

SKIP LEVEL

strategic leadership for leaders ready to think two levels up

EPISODE 122 · WORKSHEET

EPISODE 122

Your Reports Are Leaders Now

You got promoted because you were the best doer in the room. Now your reports are leaders, and managing them like contributors stalls your own rise. Maya and Marcus combine Liz Wiseman's Multiplier disciplines with US Navy Captain David Marquet's intent-based leadership: multiply your leaders by giving them control, and certify their judgment instead of replacing it with yours.

KEY STRATEGIES & IDEAS

1. Your Reports Are Leaders

At your level, your reports are not doers. They are leaders with their own teams, their own judgment, and their own rooms to run. Managing them with task lists, status checks, and approvals on every move is supervision with a bigger title.

2. The Investor

Liz Wiseman's research: leaders who amplify the intelligence around them get nearly twice the capability from the same team as leaders who drain it. The Investor discipline hands over real ownership and supports people to succeed on their own.

3. Give Control, Create Leaders

US Navy Captain David Marquet stopped giving orders on the worst-performing submarine in the fleet. His crew stated what they intended to do, and he certified their competence and clarity instead of approving their answers. The ship went from worst to first.

4. Not Ready Yet

"My team is not ready yet" is the most expensive sentence in leadership. Readiness is not something you wait for. It is built by handing over decisions and coaching the gaps.

5. Ownership Is Given, Not Rented

If one failure pulls control back to you, your team learns ownership is rented, not given. Coach the failure in private, and hand over the next decision anyway.

The proof: On the worst-performing submarine in the fleet, US Navy Captain David Marquet stopped giving orders. His crew stated what they intended to do, and he certified their competence and clarity instead of approving their answers. The ship went from worst to first — because he gave control and created leaders.

Joe Dutkiewicz

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ACTION & REFLECTION STEPS

- [ ] **Step one — audit your week.** Count how many decisions you made that a report could have made. That is your control inventory, and it is the most honest picture of whether you are leading leaders or managing doers.

Decisions I made that a report could have made:

- [ ] **Step two — hand over one real decision.** Not a task, a decision, with the outcome attached. Certify their competence and clarity instead of approving their answer. If they are ready, say so and step back. If they are not, coach the gap, and hand it over again.

The decision I will hand over this week:

- [ ] **Step three — ask, do not tell.** When a report brings you a problem, answer with a question first. What would you do? What do you need from me to decide? Every question you ask builds judgment. Every answer you give builds dependence.

- [ ] **Step four — invest publicly.** Share a report's judgment in front of the level above. Not their effort, their judgment. When the people above you see your leaders thinking well, they stop seeing you as a supervisor, and start seeing you as a leader of leaders.

A report's judgment I will share upstairs:

- [ ] **Reflect on this:** your next promotion will not be won by what you do. It will be won by who grows because of you.

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- [ ] I have audited my week and counted the decisions a report could have made.
- [ ] I have handed over one real decision this week.

Think two levels up. — Maya & Marcus

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