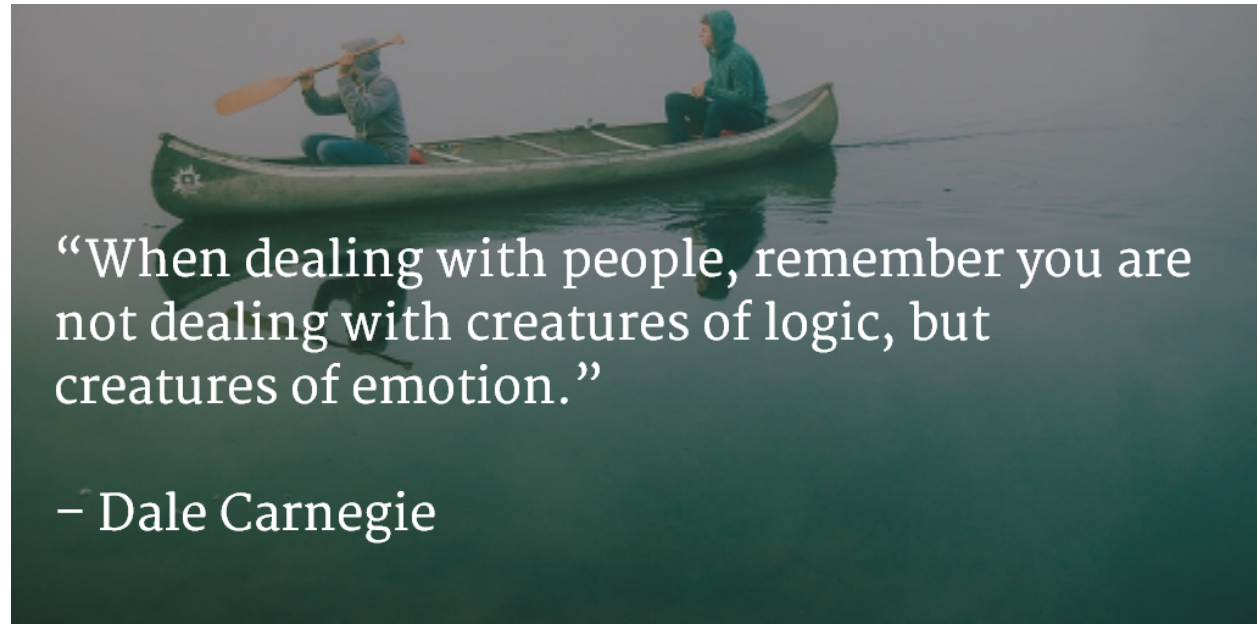


The Friendly Yet Assertive Manager



Topic: The friendly yet assertive manager/ The PM who gets work done! / How to be a friendly PM, without being pushed around

Subhead: *A good project manager can maintain a perfect balance of friendship and authority with his team*

Dealing with a team of people, with each team member having their own unique personality type, is probably one of the most interesting and demanding aspects of being a manager. What makes it so interesting and demanding? The dynamics of human behaviour!

[Human behaviour is one of the most unpredictable of things in our observable Universe.](#) Imagine that a genius like Einstein could crack scientific mysteries and introduce theories, but probably couldn't guess what was going on in his wife Serbian physicist Mileva Marić's head.

Rockstar scientist [Stephen Hawking](#) said pretty much the same thing about human behavior. "While physics and mathematics may tell us how the universe began, they are not much use in predicting human behaviour because there are far too many equations to solve. I'm no better than anyone else at understanding what makes people tick, particularly women."

Our personalities are as unique as our fingerprints. Hence, we respond, behave and act differently to authority. Some team members may play by the rules, while others might deliberately create issues with authority. Some may have a tough skin, while others may be very sensitive to being told what to do and how to do it.

So how must a manager deal with such behavioral unpredictability?

1. Be nice but firm

Being an [emotionally intelligent manager](#) who is empathetic and sympathetic towards his team members and really understands where each individual is coming from is really the key to successful management of a dynamic team. The manager must be able to communicate the importance and contribution of each team member's job duties to the overall project and be empathetic at the same time.

2. Connect and befriend

Being friends with your team members creates the human connection that is such a fundamental need for all humans. A friend is someone you can count on. A byproduct of friendship is the importance you give to what your friend has to say to you or ask of you. And by that same token, [achieving organizational objectives will be the result of a perfect balance of friendship and authority](#). It is much easier to meet common organizational goals when you are working with friends as opposed to subordinates.

3. Stroke their egos

Positive reinforcement instead of negative also works wonders in the work environment. [Rewarding individuals by praise and recognition of their productivity is a great motivator and drives people to go above and beyond their job descriptions](#). On the other hand, negative reinforcement generally backfires. You will lose trust and respect of your team mates if you are reprimanding in your response.

There will be some team members you will feel just do not listen until you are firm with them. That is when your ability to remove emotion from your message conveyance will play a vital role in behaviour modification of those individuals. An employee who feels she/he has grown in a work environment will be much more productive, valuable and cost-effective than having to fire him/her and hire/train a new one. The foundation of mutual trust and respect will have to be built upon again with a new employee.

[Dale Carnegie](#), the best-selling American author, lecturer and the developer of world-renowned courses in self-improvement and corporate training said: "When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but creatures of emotion."

4. Make it enjoyable

We have all had horrible bosses at some point in our lives. The one person who made you dread getting up and going to work. Imagine how you would have felt if that same boss was a friend you enjoyed meeting every single day.

How do you balance the line between being a team member's friend and manager? Share your thoughts in the comments section or tweet back!

Tags: Positive Reinforcement, Assertive, Friendly, Project Manager, Project Management, Team Management, Authority, Friendly PM