

CONNECTIONS

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LEADERSHIP *Matters*

How to Manage a Team of Your Former Peers

The best tips for when you're promoted to management above your peers and friends

By Vicki Salemi, Contributor (originally published by "U.S. News & World Report")

Picture it. Over time you've become close friends with your entire department: lunch outings, intramural softball games, baby showers and all. The good news? Your hard work has finally paid off and top brass has noticed! Congratulations, you've landed that big promotion in the corner office.

The not-so-good news? You've landed that coveted promotion in the corner office. Even if others in your group weren't going for it, they may inevitably feel resentment that you're rising through the ranks and they're not. After all, isn't their hard work noticeable and rewardable, too? And if they were vying for the same role you pursued, that's another issue. They didn't get it and you did, end of story. Resentment, anyone?

You may start sensing this from your former friends; perhaps pangs of guilt start to creep in. Not only that, but you're dealing with unexplored territory of having to manage your cronies. This is not an easy task—especially if you know them too well and you're aware that one is a slacker and scoots out of the office. Summer Fridays leaving at 2 p.m. have crept up to 10 a.m., and now that slacker friend is your own issue to manage.

Actually, this transition is normal and not at all unusual. With a tactful approach of setting new boundaries and altering your behavior, you can become a successful leader among your former peers, plus gain traction with your new ones.

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Greetings City Employees,

November is National Family Caregivers Month. It is a hard job to balance the demands of work, home, self-care, and managing the care of others. The Caregiver Action Network provides information on tools to help the caregiver, but we also encourage you to look at the [EAP website](#) or call us at 266-6561 to schedule an appointment to talk to a counselor and obtain more support and resources that could assist you and your eligible family members in caring for both self and others.

We have also included other topics such as how supervisors can manage when your team is composed of former peers, reasons to stop judging people, and your monthly de-escalation tip.

Thank you for the work you do!



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There are a few ways to straddle the balance of becoming a terrific boss to your former peers without being their pal. Here are several tips to help make that seamless transition.

1. Address the elephant in the room.

Schedule a meeting to sit down with your department as a team or individually. It will clear the air and set the tone for your relationship. Some may not even know they have issues with it, while others may attempt to sabotage efforts in your new role.

You can say something like, "I know this can be a little awkward and feel unfamiliar because we were so close and now I'm your boss. I just want to let you know I'm still here for you to vent your frustrations or share a laugh. I have your back." The talk doesn't even have to be in a corporate setting—take them out to lunch or coffee. Through your tone and personality, they'll hopefully feel at ease having already known you. That said, they may go through more growing pains than you experience as they see you morph and step up to the challenge in your new role. The need to get over it is more their issue than it is yours.

2. Start weaning yourself off the lunches and outings.

Part of the process of growing out of your old role and into a new one involves detaching yourself from the old day-to-day conversations. Yes, your office door may be open and they may stop by to say hello but you should start avoiding conversations that are too personal. Not stoic, mind you—if one of their kids has a health issue and they need a flexible work arrangement, that's an example of when to show continued compassion and support. But knowing how they unknowingly butchered their tuna casserole recipe at the latest block party? Too much information. You can say something like, "That's an interesting story! I hate to cut it short but we have that deadline at noon. How's that coming along?"

3. Embrace your new peer group.

Seek new peers and invite one or two of them to lunch. Get to know them, pick their brain and ask them about inner workings of the department at that level for projects you haven't encountered yet, like year-end performance reviews and budget management. Keep conversations of a professional nature and light when it comes to personal topics, alluding to perhaps a summer vacation or how your favorite local sports team is doing. Take cues from these new relationships and apply them into your old ones.

4. Volunteer to chair other initiatives.

In most companies there will be initiatives for the environment, affinity groups for minorities and other opportunities to get involved. As you take on leadership roles outside your department, former peers begin to see you as just that—a leader. An added bonus? You'll start seeing yourself as a leader, too.

5. Monitor your behavior.

With all of these pointers, it's important to note things don't change overnight. But if you're hoping to someday get a promotion it's prudent to start monitoring your own behavior and interactions, online and offline, so that you don't have to reboot suddenly. And the situation could be reversed, with your peer who doesn't do half of the workload you accomplish starts rising through the ranks. Put yourself in his or her shoes.

6. Rethink your social media settings.

Alter your privacy settings, or if that becomes unmanageable, start thinking if you really want your team to know you caught up with a college buddy last night at the local watering hole. If you were vigilant about your social media all along, you won't need to backtrack to change access to photos and more.

Above all, look at the big picture. You're in a new role and transitioning into it is just that—a transition and a learning process. Part of that involves altering relationships with your peers.



10 Reasons to Stop Judging People

Judging someone does not define who they are; it defines who you are

By Barbara Markway Ph.D., *Psychology Today*

Despite our best efforts, we all judge others. It might be over small things, like a co-worker who took too long of a lunch break. Or it might be over bigger issues, such as a person who behaves selfishly or hurts our feelings.

Psychologist and meditation teacher Tara Brach frequently tells this story: Imagine you are walking through the woods and you see a small dog. It looks cute and friendly. You approach and move to pet the dog. Suddenly it snarls and tries to bite you. The dog no longer seems cute and you feel fear and possibly anger. Then, as the wind blows, the leaves on the ground are carried away and you see the dog has one of its legs caught in a trap. Now, you feel compassion for the dog. You know it became aggressive because it is in pain and is suffering.

What can we learn from this story? How can we become less judgmental?

- 1. Don't blame yourself.** We are instinctively hard-wired for survival. When we see a dog (or a person) that might bite us (literally or metaphorically), of course we feel threatened. We go into fight-flight-freeze mode, and are unable to see the myriad possible reasons for another's behavior. We get tight and defensive. This is a normal first reaction. The key is to pause before we act out of this mode.
- 2. Be mindful.** Although judgment is a natural instinct, try to catch yourself before you speak, or send that nasty email and do any potential harm. You can't get your words back. Pause. See if you can understand where the person may be coming from. Try to rephrase your critical internal thought into a positive one, or at least a neutral one. After all, like that dog in the trap, we really don't know the reasons for someone's behavior.
- 3. Depersonalize.** When someone disagrees with us or somehow makes our life difficult, remember that it's typically not about us. It may be about their pain or struggle. Why not give others the benefit of the doubt? "Never underestimate the pain of a person," Will Smith said, "because in all honesty, everyone is struggling. Some people are better at hiding it than others."
- 4. Look for basic goodness.** This takes practice, as our minds naturally scan for the negative, but if we try, we can almost always find something good about another person.
- 5. Repeat the mantra, "Just like me."** Remember, we are more alike than different. When I feel critical of someone, I try to remind myself that the other person loves their family just like I do, and wants to be happy and free of suffering, just like I do. Most important, that person makes mistakes, just like I do.
- 6. Reframe.** When someone does something you don't like, perhaps think of it as they are simply solving a problem in a different way than you would. Or maybe they have a different timetable than you do. This may help you be more open-minded and accepting of their behavior. The Dalai Lama says: "People take different roads seeking fulfillment and happiness. Just because they're not on your road doesn't mean they've gotten lost."
- 7. Look at your own behavior.** Sometimes, we may be judging someone for something that we do ourselves, or have done. For example, the next time you find yourself yelling at someone while you're driving, ask yourself, "Have I ever driven poorly?" Of course, we all have.
- 8. Educate yourself.** When people do things that are annoying, they may have a hidden disability. For example, some people with poor social skills may have Asperger's syndrome. So if someone's invading your personal space (as someone with Asperger's might), remember again, it's not about you. Albert Einstein said, "Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."
- 9. Give the person the benefit of the doubt.** Someone once told me, no one wakes up in the morning and says, "I think I'm going to be a jerk today." Most of us do the best we can with the resources we have at the moment.
- 10. Feel good about you.** Brené Brown says: "If I feel good about my parenting, I have no interest in judging other people's choices. If I feel good about my body, I don't go around making fun of other people's weight or appearance. We're hard on each other because we're using each other as a launching pad out of our own perceived deficiency."

Remember that judging a person does not define who they are, it defines who you are.

De-Escalation Tip of the Day: Avoid Overreacting

By Emily Eilers, Crisis Prevention Institute

When I was thinking about what to share in a blog post about one of CPI's top de-escalation tips—"Avoid overreacting!"—I instantly recalled a person who I consider to be an MVP in the Keeping Your Cool Hall of Fame, CPI Meritorious Instructor and MPS safety assistant, Maria Navone.

In her interview for **Episode 12 of *Unrestrained***, CPI's podcast, Maria shared several powerful stories about working with children and adolescents in crisis. Amid a very gripping recollection of de-escalating a deeply traumatized child, Maria shared the following thought with host Terry Vittone:

I notice that when people are very upset at (a) particular time, the more limits you put on them, the more they want to act out. So I let them act out. I would rather you verbally act out and release all that ugliness than me have to put my hands on you because you're trying to physically attack me. I've got all day as far as I'm concerned. When it comes to intervention, I can talk my way out of any situation because I've got all day. But when you make the decision to put your hands on someone, you take it to a whole other level that you have no control over.

Avoiding overreacting can seem easier said than done, but Maria Navone unlocks this ability by reminding herself that she is trained, experienced, and knows what to do if a situation escalates beyond the verbal spectrum. Her confidence in her **training** is what keeps her calm when she faces a challenging situation, and her connection to her fundamental compassion for young people helps her to see the person who is hidden behind the outburst:

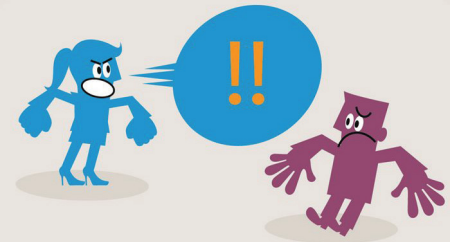
I notice that some adults think they can speak to people any old kind of way. And to me, I don't understand that philosophy. I understand that you might be the VP of a corporation, but if you don't have interpersonal skills you can't be a skilled intervener. You have to be approachable. You have to be kind, compassionate. You have to be able to step aside, build a bridge, get over yourself, first and foremost, because their malfunction has absolutely nothing to do with you.

I encourage you to take time to revisit Maria and Terry's amazing conversation on avoiding overreactions, safe de-escalation, and finding compassion and hope in moments of crisis.

Additionally, here are some other resources about maintaining a calm and professional demeanor when confronted with challenging behavior:

- In this blog post, CPI Certified Instructor Christopher Fernandes explains **how the primal brain behaves in crisis**, and how to remain calm and respond supportively.
- In this free presentation, CPI associate training director and resource specialist Pam Sikorski offers strategies for effectively **avoiding power struggles** and setting limits.
- This great article by Julie Hanks, LCSW, breaks down five practical tips for learning the biological triggers that can lead to overreaction, and **harnessing your calm** in the face of a challenge.
- Finally, these tips from the CPI social media community for **managing stress and keeping your temper** are still as useful today as they were when we first shared them!

Avoid overreacting.



crisisprevention.com

CPI's De-Escalation Techniques

Due to the variety and nature of the work that many City employees do, there are times when employees may find themselves in an uncomfortable situation with a member of the public, or perhaps even another employee, who may be struggling with their mental health, has a cognitive or intellectual status different from our own, sees reality differently than we do, has a medical condition or medication imbalance, or has found themselves in an uncomfortable situation and is expressing themselves very inappropriately or perhaps even aggressively in the workplace. While we recommend calling 911 if anyone feels immediately threatened or unsafe for themselves or someone else due to the words or actions of another person in their work environment, sometimes situations do not rise to the level of contacting law enforcement, or you may find yourself in a situation where you feel uncomfortable or threatened but are unable to distance yourself from the individual making you uncomfortable, confused, afraid, or angry. Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) is a widely utilized and useful resource that teaches employees and organizations how to de-escalate disruptive and assaultive behavior in safe, non-violent, and respectful way, and they have developed a list of Top Ten De-Escalation Tips which the EAP will be providing to you in this and upcoming newsletter articles. If you have more questions on de-escalation in the workplace, you can confidentially contact the EAP at 266-6561 or you can view upcoming trainings offered by Human Resources on their **training website**.

The Theme for National Family Caregivers Month November 2018 is

Supercharge Your Caregiving!

Caregivers are superheroes. Managing medications. Getting to doctor appointments. Balancing work and home. How can family caregivers handle it all? Even superheroes need tools! Thankfully, new caregiving tools can help lighten the load.

Think Safety First

If your elderly loved one is aging at home, safety and security is your first priority. You can't be there with them every minute of the day. But all sorts of gadgets can help keep them safe, maintain their independence, and relieve some of your worries. Wearable sensors can monitor a patient and contact family members if their loved one falls or if an emergency occurs. Smart homes and smart locks can help, too.

Unlock the Power of Medical Records

Information is power, and caregiver access to online patient medical records is getting easier and more powerful every day. With online patient portals you can get your loved one's health and insurance information how and when you need it. Join the millions of family caregivers who have already accessed their loved one's online medical records to improve care.

Master the Medications

One of your most important daily responsibilities is managing medications – making sure they are taken properly and on time, getting refills, and watching for side effects. Your loved one may have more than one illness and have to take several medications. Tech tools are an easy, safe way to track your loved one's meds and make caregiving a bit less stressful.

Unleash the Power of Apps

Caregiving is overwhelming and you simply can't do it all by yourself. Luckily, there are many apps and tools that can help caregivers do almost anything from A to Z. Check your loved one's vital signs. Locate them with GPS if they wander off. Get healthy eating plans at the touch of a button. Or connect with caregiver support groups and online communities. Use apps to streamline your tasks so you can get a break and take a few minutes to recharge your own batteries.

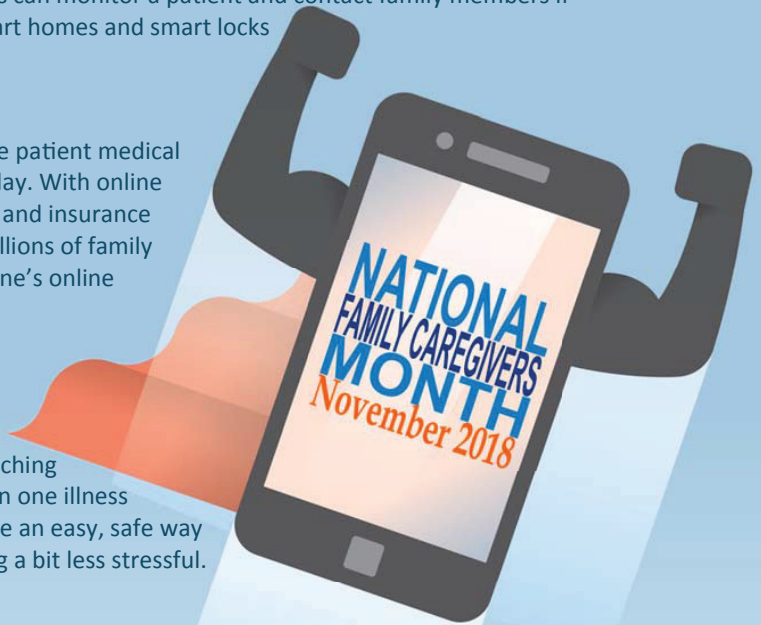
Not all superheroes wear capes. You are rising to the demands and challenges of the caregiver role every day. Take advantage of tools that can help you stay on top of it all and help you restore some balance to your life.

During National Family Caregivers Month, we want family caregivers to use new caregiving tools to make their lives a bit easier.



Supercharge Your Caregiving!

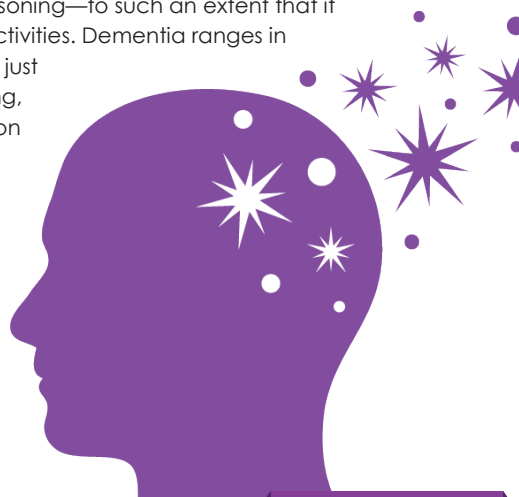
CaregiverAction.org



Has Alzheimer's Affected Your Life?

Dementia is a term used to describe a wide range of symptoms associated with the loss of behavioral abilities and cognitive functioning—thinking, remembering, reasoning—to such an extent that it interferes with a person's daily life and activities. Dementia ranges in severity from the mildest stage, when it is just beginning to affect a person's functioning, to the most severe stage, when the person must depend completely on others for daily living.

Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia among older adults and accounts for 60 to 80 percent of cases. Your LifeCycle Connect website has resources to help you learn more about dementia, its effects and how to care for those struggling with Alzheimer's.



WEBINAR

11.21.2018

12:00pm ET

REGISTER

Dementia: A Unique Conversation

One of the greatest gifts we can share with an older adult is conversation, but when they've been diagnosed with dementia it can become difficult—but not impossible. Join us and learn how to navigate the obstacles of memory loss in older adults, uncover the mental treasures they still hold and have more meaningful conversations.

Adele Lund

Director, Community and Business Relations,
Laureate Group



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Thanks for reading,

we hope you found the information useful!

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