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The six  
employee  
types you  
should know

The manager's secret playbook

# How to bring out the best in every employee

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## Managers have it rough

On one side there are the company leaders who demand higher results month after month. They want more profitability and productivity, higher quality, more customer satisfaction, more innovation and more creativity—all of which are linked to high employee engagement.

On the other side, employees demand a dream manager who can create an environment that drives engagement. Managers account for at least 70% of the variance in employee engagement scores, and only 30% of U.S. employees are engaged at work, according to Gallup. Employees blame their boss for poor satisfaction at work—one in two employees have left their job to get away from their manager at some point in their career.

And then there's you, a manager being pushed and pulled on from two directions. It's likely that you were promoted to become a manager because of your success in a previous non-managerial role, or because of your tenure in the company or field. **Once you got that promotion, the chances of you receiving training on how to manage are about 50-50.** On average, companies with fewer than 100 employees provided only 12 minutes of manager training every six months, and that decreases to six minutes for organizations with 100-500 employees, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

So here you are, with scant or unhelpful training and heavy, heavy expectations, pushing each day to deliver

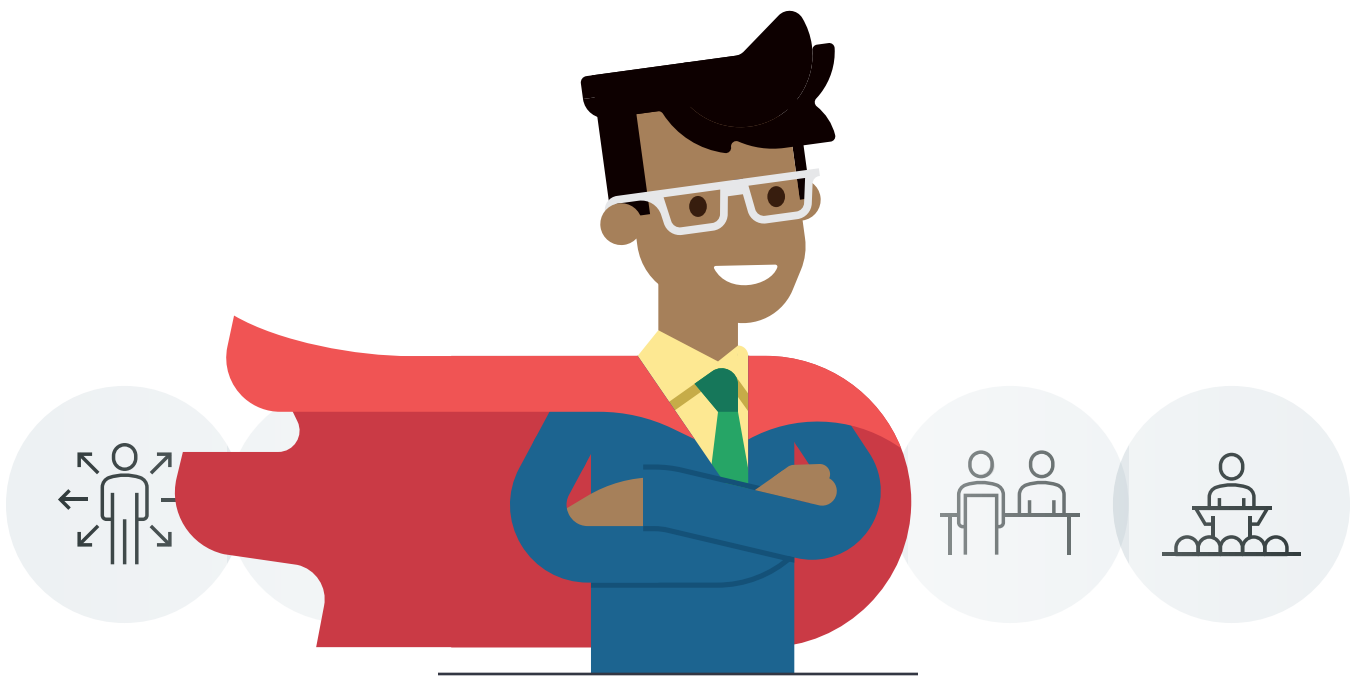
results that will provide you with job security and upward career mobility. You're managing a team of people (some who you hired and some who you inherited) with a circus of personality traits.

**Companies with fewer than 100 employees provided, on average, only 12 minutes of manager training every six months**

Sometimes, you love each person's strengths—his or her willingness to take the initiative, desire for harmony, creativity or attention to detail. Other times, their bad habits drive you crazy—they won't share ideas easily, they suck the air out of a project, they go above your head on the regular, or they just want to get a paycheck for the bare minimum. It's up to you to wrangle this group and get them to achieve a common goal.

And, you're doing this in the midst of a workplace in flux and with employees who are constantly coping with ambiguity.

Like we said, it's rough somewhere between the middle and the top.



## Understanding, The Key to Engagement

Gallup describes a great manager as someone who has a “natural talent to individualize; focus on each person’s needs and strengths; boldly review their team members; rally people around a cause; and execute efficient processes.”

No big deal, right?

About one in 10 people naturally have all of these qualities, and two in 10 have a few of the five and can be coached to have the rest.

So, what happens if you’re a manager and you’re one of those other eight? You’re still in charge of other people. You still want to do well at your job. You still have results to deliver.

To do that, you need help, a shortcut, a plain-speaking guide to understand your employees and how to manage them to get the results you need.

**This is that guide—a down and dirty manual to navigating team dynamics. Over the next few pages, we’ll give you tactical tips to identify common employee types and how to manage them effectively.**

Now, these employee types aren't based on vast scientific studies, elaborate personality quizzes, or a complicated management theory. Instead, we used our 20 plus years of experience at Career Revolution and interviews with hundreds of managers to map out the most common workplace personalities we’ve found.

About one in 10 people naturally have all of the qualities that make a great manager.

As a manager, you are the key to bringing out the strengths or the weaknesses in each of your team members. By understanding who you’re dealing with, you can also know how to inspire, motivate, and bring out the best in each employee, so you can all achieve excellent results.

## Who’s on Your Team?



“What’s in it for me?”

## THE CAREER CLIMBER

- Superpowers:** Overachiever—when it will benefit them; Craves opportunities, such as taking on new projects
- Weaknesses:** Can be self-interested, self-involved, self-centered; Little regard for hierarchy and direct leadership; May hurt other people who get in their way
- Motivators:** Looking good to get promoted, personal gain
- Core Belief:** Self-reliance is the only way to achieve success

### How to Spot

Career Climbers are primarily concerned with their own advancement and can be overachievers—when it benefits them.

**Career Climbers crave opportunities to prove their promoteability**—such as taking on new, undefined projects. But, if a Career Climber doesn’t see an immediate personal benefit, he or she could care less about a project. Because they’re so preoccupied with their own advancement, Career Climbers also don’t care who they hurt to get to the top—whether it’s you or a fellow team member. They may go over your head on a regular basis and present new projects to your manager or company leadership before telling you.

They often do not think of how their behavior impacts others, what the business needs, or what the team needs. Behind all of these frustrating behaviors is Career Climbers' inherent belief that they have to look out for number one.

### How to Manage

As a manager, your challenge is to channel this very selfish energy into activities that will benefit the whole team while not squashing the Career Climber’s enthusiasm. To do that, **pay attention to their ideas and give them opportunities to connect those ideas with work that drives your central mission.**

Career Climbers constantly seek affirmation and acknowledgment, **so reward them with public recognition**, praise and exposure to higher-ups. Whatever you do, don’t punish Career Climbers by limiting their career opportunities (even when their behavior makes you feel angry, frustrated or threatened). Instead, give them direct feedback, but make sure that that feedback doesn’t break their spirit.

Finally, be wary of a Career Climber becoming isolated. Other team members may view them as a threat and stop collaborating with them because they don’t trust them. **Make “playing well with others” part of the success metrics for a Career Climber.**



“Just because I deserve it.”

## THE ENTITLED ONE

- Superpowers:** Constantly seeking more efficient processes; Doesn't need direction or a title to take action
- Weaknesses:** Resistant to developmental feedback; Doesn't connect achievements with personal worth or value; Can wantonly disregard boundaries and authority
- Motivators:** Opportunity, freedom, autonomy, personal development
- Core Belief:** Worth and value are inherent and internally created

### How to Spot

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The word “entitled” may sound like short-hand for millennials, and sometimes it is. Entitled Ones aren't always millennials, but the ones who give millennials a bad name. These employees believe that their worth is not determined by any external factors and is inherent to who they are. Therefore, they think that they should be rewarded for doing bare-minimum work.

Now, there are positive qualities of Entitled Ones that you can harness for the good of your team. These employees can be innovative and creative because they always seek more efficient processes. They often disregard authority and want extreme autonomy and freedom. Leveraged correctly, this combination can result in **an employee who takes an idea and runs with it**. Just make sure they're running with the right idea with a clear understanding of how their performance will impact their recognition and rewards.

### How to Manage

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Managing an Entitled One can be challenging because of his or her resistance to developmental feedback and wanton disregard for boundaries and authority. Sometimes managers assume that this employee should just know what excellence looks like—but often Entitled Ones do not.

To break through to an Entitled One, **set clear, detailed performance expectations of what good, great and awesome results look like**. Think about this in terms of a rubric in a class — what kind of work would the employee need to produce to receive an excellent, above average, average or poor rating? Then, clearly relay those expectations to the Entitled One employee.

**A 360-feedback tool can be extremely effective with an Entitled One**. This type of anonymous feedback and data can help them understand which ideas get heard and contribute toward innovation, which skills and behaviors get rewarded with opportunity and the difference between career promotion and progression.



“Sure!” “No problem!” “Can do!”

## THE YES PERSON

- Superpowers:** Very agreeable and generally well-liked; Easy to work with and a team player
- Weaknesses:** Overcommitted; Unable to create and maintain boundaries; Conflict avoidance
- Motivators:** Pathological need to be liked, being needed
- Core Belief:** External factors define worth and value

### How to Spot

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The Yes Person is probably your favorite team member because he or she is so agreeable and easy to work with. And with each affirmation, agreement, and concession, the Yes Person dies a little bit inside.

The Yes Person is driven by an almost pathological need to be liked. Unlike an Entitled One, the Yes Person derives all of their value from external sources—especially the satisfaction and affection of managers and team members. They hate conflict and see it as a sign of failure, so they will do almost anything to prevent it.

Because the Yes Person is constantly saying, well, yes, **he or she is often over-committed and on the edge of burning out.** At the same time, Yes People may not be honest about the burden of their work and will not ask for help to lighten it. It's not uncommon for managers and other team members to unknowingly (or knowingly) take advantage of a Yes Person's accommodating nature.

### How to Manage

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The key to managing Yes People is to show them that they bring more value to the team than just saying yes. Help them prioritize projects and protect their time by making them feel secure and liked.

**Managers must give a Yes Person permission to say “No” and then provide a reward when he or she does.** Give a Yes Person kudos when he or she takes a vacation, or make taking time off a prize after completing a big project.

Yes People crave public affirmation of their likeability, so make sure to **call out great work that's unrelated to saying “Yes” in team settings.** Only provide developmental feedback privately, and make sure the Yes Person knows it's not a reflection of their perceived skills or abilities.

Finally, make sure you don't take advantage of a Yes Person. As a manager, it's easy to overload these individuals because they'll keep taking on more.



“We’ve always done it this way.”

## THE LEGACY EMPLOYEE

- Superpowers:** Vast institutional and historical knowledge; Reliable, consistent and steady
- Weaknesses:** Can be riding out a few more years until retirement; Resistant to change and can protect bad processes; Judgmental
- Motivators:** Financial stability, reaching milestones, routine, community, retirement
- Core Belief:** Change is impermanent

### How to Spot

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You’re not a Legacy Employee’s first manager—and you’re probably also not their fifth or sixth one either. Legacy Employees have been with your organization a long time—sometimes longer than the length of your career. As a result, these employees know the company inside and out. They know the backstory to every process, the gossip from a decade ago and where all the bodies are buried. **They can also be steady team members who produce reliable and consistent work.**

On the downside, Legacy Employees often have a bad habit of protecting subpar processes and being resistant to change. For this employee, change is impermanent—every new manager or leader in the past decade or two has come through and tried to institute something new. That person and their changes may not have lasted, but this employee has.

### How to Manage

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To leverage a Legacy Employee's vast institutional knowledge, experience, steadiness, and consistency, make sure this person feels like his or her history with the company is valued.

**Publicly show respect for this person's longevity with the organization by celebrating his or her memories and knowledge.** Ask them to explain to the team why a particular process or piece of equipment works the way it does or ask them to add historical context to discussions.

**Give Legacy Employees an opportunity to lead change initiatives, especially when you think they may be resistant to the change.** Relate to this employee on a peer-to-peer level, and ask them to use their perspective and knowledge to help solve problems. By putting these employees on the project teams that plans change, they can become a team agent and influence their peers.



“If you did it my way, it would be better”

## THE CONTROL FREAK

- Superpowers:** Extremely efficient and effective; Focused on delivering high-quality results
- Weaknesses:** Not good at delegating; Can demotivate and suck energy from entire team; Tends to work in isolation
- Motivators:** Excellence, control, ownership, results
- Core Belief:** Quality is more important than collaboration

### How to Spot

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Control Freak employees can easily make any manager feel conflicted. On the one hand, you have a super-efficient and effective person on your team who is committed to getting results. On the other hand, this person can try to control every process and every person on the team—including you. Their domineering attitude can isolate them from the rest of the team and suck the energy from other employees. And don't even mention the lack of delegation skills.

This type of employee believes that quality is more important than collaboration. **Their primary motivation is to deliver outstanding results, but often they think that only they can produce high-quality work.**

You can count on a Control Freak to deliver exceptional results, so you may become too reliant on this employee to produce. Unfortunately, this reliance can alienate other team members, which means your organization can lose out on the innovation and creativity that comes from collaboration.

### How to Manage

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To harness a Control Freak's positive qualities, such as accountability, attention to detail and high standards, you must give this person control with clear expectations. For example, put a Control Freak in charge of specific initiatives and projects (because this type of employee does get energy from organizing and telling people what to do), but mandate inclusivity at the same time. **Give a Control Freak formal instruction that success and excellence include incorporating other people into the process.**

Take it a step further by giving the Control Freak control over the feedback mechanism and measurement of collaboration. **Ask them what a good way would be to measure cooperation, and then make that part of the metrics of every project.**





“I would have said this at the meeting, but...”

## THE WALLFLOWER

- Superpowers:** Good listener and observer; Beloved by most and creates harmony on a team
- Weaknesses:** Avoids conflict to a detrimental level; Easily shaken, can lack confidence; Overly cautious
- Motivators:** Harmony, cohesion, amity, tranquility
- Core Belief:** Peace is more important than individual needs

### How to Spot

The Wallflower on your team usually avoids conflict and disruption and is often a good listener and observer. As a result, other employees trust this team member to keep their secrets. The irony here is that the Wallflower doesn't always love interacting with other people.

The Wallflower is also the employee who will rarely speak up in a large meeting, even if he or she has a solution to a problem or an answer to a question because that would be disruptive. **Wallflowers can be incredibly thoughtful and think about the connection between ideas, people, and processes.** They're often specialists with in-depth knowledge in their respective fields.

On the downside, a Wallflower's aversion to conflict may be so extreme that it outweighs this employee's other contributions. Often, Wallflowers can be so thoughtful that they can come off as slow or lazy. This type of employee can also be extremely resistant to change, as that will create disruption.

### How to Manage

To get the most from a Wallflower employee, seek to minimize disruption and conflict from any interactions whenever possible. This type of employee appreciates clear direction and instruction and the time to come up with a well-thought-out plan. This isn't the employee who would appreciate a last-minute opportunity to present to senior leadership. But, he or she would want the chance to communicate a new idea in a controlled environment with appropriate time to prepare.

Make sure to acknowledge this person's ideas. **You have to let them know that you hear them and that their information is useful.** Because of their isolating tendencies, managers must be very mindful of including Wallflowers in meetings and projects.

**To reward or recognize a Wallflower, do it in private**—there's nothing that scares them more than a big public display of appreciation. Instead, write the Wallflower a thank you note or express during a one-on-one conversation how important his or her contribution was.

# Knowing these six employee types can help you increase engagement



Employees aren't just one type—you may have a Yes Person who has some Wallflower qualities, or a Control Freak who is also a Legacy Employee. At any point in your career as a manager, you're going to have each of these employee types on your team, or a hybrid of a few.

No matter the personality composition of your team, **your job as a manager is to learn how to leverage each employee's inherent talents and bring those to the forefront.**

Sometimes, that means pairing two complimentary employee types (imagine the powerhouse of putting a Career Climber, Control Freak and Entitled One on a team while mandating inclusivity and setting clear metrics of success!) When you can do this and bring out each person's strengths, you can create your own A-team.

By adjusting your management style to each employee type, you can make each team member feel valued and in return employee engagement and the benefits it brings will increase.

## Ask yourself these questions when evaluating your team

Which employee types reflect the people I manage?

What are each of my team member's unique abilities as well as development opportunities?

What motivates each of them?

How can I customize my approach to each personality?

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