



Statement Card 1

Many people believe that to be an effective team leader you must give orders to the people on your team. **They are wrong.** Orders should be reserved for emergency situations. Instead, offer direction and encourage staff to define the best way forward.

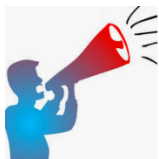


Statement Card 2

Orders Stifle Critical Thinking and Reduce Creativity

When you give orders, you tell someone to do something. "*Put that file on my desk,*" is an order. So is, "*Put Roger on the late shift.*" When you give an order, you do not allow the other person any latitude to think about what to do or how to do it. All they can do is comply with your order.

By doing this, you are suppressing creative and critical thinking and problem-solving and stifling learning. Instead of giving orders and telling someone what to do, good team leaders offer direction and provide high-level instructions. Instead of telling people how to do something, you tell them what you want to be done and leave the rest up to their efforts.



Statement Card 3

The Power of Asking for Input Instead of Issuing an Order

A more effective approach than issuing orders is to describe the work to be completed and ask for ideas and input. Most people prefer to have some degree of control over how they complete their work. Your role is to describe the end goal or target. You own the "What" however, where possible, delegate the "How" to encourage buy-in and stimulate creative thinking.

When you tell a staff member what you want to be done, instead of giving an order, you give them the freedom to come up with their best way of completing the task. They are challenged to think for themselves and even to think creatively. While their ideas may not always match your view on the best method to complete the assignment, it is important to recognise there may be multiple effective methods to get the job done. Perhaps the team member will come up with a better approach.

Learn to present tasks as challenges. Describe the underlying problem to be solved or opportunity to be realised. If possible, describe the goals for the task. And then, draw upon one of the team leader's most effective questions: "*How do you want to go about tackling this task?*"



Statement Card 4

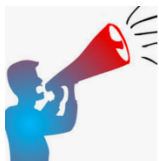
Do Be Specific About the Intended Results

Orders are generally very clear while describing the task and desired results leave room for interpretation. So... when you give instructions instead of orders, you need to explicitly define the intended results.

Instead of saying, *"I'd like you to get the room ready,"* be more precise. For example, you could say, *"Please prepare the room for when the children return from the garden. They will need to have circle time and then lunch, so ensure there is enough space on the rug for 20 of them.. The path to the sinks should be accessible so they can wash their hands independently. They will be up in 15 minutes, so if you complete this in 10 minutes, it gives us time to walk through your set up before we start. Thanks!"*

When setting direction, always highlight:

- What you are asking for (what needs to be achieved)
- The use or context (why it needs doing)
- The intended outcomes.
- The time-frame or as needed
- Your appreciation for the individual's efforts.



Statement Card 5

The Bottom Line

Your role as a team leader is to get things done. However, it also means getting things done through others. When you give orders, you limit the team to your own level of expertise. When you give instructions, you let the staff contribute whatever they can. The next time you start to give an order, try giving an instruction instead. Tell the staff clearly what you want to be done. Let them figure out how to do it. Provide support, encouragement and reassurance.