

Great at the Job. Wrong for the Role.

The two mistakes leaders make that are quietly
breaking their leadership pipeline.

45 minutes | Senior Leaders & Executives

OPENING

Why did you promote them?

- A They were outstanding at their current job
- B They showed strong leadership potential
- C Honestly — both, equally

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

THE EVIDENCE

Here's what the research actually says.

60%

of new managers underperform or fail in their first two years

DDI Global Leadership Forecast

82%

of companies admit to promoting the wrong person into leadership

Gallup State of the American Manager

\$1.2M

average cost of a failed senior leadership hire to an organization

SHRM / Leadership IQ Research

M I S T A K E O N E

Mistake 1

**We promote people
for what they've done —
not for what they'll need
to become.**

Outstanding performance in a role is not a reliable indicator of success in a people leadership role.

"The skills that make someone exceptional as an individual contributor often become the very liabilities that make them a difficult leader."

They are two completely different jobs.

Great individual performer

- Delivers results personally
- Sets standards for their own work
- Solves problems independently
- Succeeds through their own effort
- Valued for what they produce

Great people leader

- Delivers results through others
- Creates conditions for others to grow
- Develops capability in their team
- Succeeds by letting go of the work
- Valued for what their people produce

And it gets worse.

71%

of organizations say their leaders are not ready to lead their people effectively

McKinsey Leadership Development Survey

58%

of managers say they never received any training when they were first promoted

Grovo/Wiley Manager Survey

"People don't leave bad jobs. They leave bad managers. And we keep creating bad managers by promoting good employees."

Supported by Gallup: 50% of employees have left a job to get away from their manager

WHY IT KEEPS HAPPENING

So why does this keep happening?

01

The system rewards delivery, not development

Leaders are measured on results, not on how well they grow their people. What gets measured gets prioritised. Development loses every time.

02

We assume great people will develop themselves

High performers always have. But leadership requires a fundamentally different kind of learning — one that needs a guide, not just a challenge.

03

No one modelled it for them either

Most leaders lead the way they were led. If no one invested in them when they were promoted, they have no reference point for what good looks like.

A PERSONAL STORY

I've been on both sides of this.

I was promoted because I was good at my job. No one told me that leading people was a completely different one.

I blurred the lines between being a great leader and a great friend. I avoided the hard conversations. I prioritised being liked over being effective. It wasn't until I did emotional intelligence training that a lightbulb went on — I finally understood my own style, how I was showing up, and the impact I was having that I couldn't see. I committed to changing my style to better serve my team.

Now I want to hear from you.

Option A

Where is it being done well?

An example of a leader or organization genuinely investing in people after promotion - and the difference it made.

Option B

What do you wish had been done differently for you?

When you were promoted - what investment do you wish someone had made in you as a new leader?

Open your calendar.

Look at the last four weeks and count two things:

01

Delivering work

Meetings, projects, deadlines, client delivery, operational issues.

02

Developing your people

Intentional conversations about a person's growth as a leader - not about work delivery.

What does the ratio tell you?

M I S T A K E T W O

Mistake 2

We promote people into leadership — then leave them to figure it out alone.

Leaders don't fail to develop their people because they don't care. They fail because they never intentionally make space for it.

Only 23% of employees strongly agree their manager actively involves them in setting goals for their own development.

Gallup

WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS WORKS

The evidence is equally clear on what works.

3x

more likely to be high performers

Employees receiving regular feedback & coaching

Gallup Manager Impact Study

25%

higher team performance

When managers get structured onboarding in first 90 days

Harvard Business Review

Companies investing in manager development see 48% higher revenue per employee and 22% higher profitability.

Gallup: State of the Global Workplace

WHAT THE BEST LEADERS ACTUALLY DO DIFFERENTLY

It isn't a programme.

It's five behaviours.

01

A different kind of conversation

Not about work — about their growth as a leader. What they're finding hard. What they're learning about themselves.

02

Naming what you see in real time

Not six months later. In the moment: 'I noticed how you handled that. Here's what I observed.'

03

Creating space to struggle

Resist fixing it. Let them navigate hard moments — with you alongside, not in front.

04

Setting a leadership horizon

'Here's what I see in you. Here's where I think you could go.' Not a promise — a named possibility.

05

Investing the first 90 days intentionally

The trajectory of a new leader is largely set in the first 90 days. Most organizations leave this entirely to chance.

Where to invest.

MY RECOMMENDATION: Start with Emotional Intelligence. Without self-awareness, no other development sticks.

01

Emotional Intelligence

The foundation. Self-awareness unlocks everything else.

02

Coaching Skills for Leaders

Shifts leaders from solving problems to building people.

03

Feedback & Difficult Conversations

Gives leaders the language to name what they actually see.

04

New Leader Onboarding

Structured support in the first 90 days sets the trajectory.

05

Leadership Style & Presence

Bridges the gap between a leader's intent and their impact.

06

Peer Learning & Action Learning Sets

Low cost. High impact. Massively underused.

GROUPS OF THREE

Now it's your turn.

1 Form groups of three.

Turn to the people nearest to you.

2 Name your person.

Each of you: name someone on your team you've recently promoted — or are thinking about promoting. 30 seconds each.

3 Answer one question together.

What does that person need to become a great people leader? Not training — what specific capability, conversation, or experience that only you can give them?

4 Leave with one commitment.

Each person states out loud: the ONE thing they will do differently for that person in the next 30 days.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

C L O S E

You promoted them.

Now develop them.

Mistake 1: Promoting for performance, not for leadership potential.

Mistake 2: Promoting people — then leaving them to figure it out alone.

*He was promoted for all the right reasons.
Just not the ones that matter in leadership.*

Great at the Job.

Wrong for the Role.

The question is: what are you going to do about it?

Thank you.