



Australian Government

Workforce Australia

Actions: Improving managerial competency

The quality of managers and team leaders is the single biggest factor in the long-term success of an organisation and new initiatives. Many leaders within technical industries have progressed to senior levels through tenure, versus demonstrated leadership skills. The risk is that while they have deep technical skills, they do not have the capabilities to be successful leaders. Traditional command and control approaches are no longer sufficient for the dynamism of the contemporary workplace.

Managers must be able to maximise the potential of every team member and drive organisational growth. Moving managers from boss to coach will increase employee engagement, improve performance and will be essential to creating a supportive culture for employees.

What immediate actions you can implement:

- Identify and disrupt bias across the talent lifecycle by using the [Fixing the system not the women resource](#).
- Develop a behavioural statement around the role of leaders in fostering diversity and specifically encouraging flexible work practices.
 - Include the statement of expectations in every performance agreement and run a series of workshops for managers to assist them to develop confidence in initiating and handling these discussions appropriately with employees.
- Develop a leadership capability framework which focuses on the skills required to lead your organisation into the future.
- Review current performance management arrangements to ensure that employees have regular performance and career discussions with their managers.

What longer term actions you can implement:

- Offer structured leadership development programs focusing on required leadership capabilities.
- Provide managers with targeted learning to work through perceived barriers for providing flexibility, supported by a range of tools and resources. This could include a step-by-step process for managers to use when discussing a specific request for flexibility and an “if not, why not” approach.
- Consider opportunities for ongoing manager development, including one-on-one or team coaching sessions. Development should have a focus on supporting managers to have strengths-based conversations with employees and balance individual needs with business objectives.
- Ensure managers are aware of the organisations policies around supporting pregnant women and working parents. Strategies might include:
 - Working with managers to develop a clear behavioural statement around the role of leaders in supporting and retaining pregnant employees and working parents
 - Developing hardcopy checklists and guides for line managers to assist implementation of formal frameworks and procedures
 - Formal training and coaching to assist managers to initiate and manage leave discussions appropriately with employees



- Examine current manager learning and development programs to ensure that expectations around flexible work and employee development are clear and aligned
- Monitor and reward managers for supporting and enabling pregnant employees

