team processes, and continue working towards achieving its goals and objectives. This is the stage at which the real work of the team is progressing. Disagreement happens with no adverse effect on the team. Trust is high. Individual accountability, as well as group accountability, is strong. An effective manager will also check in with team members to ensure that the team's purpose and intent are on track and that goals and objectives are still relevant.

ADJOURNING

Adjourning is when the team has achieved its goals and objectives and can disband. Not all teams fall into this category. Some teams are permanent. New teams with new goals may form. During this stage, the manager thanks the team members for their contributions, focusing on the team's accomplishments as a whole, rather than focusing on individual contributors.

NOTE: Teambuilding exercises such as those found in BetterManager Best Practices can be helpful in developing a team.



THE ORGANIZATION



If you were to sit down with the company CEO, what would that CEO say were the top 3 most important values in your organization? Would it be the customer experience? Shareholder return? Profit margins? In your role as manager, it's important to know what the company values most in practice, not just in words. Next, take a look at the purpose and intent of your team. Is this aligned with the organizational values? Where do you need to make adjustments? How does your role fit into these values? Are you focused on the right things at the right time? This alignment is important to your individual success and the success of your team.

Here are some additional managerial focus areas as you develop within your organization:

1 Your Personal Brand

What are you known for? What do you want to be known for? Your personal brand speaks to your integrity (a powerful currency) and is your reputation. Just like Pepsi, Amazon, Walmart and Google – you want others to know of you (your character) and your work (what you produce). You can increase and improve your brand through networking. Word will spread quickly if you are known as a manager who develops others. Remember, you cannot control the perceptions others have of you, you can only control your own behavior. This is important when building and sustaining your personal brand.

Ask yourself these questions about your personal brand and its impact on direct reports, co-workers, other managers, and the executive team:

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- When people inside the organization speak to you, do they know who you are?
 - What images do people associate with you? Are they pleasing and positive?
 - What does your social media presence reveal about you?
 - Are you known as the manager who is always late for meetings, or always on time?
 - Do people view you as efficient, effective and responsive to deadlines?
 - Are you the person people ask if something needs to get done?
 - How do your staff members view you as a manager?
 - Does everyone in the organization see you as honest, trustworthy, and reliable?

Your answers to these questions will help guide you in making adjustments to your behavior.

2 Building Your Network

Networking enables you, as a manager, to build your capacity to serve the organization. Perhaps you meet someone you think would enjoy working for your company? Or someone the company may be able to do business with? Or someone who can help you solve a tricky problem? These connections all become invaluable to the developing manager. To quote Seth Godin, marketing guru, think of building your “tribe.” What types of people or positions would you want to be part of your tribe?

How might members of your tribe help you? Networking can also be internal to the organization or external. Expanding your knowledge, contacts and connections will increase your overall value to the organization.

3 Other Ways to Add Value To The Organization

Expanding your business acumen – your knowledge and understanding of basic business principles and concepts – will help you as you grow and develop as a manager. BetterManagers are forever curious and passionate about learning. Becoming familiar with how other teams function in the organization is key, and having a grasp on how your functional area impacts other areas is important. Knowing how to leverage your team’s strengths with other organizational teams can create synergistic relationships – enabling you to outperform others. Understanding the difference between cooperation and collaboration contributes to organizational success. Organizational teams that practice cooperation and not collaboration risk operating in silos and becoming dysfunctional. Collaboration recognizes and uses the strengths of others in the organization.

SUMMARY

Management is complex because it involves working with diverse groups of people on complex issues and challenges. But it is also an exciting career choice. As Steven Covey said in **The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People**, “Sharpen the Saw” – meaning, always be learning, remain curious, be open to feedback, and continually grow your skills, talents, abilities and knowledge.

Please contact us if we can help you with any additional information relating to management and leadership.

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Research Resources: <http://rework.withgoogle.com/blog/five-keys-to-a-successful-google-team/>
(Google Aristotle Project)
<https://rework.withgoogle.com/guides/managers-identify-what-makes-a-great-manager/steps/introduction/>
(Google Project Oxygen)

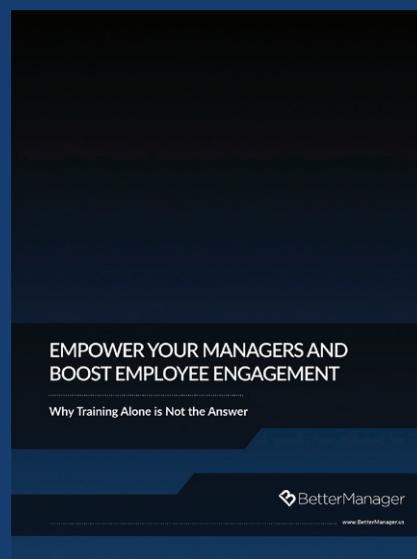
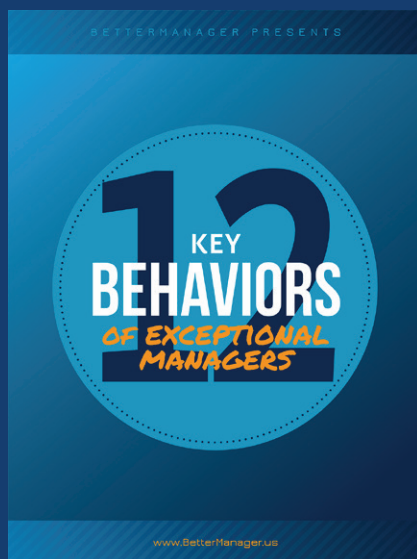
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BetterManager provides personalized coaching with experienced executive coaches in a cost effective and scalable way. Now every manager can benefit from personalized help and measurable results through a combination of Coaching, Training and Technology.

LEARNING TOOLS AVAILABLE FROM BETTERMANAGER



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