



Issue 256 - November 2025



*Celebrating  
International  
Men's Day:  
Special Feature Inside*

# BUILDING OWNERSHIP & MODERN LEADERSHIP SKILLS





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# From Employee to Owner: How to Build an Ownership Mindset



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**“That’s not  
my job.”**



It’s a phrase many of us have encountered at least once in our careers. While it may sound simple and harmless, it reflects something deeper: a mindset. As our work environments keep shifting, completing assigned tasks is expected. However, those who create value by going beyond what is entrusted truly stand out. This requires a transformation – from thinking like someone who works for the company to someone who works like you own the company. Developing an ownership mindset is therefore key to moving from simply completing tasks to creating lasting value.

An ownership mindset goes beyond following instructions. It means taking full responsibility for actions, caring about outcomes and contributing value beyond one’s role, which in turn makes you indispensable.

## Key characteristics of an ownership mindset:

- 1. Take charge** – Owner’s act proactively and take full responsibility for improving efficiency and performance rather than merely following instructions or waiting for approval.
- 2. Focus on the bigger picture** – While employees may focus only on their part, owners think about the larger system such as profit, client satisfaction, and overall growth, even as they complete their tasks.
- 3. Think ahead** – Owners look beyond short-term gains. They focus on sustainability, long-term impact, and continuous growth.

## Practical ways to build an ownership mindset:

- 1. Accountability check-ins** – Regularly reflect on your contributions. Ask yourself, “What difference did my work make this week?” or “How can I simplify processes to work more effectively?” This simple habit builds self-awareness and responsibility for results.
- 2. Proactive problem-solving** – When problems arise, don’t stop at identifying them. Instead, offer solutions. Suggest improvements or alternatives. Ownership means taking initiative to make things work better.
- 3. Take smart risks** – Every risk, whether it succeeds or fails, brings new insights that sharpen future decisions and often lead to innovation. Smart risks are calculated through reflection, learning, and courage to step outside your comfort zone.



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Start building your ownership mindset by taking one small step today: Take initiative in one area this week or simply offer a new idea that adds value to your team. Having a shift in our mindset and start thinking like owners, we are one step closer to achieving success and, most importantly, unlocking our true potential.



## FIRST-TIME MANAGER'S GUIDE:

# COMMON PITFALLS AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Stepping into a management role for the first time is both exciting and challenging. While the transition into leadership brings great opportunities, it also comes with a steep learning curve.

As first-time managers step into their new roles, it's essential to build an ownership mindset, avoid early leadership pitfalls, and set healthy boundaries. Adapting to today's multi-generational workplace is equally important in laying a strong foundation for long-term leadership success.

Here's a quick survival guide to help new managers navigate early challenges and lead with confidence.

## 1

## BALANCING AUTHORITY WITH APPROACHABILITY

New managers often want to maintain good relationships with former peers or new team members which can sometimes blur boundaries.



**Solution:** Focus on building trust, not friendship. Be approachable, listen actively, and communicate clearly, while setting expectations and maintaining accountability.

## 2

## NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Giving feedback can feel uncomfortable, especially when you're concerned about harming morale.



**Solution:** Focus on building trust, not friendship. Be approachable, listen actively, and communicate clearly, while setting expectations and maintaining accountability.

## 3

## DELEGATING EFFECTIVELY

It's common for first-time managers to take on too much, especially when transitioning from a peer role.



**Solution:** Learn to delegate based on team strengths. Empowering others builds trust, develops capability, and frees you to focus on strategic leadership.

### BONUS INSIGHT: AVOID OVER-MANAGING

Micromanagement often stems from fear of mistakes, but it can stifle creativity and initiative. Set clear goals, offer support, then give your team space to deliver.



With **International Men's Day** as a timely reflection point, we also consider how men in leadership can move beyond outdated stereotypes by leading with empathy, balance, and inclusion. Leadership isn't about perfection, it's about learning, listening, and helping others thrive. Every challenge is an opportunity to lead better, together.



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## CROSS-GENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP:

BRIDGING BOOMERS,  
GEN X, MILLENNIALS,  
AND GEN Z

Today's workplace is more age-diverse than ever before. From experienced Baby Boomers to digitally native Gen Zs, each generation brings unique strengths, values, and perspectives. Generational differences do exist, but they are not roadblocks when leaders know how to harness them effectively and cultivate mutual respect.

## The RACE Mindset for Leading Across Generations

To lead inclusively across generations, leaders can remember to **RACE**:

- **Recognize** the differences that shape each generation's perspective.
- **Avoid** bias or labeling based on assumptions.
- **Communicate** openly and inclusively across diverse preferences and styles.
- **Enhance** collaboration through mutual learning and respect.

Every generation is on a different life journey, shaped by distinct experiences and milestones. These experiences influence their values, work preferences, and communication styles. While people may value similar things, they often express those values differently depending on the life stage, social context, or professional environment.

Take work-life balance as an example. It is not just a lifestyle choice for Millennials and Gen Z; Baby Boomers and Gen X also seek it, though they may define it differently. Some prefer to maintain clear boundaries between work and personal life, while others integrate both through flexibility and family commitments. These variations reflect diverse interpretations of the same value, which are not about right or wrong.

Leaders must therefore avoid bias or assumptions about any generation's motivations and behaviors. Instead, they should communicate authentically, remain open-minded, and show genuine care for everyone's needs and circumstances.

Baby Boomers and Gen X bring a wealth of experience, resilience, and perspective. When they share their lessons learned, they inspire younger generations to learn, take risks, and grow through learning. Meanwhile, tech-savvy Millennials and Gen Z contribute digital fluency and fresh ideas, which offer reverse mentoring opportunities that help senior colleagues stay connected to emerging trends.

Rather than emphasizing generational divides, leaders should identify shared values and create opportunities for generations to learn from and complement one another.

## Formula of Cross-Generational Leadership:

$$B \text{ (Baby Boomers)} + X \text{ (Gen X)} + Y \text{ (Millennials)} + Z \text{ (Gen Z)} \\ = \text{People} \times \text{Diversity} \times \text{Innovation}$$

Each generation enriches the workplace:

- **Boomers** offer experience, commitment, and resilience.
- **Gen X** contributes pragmatism, flexibility, and independence.
- **Millennials (Gen Y)** bring collaboration, purpose, and adaptability.
- **Gen Z** adds curiosity, inclusiveness, and digital creativity.

Cross-generational leadership is not just about managing diversity in age; it's about leading beyond—beyond bias, beyond “my way,” and beyond generation-based assumptions. Cross-generational leadership is about leading beyond generations to build workplaces where every voice matters, learning flows both ways, and innovation becomes the shared language of progress.

Ultimately, it begins with respect, is built on respect, and thrives through respect.

## Practical Tips for Cross-Generational Leadership

- **Create Generational Bridges:** Pair team members from different generations in reverse mentoring partnerships to promote mutual learning and shared growth.
- **Personalize Communication:** Adapt your communication style to fit generational preferences, balancing digital efficiency with personal connection.
- **Clarify the Shared Purpose:** Guide the team and organization to understand the collective “why” behind working together; align diverse perspectives toward a common goal.
- **Lead with Curiosity:** Show genuine appreciation for others' viewpoints and ask, “Help me understand how you see it.” Curiosity fosters trust, empathy, and deeper connection.

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# Boundary Management for Leaders: Saying Yes Without Burning Out

As managers, we often juggle pressure from above, demands from our team, and cross-departmental coordination. Why do we end up feeling exhausted? It's partly due to our own high standards and sense of responsibility. This issue runs deep. Sometimes we strive for perfection, wanting to stay in control, fearing failure, worrying about disappointing others & trying to please everyone. In the end, we feel frustrated as we take everything upon ourselves, doing it all personally.

We realize our minds are entirely consumed by work, leaving us utterly drained. When burnout hits, it often comes with a sense of hopelessness or the urge to give it all up. This is exactly what we need to guard against. The focus here is on how to set healthy boundaries without falling into burnout.

**Reflect on why you always say “yes” when your heart is shouting “no.”**

- **Perfectionism and the desire to do everything well** → Then, do you find yourself procrastinating and eventually rushing at the last minute—only to end up feeling frustrated with yourself?
- **Superman/Superwoman complex** → Do you feel you must do more than others to meet the expectations of both your superiors and subordinates? Do you try to perform perfectly in every role—manager, employee, partner, parent, caregiver? Do you often feel time is never enough and that you are constantly exhausted?

**Whether you tend toward perfectionism or a “superhero complex,” the solution is to set boundaries.**

## Step I: Acknowledge your limits — say STOP to “it could be better.”

People with a “could be better” mindset often believe their work is just okay, while others see it as outstanding. Try to aim for 80% completion first, then seek feedback from others. This also helps with collaboration. Ask yourself: Am I being too detailed? Doing too much? Could I collaborate or negotiate with the team instead? Am I delegating and empowering others enough? Do I know when to say no?

## Step II: Set limits on “time use” and “task importance.”

At the end of the day, do you have a moment to reflect on how your day went? If you're too exhausted even for that, it's time to set boundaries on your schedule. Designate a “shutdown” time for yourself. Take 3–10 minutes to practice mindful breathing, then review your priorities by using the Eisenhower's matrix.

## Step III: Set boundaries for “being honest with yourself” and “taking care of yourself.”

Those with a superhero complex often think more and plan further ahead than others — that's part of why you're a leader. But when overused, this strength turns into worry, doubt, and neglect of your own needs. Taking ownership of your work doesn't mean that you shouldn't draw boundaries. Alternatively, reserve one hour each evening for self-care and completely disconnect from your IC tech & work.

Put **self-care first**. When you are well cared for, your family and colleagues will naturally sense your calm and clarity. You'll make better decisions and lead more effectively.

Here are a few ways to practice:

- **Keeping healthy lifestyle habits that help nourish yourself and boost your energy.**
- **Consider a “no work email” rule outside work hours.**
- **Say YES to what your heart truly wants: Try doing a bit less and observe how others respond. At first, they may feel surprised - but by being kind and honest with yourself, you'll feel more aligned and satisfied.**

As a manager, your job is complex, so seek **external support** to help you clarify your stressors and get tips for a healthy lifestyle.

Think of boundaries as a **firewall**: they protect your well-being and allow you to lead healthily, not to shirk responsibility. When your life satisfaction rises, your stamina and leadership sustainability grow too.



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Special Edition:  
International  
Men's Day

#256

INFLUENCER  
AN OUTLOOK ON LEADERSHIP & CHANGE



HUMANdynamic

Beyond Stereotypes

# MEN LEADING WITH EMPATHY AND BALANCE

Each November, **International Men's Day** invites reflection, not to glorify strength, but to redefine it.

The world of work is changing fast. Leadership has changed but a lot of men still feel a weight that is not visible: the pressure to seem certain, decisive, and unshakeable. But real leadership today is not about standing tallest or strongest; it's about standing with others.

When men in leadership model empathy, they set the tone for trust. When they listen instead of dominating, they make collaboration possible. When they admit their blind spots, they make it easier for everyone else to learn. In other words, inclusion by men isn't about giving space; it's about sharing space.

Research supports this shift. A 2023 Harvard Business Review study found that inclusive organizations are 73% more likely to reap innovation revenue, 70% more likely to capture new markets, and 50% more likely to make better decisions. When people feel included, they don't just contribute, they create.

Among other men, inclusion begins when leaders replace competition with connection. It's about creating a safe space for honesty, to admit fatigue, discuss wellbeing, or celebrate vulnerability as a strength, not a weakness. When senior men lead this way, they steadily rewrite the definition of masculinity in the workplace.

When it comes to women, male leaders need to be allies, not gatekeepers. They make sure that everyone has a chance to speak up, make sure that meetings are fair, and give credit where it is due. Being a true ally is not about showing off; it is about being fair in everyday choices.

During my participation in the **Malaysia Inclusion Summit 2025**, one message echoed across sessions: Inclusion starts with awareness and empathy. It isn't a corporate trend or a compliance checklist. It's a daily practice of seeing, listening, and making space for others to thrive.

Inclusion asks men in leadership to bring balance: to lead with both conviction and compassion, to value difference without defensiveness, and to show courage through vulnerability.

## A Challenge for Today's Men

Inclusion is tested in daily actions, who we mentor, who we listen to, and how we decide.

So perhaps this International Men's Day, the real reflection is this:

- Do people around me feel safe to disagree?
- Do I make room for others to shine, even when I could lead?
- Am I building belonging, or just authority?

Real strength isn't about standing above others. It's about standing with them and bringing others together.



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