

Top 10 Manager Nudges of 2021

All customers

Over the past year, we sent millions of nudges—short, science-backed suggestions—to managers across the world on how to support their teams through another year of the pandemic.

So what small actions had the biggest impact during a year filled with stress, continue isolation, and uncertainty? Our data scientists looked at every single nudge we delivered in 2021. Across themes like staying connected, combating burnout, and making progress, these were the 10 nudges that managers told us helped them the most.

1 Inspire customer champions

This week, talk to your people about the critical role they can play in improving customer experiences. Try to share a story about a problem that was only solved because someone spoke up.

Why? Teams perform better when employees advocate on behalf of their customers.

2 Coach employees to create mini milestones

In 1:1s this week, help each employee to break a long-term goal into smaller tasks that they know how to tackle, or near-term goals they're confident they can achieve.

Why? Breaking down complex tasks into more attainable goals can lead to increased employee motivation and performance.

3 Together, one step at a time

In your next meeting, help your team break long-term priorities down into smaller goals. Ask members to pick one thing to work on over the next week—and to hold each other accountable.

Why? By focusing your team on action and encouraging them to bring accountability to the process, you set them up for success—and real, positive change.

4 Encourage risks by showcasing a personal failure

At your next team meeting, share a story about a mistake you've made in your career, focusing on what you learned and how you grew professionally as a result.

Why? Being vulnerable enough to share what you've learned can create a supportive environment where the entire team feels safe to experiment and innovate.

5 Make it personal

In your next team meeting, talk about the importance of being a lifelong learner. Then share a story about something you recently learned, and how you're applying it to your work.

The more specific you can make your example, the better.

6 Conduct a learning audit

In 1:1 conversations, talk to your team about what abilities they'd like to develop. Together, agree on:

1. The most valuable skill to pursue
2. A plan to practice this skill on-the-job
3. Why this skill is important

Why? Having structured conversations about learning can help employees to make good choices, especially when they have down-time that could be dedicated to self-improvement.

7 Spread leadership around

The next time an issue comes up, don't immediately fix it or explain it away. Instead, ask who wants to step up to lead the team in investigating the problem—and finding a solution.

Why? By getting behind your team and helping them challenge the status quo, you push them to be more innovative. Bonus: you'll also boost their motivation!

8 Listen then share back

The next time you're considering different possibilities, ask trusted team members for their thoughts.

When you've reached a final decision, make it a point to share how their comments informed it—and why you were not able to act on every suggestion. Try something like, "I understand that X is a priority for many of you, but we have to do Y first because..."

9 Feedback, adjustment. Repeat.

Help your team—and yourself—by asking for feedback frequently, and framing each request as a personal learning opportunity.

By asking for frequent feedback on even minor things, you signal that you're open to adjustments—and that you value their contributions to your own personal growth.

10 Encourage stretch goals

Show you believe in your team by encouraging them to set goals that aren't just achievable, but ambitious—and maybe even a little scary.

Why? When leaders set difficult goals, team members perform at a higher level—and become more likely to believe in their abilities. They also set higher goals for themselves in the future!

Ready to further develop your managers—every single week?

Send us a note at hello@humu.com