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Unfreezing the Frozen Middle

ROAD MAP TO MIDDLE MANAGER BUY-IN

PRESENTED BY SHARON LIPINSKI

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A grid of safety-related icons including a lightning bolt, hard hat, starburst, safety vest, hand with prohibition sign, target, left arrow, downward arrow, right arrow, warning triangle, sun, barrier, headphones, hand, safety glasses, and a hand with a blue glow.

ROADMAP TO MIDDLE MANAGER BUY-IN

Presented By
Habit Mastery Consulting

abc CBS FOX NBC PSJ EHS Today iO INCIDENT PREVENTION

Leaders of Leaders Who Report To Leaders

- Project Managers
- Area Managers
- Regional Managers
- Site Supervisors
- Facility Managers

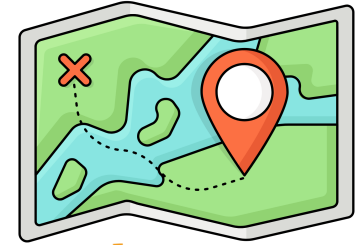
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Our Agenda

- Psychology of the Middle Manager
- 3 Stops on the Road Map
- Tools: Buy-In Worksheets



Road
Trip



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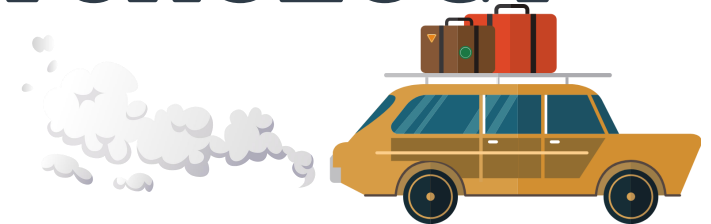


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INSIDE THEIR MINDS

PSYCHOLOGY



The Best Practices

Key Differences: Their Priorities

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
Strategic Alignment Organizational Liability Organizational Reputation	Department Efficiency Team Performance Personal Reputation

The Best Practices

Key Differences: Timeline They Are Thinking On

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
Quarters Annual 5 Year Plans	Today This Week This Project

The Best Practices

Key Differences: How You Influence Them

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
Data/Incident history Strategic timing Strategic alignment	Feasibility (Simplicity, Logistics) Impact on Operations (time out for training, budget)

The Best Practices

Key Differences: Barriers To Their Support

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
Competing priorities Lack of urgency Profit	Mixed messages Lack of clarity Responsible for execution

The Best Practices

Key Differences: Best Times To Approach Them

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
After Serious Events Before Strategic Decisions	After Disruptions Before Launch At Idea Stage

The Best Practices

Key Differences: How They Support You

Senior Leaders	Middle Managers
<i>Don't think, "They support us because they say they do."</i>	<i>Don't think, "They'll support it because they're told to."</i>
Endorsement Presence Budget	Daily Actions Reinforcement Prioritization

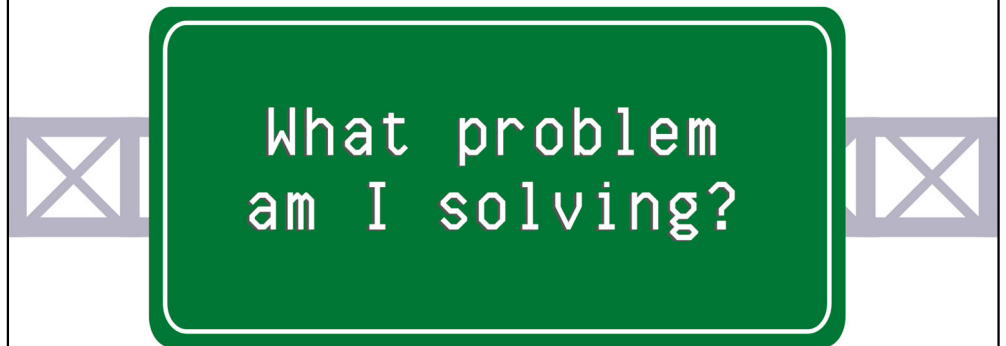
What To Expect

The Way To Your Middle Manager's Heart



What To Expect

Be A Problem Solver



What To Expect
Practical

How will this
work for their
department?

What To Expect
Tool-Oriented

What do they
need to make this
happen?



The Best Practices

Our Roadmap At A Glance



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STOP #1

PREPARING



Preparing

1. Understand their work
2. Understand their personality
3. Build Credibility



1: Understand Their Work

1. Spend time in the field
2. Learn the KPI's
3. Know their problems

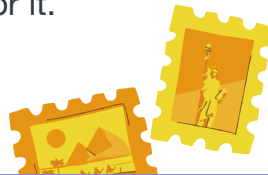
In Action

Safety for Short-Service Employees

- New message: 50% of recordables
- Led to Committee
- Identifying Helmets/T-shirts
- Regular check-in process

Quote

I'm in the meeting. I know you have a problem with this. Let's develop a solution for it.



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Key Takeaway

If you Understand their problems, you can help solve them



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#2: Understand Their Personality

1. 1. What They Value



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Quote

“Don't make the assumption that the middle managers don't care. That they only care about money, or they only care about this thing, or their people, or getting the job done. That's going to stunt your ability to influence somebody. Money's such a surface-level thing. There's usually something more to it than just the dollars themselves.”



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#2: Understand Their Personality

1. What They Value



2. Who Influences Them



3. How They Make Decisions



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In Action

Routine Work Intervention

- Identified influencer. Made the case to that manager first.
- Scheduled an encore presentation/discussion



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Quote

“Some are just always going to be a challenge. That's just the way they're wired. And you have to try different approaches, you know, till you find what works. And sometimes that takes time.”



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Key Takeaway

If you Understand their personality, you can Adapt your approach



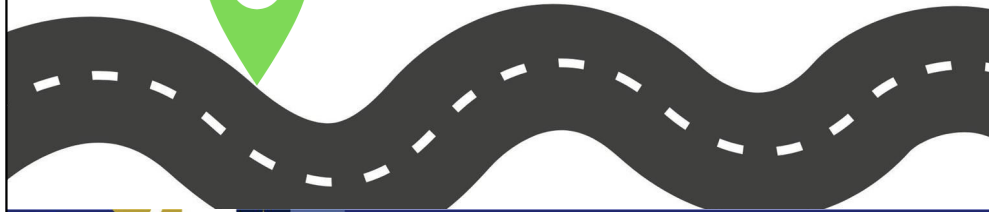
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#3: Build Credibility- Theirs And Yours

1. 1. Solve A Problem



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Quote

“They're worried about their own project, their relationships with their people on their project. You might have some sort of cost that hits their job, and they get all up in arms over it. They're so worried about their project that they don't realize it's really hurting the company as a whole, too.”



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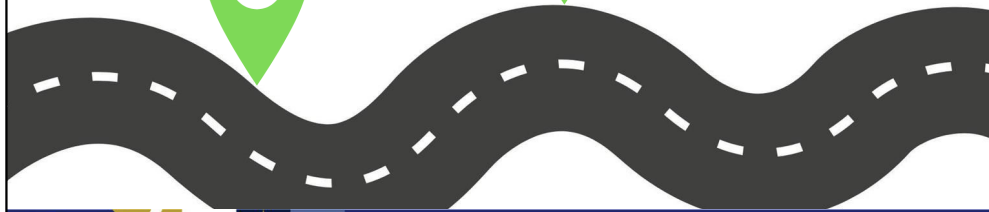
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#3: Build Credibility- Theirs And Yours

1. 1. Solve A Problem



2. Protect Their Reputation



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In Action

Call to discuss incident on their site



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#3: Build Credibility- Theirs And Yours

1. 1. Solve A Problem

2. Protect Their Reputation

3. Create a Track Record

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Key Takeaway

If you build credibility, you Become a trusted partner



STOP #2

MARKETING



Marketing



4: Collaborate




Quote

"They can provide a unique perspective that upper management sometimes doesn't see or the guys in the field don't see."



4: Collaborate







In Action

Software Rollout

- Communication: This is coming...
- Testing Phase: We need your help!
- Site visits: Trained & set up
- Roll-out with contest: Let's play!
- Official Launch!

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Marketing


Timing Of Collaboration: Driven By Senior Leaders

Engage middle managers early in planning and troubleshooting— within clear boundaries.

We have a worksheet on this for you! Email sharon@habitmasteryconsulting.com to request it.



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Marketing

Timing Of Collaboration: Driven By You or Them


Include from the beginning to co-develop solutions, then loop in senior leaders to build top-down momentum.

We have a worksheet on this for you! Email sharon@habitmasteryconsulting.com to request it.




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Key Takeaway

If they help design it, They will own it

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#5: Seize Opportunities



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Key Takeaway

If you find the right time, it's easier to open a door

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6: Tell Compelling Stories & Craft Practical Plans



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Tell A Story

1. Be Specific
2. Be Realistic
3. Be Simple
4. Be Helpful (Here's How...)



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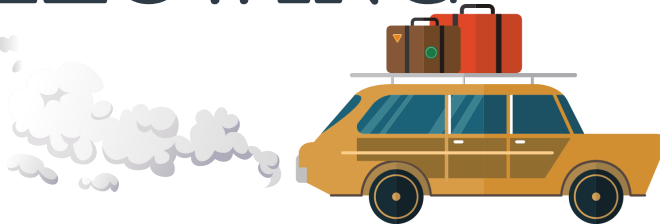
Key Takeaway

If you tell a good story and make it easy for them, they can get More excited



STOP #3

FOLLOWING UP



Following Up

- 9. Be Patient & Persistent
- 8. Review Progress
- 7. Clarify Expectations

7: Clarify Expectations



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Key Takeaway

If it's clear what success looks like, it's Easier to Reach it

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#8: Review Progress- Up & Down



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Quote

“Things get thrown around a lot. ‘This would be a good idea to do this,’ and then nobody ever measures it or checks on it.”



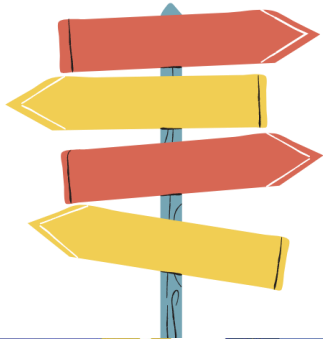
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In Action

Safety for Short-Service Employees

- Number of completed check-in's
- COO monthly call
- Internal website
- Each executive VP delivers monthly to their specific areas



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Key Takeaway

If you track progress, accountability is easier



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9: Be Persistent & Patient

1. Think Long-Term

2. Set Expectations

3. Market Your Success



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Key Takeaway


If you are patient and persistent, You will find more success



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AN EXAMPLE
A CASE STUDY



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The Best Practices

What Happens When You Do This Well

1. Faster adoption of safety programs
2. Lower resistance, higher ownership
3. Less need for constant follow-up
4. Stronger safety culture from the middle out

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Case Study: Laundry Facility Ergonomics



- Decreased musculoskeletal injuries
- Increased efficiency
- Reduced overtime

“Most of our injuries were body motion injuries... but no one had been taught how to use the equipment correctly.”

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Preparation

- Immersed in Operations: Regularly attended operations meetings
- Diagnosed the Business Impact
- Business Case: Safety Improves Productivity and Profitability

“I could have tried just to do an ergonomic assessment and help their employees. I'm not sure what kind of support I would have gotten had I not connected the dots for them.”



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Marketing

- Seized a Strategic Moment: New Director
- Asked questions that led to practical solutions: What if they sorted one type of towel?
- Collaborated Across Departments: Industrial hygienists, ergonomists, and operations

“I put it together in a way that was simple, with clear, observable steps and auditable data.”



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Following Up

- Demonstrated Operational Benefits: Tracked reductions in injuries and increases in production consistency
- Protected Middle Manager Credibility: Performance dashboards remained in place
- Created a Repeatable Model: Managers “took the idea and ran with it,” requiring little ongoing reinforcement.

“They saw the gain immediately... It was their efficiency that improved. I didn't even have to...”



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IN CONCLUSION...

WRAPPING UP

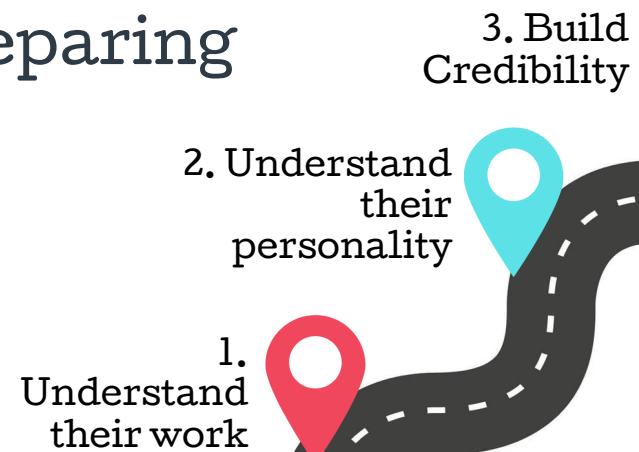


The Best Practices

Our Roadmap At A Glance



Preparing



Marketing




Following Up



2 step-by-step worksheets!

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