



Young Manager's Mini Manual to Handling Older Team Members



Communicate effectively.

Know when to listen and when to share. You may have ideas you want to communicate with your team members, but don't forget to encourage them to share their thoughts, too. This will not only make them feel valued, but will also make you a mature leader despite your young age.




Leverage their strengths.

Effective leadership doesn't only come with maturity, but with experience. Take time to identify your team's strengths and weaknesses and honor their unique talents, abilities, and ideas.




Pay attention to their needs.


Give up your pride and put your team's welfare on top of your priorities. Heed their needs and never judge them. If one of them needs music to concentrate, give it a go. This will not only help them feel at ease, but will also make them more productive at work.



Always prepare for the age question.

The age question is, in fact, illegal in the workplace, but some people ask it anyway. When your older staff asks you this question, don't get caught off guard. Just answer playfully (not sarcastically), for example, "old enough to lead the team."


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Be an epitome of composure and stillness.

Don't be the first to crash and burn when pressure hits, as your staff will pick up on it. Keep the potential disorientation, loss of concentration, and conflict in check by being an example of composure and stillness to your team.



Seek respect, not approval.

Balance the boundaries you'll set between you (the leader) and your staff. Allow them to be open or be friendlier to you. Just remember to set boundaries, so you both know the place you'll stick to.