

## The middle manager remains the linchpin of team engagement and performance and requires more training and support than ever.

With tightening budgets in 2023, many organizations scrapped middle managers and became flatter, which has left remaining managers leading larger teams and feeling underprepared to perform their jobs well. According to Gallup, in 2023 middle managers were at greatest risk for losing their jobs and [only 48% of managers agree that they currently have the skills](#) needed to be exceptional at their job. Likewise, in a Gartner survey, 75% of HR leaders said [managers are overwhelmed](#) with their growing responsibilities and are not equipped to lead change.

With hybrid work arrangements here to stay and only three in 10 managers receiving formal training in leading hybrid teams, managers need [“often and varied”](#) training in [key skills](#) that are known to drive higher performance and retention: identifying and coaching to employees’ strengths, delivering specific and actionable feedback, setting clear priorities, and boosting recognition and a sense of belonging through effective team and 1:1 communication.

Per our BCCWF members, we expect to see more formal peer support and collaboration among managers in 2024. This “cohort” approach not only enables more best practice sharing and skill-building, it also helps managers develop a larger “resilience network” - a critical support in the workplace, as Karen Dillon suggested in her fall workshop for our members on [microstress](#).

As managers become more skilled and engaged themselves, a virtuous cycle of trust in leadership and intent to stay develops for all - critical to keeping turnover costs low and performance high in an increasingly competitive environment.

### KEY DATA

- ▶ As of August 2023, 54% of managers were watching or actively seeking a new job. (Gallup 2023)
- ▶ The work-life balance rating for middle managers eroded significantly in 2023 but were stable for more senior and junior employees. (Glassdoor 2023)
- ▶ For almost 70% of workers, managers have a bigger impact on their mental health than their doctor (51%) or therapist (41%). (Workforce Institute @UKG 2023)
- ▶ Employees reporting to effective managers are 15.4x more likely to be high performers and 3.2x more likely to stay with their employer. (Gartner 2023)

“Having a great manager is nearly four times more important than an individual's work location when it comes to their engagement and wellbeing.”

Wigert and Barrett,  
Gallup