

Lydia Anthony – Management Philosophy

I am Lydia Anthony, developing leader and manager. While I'm not afraid of the spotlight, I hope you'll find me a “guide on the side,” encouraging and fostering a team effort where everyone is engaged at full capacity, leveraging their strengths, and feeling valued. Outsiders looking at our work should, first, be impressed with the total quality of what we've accomplished, and secondly, have an equal sense of how we each contributed to making it happen. No standouts or superstars, just a group of people achieving the best of what is humanly possible, together.

My Management Values

My management values include creativity, teamwork, personal ownership, clear expectations, shared goal-setting, flexibility, respect, integrity, and fearlessness.

Creativity

Creativity ties into everything I do and is essential for my own happiness at work. In turn, I believe that fostering creativity in the workplace leads to better solutions to problems, and a more fun environment for everyone.

Teamwork

No one is an island. I embrace the interconnectedness of every part of the whole, and seek to build a culture of collaboration among my colleagues. I don't really believe in personal competitiveness, instead expecting people to share each other's burdens and seek solutions together, while recognizing and celebrating everyone's unique contribution.

Personal Ownership

I embrace McGreogr's Theory Y – believing that every person is more motivated to achieve when they are personally connected to what they are doing and have control over the way they achieve it. At the same time, I recognize that individuals vary widely and not every work environment fosters a Y approach – thus sometimes theory X represent realities that can't be ignored. Still, my go-to philosophy is to treat people as mature, internally motivated, and capable of owning what they do and striving for continual improvement.

Clear Expectations

I believe in thorough and constant communication – especially to define what is expected of my team. This includes carefully defined roles, documented policies and processes, timetables discussed up-front, and a thorough briefing on the goals and expected products of each new project.

Shared Goal-Setting

I love the delegation principle of defining the *what* and not the *how*. This principle ties together the two above, in giving people clear expectations of the endgame while giving them as much autonomy as possible in how they get there. While as the manager I consider myself to “own” the *what* and expect my subordinates to own the *how*, do believe in listening to feedback and ideas on what the big picture should be, and I also at times like to share strategies and approaches for getting things done, that can be either used or not used. Avoiding the extremes of micromanaging or making people feel they must fend for themselves, instead I hope to foster dialog and together develop a “plan of attack” that everyone buys in to.

Flexibility

I admit to being a “planner,” but I recognize the truth of the old maxim “the first casualty of war is the plan.” So I embrace and seek to cultivate adaptability. Nothing is set in stone so every plan and method

should be re-evaluated, both every time a new variable hits us and causes a “crisis,” and regularly in periods of so-called “stability.” The world is always changing, and those changes affect what we do, whether it's obvious or not. Success depends on the ability to adapt and reinvent, just as much if not more than on the strength of the initial idea.

Respect

A respected manager I work with always says “hire good people, then leave them to do their job.” It's so crucial to trust employees and value their skill and expertise, both in implicit attitude and with words of affirmation. Not only for their well-being, but for mine, and that of the organization. It fends off micromanaging and allows productivity to rise as people feel appreciated and empowered to work to their strengths.

Integrity

In turn I want to earn the respect of my colleagues, so I have to be trustworthy. This includes total honesty, an uncompromising ethical standard for myself, and transparency in my work and motives.

Fearlessness

Lastly, I model a bold approach to work, unafraid of mistakes. I want my employees to feel they are in a safe zone where they can paint with bold strokes, test out big ideas on a small scale, fall down, and fail with no fear of consequences. I believe in rapid prototyping and “failing faster,” because we learn so much more when we don't hold ourselves back and make the most of every single experience.

My Management Motto: “Be Human”

By natural inclination I am strongly a task-oriented leader. I make Gantt charts, write marketing briefs, define job descriptions, sequence tasks, document processes, and delegate. I see the world, and my organization, like a giant Rube Goldberg machine, to be tweaked and oiled to perfection. So I appreciate and identify with the Scientific and Organization/System movements in management theory with their values of efficiency and their mechanistic understanding of labor.

However, I recognize the relational spectrum of leadership as equally important and deeply appreciate the human relations perspective on management. I have been very consciously cultivating the relational side of my leadership ability for a few years and think I have grown as a relational leader. This is still, I would say, my weakness. I can be brutally honest and direct and forget to “warm people up.” I also get so caught up in the task at hand that I simply forget to account for people's emotions, backgrounds, baggage, and all the soft situational factors that go into someone's personal work environment on a particular day.

This is what led me to my personal management motto: ***“Be human.”*** I have this mental image of myself as an android, maybe like Data from Star Trek or the Bicentennial Man, consciously learning and striving to be human while there's always this tendency to revert to being a robot. Because my Rube Goldberg machine is, in fact, comprised not of cogs and corkscrews and shoelaces, but of human beings. Precious, awe-inspiring, unpredictable, wacky, wonderful human beings. “Be human” is a reminder for when I get too caught up in the mechanistic side of managing processes and tasks and inputs and outputs – at the end of the day, we're all just people with wants and needs and feelings that need to be not only taken into account to be realistic and for productivity's sake, but truly empathized with on a human-to-human level.

Management Elevator Speech

What would I do if someone asked me to summarize my management philosophy on an elevator ride? I'd probably hold up my ten fingers and share my 9 values and motto (this is imagining a perfect world where I'd memorized them all). Then I'd paint them a picture something like I shared in my intro – of a beautiful human machine achieving excellence without superstars, fueled by mutual trust, self-respect, and shared vision.