

Answers

A) Match the phrases to the definitions

Based on the context of the article, can you match the words in the box to the definitions listed below? Then add the word into the example sentence. You may need to change the form of the word to fit the meaning of the sentence.

to adopt an approach	hands-on	to follow through on	to pinpoint
to get the best out of	to instil	to lead by example	to strive to
to build rapport	to set boundaries	to foster	to cross the line

1. To gradually but firmly establish an idea in someone's mind: **to instil**

*"I believe that we have really **instilled** a sense of self-belief in the team."*

2. To try very hard to make something happen: **to strive**

*"I **strive** to make everyone in the team feel as if they have something to contribute."
"I am **striving** to change the mindset of the team."*

3. To do something which is outside of what is considered to be acceptable behaviour: **to cross the line**

*"He really **crossed the line** when he started criticising the whole team in the meeting."*

4. To build a close relationship whereby everyone understands each other's feelings and communicates well: **to build rapport**

*"I believe we have **built** a strong **rapport** in the team, which I am very proud of."*

5. To establish what is acceptable behaviour: **to set boundaries**

*"I **set boundaries** as soon as I took over the team. It was important that everyone understood what was expected of them."*

6. To ensure that someone performs to the best of their ability and reaches their potential: **to get the best out of someone**

*"I don't think we are **getting the best** out of her at the moment. I think I should set up a 1-1 meeting to discuss how she could improve."*

7. To have a way of doing something: **to adopt an approach**

*"We need to **adopt** a more strategic **approach** if we're going to make this work."*

8. To identify something with precision: **to pinpoint**

*"It is important to **pinpoint** the main strengths of each team member."*

9. To encourage the development of something desirable: **to foster**

*"I always ensure that we celebrate at the end of every month if we have achieved our targets. That way we can **foster** a real sense of progress and achievement."*

10. To demonstrate to your team the way that you would like them to approach their work: **to lead by example**

*"You have to be the first one in the office and the last one to leave. That way you can **lead by example**."*

11. Using direct involvement and intervention in something: **hands-on**

*"I am more of a **hands-on** manager."*

12. To continue something to its completion, especially if you said that you were going to do it: **to follow through on**

*"A strong leader needs to **follow through on** all promises that they make."*

B) Key Words in a New Context

Hands-on or Hands-off - Which is the Best Management Strategy to Adopt?

A hands-off management style is characterized by a manager who takes a more relaxed approach to managing their team. They provide general guidance and direction, but they do not micromanage. Instead, they allow their team members to take ownership of their work, to make their own decisions and to **strive** to achieve their goals independently. Proponents of this approach claim that it **instils/fosters** a sense of independence and self-sufficiency, which can lead to increased motivation and productivity. It also allows the manager to focus on more high-level tasks, such as strategy and planning.

However, if it is taken too far then there is a feeling that the manager is absent, indifferent, or even lazy. It can be challenging to **build rapport** with team members if the manager has little to no involvement in their day-to-day work. In some ways, it can actually make life difficult for a manager, as they are not able to **pinpoint** areas where improvements can be made if the manager is not closely involved in the work of their team.

On the other side of the divide, a hands-on manager is heavily involved in the day-to-day activities of their team. They are not afraid to get their hands dirty to make sure that everything is done to their standards. However, if you have ever heard of the term 'micromanager' or 'helicopter boss', you will know that there can be problems with this style

of management. It can be difficult to **set boundaries** between the manager and their team in terms of how far the manager should be allowed to intervene. All too often we hear of stories from irritated employees who claim that the manager has **crossed the line** and interfered too much. It can really inhibit creativity, independence and even motivation if taken too far.

So, which approach is the best strategy? It may be best to tailor your approach according to the type of employee you are managing. If you are managing a team of new employees who are still learning the ropes, you might lean towards a more hands-on approach to ensure that tasks are completed correctly, at least to begin with. Logically, if you are managing a team of experienced professionals who are already highly skilled in their work, a more hands-off approach may be appropriate. Either way, it is important to **pinpoint** the approach which will **get the best out of** each individual team member.

Regardless of which approach you take, it is important to **lead by example** and demonstrate to the team how you want them to perform. Set clear expectations and boundaries, and **follow through** on them. By doing so, you can instil/**foster** a sense of independence and self-sufficiency among your team members, while still ensuring that tasks are completed correctly and efficiently.

C) Comprehension Questions

1. What do you think a 'proponent' is in the first paragraph?
A proponent is someone who is in favour of a certain theory or action. This is the opposite of 'opponent'.

This is another great term to use when talking about leadership. A manager may be a proponent of certain approaches or management styles.
2. If a manager is too hands-off, how could this be perceived by employees?
They may be perceived as 'absent, indifferent or even lazy'. If someone is indifferent about something, it means that they have no real interest or feelings, either positive or negative, towards something. If the manager is indifferent about the outcome of a task or about the development of a team then it means they are not interested in it.
3. In paragraph 3, what do you think 'get their hands dirty' means?
To get your hands dirty means to do hard work. We can predict the meaning from the image that the metaphor evokes. We can also predict this from the context of the paragraph, whereby the boss is closely working alongside his/her staff.
4. In paragraph 3, there is a verb used which is the opposite of 'foster'. Which verb is it?
This is the verb to 'inhibit'. The verb means to hold back the development of something. Something could inhibit creativity/innovation/productivity.
5. What is the best approach for a manager to take: hands-on or hands-off?
The conclusion is that it is better to tailor your approach according to the experience of the employees. Some employees may be 'learning the ropes', meaning that they are learning how processes etc. work in the company, and for

those it is better to adopt a hands-on approach. With more experienced employees, it is better to adopt a more hands-off approach.