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# The CEO of Salesforce Found Out His Female Employees Were Paid Less Than Men. His Response Is a Priceless Leadership Lesson

Marc Benioff doesn't believe you can be a decent CEO in 2018 if you're not committed to paying women and men equally.



By **Marcel Schwantes** *Principal and founder, Leadership From the Core*

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Fortunately, we are ushering in a new era of hiring and promotion practices led by conscious leaders intolerant of the [existing gender pay gap](#).

One such leader is the [CEO of Salesforce, Marc Benioff](#). The San Francisco-based cloud computing company that sells customer relationship management tools landed the No. 1 spot for the second year in a row in a prestigious list of "[Companies That Care](#)," while continuing to level the playing field regarding pay equality.

### Pay gap between men and women at Salesforce

According to a [press release](#) out yesterday, it was chief personnel officer Cindy Robbins who first raised the issue of a pay gap between men and women at Salesforce.

"We wanted to figure out what we could do to help other women at Salesforce," said Robbins. She brought it to the attention of Benioff in 2015, who was at first stunned and in denial but quickly stepped up to fix what would be a \$6 million problem.

As [Quartz reported last September](#), an audit uncovered a statistical difference in pay between men and women. "It was everywhere," [Benioff admitted in a 60 Minutes](#) interview. "It was through the whole company, every department, every division, every geography."

Benioff fixed the problem by dedicating \$3 million that year to correct the discrepancy, and then another \$3 million in 2017 to correct compensation differences by gender, race, and ethnicity across the company.

He also created a new rule that would make it more likely that women would be promoted and seen as leaders.

"Like, we would have a meeting and I would look around the room and I'm like, 'This meeting is just men. Something is not right,'" he told [60 Minutes](#). So he announced he would not hold a meeting unless 30 percent of the participants were women.

As you would imagine, under Benioff's progressive leadership, Salesforce has become a strong equality advocate for its own workforce and in the communities it serves -- whether it is gender, LGBTQ, racial, national origin, or religious equality.

As a result, the firm has racked up several awards over the years, including an impressive list in 2018 alone:

- Best Workplaces in Chicago 2018 (ranked No. 1)
- Best Workplaces for Giving Back 2018 (ranked No. 1)
- Best Workplaces in the Bay Area 2018 (ranked No. 1)
- Best Workplaces for Technology 2018 (ranked No. 3)
- Best Workplaces for Millennials 2018 (ranked No. 2)
- Fortune 100 Best Companies to Work For 2018 (ranked No. 1)

### "There's no excuse"

More and more executives at the helm of companies like Salesforce are being intentional about eliminating gender bias by implementing clear policies and guidelines against gender pay gaps, and

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"CEOs, with one button on one computer, can pay every man and every woman equally," he adds. "We have the data. We know what everyone makes. There's no excuse."

*Update: Salesforce has spent another \$2.7 million on closing pay gaps to adjust the salaries of 6 percent of its global 30,000 person workforce, [as reported by Biz Women](#).*



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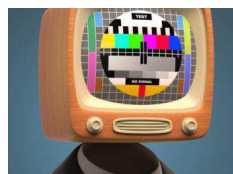
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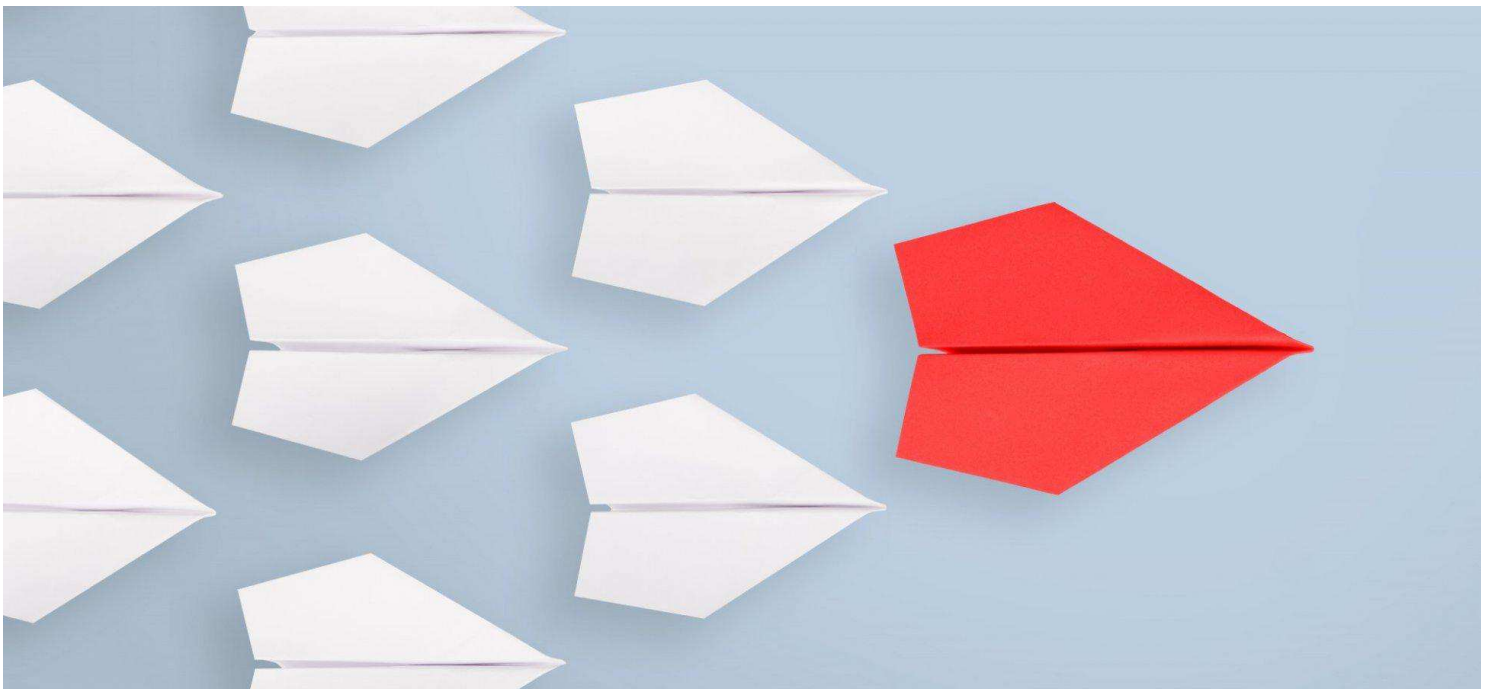
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# How to Avoid the 3 Most Common New-Manager Mistakes

Transitioning into a management role doesn't have to be as daunting as it seems.



By **Jessica Rovello** *Co-founder and CEO, Arkadium* [@JessRovello](#)



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Now what?

You're suddenly responsible for the career trajectories of people that aren't yourself. And with that comes new a set of [responsibilities, perspectives, and skills](#).

It's no small task, and without being mindful of [common mistakes](#), it's easy to mishandle. I take pride in being a good manager. I focus a lot of my attention on managing my direct reports and think effective management is the most important aspect of my job. But managing didn't always come naturally to me and I've made my fair share of mistakes along the way.

Here are the three most common mistakes I've seen new managers make, as well as some advice on how to avoid doing the same.

### 1. Having Micromanager-phobia

Even if you haven't been directly exposed to one, you surely know someone who has suffered under the dreaded "micromanager."

For those who have worked for one, the reactions are strong and unanimous: *This stifles my creativity. I can't work this way. I'll never be this type of manager.*

Far too often, the next step is overcompensation. The new manager becomes so fearful of being labeled a [micromanager](#) that they end up not managing anything at all.

Part of managing involves telling people what to do. Rookie managers often mistake this for micromanaging. However, ordering directs to do things a certain way, doing it for them, or pointing out a mistake without correcting are all qualities of a micromanager.

Checking in with people to make sure they're on track. Asking to see results. Asking to see a report. Asking to be kept in the loop. Asking to join a call to see how someone's doing. These are all things every manager is expected to do. And that's the difference.

Every one of your direct reports will be different, but find a balance that gives them the freedom to get things done independently but also stresses accountability.

### 2. Being the Friend Boss

Another new-manager fail? Being the Friend Boss. Don't be the [Friend Boss](#).

Of course, you want your workplace to be a friendly environment. Of course you want to be kind and caring with all of your colleagues. And, of course, you want to have fun together. At my company, Arkadium, we have a "joy team" dedicated to organizing fun outings for everyone in our company. Fostering a friendly and fun environment is super important to good workplace culture.

But never confuse being someone's manager with being their best friend—it will almost always lead to uncomfortable situations, especially when it's time to have challenging conversations. Giving constructive feedback or addressing poor performance, for example, can easily be misconstrued when your direct report is under the impression that you're supposed to be friends.

As a manager, you're responsible for somebody's career trajectory, their growth, and their compensation. Executing all those responsibilities while simultaneously being their friend is a

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available.

Does your direct report have a question about the email cadence between your account manager and a partner? That's perfectly valid—they need that information to properly do their job. Should you fulfill your direct report's request to proofread every one of their emails before they press send? Of course not.

Don't be an enabler by giving the impression that you need to sign off on every small decision. By stunting someone's independence, you make it difficult for them to learn and grow in their role.

Be genuine, be open, and don't hesitate to draw lines in the sand. Being a new manager isn't the minefield some expect it to be.

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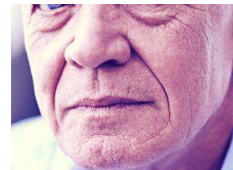
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