THE FRONTLINE

SOLUTIONS YOU *NEED*, WHEN YOU NEED THEM.

Training, consulting, and coaching services that make a difference.

Frontline Training Solutions
An Express Employment Professionals Company

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Training Solutions ℠
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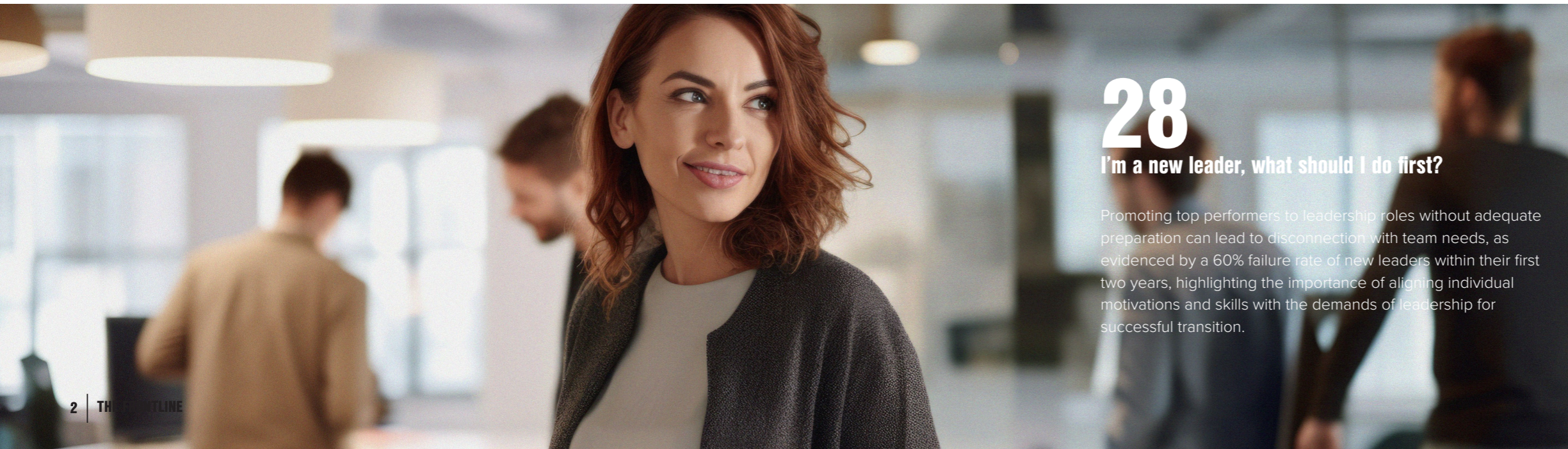
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I'm a new leader, what should I do first?

Promoting top performers to leadership roles without adequate preparation can lead to disconnection with team needs, as evidenced by a 60% failure rate of new leaders within their first two years, highlighting the importance of aligning individual motivations and skills with the demands of leadership for successful transition.

At Frontline Training Solutions, we create thriving organizations where everyone matters through training, consulting, coaching and real solutions to everyday challenges in the workplace.

Frontline Training Solutions is headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan and serves organizations both locally and internationally with a full range of training and consulting solutions. Each year we train thousands of leaders and serve organizations across North America. Our team is on the frontlines between the workforce and the workplace, so our solutions always take a practical real-world approach to be a catalyst for change and improvement throughout your organization.

Since 1983, our parent company, Express Employment Professionals, has been connecting the workforce to the workplace. Founded in 1983, Express annually employs more than half a million people across almost 900 franchise locations worldwide. Their long-term goal is at the heart of the company's vision, to help as many people as possible find good jobs by helping as many clients as possible find good people.

Frontline Training Solutions partners with Express Employment Professionals for Light Industrial, Skilled Trades, and Administrative staffing solutions and Specialized Recruiting Group for Professional and Executive Recruiting.

Every training qualifies for HRCI/SHRM recertification credits based on training length.

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES YOUR TEAM NEEDS TO THRIVE

Frontline Training Solutions offers a comprehensive suite of training opportunities designed to cater to a wide array of organizational needs across various industries, including manufacturing, retail, hospitality, and professional services. Our offerings are meticulously crafted to enhance skills in leadership, project management, customer service, human resources, and team development. Notably, Our programs such as "Advanced Emotional Intelligence," "Courageous Conversations," "5-Star Customer Service," and "Working Better Together" utilize practical, real-world approaches to ensure participants can directly apply their what they learned within their organizations. These training programs range from a few hours to several weeks, available both virtually and in person, allowing for flexibility and customization to meet the specific needs of each organization or team.

Moreover, Frontline Training Solutions emphasizes the development of strategic skills critical for navigating contemporary workplace challenges, such as effective change management, project management essentials, and strategic workforce planning. Our "Supervisor Boot Camp" and "Leadership Foundations" are specially designed to equip frontline managers and leaders with the tools necessary for operational excellence and team alignment. The training programs are underscored by a commitment to improving employee retention, enhancing customer satisfaction, and fostering a culture of innovation and excellence. By partnering with Frontline Training Solutions, organizations can expect not only to address immediate skill gaps but also to lay down a foundation for sustained growth and competitiveness.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Frontline Training Solutions offers leadership development programs designed to enhance the skills of both current and future leaders. These programs aim to improve performance, increase learning capacity, and contribute to organizational success by focusing on critical leadership skills.

Purpose Driven Leadership Training

Purpose Driven Leadership Training is for new and seasoned leaders to help them bring out the best in the people they lead. This 6 week program focuses on "turning the mirror" inward to see how leadership influences those we lead, impacting engagement and retention within the company. This is intended to be a catalyst for continuous personal and professional development, benefiting anyone interested in enhancing their leadership, communication, or teamwork abilities.

Leadership Foundations

Leadership Foundations training is aimed at equipping new and future leaders with essential leadership skills. Over 3 to 4-hour sessions spanning five to six weeks, the program covers topics such as leadership basics, team development, problem-solving, and HR essentials. It's designed for those stepping into managerial roles or needing a refresher in leadership fundamentals, providing them with practical tools and a personalized development plan to continue their leadership journey.

Supervisor Boot Camp

Supervisor Boot Camp is a practical training program designed for frontline supervisors and new leaders in the manufacturing and industrial sectors. It offers 16 hours of instruction over four sessions or two full days, focusing on essential leadership skills such as financial literacy, effective communication, and team management. Participants learn to transition from peer to leader, aiming to improve their leadership effectiveness and contribute positively to their organization's bottom line.

Developing Coaching Leaders

The Developing Coaching Leaders program is designed to shift leaders from traditional management roles to becoming coaching leaders, focusing on developing, inspiring, and unlocking their team's potential. This 3-day, activity-based program emphasizes practical coaching skills, aiming to foster self-reliant problem solving and enhance team engagement and accountability. For leaders looking to elevate their leadership through coaching, this program offers a comprehensive and experience-based approach..
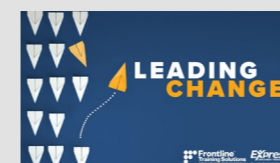
Leading Change

The Leading Change Training offered by Frontline Training Solutions equips participants with the necessary tools to effectively manage and navigate organizational changes. This program emphasizes understanding the emotional and psychological responses to change, the relationship between change and organizational culture, and provides a step-by-step process for creating and executing a change plan. Designed for a wide range of professionals, from individual contributors to leaders, this training prepares attendees to develop a proactive approach to change, ensuring a smooth transition within their organizations.

Scan here to learn more about these trainings.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Frontline Training Solutions offers Human Resources training programs designed to develop HR professionals at all stages of their careers. These programs cover a wide range of topics including HR strategy, organizational culture, talent management, and strategic workforce planning, aiming to equip HR teams with the tools needed to become employers of choice. The training is practical, led by seasoned HR professionals, and available as public workshops or customized sessions.

Strategic Human Resources Leadership

Strategic Human Resources Leadership training is designed for senior HR leaders, aiming to enhance their strategic thinking and leadership capabilities. This 5-week program covers strategic planning, organizational culture, talent management, and more, equipping participants with the skills needed to ensure that HR is aligned with and driving business strategy.

The Frontline Human Resources Manager

The Frontline Human Resources Manager training program is designed to help HR professionals transition into managerial roles, focusing on leveraging HR metrics, managing change, and fostering collaboration. This 16-hour course, available both in person and virtually, aims to equip HR managers with the skills needed to balance business strategies with HR goals effectively.

The Human Resources Professional

The Human Resources Professional training program is a comprehensive 12-hour course designed to elevate HR professionals' skills in areas such as building operational credibility, coaching through conflict, and increasing personal and organizational effectiveness. Aimed at both new and experienced HR professionals, this program focuses on developing the foundational skills necessary for HR professionals to gain credibility and effectively support their organization's operational priorities.

Masterful Interviewing & Onboarding

Masterful Interviewing and Onboarding focuses on enhancing interviewing techniques and onboarding processes to improve employee retention and engagement. This 6-hour course, designed for HR professionals and managers, teaches behavioral and situational-based interviewing, alongside developing effective onboarding strategies that extend beyond an employee's first day.

Strategic Workforce Planning

The Strategic Workforce Planning workshop is designed to equip intact teams with the tools and insights needed to create effective workforce plans that address current talent crises and future labor shortages. This comprehensive program, suitable for senior executives, HR professionals, and frontline leaders, focuses on understanding demographic trends, the essential elements of strategic planning, and ensuring broad organizational support.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Frontline Training Solutions' Team Development Training programs are designed to enhance team dynamics and individual collaboration skills across various environments, such as work, project, and virtual teams. The training offerings include fundamental skills for better teamwork, conflict management, and effective communication, leveraging tools like DiSC and emotional intelligence. These programs can be customized to meet the unique needs of intact teams.

Introduction to DiSC

The "Introduction to DiSC Training" by Frontline Training Solutions offers participants an insightful dive into the DiSC assessment to enhance workplace communication and teamwork. Through a 2-hour session, this training uncovers the dynamics of DiSC work styles, motivators, stressors, and effective communication strategies, aimed at improving interpersonal skills and reducing workplace conflicts.

Working Better Together

Working Better Together utilizes the Workplace DiSC® assessment to help employees at all levels develop more productive and effective work relationships. This advanced training program, offered both in person and virtually, guides participants through understanding their own DiSC personality style, recognizing and adapting to different styles, and leveraging this knowledge for improved workplace engagement and collaboration.

Transforming Workplace Conflict

Transforming Workplace Conflict aims to reframe conflict from a source of dread to a tool for productivity by employing the Everything DiSC Productive Conflict assessment. This program, suitable for all employee levels across industries, focuses on recognizing and mitigating destructive behaviors and fostering constructive conflict management strategies, enhancing workplace relationships and culture.

Decision Making & Innovation

The Decision Making and Innovation training focuses on developing critical thinking, decision making, and innovation skills for both individual contributors and leaders. It covers identifying personal and team barriers to effective decision making, innovative problem-solving techniques, and includes creating a personal and team decision-making playbook. This 8-hour session aims to provide participants with practical tools and strategies for enhancing organizational competitiveness.

Working Across Cultures

Working Across Cultures focuses on enhancing cultural competence within organizations, addressing the challenges and benefits of cross-cultural interactions in the globalized business environment. It aims to equip participants with the skills to understand and navigate cultural differences, improving communication, retention, and effectiveness in diverse work settings.

Scan here to learn more about these trainings.

Scan here to learn more about these trainings.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Frontline Training Solutions offers Professional Development Training programs designed to bolster a wide array of fundamental skills for workplace success, such as managing difficult conversations, project management, and enhancing self-awareness. These programs are targeted at professionals across all career stages, aiming to improve employee retention, collaboration, performance, and organizational effectiveness through practical and engaging training methods.

Foundations of Emotional Intelligence

Foundations of Emotional Intelligence is a comprehensive course that teaches participants to improve their emotional intelligence for enhanced leadership and team collaboration. Delivered in 2-hour virtual session over 4 weeks, this training covers self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, aiming to foster a productive workplace environment through better interpersonal skills.

Advanced Emotional Intelligence

The Advanced Emotional Intelligence training program delves deeper into emotional and social function, targeting individuals seeking to enhance their emotional intelligence skills for workplace success. This training spans five 2-hour sessions, offering an in-depth exploration of emotional intelligence through the EQ-i2.0 assessment, focusing on areas such as conflict resolution, teamwork, and stress management. It is recommended that participants complete Foundations for Emotional Intelligence prior to attending this program.

Courageous Conversations

Courageous Conversations training focuses on using radical candor to navigate difficult conversations effectively, aiming to balance directness with care to build trust and improve communication. It is designed for individuals across all levels and industries, delivered through 6-hours of training in-person or virtually, teaching participants about their natural tendencies in conversations, overcoming barriers to candor, and the positive impacts of adopting radical candor.
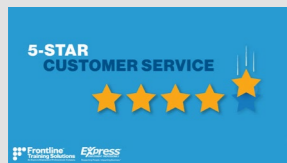
5-Star Customer Service

5-Star Customer Service training focuses on elevating customer service to create a culture of excellence within organizations. It covers strategies for handling complaints, improving the customer experience across various communication platforms, and instills a process-oriented approach to fostering exceptional service. The training is suitable for anyone in a customer-facing role, aiming to enhance both internal and external customer interactions.

Time Management

Time Management training is focused on enhancing productivity by managing behaviors that affect time use, rather than attempting to manage time itself. It covers identifying "time thieves," implementing seven time control habits, and provides a toolkit for immediate application. This training is available in various formats including in-person and virtual sessions.

OPERATIONS

The Operations Training programs at Frontline Training Solutions are designed to advance operational excellence, enhancing efficiency and effectiveness within organizations. These offerings include practical skills training in areas such as lean manufacturing, project management, and operations leadership, all aimed at driving real business results and improving workforce productivity.

Supervisor Boot Camp

Supervisor Boot Camp is a practical training program designed for frontline supervisors and new leaders in the manufacturing and industrial sectors. It offers 16 hours of instruction over four sessions or two full days, focusing on essential leadership skills such as financial literacy, effective communication, and team management. Participants learn to transition from peer to leader, aiming to improve their leadership effectiveness and contribute positively to their organization's bottom line..

Leadership Alignment for Operational Excellence

The Leadership Alignment for Operational Excellence training aims to align all levels of leadership within an organization, focusing on improving safety, waste reduction, communication, onboarding, and employee retention. It is an in-person, customizable program conducted at your company, designed to bring together different leadership groups to collaboratively work on operational behaviors and leadership traits over a 13-week period.

Project Management Essentials

The Project Management Essentials training is designed to teach effective project management techniques, including how to get team members on board and achieve project goals successfully. Covering PMI® standards and knowledge areas, this 16-hour course offers practical learning and application for project contributors and leaders, eligible for PDUs towards PMI certifications.

Lean Academy

Lean Academy introduces participants to the principles and mindset needed for effective waste reduction in their operations, focusing on enhancing efficiency and driving higher profits through value-add activities. This four-hour training, applicable to both manufacturing and non-manufacturing settings, is designed for leaders interested in optimizing workplace efficiency, available in person, virtually, or onsite.

Scan here to learn more about these trainings.

Scan here to learn more about these trainings.

Practical lessons for tactical leading.

SUPERVISOR
BOOT CAMP

Supervisor Boot Camp offered by Frontline Training Solutions is designed to equip frontline managers in manufacturing with the essential skills for effective leadership. The program, available both virtually and in person, covers practical skills for transitioning from peer to leader, financial literacy, communication essentials, and strategies for team engagement over a 16-hour course. It targets new leaders, frontline supervisors, and high-potential employees in manufacturing and similar industries.

- **Locations:** Virtual, Customized on-site at your Company, or in person, at one of our three training hubs:
  - Grand Rapids, Michigan
  - Thousand Oaks, California
  - St. Joseph, Michigan
- **Target Audience:** Frontline supervisors, new leaders, and high-potential employees in manufacturing or similar industries.
- **Course Content:** Includes supervisor basics, financial literacy, communication skills, and team engagement strategies.
- **Format and Cost:** 16 hours spread over four 4-hour virtual sessions or two full days in person, costing *$1195*.

Learn more about this impactful training, and how it can set up your frontline leaders for success.

This training qualifies for 16 HRCI/SHRM recertification credits.

Listen to our podcast on what leadership skills manufacturing supervisors need to be successful.

GENERATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

"**M**illennials are so entitled – they job hop whenever they don't get what they want."

"Baby boomers are terrible at technology!"

"Gen Z have such short attention spans – must be because of all that social media".

How many times have you heard these stereotypes? And worse still, how many times have you been accused of one of them?

The chances are very likely that you've been on the receiving end of these generational stereotypes before. Oversimplifying an entire generation has become common in everyday life and is often used as a convenient way to identify and define individuals based on their age.

While some may laugh these stereotypes off as harmless, the reality is quite the opposite. Generalizing entire groups of people based on age can seep into various aspects of our personal and professional lives, shaping our perceptions and impacting how we deal with others.

At the workplace, these generalizations can negatively impact the hiring process, decision-making, team dynamics, and more. They contribute to a divisive workplace culture, creating conflicts among colleagues from different age groups who make assumptions about each other based on perceived generational traits. Even more troubling, individuals who find themselves subjected to these prejudices may internalize them, believing them as accurate reflections of their identity. This, in turn, can influence their confidence, behavior, and self-perception of their capabilities.

To break free from this cycle of stereotyping, we need to cultivate generational intelligence – the ability to be mindful of the experiences and preferences of different age groups and to use this knowledge for better collaboration.

The need for generational intelligence today is more critical than ever, as you may easily have up to 5 generations working together on a daily basis. When we're taught to recognize and appreciate the characteristics and values of different age groups, we create a richer pool of ideas and skills that contribute to the organization's success.

What are the 5 Generations?

Originally used to describe the period from birth to parenthood, the term 'generation' now defines a group of people born and living around the same time.

Currently, there are 5 named generations – the Silent Generation, Baby Boomers, and Generations X, Y, and Z – and each has its own traits, values, and behaviors that are shaped by world events during their formative years. These events can be political, economic, social, or technological, and leave a lasting impact on that generation's collective identity.

Recognizing the effect of these events can help us understand why each of these five generations behaves or thinks the way they do:

1. The Silent Generation (Also known as Traditionalists/Veterans) (1928 – 1945)

- Major Events: The Great Depression, World War 2.
- Traits: Besides being children of post-WW1 parents, the Silent Generation lived through the Great Depression and WW2. Because of this, they're thought to be resilient and pragmatic, possessing strong work discipline and traditional family values.

2. Baby Boomers (1946 – 1964)

- Major Events: Historical social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, Anti-Communism, Women's Rights, Vietnam, and Korean Wars.
- Traits: As Baby Boomers witnessed their parents' struggles, they developed a strong work ethic and frugality, valuing family, job stability, hard work, and social progress.

3. Generation X (1965 – 1980)

- Major Events: Economic uncertainty due to the oil crisis, high inflation, and economic recessions; huge technological advances such as widespread access to personal computers and the internet.
- Traits: As most Generation Xers grew up in households where both parents worked, they are believed to value independence, resourcefulness, and work-life balance.

4. Gen Y (also known as Millennials) (1981 – 1996)

> **" Generalizing entire groups of people based on age can seep into various aspects of our personal and professional lives, shaping our perceptions and impacting how we deal with others.**

advantageous when analyzing team dynamics and social interactions. Organizations can also tailor strategies that resonate with the values and expectations of each generation, such as focusing on sustainability and environmental responsibility to align with Gen Y and Z employees.

However, while it's important to be aware of the distinct characteristics of each group, it's also vital to recognize that labeling someone based on their age runs the risk of perpetuating stereotypes and biases. These labels may impact your daily decisions at work; for example, let's imagine you're interviewing a millennial with great experience and potential, but you hesitate to hire them because you're afraid they won't stay long. Along the same lines, you reject hiring an older employee because you worry they're not tech-savvy enough, or that they won't be able to adapt as easily as a younger candidate.

Having thoughts or feelings like these towards a group of people based on their age is called ageism; when these perceptions manifest into actions, they lead to discriminatory acts such as biased hiring practices or performance evaluations. These actions could lead to missed opportunities, where you risk losing the potential talent and skills individuals could bring to your team and company. If not dealt with, ageism at the workplace becomes destructive – breaking down conversations, relationships, and the organization's very culture itself.

Overcoming these stereotypes thus requires us to challenge our assumptions and to appreciate and truly see individuals for who they are, beyond generational labels. It requires us to value their unique contributions and capabilities to foster a workplace rich in generational collaboration, diversity, and inclusion.

Age Diversity: A Differentiator for Any Business Today

Instead of viewing age diversity as an obstacle, organizations should consider the amount of experience and potential every employee possesses, regardless of which generation they're from. Instead of having thoughts like: 'What if they're like the rest of that generation?' or 'What if their values don't fit with the rest of the team's?', reframe your perspective to think about the strengths and skills they can bring to the table instead.

For instance – rather than viewing Gen Z employees as too young, think about the number of fresh ideas they might have that could help revolutionize how things are done at your organization. Or instead of worrying that a Millennial employee might job hop, acknowledge their need to seek meaning in their work and brainstorm ways to make that happen. Shifting your mindset to accept age diversity as a benefit rather than a hindrance can open doors for better communication, problem-solving, and improved team dynamics.

To ensure you're on the right track in supporting multigenerational teams, reflect on the following three main points with your leadership teams:

1. Perspective

In decision-making, perspectives play a crucial role in influencing choices and outcomes. Embracing diverse viewpoints results in a wealth of insights and considerations, leading to more comprehensive and enhanced decision-making. Check if you're effectively involving representatives of different age groups in the decision-making process by reflecting on these questions:

- How are you engaging different age groups to ensure you receive a proper range of perspectives?
- Do you always just go to a particular group of people, and are they of a certain age?
- What do you notice whenever you hear your team's perspectives? Do you often hear phrases such as: 'We've always done it this way – why do we need to change?' or 'We don't have the latest in… We need to get this now!'
- Do you always lean towards one perspective, or do you try to strike a balance?

- How do you utilize skilled employees of any age group to mentor those who are less skilled?
- Do you automatically think of mentoring as older employees guiding younger ones, or have you considered the possibility of reverse mentoring, where younger employees mentor up to teach older employees new skills?

Throughout the decision-making process, there needs to be a balance between fluid and crystallized intelligence. While fluid intelligence involves adapting and thinking quickly in new or unfamiliar scenarios, crystallized intelligence is about applying acquired expertise and knowledge gained over time. In other words, it's about adopting a blended approach that combines the innovative mindset of 'Hey, that's a great way to change this company!' with the wisdom of 'If it's not broken – why fix it?'. Welcoming various perspectives from different age groups can aid in achieving this balance.

2. Innovation

The common misconception that older individuals can't be fluid in their thinking or that younger employees lack wisdom is a fallacy. Recognizing the wealth of experience and skills individuals possess, irrespective of age, is essential in innovation.

When it comes to new ideas and change:

- How are you utilizing different age groups to innovate and be creative? Again, are you going to one group more often than another?
- Whose voice do you tend to gravitate towards when there's a call for innovation?
- Do you tend to lean towards younger voices? If so, reflect on how that could impact your perspective on innovation.

Refraining from leaning on just one group during innovation encourages all voices to be heard and valued. Think about the wisdom of a seasoned

- Major Events: Rapid technological advancements, globalization, and significant social movements such as environmental awareness and inclusivity.
- Traits: This generation grew up in a time of rapid globalization brought about by technological advancements. As a result, they're often viewed as tech-savvy, interconnected, and collaborative. They prioritize experiences over possessions, seeking purpose in their work and a flexible, inclusive work environment.

Generational Labels – Helpful or Harmful?

Understanding generational differences in the workplace is

5. Gen Z (1997- 2012)

- Major Events: Rise of social media, digital era, impact of global events such as COVID-19.
- Traits: As the first generation to grow up in an interconnected world with smartphones and social media, Gen Z is known for being inclusive, expressive, and invested in social and environmental issues. Due to the pandemic, they favor remote work and flexible work arrangements.

employee, gained over lifelong experience, merging with the fresh perspective of a new hire - such collaborations have the potential to yield groundbreaking results.

More importantly, when you encourage ideas from all age groups, you lead to the next point.

3. Belonging

Belonging happens when employees feel accepted, included, and appreciated. Employees who feel they belong show their authentic selves and are more likely to reach their full potential.

When it comes to creating a sense of belonging at your company:

- Do employees of all age groups feel they belong, with their voices heard and valued?
- What is the evidence that your people feel they belong in your organization?
- Does age diversity impact inclusion in your organization, e.g., are employees who are young and new or about to retire excluded from specific opportunities?
- What is your company doing to influence and promote a sense of belonging amongst your employees?

By contemplating these three main aspects, you empower your teams to challenge assumptions about age diversity, eliminating biases and discrimination. When each member of a multigenerational team feels their perspective, innovation, and belonging meters are fulfilled, it not only boosts employee engagement and retention but also positions your organization as an employer of choice.

Learn More About Generational Intelligence with Frontline

Mastering generational intelligence is a challenging and dynamic process that involves continuous learning. Navigating the distinctive characteristics, values, communication styles, and behaviors of different generations can be complex, especially as societal changes contribute to the ever-evolving nature of each generation.
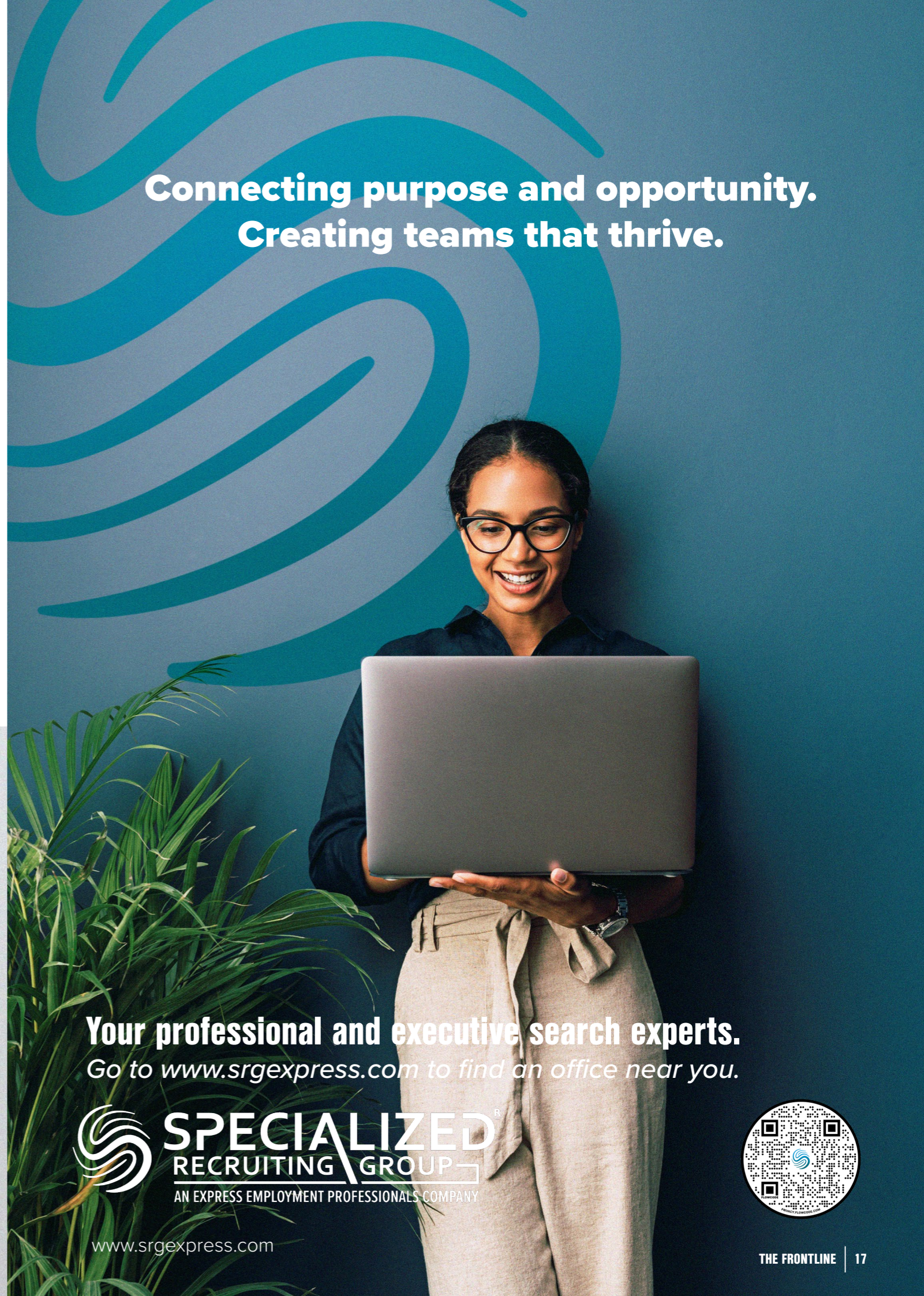
For more insights on generational intelligence, watch our free webinar on how to use this concept as a secret weapon for retention at your workplace. Alternatively, contact us at Frontline if you'd like to learn more about leveraging age diversity as a catalyst for your organization's growth and innovation.

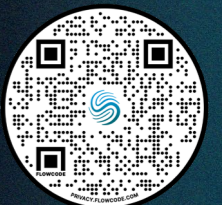Watch our free webinar on Generational Intelligence

PURPOSE DRIVEN
LEADERSHIP
TRAINING

The Purpose Driven Leadership Training by Frontline Training Solutions is aimed at both new and seasoned leaders, focusing on enhancing their ability to bring out the best in others. It emphasizes self-reflection on leadership impact, offering practical tools and strategies for continuous personal and professional development. The training covers topics such as trust, communication styles, emotional intelligence, and coaching conversations over 6 weeks.

- **Target Audience:** Leaders at all levels interested in improving leadership, communication, and teamwork skills.
- **Core Components:** Trust building, masterful communication through DiSC® assessment, emotional intelligence via Emotional Intelligence 2.0 assessment, giving feedback, coaching conversations, and customized management styles.
- **Format and Pricing:** Available both virtually and in person with sessions spanning 6 weeks, costing **$1795** for virtual and **$1895** in person for this impactful leadership development opportunity.

Learn more about this purpose driven training, and how it can set up your leaders for a lifetime of success.

This training qualifies for 26 HRCI/SHRM recertification credits.

Bring out the best in the people you lead.

THE EMPLOYEE EXPECTATION GAP & THE ROLE OF THE MANAGER

Often times, it is easy for leaders to assume they are a good manager – remembering team members' birthdays, readily approving their time off requests, and even surprising them with thoughtful gestures like treating them to lunch. Yet, despite the manager's best efforts, they find team members leaving, citing "better opportunities" as the reason. What more can we do to make them stay?

Do you have managers struggling with this problem? They are not alone.

A recent Gallup poll uncovered a startling statistic: 51% of surveyed employees admitted to actively seeking or keeping an eye out for new job opportunities. Their top reasons for seeking change? Higher pay, improved well-being, and the chance to grow and develop in their careers.

This signifies a shift in the modern employee's mindset – they no longer work just for a paycheck. They crave a sense of purpose, meaningful work, and a healthy work-life balance to remain engaged and satisfied.

Unfortunately, this is not the case for many employees. Their aspirations often clash with workplace realities, resulting in a substantial gap between their expectations and actual experiences. When this divide remains unaddressed, it can lead to disengagement, reduced productivity, and high turnover rates.

But there is still hope. With proper support, managers can bridge the employee expectation gap, enhance the employee experience, and boost engagement and retention rates.

Understanding the Gap – the Elusive Definition of Growth
To better understand the issue, managers must recognize that employees have different interpretations of the word "growth". For some, it may mean a new job title. For others, it may mean role changes, more challenging responsibilities, or skill development opportunities.

> " **This signifies a shift in the modern employee's mindset – they no longer work just for a paycheck. They crave a sense of purpose, meaningful work, and a healthy work-life balance to remain engaged and satisfied.**

In a Quantum Workplace study, 70% of employees reported never discussing their career growth with their managers before leaving. Moreover, around 53% felt unrecognized for their contributions. When employees lack clarity about how to meet their expectations, frustration can set in, prompting them to leave organizations where they feel undervalued.

The key to handling this challenge lies in open and transparent communication. Managers need to engage in regular and meaningful conversations with their employees. Doing so can help them understand and align expectations, discuss personal growth, and create clear development paths.

When employees know what to expect and what the company expects of them, they become more satisfied and engaged. Like customer loyalty, employee commitment hinges on fulfilling expectations rather than workplace conditions.

What Shapes Employee Expectations?
Like the term "growth", employee expectations vary and are influenced by industry, culture, and individual preferences. To gain deeper insights into these expectations, staying informed on current trends in current employee trends is essential.

Environmental Concerns
Many Gen Z and millennial employees expect companies to focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility. Even small initiatives such as recycling programs show a company's commitment to these values.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)
More than ever, there is an increasing emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Employees no longer settle for just diversity statistics. They

desire inclusion, recognition, and appreciation for their unique contributions.

Flexible Work and Work-Life Balance
Remote and flexible work has become the norm since the pandemic. However, organizations need to understand individual preferences and foster team connections to make this productive. For example, younger generations may prefer in-person interactions, while older team members prioritize flexibility.

Employee Well-Being
Employee well-being extends beyond material wealth and includes pivotal metrics such as mental health and financial stability. Organizations should adopt a holistic approach to cover these facets when focusing on overall employee health.

> **Managing employee expectations is an ongoing journey that spans the entire employee lifecycle.**

And what's the main takeaway from all this?

The importance of intentionality Managing employee expectations is an ongoing journey that spans the entire employee lifecycle. Organizations must remain responsive to these evolving expectations and regularly adjust their policies and practices to increase employee engagement.

Setting Expectations from the Outset
In addition to staying on top of current workforce trends, managers should set expectations right from the beginning. This involves specific actions during the recruitment, interview, and onboarding phases.

Recruitment
During this stage, hiring managers and HR professionals should work together to set the foundation for a positive employee experience. In particular, there are two areas of focus:

Defining precise role expectations
Hiring managers and HR professionals should develop a thorough understanding of the job's responsibilities, tasks, and performance expectations. This clarity guarantees that candidates gain a realistic understanding of the role's requirements and responsibilities.

Creating accurate job descriptions
Are the job descriptions aligned with the required skills? Do they paint a clear picture of the company's culture and values? Do they provide a reliable representation of what is expected? Crafting job descriptions that answer these questions will go a long way in helping candidates make informed decisions about their fit within the organization.

Interviewing
While presenting a positive image of the role and the company during the interview is critical, remember to avoid overselling or underselling the situation. Giving unrealistic expectations can result in eventual disappointment and dissatisfaction. Hence, hiring managers must strike a delicate balance when honestly accounting for the job's strengths and challenges.

One innovative approach to managing expectations even before hiring is to offer shortlisted candidates the opportunity to job shadow. This immersive experience allows potential hires to see the daily operations, team dynamics, and workplace culture firsthand. When candidates get a real sense of the job and the company, they can decide if the role matches their preferences, skills, and career goals before accepting the job.

Onboarding
Once an employee has joined a company, they often decide to stay or leave based on their first 30 days. Even seemingly minor incidents, such as a lack of proper welcome, can leave a lasting negative impression. Thus, managers should consider onboarding a crucial chance to shape

strategy, and employee expectations. But the question remains — are your managers ready for this challenge?

The reality is that managers are employees themselves and face their own expectation gaps. Unlike the traditional managerial role, managers today face a unique set of challenges. They can no longer rely solely on positional authority, and their employees are becoming increasingly self-reliant on their own knowledge and skills.

Managers are now also expected to hold the dual role of "player-coach", balancing both managerial and individual contributor responsibilities. This shift requires them to build credibility over time and navigate with less formal authority while efficiently overseeing their teams. Managers thus often face their own expectation gap as they are caught between the expectations of their employees and superiors. As a result, they are twice as likely to quit their jobs compared to individual contributors.

What Can We Do to Help Managers Bridge the Gap?
Whether it's managing the expectations of a manager or an individual contributor, organizations can implement the following strategies:

Establish Two Development Paths
Recognize that not all high-performing employees aim to become managers. Instead, design separate career development paths for individual contributors and those aspiring to manage. If an individual contributor transitions into a managerial role, adjust their individual contributor responsibilities to avoid burdening them with dual roles.

Seek Authentic Employee Feedback
Implement employee experience metrics to measure employee engagement and job satisfaction. Conduct focus groups, pulse surveys, or third-party assessments at the right cadence to identify unmet

expectations. Based on this feedback, act and improve wherever possible according to employee suggestions.

Close the Manager Expectation Gap
Define and standardize expected managerial behaviors using a behavioral competency model. Assess their performance to see if they align with the organization's stated values and recognize and reward proper behaviors. Again, reduce their individual contributor responsibilities to prevent widening the gap.

Provide Tools and Training
Offer comprehensive training and support to help managers understand and meet employee expectations. Use 360-assessments to match their perceptions with reality, and give ongoing support through feedback, coaching, and facilitating connections with other managers.

Encourage Transparent and Effective Communication:
Ensure senior leaders regularly convey the organization's values, objectives, and expectations to help employees understand how their roles contribute to the company's success. Additionally, empower employees to speak up by giving them a platform to share their expectations, concerns, and feedback. One way of doing this is for senior leaders to host regular listening sessions with their managers, where the purpose is to close communication gaps and gather insights into the employee experience.

Learn More about Closing the Gap with Frontline
At Frontline, we understand that the employee expectation gap is a complex challenge that demands ongoing attention, understanding, and strategic planning. Closing this gap is not just about meeting expectations; it's about exceeding them and creating a workplace where your employees thrive and contribute their best.

Contact us to explore how we can help you resolve this gap to forge stronger relationships with your employees, cultivate a more engaged and satisfied workforce, and solidify your position as an employer of choice in a competitive landscape.

 Watch our free webinar on The Employee Expectations Gap & The Role of The Manager

the employee experience, beginning as early as the first interview. Rather than just focusing on training and paperwork, they should approach it as "belongboarding," aiming to make employees feel valued from day one.

We Need to Walk the Talk
Now, let's imagine that you've done all the above, and your employee seems to have found the perfect job. You might assume that you've successfully managed their expectations at this point. However, that's not always the case. Even in an ideal job situation, there can still be an expectation gap if there's a misalignment between the organization's stated values and what is practiced.

Here's the core issue:
Organizations often promote

publicly stated values that reflect their desired culture. However, the real culture of a workplace, what we refer to as "lived values", is seen in how employees behave in their daily actions. Lived values may not always align with the company's officially declared values.

Ignoring this misalignment can normalize undesired behaviors and impact the overall employee experience. In this situation, having a well-developed talent strategy is vital as it helps shape and sustain a positive company culture.

It All Boils Down to the Managers – But Are They Prepared?
Amidst these complexities, managers play a leading role. They have the power to make sense of it all, aligning stated and lived values,

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YOU HAVE A NEW LEADER, WHAT SHOULD THEY DO FIRST?

A star performer has recently been promoted to a leadership role within their company, marking the beginning of an exciting yet challenging new chapter. With a wealth of ideas for leading their team to success, this individual dives into the role with enthusiasm, quickly starting to delegate tasks and set deadlines. However, the initial excitement soon gives way to a noticeable decline in team morale. Hesitation, stress, and overwhelm become evident among team members, leading to decreased productivity and an alarming rate of resignations.

This situation is far from unique. According to a study by CEB Global, an alarming 60% of new leaders fail within their first two years. This high failure rate is often attributed to employers' oversight in preparing top achievers for the nuances of leadership roles. The assumption that success in individual contributions equates to effective leadership is a common pitfall, neglecting the distinct skills required to inspire and manage a team.

The transition from a star performer to a manager involves more than just a change in title. Success in this new role requires a deep understanding of leadership responsibilities and expectations, starting with a clear motive for taking on the leadership mantle. It's imperative for new leaders to pause and reflect on their genuine interest and readiness for the role, considering the impact of added responsibilities on their motivation and the well-being of those around them.

Leadership demands a balance between authority and empathy, a commitment to the team's success over personal achievements, and an openness to learning from mistakes. These qualities are essential for fostering a collaborative environment where every team member can thrive.

New leaders face a daunting list of expectations, including being empathetic, strategic, and communicative. To navigate these expectations effectively, engaging in open dialogues with superiors to define success and understanding the scope of their role is crucial. Similarly, setting personal benchmarks for managing workload and team interaction can guide their actions and decisions.

Integrating into an existing team poses another significant challenge, requiring sensitivity and a gradual approach to implementing changes. Effective communication, through various channels, and establishing an open-door policy are vital for setting expectations and building trust. This foundation of trust is essential for facilitating a smooth transition and introducing a new leadership style.

Leadership is a journey of continuous learning and adaptation. Acknowledging vulnerabilities and engaging in a growth mindset can significantly enhance a leader's

> "Being a leader is more than the managerial responsibility of overseeing tasks or directing workflows – it's about embodying a vision, empowering others, and fostering a collaborative environment where everyone prospers.

effectiveness. By embracing mistakes as learning opportunities and fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement, a leader can cultivate a resilient and innovative team environment.

Celebrating team achievements, tailored to individual preferences, is crucial for reinforcing team cohesion and motivation. Such recognition not only appreciates efforts but also bolsters a sense of belonging and loyalty among team members, contributing to a more engaged and productive team.

The journey of a new leader is fraught with challenges but is also ripe with opportunities for personal and professional growth. By prioritizing the creation of a nurturing environment for their team, leaders can pave the way for collective success and fulfillment. Organizations like Frontline offer valuable resources and support for new leaders, providing insights, training, and personalized solutions to navigate the complexities of leadership roles effectively.

This article was written from a conversation had on the Behind The Frontline Podcast, in an episode titled, "*I'm a new leader, what should I do first?*" We invite you to watch this episode of the podcast by scanning the QR code to the right.

Join the conversation around solutions you need.

A solutions podcast series

BEHIND THE
FRONTLINE

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SOLUTIONS YOU *NEED*, WHEN YOU NEED THEM.

Frontline Training Solutions offers a variety of services aimed at addressing modern workplace challenges, including business consulting, apprenticeship program management, coaching, and assessments & surveys. Our training programs cover leadership development, professional development, human resources, and operations. We emphasize industry-specific expertise, employee retention, team leader growth, workplace transformation, understanding employees through assessments, and addressing modern work challenges. We always advocate for creating a workplace built on trust, safety, and respect to overcome obstacles unique to your organization.

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We always advocate for creating a workplace built on trust, safety, and respect to overcome obstacles unique to your organization.

Keep reading about solutions provided by Frontline that can be customized to fit your organizational goals.

CONSULTING SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY CHALLENGE.

Frontline Training Solutions offers comprehensive consulting services tailored to enhance organizational performance across various industries. Our approach involves directly engaging with client teams to address challenges such as operational streamlining, succession planning, and revamping an interview and selection process. This approach is structured around five key steps: needs assessment, collaborative solutions development, formal proposal, consulting implementation, and progress review, ensuring a collaborative and effective consultancy experience.

We focus on:

- **Personalized Approach:** Consultants "join your team" to address specific organizational challenges.
- **5-Step Consulting Process:** Involves issue identification, solution definition, proposal review, consulting initiation, and final feedback.
- **Industry Experience:** Expertise across manufacturing, nonprofit, professional services, and retail & hospitality sectors.
- **Proven Expertise:** Consultants offer actionable, trustworthy guidance.
- **Embedded Services:** Consultants work closely with business leaders to identify and solve challenges.

For more details, visit www.frontlineon.com, or scan this QR code.

EXECUTIVE, PROFESSIONAL, & TEAM COACHING.

Frontline's coaching services are designed to unlock the full potential of individuals and teams in the workplace. Our offerings include professional, executive, and team coaching, emphasizing a customized approach to address unique challenges. The coaching process involves identifying needs, proposing a coaching plan, selecting a coach, executing the plan with check-ins, and concluding with feedback. This approach aims to enhance effective leadership behaviors such as self-awareness, problem-solving, personal accountability, conflict management and much more.

We focus on:

- **Customized Coaching:** Tailored to meet individual and team development needs.
- **Five-Step Process:** From identifying needs to final feedback.
- **Diverse Coaching Options:** Includes professional, executive, and team coaching.
- **Goal-Oriented:** Focuses on self-awareness, effectiveness, and personal accountability.
- **Nationwide Availability:** Coaches available across the country and available for in-person and virtual connections.
- **Industry Experience:** Expertise in manufacturing, nonprofit, professional services, and retail & hospitality.

For more details, visit www.frontlineon.com, or scan this QR code.

ASSESSMENTS TO BRING OUT THE BEST IN YOU & YOUR TEAM.

Frontline Training Solutions emphasizes the use of assessments as crucial tools for organizational and personal development. We offer a broad range of assessments, including selection, personality, emotional intelligence, 360 feedback, and team assessments. Depending on their purpose, these tools aim to improve hiring and promotion decisions, increase self-awareness, support coaching engagements, enhance development plans, and optimize team performance. Our approach is designed to uncover individual strengths and development areas, facilitating better performance and engagement.

- **Selection Assessments:** Evaluate candidates for job compatibility and cultural alignment.
- **Personality Assessments:** Reveal individual personality traits to leverage strengths.
- **Emotional Intelligence Assessments:** Identify emotional intelligence strengths and areas for development.
- **360° Feedback Assessments:** Provide comprehensive feedback for personal growth.
- **Team Assessments**: Enhance team cohesion and performance.

For more details, visit www.frontlineon.com, or scan this QR code.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM MANAGEMENT.

Frontline offers an Apprenticeship Program Management service collaborating with manufacturers to tackle talent shortages in manufacturing skilled trades. We manage the entire apprenticeship process from setup to completion, including training and education, program administration, and apprentice screening, ensuring compliance with Department of Labor (DOL) regulations. The program is designed to help you create a skilled workforce through approved apprenticeship standards, on-the-job training, related instruction, rewards for skills gains, and obtain a nationally recognized credential upon completion.

- **Collaboration:** Partnership between the employer, Frontline Training Solutions, and the Department of Labor to train and provide credentials for your workforce.
- **Program Management:** Manages apprenticeship processes from setup to completion.
- **DOL Compliance:** Ensures compliance with Department of Labor regulations.
- **Training Needs:** Offers on-the-job training and related instruction.
- **Apprenticeship Credentials:** Provides a pathway to nationally recognized credentials for apprentices.

For more details, visit www.frontlineon.com, or scan this QR code.

LEADERSHIP FOUNDATIONS

The Leadership Foundations Training by Frontline Training Solutions is tailored for new or future leaders, offering practical tools and strategies to effectively lead teams. It covers essential leadership skills over 18 to 20 hours of training either virtually over six weeks or in person over five weeks in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The program includes sessions on leadership basics, developing and motivating employees, building cohesive teams, decisive problem-solving, and understanding key HR policies, aimed at enhancing leadership effectiveness and employee engagement.

- **Target Audience:** New managers, future managers, and employees with leadership potential.
- **Core Topics:** Leadership fundamentals, employee development, team cohesion, decision-making, and HR essentials.
- **Format and Pricing: $1495** for either virtual or in person sessions, with personalized development plans and accountability partnerships.

Learn more about this foundational training for new and future leaders.

This training qualifies for 15 HRCI/SHRM recertification credits.

Practical tools for new and future leaders.

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