

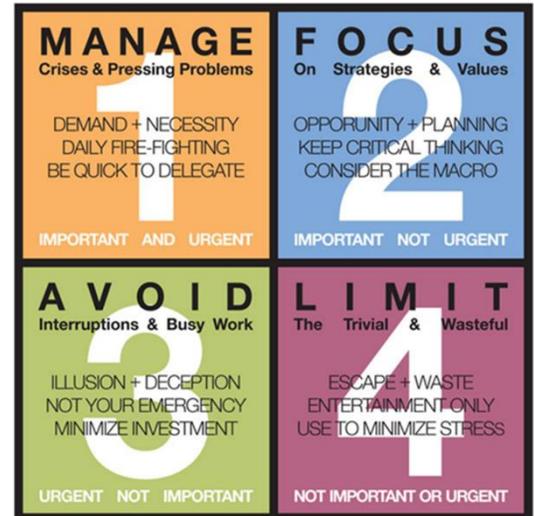
Management for the New Year

Reactive vs. Proactive Managers, from Mohamed Ibrahim, LinkedIn

Reactive managers are not always a chosen managerial style. There may have been a crisis, poorly planned processes in place, or a manager who enjoys the “buzz” of reactive management a bit too much. While reactive managing is required in some situations, it can always lead to a lower quality of work from your team, inefficient systems that could create frustration, and an inability to spot potential, strategic opportunities moving forward. All-in-all, reactive management is stressful and not the best path for success and optimization for any organization.

Proactive management can be reached with a few steps to reclaim your management style. First, you must take back control of your schedule. Schedule tasks and meetings, don't let deadlines and people schedule you. You can use Eisenhower's Urgent/Important Principle to determine prioritization of your to-do's.

Next, you can take a look at your internal processes. Map them out and challenge each process with Flow Charts to create an efficient working machine, involve your team members and create checklists or documentation to help your people adapt. Improved processes will help you anticipate and avoid future crises while giving you back more of your day. Understanding risk, focusing on morale, and finding time to regularly discuss new ideas to create a culture of continuous improvement are also ways to increase your proactive management.



Employers Should Spend 6 Hours a Week with Employees, from Laura Vanderkam, Fast Company

Every company wants to employ engaged, hard-working people and keep them that way. Is there a secret formula? Maybe. Quality time makes people feel more engaged, and a survey from Leadership IQ discovered that the magic number is six hours a week with each direct report.

The study showed that as people rose from one to six hours spent with their managers/leaders, they became 29% more inspired about what they do and 30% more engaged at work. However, don't fall on the other side because once you go above six hours, all of these measures flattened out or declined.

This study gives several interested implications for balance. For example, work-from-home can still be successful with a six-hour rule. Working from home one to three days a week still leaves space for six hours of face-to-face with leaders and direct reports. This can also help with a manager's work-load. If managers work directly with their reports for six hours each week, then they can only manage six or seven people.

And as Laura Vanderkam from Fast Company goes on to say, “It also calls into question the idea that people can handle both manager and individual contributor roles simultaneously. This only works if such “player-coaches” manage just three or four people and have corresponding limits on their expected individual productivity.”

Six hours can seem like a bit much to start with, but if you start focusing on one really good, meaningful conversation this week, then team members will start coming to you when they have questions, ideas or want feedback. It's these interactions and discussions that create value and success for any business.