

# High Performance Series: The Power of Consistent Management Routines



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When Leaders and their Teams meet regularly with precise agendas and objectives, their performance is consistently improved. This article examines the value of a consistent set of Management Routines and the positive impact on performance.

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## Blueprint for Success:

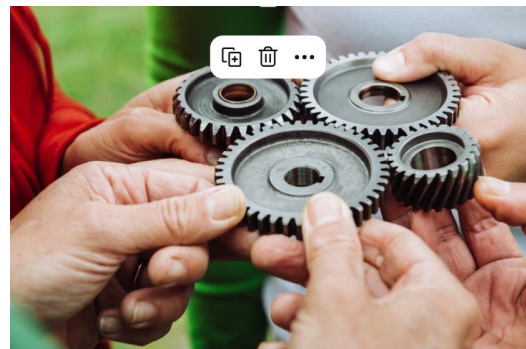
“Leadership is not about creating a vision. Leadership is about creating a climate where the truth is heard and the brutal facts confronted”

Jim Collins

### Consistent Management Routines = Effective Leadership

Very often we find Executive Teams meet infrequently. Attendance can be sporadic and the leaders seldom find value when they do attend. These teams are commonly plagued with poor communication and a lack of trust among the leaders. Not surprisingly, the same symptoms can be repeated down through the organization. Poor meetings do not have to be the norm! Good communication is a forerunner for high quality results. In today’s dynamic and fast-paced business environment, establishing clear and consistent management routines is essential for effective leadership and will bring benefits throughout the organization.

Regular meetings with planned agendas that prioritize decision-making over mere reporting streamline operations and enhance the overall effectiveness of senior leadership teams. By focusing on strategic priorities, problem-solving, and data-driven decision-making, these routines help organizations stay aligned with their goals and foster a culture of accountability and collaboration.



## **The Value of Management Routines**

### **1. Focus on Strategic Decisions and Execution:**

Management routines play a critical role in ensuring that strategic goals are consistently translated into actionable tasks. By aligning meetings with strategic priorities, leaders can ensure that their teams remain focused on what matters most. This alignment between strategy and execution is reinforced by KPI dashboards that provide a real-time view of performance and trends, allowing leaders to make informed decisions and address issues proactively.

### **2. Enhanced Problem Identification and Resolution:**

One of the primary benefits of regular management routines is the ability to identify and address problems early. When meetings are structured around decision-making and problem-solving, teams can quickly escalate issues that cannot be resolved at lower levels. This proactive approach ensures that challenges are addressed collaboratively, reducing the risk of delays and ensuring that critical actions are taken promptly.

### **3. Data-Driven Discussions:**

Data should be at the heart of all management routines. By utilizing KPI dashboards and other performance metrics, teams can base their discussions on facts rather than assumptions. This not only improves the quality of decisions but also ensures that all team members are on the same page. A data-driven approach also helps in identifying trends and early warning signs, allowing leaders to take corrective actions before problems escalate.

## **Case Study Example #1**

### **Transforming a Disrupted Executive Team**

Consider the case of a manufacturing company that held regular executive team meetings but struggled with discipline and focus. Meetings were frequently interrupted, and

attendance was inconsistent, largely due to the lack of a structured agenda and alignment within the executive team. The result was a lack of trust among team members, and key business decisions were often delayed, leading to missed opportunities.

Recognizing the need for change, the company adopted consistent management routines with a decision-focused agenda. The new structure ensured that meetings started and ended on time, with clear objectives and roles for each participant. Over time, attendance improved, and the leadership team became more engaged and committed to the process. Trust was rebuilt, and the team began to address key business decisions more effectively, leading to increased business success and smoother operations.

#### **4. Encouraging Trust and Accountability:**

As seen in this example, when meetings are consistent and purposeful, they foster a sense of trust and accountability among team members. Leaders know that their time will be respected, and that their contributions will be valued. This trust is essential for high-performing teams and leads to better outcomes for the organization.

## **Case Study Example #2**

### **From Chaos to Clarity**

In contrast, a technology company found itself in turmoil due to its lack of consistent leadership meetings. The executives were "too busy to meet," relying instead on spontaneous, infrequent individual meetings with the CEO. This approach led to poor



communication, ambiguous priorities, and a lack of cooperation among teams. As a result, projects failed, and key staff members began to leave due to the confusion and infighting.

To address these issues, the company developed clear management routines that included both

regular reporting and precise agendas. By implementing these routines, they began to hold consistent leadership meetings that ensured alignment across the team. Communication improved, and priorities became clearer. Direct reports began to feel more connected to the overall success of the company, and cooperation among teams increased. As a result, company performance improved, and turnover decreased as executives and employees alike felt more engaged and aligned.

## 5. Leveraging Clear Communication for Success:

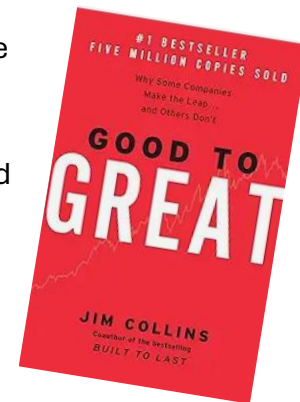
This second example highlights the importance of consistent communication in leadership. As Collins' book, *Good to Great*, he points out the critical nature of good communication: When everyone is on the same page, with clear priorities and goals, the entire organization benefits. Regular management routines ensure that communication flows smoothly, reducing misunderstandings and fostering a collaborative environment.

### Sample Routines

Who	What	When	Why
Exec Team and CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current priorities</li> <li>• Coordinate calendars</li> <li>• KPI by execution only</li> </ul>	Weekly (weeks 1,2,4) 1 Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain alignment and focus</li> <li>• React to immediate needs and anticipate future actions</li> </ul>
Staff (DRs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current Priorities</li> <li>• Determine resourcing needs</li> <li>• Coordinate calendars</li> <li>• KPIs by exception only</li> </ul>	Weekly (weeks 1,3,4) 1 Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain alignment and focus</li> <li>• React to immediate needs and anticipate future actions</li> </ul>
One on One	Review individual priorities	Weekly 30 Minutes	Provide one on one direction and feedback Talent development
Exec Team and CEO	Review KPI Dashboard	Monthly (Week 3) 1 hour	Understand KPI performance vs. plan
Staff (DRs)	Review KPI Dashboard	Monthly (Week 2) 1 hour	Understand KPI performance vs. plan
Exec Team and CEO	Quarterly Review and Strategic Planning	Quarterly	Review quarterly performance Discuss key strategic issues
Staff (DRs)	Quarterly Review and Strategic Planning	Quarterly	Review quarterly performance Discuss key strategic issues

## Key Tips for Successful Management Routines

In Collins frequently cited book, *Good to Great*, he emphasizes the critical importance of regular, interactive and honest communication: “Leadership is not about creating a vision. Leadership is about creating a climate where the truth is heard and the brutal facts confronted.” This cannot happen without a consistent and direct line of communication among leadership teams.



Here are some tips for success:

### 1. Rotate Meeting Agendas:

To keep meetings relevant and efficient, consider rotating agendas based on current priorities. This practice prevents meetings from becoming too long or repetitive and ensures that they remain focused on the most pressing issues. By doing so, you'll maintain regular attendance and engagement from the invitees.

### 2. Distribute Updates in Advance:

Maximize meeting time by ensuring that status updates or reports are distributed in advance. Attendees should review these materials beforehand, allowing the meeting to focus on decision-making rather than reporting. This preparation leads to more informed discussions and quicker resolutions.

### 3. Prioritize In-Person or Video Meetings:

Whenever possible, hold meetings in person or via video conference with cameras on. Face-to-face interaction fosters better communication and helps build stronger relationships among team members. Video meetings, in particular, help maintain engagement and accountability, as participants are more likely to stay focused.

### 4. Encourage Open Dialogue and Participation:

Effective management routines require open dialogue and participation from all team members. Encourage an environment where everyone feels comfortable sharing their insights and concerns. This inclusive approach not only leads to better decision-making but also strengthens the team's sense of cohesion and trust.



Some leaders avoid conflict among their teams; meetings can sometimes just seem to encourage hard conversations. In his article, “The Wisdom of Anger” in Psychology Today, Moshe Ratson addresses the value of conflict, when properly nourished with both boundaries and assertiveness: “When conflicts are managed constructively, it can help build trust in relationships. Respectfully, directly, and openly discussing opposing perspectives and resolving conflicts collaboratively can create a sense of unity, shared purpose, and mutual respect within the relationship.”

### **5. Establish Clear Follow-Up and Accountability:**

To ensure that meetings lead to tangible results, it’s crucial to establish clear follow-up actions and accountability. Assign specific tasks and deadlines to team members, and make sure that progress is reviewed in subsequent meetings. This approach fosters a culture of accountability and ensures that decisions are implemented effectively.

### **6. Leverage Technology:**

Incorporating technology into management routines can further streamline processes and enhance efficiency. Use collaborative tools and project management software to organize meeting materials, track progress, and facilitate communication. This will help keep everyone aligned and ensure that meetings are focused on strategic priorities.

### **Conclusion: The Power of Consistent Management Routines**

Establishing clear and consistent management routines is crucial for enhancing leadership effectiveness and driving organizational success. As demonstrated by the manufacturing company that transformed chaotic meetings into focused decision-making sessions, and the technology company that turned around poor communication and failed projects by adopting structured leadership routines, the impact of consistent management practices is undeniable. When meetings are well-organized, decision-focused, and aligned with strategic priorities, they build trust, improve

To ensure your organization reaps these benefits, consider the following best practices for better meetings:

1. Focus on key decisions and problem-solving.
2. Rotate agendas based on priorities.
3. Prepare and distribute updates in advance.
4. Emphasize face-to-face or video interaction.
5. Encourage open dialogue and participation.
6. Establish clear follow-up actions and accountability.
7. Leverage technology for efficiency.



By implementing these practices, you can transform your leadership meetings into valuable tools for decision-making and collaboration. Consistent management routines ensure that your leadership team stays aligned, addresses key business issues promptly, and fosters a culture of accountability and trust. Just as the companies in our examples experienced significant improvements, your organization can also achieve better performance and long-term success through disciplined and structured management routines.



## AUTHORS



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He formed LNG after serving in management roles at PwC for 12 years. He previously founded Conequity Resources, a management consulting firm acquired by PwC in 2010.

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Working in multiple industries, his coaching and team building strategies have received recognition in leading companies like The Boston Globe, Year Up and the U.S. Army where he was awarded a bronze star for his service in Iraq.