



Managing Together

Fall 2023

A photograph of the Union County Government Center building. The building is a multi-story structure with a brick facade and large windows. The words 'UNION COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER' are visible on the side of the building. In the foreground, there is a large blue graphic element that tapers to the right, and a green horizontal bar at the very bottom. A large, leafy tree is visible on the left side of the building.

UNION COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

IN GOD
WE TRUST



Leadership Development Corner

A Key Leadership Skill: Delegation

We know that delegation is an essential leadership skill, but the question is: Do leaders really understand the difference between assigning tasks and truly delegating?

Delegating can be one of the most difficult challenges for a manager, because it requires **entrusting authority and responsibility** over a piece of the work to someone else. True delegation is very different than assigning specific tasks because it requires you to relinquish authority and give responsibility to your employees, and that requires trust.

So why do managers avoid delegating? Let's look at the top three reasons:

1. I do not have confidence in my employee's ability to do the work to my standard.

This is a failure to develop your employees. To overcome this, a manager will need to invest time in developing the skills of their employee.

This will require a manager to:

- Teach and train their employee on exactly what they expect without holding anything back.
- Give their employee meaningful job experience.
- Ultimately be able to relinquish control over the work completely.

2. I prefer to keep control over how things are done.

This tends to lead to employees who do not have a true understanding of the work and therefore cannot have any sense of ownership to it.

3. I fear that giving authority over the work (and something goes wrong) will impact my reputation.

This tends to exist when a manager does not trust their employee's skill or competence in an area of work.

A failure to delegate can lead to micromanaging, burnout and exhaustion. This is why it is essential to transfer your knowledge to your employees, give them access to all the resources needed to perform the work, provide well-defined expectations, and finally trust them to work independently.

The outcomes of delegation include:

- Building trust within your team;
- Developing new skills in your employees;
- Empowering your employees;
- Engaging your employees.

According to Carol Walker, delegation allows a manager to be more productive and concentrate on the larger picture. Furthermore, it prepares the next generation of managers to gain real-life experience. It is critical for managers to consider the tasks being performed as well as their employees' expertise. To be successful at delegation, you must plan, communicate, monitor, and express gratitude. Because managers are frequently unable to let go of the habits they have developed over time, they are frequently the source of obstacles.

Get Prepared for your next performance evaluation by completing journal entries for yourself and your employees.

Journal entries are a way for employees and supervisors to document information about employee performance and significant work activities throughout the review period.

- Did you know you can add your journal entry through email?
 - Use journals@neogov.net to share emails to your journal entry.
 - Remember to put your name or your employee's name as the subject line and place "end journal" at the end of your email entry.
- Share journal entries with your manager or your employees via NEOGOV Perform.
- Attach documents to your journal entries (i.e. emails, training certificates, notes of appreciation, etc.).
- Tag competencies (For example: @ communication) to your journal entries to specify the performance are you are highlighting.
- Set a calendar reminder in Outlook to enter journal entries (weekly, monthly, or as appropriate).

For more information [click here](#) for a step-by-step guide to enter in a journal entry under NEOGOV Perform Resources.

Fear

Managers fear the assigned task will not be carried out accurately.

Time

Feel it will take too long to explain.

Trust

Managers don't trust their team enough.

Skill

Managers feel their team don't posses the right skill-set.



10 Thoughts about Leadership

By Jon Gordon

- 1. People follow the leader first and the leader's vision second.** It doesn't matter if the leader shares a powerful vision if the leader is not someone who people will follow the vision will never be realized. As a leader, who you are makes a difference. The most important message you can share is yourself.
- 2. Trust is the force that connects people to the leader and his/her vision.** Without trust there is a huge gap between the leader and the vision. Without trust people will stay off the bus. However, if people trust the leader they will hop on the bus with the leader and help move the bus forward towards the vision.
- 3. Leadership is not just about what you do but what you can inspire, encourage and empower others to do.**
- 4. A leader brings out the best within others by sharing the best within themselves.**
- 5. Just because you're driving the bus doesn't mean you have the right to run people over.** Abraham Lincoln said, "Most anyone can stand adversity, but to test a man's character, give him power." The more power you are granted the more it is your responsibility to serve, develop and empower others. When you help them grow, they'll help you grow.
- 6. "Rules without relationship leads to rebellion."** Andy Stanley said this and it's one of my favorite quotes. As a leader you can have all the rules you want, but if you don't invest in your people and develop a relationship with them, they will rebel. This applies amazingly to children as well. It's all about relationships.
- 7. Lead with optimism, enthusiasm and positive energy; guard against pessimism; and weed out negativity.**
- 8. Great leaders know they don't have all the answers.** Rather they build a team of people who either know the answers or will find them.
- 9. Leaders inspire and teach their people to focus on solutions, not complaints.**
- 10. Great leaders know that success is a process not a destination.** One of my heroes, John Wooden, the legendary UCLA basketball coach, never focused on winning. He knew that winning was the byproduct of great leadership, teamwork, focus, commitment, and execution of the fundamentals. As a leader focus on your people and process, not the outcome.



Invest in Yourself

Upcoming Trainings for Managers & Directors

The focus of this year's series is **Trust and Purpose creates JOY and HAPPINESS at work**. Joy is the result of working with trusted colleagues who have a sense of purpose at work. Joy arises naturally when people want to be at work and are challenged and recognized for what they do. Purpose and service are powerful oxytocin boosters. Our neurobiology has everything to do with



Listening. Learning. Growing.

how we connect to each other. When we are better connected, we are more likely to be engaged not only with each other, but also in the work we do to provide services to the residents of Union County.

Date & Time	Location	Topic
Tuesday, Dec. 12, 10:30-11:30 a.m.	Virtual	How to Create a Workplace Where Joy and Happiness Thrive (click to register)
Thursday, March 14, 10-11 a.m.	In Person	Working with Gen Z (registration details to come)

Did You Know?

Our **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)** through **Atrium Health** provides assistance and support to managers in-person, by phone or virtually.

- Mandated EAP referrals for an employee who is not performing well (must be arranged through the Human Resources department).
- Managers can speak with a licensed counselor to discuss a situation about an employee and discuss ways on how to work/partner with the employee.
- Critical incident sessions can be scheduled for your department if a tragic event (i.e. death in department, etc.) has occurred (must be arranged through the Human Resources department).



Visit the [Employee Assistance Program](#) resource page on County Connect for additional information.



Hiring Managers: Help Has Arrived for Building Your Interview Question Guide

The [Interview Form Builder](#) is now available on County Connect to assist you in creating an interview questionnaire for the interview and hiring process. Key features include:

- 145 question bank available for non-supervisors
- 151 question bank available for supervisors
- Hiring managers can choose up to 15 questions total on the form.
- There is also an option to create six custom questions specific to your interview and candidate assessment.
- Questions can be arranged on the form in the preferred order and printed for your interview panel and use for applicant interviews.

Start using this incredible tool and resource today!

Interview Form Builder

Position:	Administrative Assistant
Interviewer(s):	Gusanne Smith, John Doe, and Mary Manager
Hiring Manager:	Mary Manager
Department:	HUMAN RESOURCES
Date:	

This tool uses a scoring rubric to evaluate candidate responses. Interview panels should discuss what each score means before beginning the interview. This will ensure a consistent approach and limit scoring bias.

Interview Questions

Question: Walk us through your professional experience. How has this experience prepared you for the job you have applied for?
Response:

<input type="radio"/>				
5 = Excellent	4 = Good	3 = Average	2 = Fair	1 = Poor

Question: How does this position fit into your career aspirations? (Hiring)
Response:

<input type="radio"/>				
5 = Excellent	4 = Good	3 = Average	2 = Fair	1 = Poor

Question: In your current or previous position, have you ever been asked to take on additional responsibilities? If so, what were those responsibilities? Tell us about them. (Hiring)
Response:

<input type="radio"/>				
5 = Excellent	4 = Good	3 = Average	2 = Fair	1 = Poor



Employee Climate Survey

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The 2024 Employee Climate Survey is Coming!

The Employee Climate Survey will be released in early 2024 to all employees. This is a great opportunity for you and your direct reports to provide feedback regarding experiences within our workplace. Please encourage your employees to participate in this confidential survey where they will have an opportunity to provide perspective on items like: My Work Experience, My Work Unit, My Department, Union County as an organization, My Supervisor, Leadership,

Reminder on Holiday Policy Changes

Holiday policy changes became effective Nov. 4, 2023. Take a moment to [review the changes](#) and reach out to HR if you have any questions.

Get Ready for 2024

2024 resources are now available for the New Hire Orientation Schedule and Payroll Calendar for next year. Print or save these documents in a convenient spot for reference.

The [New Hire Orientation Schedule](#) provides you with available start dates for your new hires in 2024 and the dates for orientation. Please use these dates as you complete the Personnel Action Form (PAF) and the offer letter for the new hire.

The [Payroll Calendar](#) provides important reminders for timecard deadlines, holidays and pay dates that are key items for everyone.



Manager's Corner

Union County has more than 200 employees in management roles across the organization.

Let's take some time to get to know our managers, supervisors, and directors.



Name: LaMeka Harrison
Title: Assessment Supervisor
Department: Tax - Revenue
Started Employment with UC: 5/08/2023

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What skill or behavior/trait do you possess that helps you succeed as a manager? How does this attribute to your success?

Employee Recognition – I practice this in two ways.

As a leader, we must remember the employees are the ones that carry out day-to-day tasks and execute our initiatives. They are vital to our department and our success. I recognize my team's value and I seek out ways to acknowledge them, individually and collectively.

My way may not be the right way or the best way. With that said, instead of telling the team verbatim how to do something, I'll ask the employees for their input on some issues. I want my team to feel empowered and know that I trust them. I try to allow as much autonomy as possible, make myself available for guidance and instruction, and only intervene when necessary.

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How do you build trust with staff and co-workers?

One of the easiest ways for me to build trust with staff and coworkers is to be authentic, consistent, and intentional in my interactions with everyone. I make it a practice to genuinely care about what is important to them. As we build connections and extend trust to each other, we are displaying respect and vulnerability. I feel obligated to keep building on that extension of trust. We all know, it is much harder to rebuild a structure after it collapses vs. beginning on flat, cleared land. You will second-guess every decision you make regarding the foundation, subfloors, joists, etc. (Appraiser Mentality).

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Why do you like working for Union County?

Union County is a dream! The county is growing rapidly enough to make me feel like I am home – Detroit, Michigan, yet it offers a tranquil escape from a big-town life. I enjoy working for this diverse organization with its chock-full of funny, friendly, supportive, and knowledgeable employees because they've all embraced my quirky introverted self with patience and kindness.

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What do you believe is the best trait a manager should have?

Self-Awareness. Although I suffer from Only Child Syndrome, I do NOT matter the most in the office; my team does. I try to check my mood and emotions at the door as I enter each day. I know my attitude, disposition, actions and/or reactions can set the tone of my day and my team. If I am having a weird day or I am in a wacky over-caffinated kind of mood; I tell my team immediately.

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What is the best advice you can give to someone who just started working in a supervisory role?

My best advice for someone in a new supervisory role, especially in a new environment, is to wake up daily with a positive attitude ready to welcome new perspectives from yourself and from others. When you work on building and being a part of a great team, it is important to be mindful of how everyone has something to offer. Don't be afraid to seek suggestions from others and know that it is okay to let others to "have the floor." We vary in our strengths for a reason. We do not have to do everything well. It's okay to allow others to shine. Great leaders help develop new and sometimes better leaders.

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What was your first job?

My very first job was through the City of Detroit's summer job program, working for D-DOT – the Detroit Department of Transportation. Long before the advancement of technology, Detroit residents would call into the Customer Service division and ask us to find out which bus routes would take them from point A to point B, and at what times they could expect the bus to arrive at their stops. On the flip side, Detroit residents would call us to file complaints of buses not arriving at their stops on time, too. This is where my customer service skills were born.

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What is one skill in life that you think everyone should learn?

Gifting grace to others daily.

? **If you could do any other job than your current one, what would it be?**

I would be a pilot. I love to travel and enjoy beautiful landscapes. Plus, I think I would look great in a uniform and captain's hat!

? **What is something people would be surprised to learn about you?**

I am a twelve-year breast cancer survivor.

? **What is your favorite thing to do when you are not working?**

Reading and/or listening to books, preferably while in another country.

“ Leaders become great not because of their power but, because of their ability to empower others. ”

- JOHN MAXWELL



Name: Daniel Pena

Title: Training Supervisor

Department: Human Services -
Business Operations

Started Employment with UC: 7/18/2022

? **What skill or behavior/trait do you possess that helps you succeed as a manager? How does this attribute to your success?**

One of the key skills and traits that I possess, which significantly contributes to my success as a manager, is empathy coupled with flexibility. Empathy allows me to connect with my team members on a deeper level. I make a conscious effort to understand their perspectives, emotions, and concerns. This not only creates a more positive and supportive work environment but also enables me to address their needs effectively. When employees feel heard and valued, they are more motivated, engaged, and loyal to the organization. Flexibility, on the other hand, enables me to adapt to changing circumstances and evolving business needs. In today's unpredictable work environment, being rigid can hinder progress. I believe in being open to new ideas and approaches, and I encourage my team to innovate and experiment. This flexibility allows us to seize opportunities and tackle challenges with creativity and agility..

? **How do you build trust with staff and co-workers?**

I believe in cultivating trust through a combination of flexibility, honesty, and open communication. Trust often begins with being adaptable and willing to accommodate differing perspectives and needs. I approach my interactions with an open mind and a willingness to adjust my plans or decisions when necessary. This flexibility shows that I value input and respect the diverse viewpoints of my colleagues. It also helps create a collaborative atmosphere where everyone feels heard and respected. Honesty is the cornerstone of trust. I make it a priority to be transparent and forthright in my communication. This means sharing both good and bad news openly and honestly. When I make a mistake, I admit it and take responsibility, which demonstrates integrity. When others see that I'm truthful and trustworthy, it encourages them to reciprocate and be honest in their dealings with me. Open and consistent communication is key to building trust. I encourage regular dialogue with staff and co-workers, making myself available to listen to their concerns, ideas, and feedback. I try to create an environment where

people feel safe to voice their opinions without fear of judgment or reprisal. When issues arise, I address them promptly, seeking collaborative solutions that align with the team's goals.

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Why do you like working for Union County?

I have a deep appreciation for working for Union County, an entity that provides crucial social services to our community. What I find particularly rewarding about my role here is the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of our residents and the betterment of our community as a whole. Our organization plays a pivotal role in addressing the needs of our community members, from providing essential services like healthcare, housing assistance, and social support programs. These services have a direct and positive impact on the lives of our neighbors, friends, and fellow citizens. Knowing that my work contributes to improving their quality of life is incredibly fulfilling.

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What do you believe is the best trait a manager should have?

In my view, one of the most crucial traits a manager should possess is empathy, coupled with a steadfast commitment to treating people with dignity and respect. Empathy allows a manager to understand the emotions, perspectives, and needs of their team members. It goes beyond simply acknowledging these feelings; it involves genuinely caring about the well-being and success of each individual. When a manager demonstrates empathy, it fosters a sense of connection and trust among team members, as they know their manager values their feelings and concerns. Treating people with dignity and respect is equally vital. This means recognizing the inherent worth of every person on the team, regardless of their position or background. It involves actively listening to their ideas, giving credit where it's due, and creating an inclusive and non-discriminatory work environment. When people are treated with dignity and respect, they feel valued and empowered to contribute their best efforts. Furthermore, these qualities also contribute to effective leadership. An empathetic and respectful manager is better equipped to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their team, provide appropriate support and feedback, and lead by example. This, in turn, enhances the overall success of the team and the organization.

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What is the best advice you can give to someone who just started working in a supervisory role?

The best advice I can offer to someone who has just started working in a supervisory role is to shift their perspective from simply "being in charge" to understanding that their primary responsibility is to ensure the success and well-being of every member on their team. Being a supervisor isn't about wielding power or authority for its own sake. Instead, it's about recognizing that your role is one of support and facilitation. You are there to guide, empower, and enable your team members to perform at their best and achieve their goals. When your focus is on the success and well-being of your team, you'll not only be a more effective supervisor but also foster a positive and productive work atmosphere.

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If you could do any other job than your current one, what would it be?

If I were to choose a different career path from my current one, I would lean toward becoming a fitness coach or a voiceover artist. Strength training has proven to be an invaluable stress management tool in my life, sparking a desire to delve deeper into the science of optimizing the human body. Assisting people in achieving their best possible lives and reducing the risk of injuries and illnesses associated with our often-sedentary lifestyles would be immensely satisfying. Some have told me that I have a voice well-suited for voiceover work. Working as a voiceover artist would enable me to unleash my creativity and utilize my voice as a storytelling instrument. In this role, I would contribute my voice to a diverse range of projects, including commercials, animated films, audiobooks, and documentaries, breathing life into narratives and conveying messages in a distinctive and engaging manner.

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What is something people would be surprised to learn about you?

One thing that often surprises people when they get to know me better is that I'm not as serious as I might initially appear. While I take my work and responsibilities seriously, I also have a fun and lighthearted side that emerges when I'm comfortable and relaxed. I enjoy humor, engaging in light-hearted conversations, and finding joy in the small things in life. It's often surprising for those who initially perceive me as reserved or serious to discover that I have a playful and easygoing personality once they get to know me on a more personal level.

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What is one skill in life that you think everyone should learn?

One skill in life that I believe everyone should learn is developing grit and resilience. Life has a way of throwing unexpected curveballs at us, and having the ability to process, adapt, and react appropriately to these changes and challenges is invaluable. Grit enables individuals to persevere in the face of adversity, maintain a positive attitude, and keep moving forward despite setbacks. It's not just about bouncing back from failures but also about using those experiences to grow and become more resilient. With grit, individuals can tackle life's uncertainties with determination and ultimately achieve their goals, no matter what obstacles come their way.

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What is your favorite thing to do when you are not working?

My favorite thing to do when I'm not working is to strike a balance between spending time with my lovely wife

Alexis, strength training to stay as active and healthy as possible, indulging in good food (but not too much), binge-watching TV series, and occasionally, relishing moments of complete nothingness to recharge my mind and soul. For me, it's the perfect recipe for unwinding and finding joy in the simple pleasures of life.

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What was your first job?

My very first job was working as a ride operator at Six Flags Magic Mountain in Valencia, California, when I was just 16 years old. It was an exhilarating experience, both in terms of operating the rides (which mostly consisted of pushing buttons and securing guest's harnesses on roller coasters/rides) and interacting with visitors from all walks of life. I am convinced that my enjoyment of roller coasters developed during this time. Working there taught me valuable lessons in responsibility, customer service, and teamwork, and it remains a memorable part of my early work history.





Friendly Reminders:

Completed PAF packets must be received in the HR Office by the Monday prior to the effective date of action.

The following must be included with the PAF packet: employment application, completed reference check forms and justification documentation (internal transfers only).

Proper onboarding is an important step when welcoming a new employee.

- Make sure to welcome the employee prior to their start date & provide expectations for their first day.
- Their workstation should be set up and ready for their first day.
- Provide a tour of the workspace and common areas.
- Create a 30-day agenda for training and activities.

A [separation PAF](#) and the [employee separation notice](#) must be completed as soon as you receive notification of an employee resignation.

COVID-19 [Employee Return to Work Guidance](#) is available on County Connect.





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