



## ASK THE EXPERTS

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CAREER

*As an experienced individual contributor, I'm looking to advance into a management position. What are the most effective strategies for making this transition?*

To successfully transition from an individual contributor to a management role, you want to be strategic in demonstrating that you have what it takes for a leadership position. Following are some steps you can take to stand out as a management candidate.

As an experienced individual contributor, I'm looking to advance into a management position. What are the most effective strategies for making this transition?

1. **Develop and demonstrate the right skills.** Managers require strong leadership, communication, decision making, and problem-solving skills. In a management role, your responsibilities will shift from focusing on individual tasks to making decisions that will impact and benefit the whole team.
2. **Hone your emotional intelligence (EI).** As a manager, you will be required to understand and manage your and your team's emotions and the ebb and flow of the team dynamics. (See our article on emotional intelligence on page 6 on the November 2024 newsletter.)
3. **Learn to delegate.** You will need to trust others with tasks so you can manage your own time effectively. As a manager, you will shift from "doing" to "leading."
4. **Get some formal training.** Explore leadership, EI, project management, and other relevant training programs and/or online courses from platforms like Coursera, EdX, or LinkedIn Learning.
5. **Find a mentor.** Reach out to a leader you respect in your company or network and ask for guidance. Attend industry events and professional groups where you can connect with leaders who have navigated their own transitions.
6. **Demonstrate your readiness and gain leadership experience.** Let your boss know that you are interested in moving into management and offer to lead projects or mentor junior team members.
7. **Avoid pitfalls.** Don't be a micromanager; resist the urge to do everything yourself. Trust your team to handle tasks. As a leader, your and the organization's success will be tied to the team's outcomes, not just your own.

By planning ahead and focusing on these strategies, you'll not only prepare yourself for a management role, but also demonstrate to others that you're ready to take on the challenge. For more on this topic, check out our July 2024 article on Speaking Up for Your Value: Negotiating Salary, Promotions and More.

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