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Are You a Manager or a Leader?

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5-6 minutes

[Management Style](#)



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Over the past 15 years of building my real estate business, I've come to learn there's a huge difference between managers and [leaders](#). Too often these words are used interchangeably. I've seen managers who are, in fact, leaders and so-called business leaders who are really nothing more than managers.

The nuances in meaning are slight, but the business results produced by the two are drastically different. If you search online

for the definition of a [manager](#), Google defines it as "a person responsible for controlling or administering all or part of a company or similar organization."

A leader is simply someone who leads.

A manager controls. A leader leads.

It has been my experience that the companies that make a dent in the universe are the ones that are led not controlled by people.

Are you a manager or a leader? Here are four simple ways to find out:

Related: [Managers Can Be True Leaders Not Just Taskmasters](#)

1. Being open to new ideas.

I will admit that there have been times in my career when I have actually caught myself saying, "That's the way it's always been done" to someone. When I do, I know I am trying to control not lead.

When employees or customers challenge the status quo of the way your organization does things, this is an opportune time to let them lead.

Your employees and customers have great ideas, ones that can make your company better. Instead of always saying or thinking, "We do it this way because that's the way we've always done it," challenge yourself to stop controlling the situation and let someone else have a stab at making the company better.

2. Viewing the competition to learn from it.

"Our competitors are awful," a manager might say. If you're

thinking or saying that the competitors are awful, you're a manager. Managers like to control things and one thing they can't control in business is the competition.

A leader, on the other hand sees that competition can make a company stronger. Leaders pay attention to what the competition is doing right and what rivals are doing wrong, so that they can learn new and better ways to build their own business.

Leaders realize that the competition is not awful. It's just different. When explaining their company's value proposition, leaders can eloquently detail how the competition's value proposition differs from their own, without saying anything negative about the other company.

Related: [A Rigid Mind Blocks Success. Try These 5 Strategies for Fearless Leadership.](#)

3. Embracing the input of staff.

Managers don't ask others for their opinion because by doing so, control is lost. Leaders love using technology like the online-polling tool [Survey Monkey](#) so they can poll team members for ideas and advice about everything.

I learned this the hard way. I used to control and manage everything in my business from the planning of events to the training and marketing. When you start to see low attendance at your events and training or find that few are embracing your new ideas, it's time to start asking for help.

I survey members of my team about everything, including what training to offer, how the marketing should look and when and where to host events. By doing this, I get a consensus about what's

important to them.

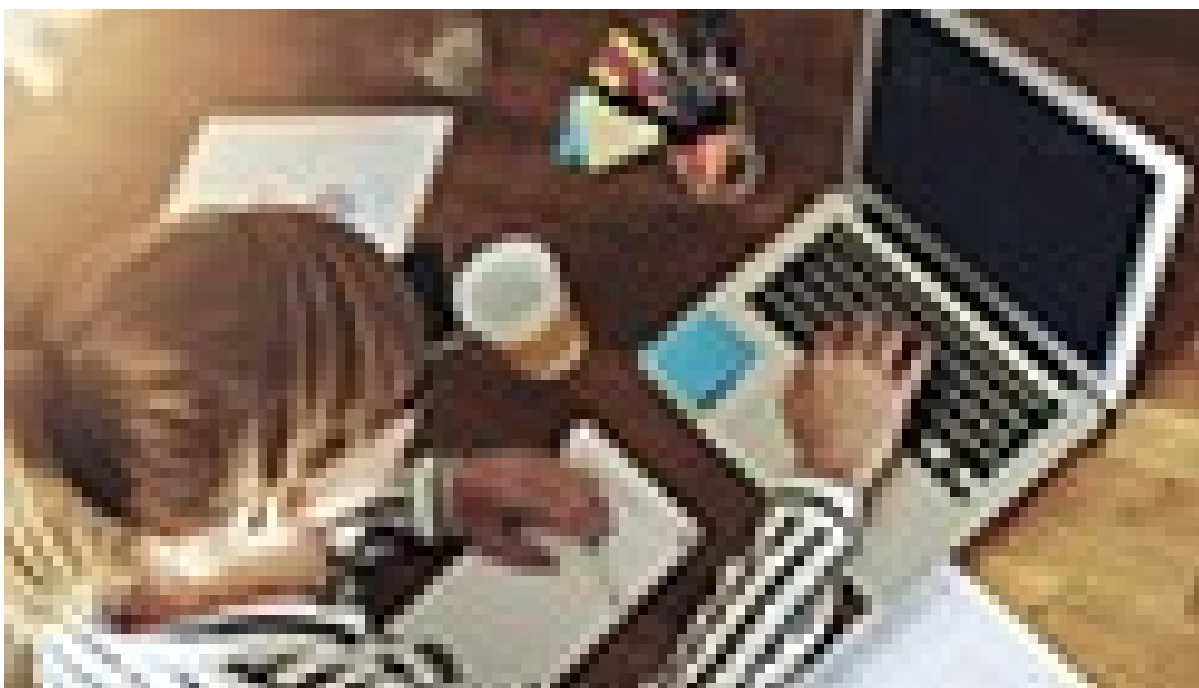
When people are engaged in the decision-making process, they are more likely to embrace whatever organizational endeavors the leader is working on. Even if you have some staffers who don't agree with the final decision, they appreciate having been asked their opinion, which means they're more likely to embrace the initiative even if they don't agree with it.

4. Not needing the final word.

Managers like control and one of the ways they retain it is by analyzing most decision-making processes with an assumption that they are right most of the time.

Leaders approach things from a different viewpoint, one in which the assumption is that they don't have all the answers and the best way to find the best answers is through collaboration with others on the team.

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