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# From Middle Management to Senior Leadership

## Practical Tips for Transition

1. Expand your network – you need to understand how your team bits into the bigger picture
2. Beware the echo chamber – don't always talk to the same people – get different people from different levels involved in the conversation
3. Cross-fertilisation. Some ideas from completely different parts of the business may help you to do things differently – think creatively
4. Trust your managers and senior colleagues...they know what they are doing. You just need to guide them.
5. Don't sweat the small stuff – that's not your job any more!
6. Take time to THINK. Your job is no longer all about doing, but thinking. Make time for it!
7. Get comfortable with uncomfortable. Your managers should be handling business as usual – that's their job. YOUR job is to handle the new, complex or difficult.
8. Invest in yourself. Your strengths now lay less in technical skills but more in commercial and interpersonal ones
9. Support don't manage
10. Be accountable. You won't get everything right, but take responsibility for your decisions.
11. Switch your focus from inwards and downwards to outwards and upwards
12. Focus on developing others and in particular successors
13. Learn to influence – command and control is less effective the further up you go
14. Innovate. start focusing less on improving upon your team's historical performance and start focusing on how to become the best team in the world at whatever discipline you hold.
15. Focus on top-level outcomes and helping people to understand why rather than measuring inputs and telling people what they must do.
16. Be authentic – people buy people and in a role where you are defining the direction, rules and processes, you have to have people believe in you.
17. Listen to people – take time to understand their world. It will help you appreciate other perspectives AND make influencing easier
18. Make time for people – its people that drive the business...taking time to have a coffee or stop and chat, ask about the family will do loads for your reputation.

19. Learn what makes your manager tick!
20. Understand the culture
21. Managing managers (or specialists) means the vast majority of your job is supporting others, NOT doing tasks! You should be guiding, supporting, monitoring, planning, coaching etc, not doing.
22. Communicate – upwards and downwards... let SLT know what your team is doing and why, but also translate business strategy into terms that are meaningful to the team.
23. compete for resources, while maintaining the operational needs of the business at the centre
24. The functional manager is able to look beyond the current moment and devise strategies that give the organization a competitive edge in the long-term.
25. Have the confidence to make decisions and take responsibility for them.
26. Be able to perform under pressure
27. Balance the immediate needs with longer-term strategy
28. Be willing to make unpopular decisions
29. Be willing to sacrifice department goals for the good of the business – know when to fight and when to step aside
30. Take control of your own development, and look for inspiration beyond your organisation and industry.
31. Interpret data correctly, but more importantly, know WHAT data matters!
32. AS you move up the career ladder, skills are less important than behaviours, which come less important than attitudes and eventually, less important than values.
33. As a broader perspective is needed, you need to build broader networks and tap into them! Peer coaching, action learning sets, industry networking groups (as well as external ones) all help.
34. Be optimistic and resilient – focus on what you CAN do to succeed. Yes, you have to consider potential problems and plan to avoid them, but don't obsess over them. Assume the best and plan for that!
35. Peter Drucker “ We spend a lot of time teaching leaders what they should do. We don't spend enough time teaching them what to stop doing”. What habits no longer serve you?
36. See page 40-41 of book for common faults/problems
37. Take time to pause and reflect, and get feedback that might be uncomfortable
38. Learn about different parts of the business – take a genuine interest in it and how you can support it
39. Be consistent in your behaviour. Authenticity matters.

40. Develop others. “A good manager isn’t worried about their own career, but the careers of those who work for them. Don’t worry about yourself. Take care of those who work for you, and you’ll float to greatness on their achievements.” H M Burns
41. It’s less about knowing everything or being able to do everything, but more about knowing what needs to be known/done and finding the people to do that.
42. Be curious. The world, your business and your job is ever changing. Never assume you know everything you need to know.
43. Understand it is a big change – like going from operator to supervisor.. you used to do everything yourself and then had to get tasks done through people. In this move you go from managing everything yourself, to trusting others to manage things for you.
44. Don’t be afraid of not knowing. Not knowing is the starting point, not a blocker.
45. Co-ordination is a vital skill... keeping the machine working, like a conductor, when to bring one section out and when to quieten one down. Bringing the right people to the fore at the right time.
46. Don’t think you have to do it one your own... you are stronger when you collaborate. Build relationships, don’t isolate yourself.
47. Managing stakeholders and understanding the power bases. Handling politics becomes very important... playing the long game.