

CEO Checklist for Managing Executive Teams

In our research, every high performing team we identified was led by a CEO who intentionally managed the team. This checklist highlights a number of steps CEOs can take to more effectively lead their executive teams. Use it to assess your approach to executive team management and where it might need improvement.

1. Leading the team and individuals

Managing the team

- I have defined (or worked with my team to define) and communicated the work of the team.
- I have determined who should be on the team and if two teams are needed.¹
- I maintain ownership over the team meeting agendas and process.

Leading the team

- I have communicated my decision-making style and preferences to the team.
- I am clear with my expectations of what I want from the team (making a decision, providing input, etc.).
- I demonstrate desired behaviors (lead by example).
- I reward (address) appropriate (inappropriate) team behaviors.
- I reward (address) appropriate (inappropriate) individual behaviors.
- I draw out and amplify diverse and underrepresented points of view.
- I consider differential impacts of decisions on people of color.
- I understand and self-correct my unconscious biases.

Developing the team and individuals

- I have identified competencies that individual team members need to develop and have developed a plan with each individual to help them improve.
- I incorporate feedback for individuals about their team performance in their annual reviews.
- I manage out team detractors that don't improve with feedback.

2. Delegating, but not abdicating, some team management tasks

- I have clearly communicated responsibilities and expectations to any deputy (e.g., COO, chief of staff, or strong executive assistant) I have to manage some team processes (e.g., meeting follow up).
- I have clearly communicated responsibilities and expectations to any specific leaders to whom I have delegated to lead certain topics.

3. Strengthening your capabilities

- I have identified ways in which I need to strengthen my capabilities to lead the team.
- I have identified ways I can get help (e.g., other CEOs, board members, coaches, team members, etc.).