

## ***The Four Most Embarrassing Management Blunders and How to Avoid Them***

Managers often commit embarrassing blunders in the course of their work. A housing contractor forgets to have his foreman bring the right kind of nails on the first day of construction, a shipping manager discovers that his new team member has been putting products into the wrong packaging, an IT manager realizes three months into a major project that his team completely misunderstood the project's requirements, and on and on and on.

You've been there—you've been the guy who has to look his boss in the eye and say "my team screwed up, it was a stupid mistake, but we'll fix it." It's embarrassing, and it reflects poorly on you even if you weren't truly at fault.

How can you prevent yourself and your team from committing these embarrassing management blunders?

### ***Organize Your Projects and Never Miss a Deadline***

Projects are complicated. You have to coordinate a team of people to work on any number of different things at once, all advancing towards one common end. It's no wonder that projects can be delayed and derailed so easily.

More often than not, it's a management blunder that's responsible for late projects. Perhaps you didn't take the time to properly explain the order in which tasks needed to be completed to your team, or you didn't put a delivery date into writing, or you just expected your team to be able to figure out how to do something that they hadn't done before on their own. Whatever the case, you can take three easy steps to organize your project and prevent management blunders:

1. Decompose the project into small tasks and determine accurate deadlines;
2. Use a Gantt chart to schedule all of the tasks and determine which tasks depend on the results of others;
3. Use a team chart to assign the right people to the right tasks.

### ***Remember all of the "Little Things" before they become "Big Problems"***

Managers don't skip over "minor," dangerous organizational details because they are incompetent; they skip over them because they have a lot on their plate and they need to get through it as quickly as they can. Unfortunately those details can explode into project delays which hinder your productivity and embarrass you among your co-workers.

Want to make sure that you have all of your bases covered? Want to make sure that you haven't forgotten to account for one of those pesky "little things" which can explore into a big problem and embarrass you?

## ***Standardize Your Work to Prevent Errors***

Often times managers will ask their team members to do something without providing them with a set of instructions; it's assumed that team members will be able to figure things out on their own. While it's true that most team members will be able to find a way to get something done, expecting them to "figure it out" can lead to errors, the costs of which can be enormous.

It's a far better practice to document and optimize a standard routine for employees to follow, as it can drastically reduce the number of errors that employees make.

## ***Get It Done Right the First Time***

One of the biggest sources of embarrassment for managers is miscommunication. They say one thing to their team and the team does something completely different. Managers like you try their best to convey their ideas and instructions clearly, but sometimes words simply aren't enough; they need the assistance of strong visuals.

A recent study showed that people are six times more likely to retain and understand information that is presented to them visually, and this is largely because most people are visual learners. Why not improve the clarity of your communication by visualizing some of it for your co-workers?

Here are the following things that can be communicated more clearly using visuals:

1. **Who** is responsible for this?
2. **What** are we doing?
3. **When** is it due?
4. **Where** is it?
5. **Why** is this important?
6. **How** are we going to do it?