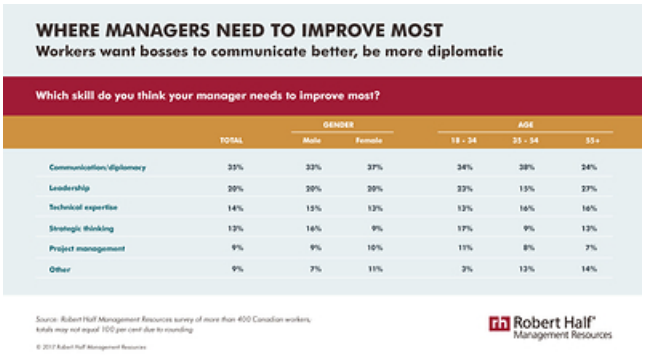
Robert Half Canada

The Skills Workers Say Managers Need to Improve Most



Employees Surveyed Find Communication and Diplomacy Often Lacking in Bosses

TORONTO, Feb. 16, 2017 /CNW/ - Strong communication skills are necessary at every career stage, but especially for those in leadership positions. In a new study from Robert Half Management Resources, however, one in three workers (33 per cent) did not give their boss high marks in this area, reporting communication and diplomacy are where their managers most need improvement. Greater leadership (20%) and technical expertise (14%) ranked second and third, respectively, on professionals' wish lists.

Workers were asked, "**Which skill do you think your manager needs to improve most?**"
Their responses:

Communication/diplomacy	**35%**
Leadership	20%
Technical expertise	14%
Strategic thinking	13%
Project management	9%
Other	9%
	100%

"At the executive level, successful leadership is often measured by strong communication skills, capable of engaging workers regardless of the business environment," said David King, Canadian president of Robert Half Management Resources. "To inspire their staff, managers must be able to clearly articulate company goals, and ensure each employee understands how their work contributes to the success of the business."

Be proactive about honing your soft skills as a manager, added King. "Create an atmosphere that allows for open dialogue with your staff, encouraging regular feedback. Showing an openness to hearing and acting on your team's recommendations sets a good example, allows them to feel more involved and creates a strong foundation for growth, individually and as a business team."

- **Request 360-degree feedback.** Opinions from your manager, peers and employees are invaluable. Ask them about your strengths and weaknesses, their communication preferences, and how you can make it easier for them to come to you with questions or concerns. Not everyone will feel comfortable giving candid feedback, so consider gathering input anonymously.

- **Find a role model.** Think of a manager you admire who enjoys great rapport with his or her staff. What makes this person stand out? Observe how he or she interacts with others.

- **Define your comfort zone – and go outside of it.** If you struggle handling difficult conversations, ask a mentor or trusted colleague for pointers. If giving presentations is not your strong suit, take a public speaking class or join a group

like Toastmasters.

- **Practice active listening.** In conversations, focus on what others are saying instead of formulating your next thought. Pause an extra second before jumping in to make sure you don't interrupt others.

- **Be yourself.** Don't try so hard to be a manager that you stop being an individual. Be honest and relatable, and show vulnerability from time to time. To err is human – your team wants to know that you are not perfect and don't expect them to be either.

About the Research
The survey was developed by Robert Half Management Resources and conducted by an independent research firm. It includes responses from more than 400 Canadian workers 18 years of age or older and employed in office environments.

About Robert Half Management Resources
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