

What are the differences between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader?

Some of you are making that critical transition from manager to leader. Some of you are helping key people in your organization make that transition from manager to leader. Some of you are aspiring to make that transition from manager to leader.

By recognizing the differences between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader, all of you can accelerate this critical transition.

What are the differences between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader?

One difference between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader is focus of information.

A manager presents data points. A manager will typically begin by introducing the topic – “Now I’d like to talk about staffing...” – and then proceed to explain:

- number of workers
- experience levels of workers
- expected decrease in audit sites due to consolidation

A leader uses the data points to tell a story. A leader will begin by stating the conclusion – “We have adequate staff to meet all audit needs.” Then the leader will attribute the reasons for that conclusion, including:

- number of workers
- experience levels of workers
- expected decrease in audit sites due to consolidation

Another difference between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader is focus of attention.

A manager focuses on displaying mastery of the material. A manager focuses on knowing the details, presenting the details clearly. A manager wants to educate the audience. A manager’s premise is – if you understand all the details and the soundness of my arguments, you’ll support my position.

A leader focuses on influencing the audience. A leader focuses on presenting conclusions, making connections, projecting confidence and integrity. A leader’s premise is – if you trust my thinking, you’ll support my position.

Another difference between presenting like a manager and presenting like a leader is focus of movement.

A manager gestures unconsciously. A manager’s gestures reflect energy, feeling and words. The result is continuous motion, random motion and choppy, staccato motion. The gestures compete with the message.

A leader gestures deliberately. A leader’s gestures highlight key concepts. A leader’s movements are strong and smooth. Each gesture adds dimensions and insight into the key messages.

What these differences demonstrate is that leaders focus on connecting – connecting points into stories, connecting stories to audiences, connecting themselves to their message.