

STUCK IN THE MIDDLE

2022 MANAGER CHALLENGES RESEARCH



Being a manager has always been a tough job— and the changes brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic have added to that challenge.

Researchers at The Ken Blanchard Companies® recently completed a survey to identify the challenges managers were facing and how they were coping. More than 800 managers responded to questions that asked:

- **What are your biggest stressors/challenges?**
- **What's blocking your success?**
- **How much time do you spend on typical management duties?**
- **What would help you be more effective?**



More than 70,000 data points were analyzed, yielding an in-depth look into the lives of today's managers.

Long-time challenges topped the list. Managers reported that their productivity is limited in many ways.

Insufficient staff

77%

Constant change

72%

Inefficient processes

71%

Underskilled workforce

70%

Outdated systems

66%

Organizational conflict

64%

**While all levels
of managers
experienced these
challenges, middle
managers reported
being in the most
pressurized spot.**

Three themes were identified...



THEME ONE:

Managers are suffering
from fragmentation

**60% say they have too many
priorities to focus on**



70% are spread across
too many projects

66% have too
many goals

59% have unclear
priorities



Managerial Shiatsu

As a result, managers are being pulled in multiple directions

62% of managers are feeling this simultaneous squeeze and stretch



THEME TWO: Managers are overworked

Respondents reported working an average of **48.5 hours per week.**

But that didn't mean managers were getting all their work done. When asked, "**How long would it take to complete your work?**" managers estimated it would require 62.5 hours weekly.



As a result, two out of three managers have experienced burnout in the last 12 months.

Most say they'd be more successful if they could focus on fewer projects.

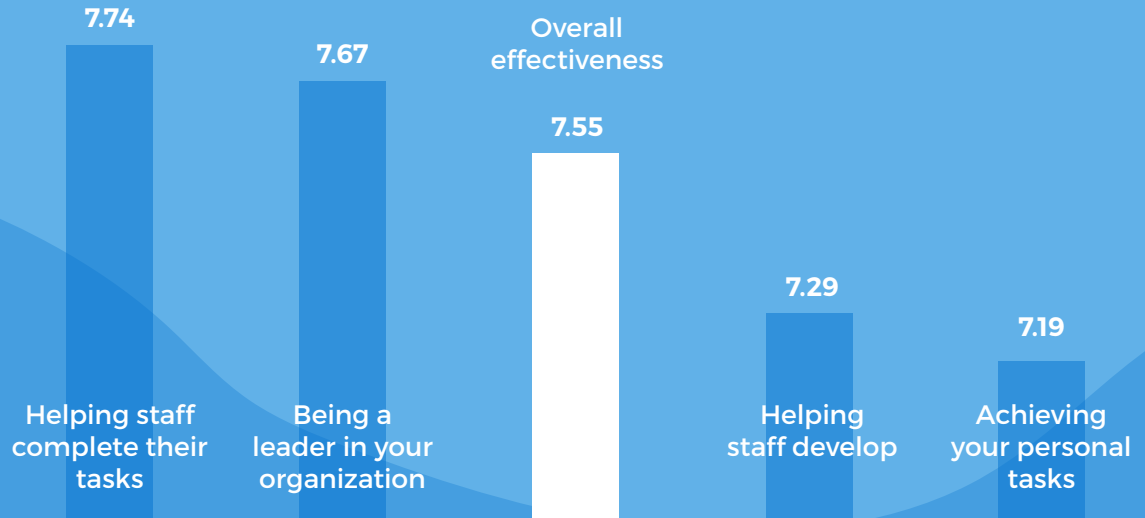


THEME THREE:

Managers give themselves a mixed grade on effectiveness

On a scale of 1 to 10, managers rate their overall effectiveness at 7.55

However, they do feel that they are better at helping staff complete their tasks and being a leader in their organizations than they are at helping staff develop or getting their own work done.



When it comes to effectiveness on specific skills, **providing clear direction, listening to others, and communicating actionable feedback** were identified as the most important responsibilities.

When asked what they were least effective at, managers cited **networking with others, cultivating innovation, and recruiting new staff members.**

The two areas with the **biggest gap** between importance and effectiveness? **Confronting performance problems and dealing with interpersonal conflict.**



When asked what organizations can do to help, managers identified three strategies.

#1

Honor requests for time and resources

- More time to complete their tasks
- More time to mentor their people
- More budget for hiring and upskilling staff
- Better systems and processes

#2

Provide vision and clarity

- Sharing what's most important
- Guiding them on how to make tradeoffs and juggle goals
- Helping them manage and prioritize
- Protecting them from being overly fragmented

#3

Provide differentiated training for leaders at every level

Frontline Managers

- Leadership
- Decision-making
- Personal assertiveness
- Problem-solving
- Team leadership

Middle Managers

- Decision-making
- Leadership
- Communication
- Team leadership
- Problem-solving

Senior Manager/Director

- Strategic planning
- Leadership
- Communication
- Personal assertiveness
- Collaboration

Executives

- Emotional intelligence
- Leadership
- Measure and track results
- Communication
- Strategic planning

**Today's managers are effective and dedicated,
but many are suffering from too many hours,
too little clarity, and too few resources.**



Ready to help your managers take their teams to a higher level of performance?

The Ken Blanchard Companies specializes in equipping managers with time-efficient strategies that bring out the best in others.



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www.kenblanchard.com or scheduling
a free consultation at
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