

THE EXECUTIVE
ROUNDTABLE®
Great leaders make the difference



The generational gap can be a daunting obstacle for the best of leaders.

Glain Roberts-McCabe asked Executive Roundtable community member, **Sharmane Good**, Senior Vice-President, Customer Care at LoyaltyOne, to share her pragmatic advice for managing a millennial team.

Most importantly?

Be open and have fun!

MENTORING MATTERS

Q

“I’ve just taken on a new team and it’s filled with twenty-somethings. It’s my first time managing a group this young. I’ve heard that younger employees can be a challenge to manage. How can I get off on a good foot?”

Regardless of age or generation, whenever a team gets a new leader, there will be a period of acclimatization for everyone. Here are some of my tried-and-true new team ideas:

Get to know the individuals who make up the team.

Don't assume that there are "truths" about any generational cohort that will be a reflection of your new team members. A team is made up of individuals who all have a role in the team dynamic and understanding each person as an individual is very important.

Tell your new team your story.

In order to create followership, the team needs to understand:

- (a) Who you are;
- (b) Why you here; and
- (c) What you are trying to build.



Listen and ask questions.

Younger associates tend to ask lots of questions. Many times those questions start with “why.” Be honest, be factual, and don’t be afraid to ask clarifying questions back. Honesty builds trust, and trust is the foundation of any great team.

Provide clear accountabilities and authorities.

One of the most powerful self-discovery coaching questions is to ask your team members, “What would you do?” It is a great way to explore how an associate thinks and makes decisions.

Even if you don’t have a door, have an “open door” policy.

Gone are the days when hierarchy created boundaries between leaders and associates. Be open to casual as well as work related questions, without the need to book a meeting.

Career development is always a hot topic.

Which generally starts with a question, “How do I get from here to there?” Encourage everyone on your team to have a documented learning plan which is kept up-to-date and discussed at least every quarter. The most important goal is that they are ready for their next role—up or across—when the organization is ready.

The lines between work and play are very blurry.

Technology has enabled most to work anywhere at any time. Resist the urge to count the work hours based on a nine-to-five clock and, instead, consider what work is getting done. Coach to quality and speed and ensure that there is open dialogue about what is next.

Have fun! Work is no longer about putting food on the table or a place that you go. Regardless of generation, many of us want to work for a company that also gives back to the community and encourages their associates to do the same.

Always remember that “Culture eats strategy for breakfast.” (Peter Drucker) As a leader, everything you do and say will set the culture for your team. Culture is about setting the understanding about *how* great work is accomplished not just about *what* great work is completed. The “what” will always be important, but never lose sight of the “how.”



As LoyaltyOne’s Senior Vice President of Customer Care, **Sharmane Good** is responsible for the strategic planning and service delivery for the AIR MILES Reward Program’s Contact Centre. A well-respected leader, she is in charge of defining and implementing the core functions of a scalable and cost effective contact centre, while cultivating an agile and collaborative team environment. Sharmane oversees approximately 475 Customer Care associates, ensuring they are equipped and confident to provide impactful customer service to over 6,000 customer calls a day, representing close to two million contacts a year.

Sharmane currently sits on the Canadian Marketing Association’s Customer Experience Council, a respected group of industry experts who work to educate, share and leverage compelling customer experience initiatives and best practices that drive business results.

The LoyaltyOne logo, featuring the word "Loyalty" in a blue serif font and "One" in a blue sans-serif font, with a stylized blue arc above the "y" in "One".



Glain Roberts-McCabe is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Executive Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.