

How to Empower Managers to Drive Efficiency, Effectiveness and Productivity

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Investing in managers pays off faster than almost anything else.

Managers shape culture, drive performance, and grow people. Without them, everything that makes work work breaks—from engagement and trust to productivity and retention. Yet too many managers are promoted without support. In this session, LifeLabs Learning and Ethena shared strategies and tools to help HR leaders enable managers to succeed, without burning out.



KEY TAKEAWAYS



Great expectations

Gen Z professionals want managers who coach, engage, support, motivate, and explain the “why” behind decisions. This generational shift requires a new set of management skills.



HR as a true partner

HR and business leaders often work at odds. Success comes from meeting execs halfway, speaking in business terms, and showing how manager enablement accelerates results.



A recipe for burnout

Managers can’t be expected to be therapists, friends, coaches, and enforcers in all ways. Without clear boundaries and role design, you set them up for exhaustion and failure.



AI as a force multiplier

AI can take repetitive tasks off managers’ plates, like drafting performance reviews, so they can spend more time giving thoughtful feedback and coaching their teams

💡 AI can help you and your managers work smarter. Download Ethena’s [5 Ways to Use AI in Your Workflows](#).

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ACTION ITEMS



Empower managers

Give managers clear policies and consistent messaging so they aren't left making things up or struggling to answer questions.

💡 Ethena created a public [comp philosophy](#) so managers have a clear ethos to lean on and a list of FAQs.



Clarify the role

Define what great management looks like at your org and what it doesn't. Set clear expectations for all.

💡 At Ethena, onboarding includes a career ownership session that outlines manager and IC responsibilities.



Take the burden off

Identify common friction points (like feedback, 1:1s, performance reviews) and provide managers with quick tools or templates to save time and reduce stress.

💡 Give them the [LifeLabs feedback prep grid](#) and [1:1 agenda template](#).



Give space to lead

Offer managers autonomy and agency to customize how they lead and motivate their teams.

💡 At Ethena, each manager has their own morale budget for engagement activities, be it meals, swag, or in-person gatherings.

Download the [Great Managers Playbook](#) for the systems, tools, and skills that create great managers fast!



“It’s a fallacy to expect whatever success you had as an individual contributor is going to translate into success as a manager because the skill sets are completely different. Some of the things that made you successful as an IC could make you a terrible manager.”

Priscila Bala
Vice Chair, LifeLabs Learning

Want to build managers who lead people and culture—not just projects?

LifeLabs Learning equips managers with the skills, tools, and language to create a high-performance culture, fast. Visit lifelabslearning.com to learn more!

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