

DISCIPLINED, PEOPLE-FOCUSED MANAGEMENT

In high-performance organizations:

- Managers **translate leaders' drive for excellence into clear work plans and incentives** to carry out the work effectively and efficiently.
- Managers' **decisions are data informed** whenever possible.
- Managers, like executives and boards, **recruit, develop, engage, and retain the talent** necessary to deliver on the mission. They help staff get the tools and training they need in order to deliver the desired results.
- Managers **provide opportunities for staff members to see how their work contributes to the organization's mission**. Managers know that doing so helps staff members find meaning and purpose in their work—and generally leads to higher motivation and performance.
- Managers **establish accountability systems that provide clarity** at each level of the organization about the standards for success and yet **provide room for staff to be creative** about how they achieve these standards.
- Managers **provide continuous, candid, constructive feedback** to team members and augment it with periodic performance reviews. They view performance reviews as an opportunity to help staff improve.
- Managers provide frequent **opportunities for staff to provide feedback to their supervisors**. Supervisors are not only open to receiving this feedback; they encourage it and are willing to act on it.
- Managers **acknowledge and take action when staff members are not doing their work well**. They give these staffers help to improve or move them to more suitable roles. If it becomes clear that staff members are unable or unwilling to meet expectations, managers are **not afraid to make tough personnel decisions** so that the organization can live up to the promises it makes to constituents, donors, and other key stakeholders.

Note: We recognize that an organization with a very small staff usually can't afford to draw a distinction between leaders and managers. In our experience, this distinction starts to be meaningful as an organization grows in size and/or adds sites—making planning, organizing, and coordinating more important and more challenging to do.