Leadership is More Than a Title: Managing People, Pressure, and Change

INDIANA BANKERS ASSOCIATION

Amber Fields | trueU | IBA 2026 FLD Leadership & Intern Conference

You've Landed in an Extraordinary Industry

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Most Trusted Industry

Banking consistently ranks as one of the most trusted industries in America.

75%

of Bankers Stay

Career loyalty in banking is among the highest of any professional sector.

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Career Paths

Lending, wealth, compliance, operations, technology — no two careers look alike.

WHAT WE'LL COVER

01

Managing vs. Leading

A distinction worth learning early

02

The Pressure Cooker

What you're stepping into: compliance, performance, change, people

03

Building Credibility

Before you have any formal authority

04

Practical Shifts

What to start doing Monday morning

MANAGING VS. LEADING

MANAGING

- Process, deadlines, accuracy, following procedure.
- Your training checklist. Your accuracy on transactions. Your calendar.
- Banks are very good at teaching this part.

LEADING

- Trust, influence, growth, showing up for people.
- Earning trust. Influencing people who don't report to you.
- Rarely taught early — but it's what people remember.

The habits you build now — how you handle a mistake, how you treat the person next to you on a hard day — are the leadership audition, whether you notice it or not.

You don’t need a title to lead.
You need to be the person people trust when things get hard.

THE PRESSURE COOKER YOU'RE STEPPING INTO

COMPLIANCE

Exam cycles, precise documentation, zero tolerance for error.

PERFORMANCE

Production goals and metrics — measured sooner than you'd expect.

CHANGE

Consolidation, digitization, restructuring — constant, not occasional.

PEOPLE

Even without a title, you affect morale — every single day.

BUILD CREDIBILITY BEFORE YOU HAVE AUTHORITY

1. **Own mistakes fast**

   Tell them before they're discovered — it's the fastest way to build trust.

2. **Ask good questions**

   Instead of guessing. It signals confidence, not weakness.

3. **Be coachable**

   Take feedback without getting defensive, and visibly act on it.

4. **Find mentors on purpose**

   Don't wait to be assigned one — ask specific questions.

THE INDUSTRY NEEDS YOU

40%

of community bank boards expect their CEO to retire or step down within 5 years

18%

have a documented succession plan in place

31%

of U.S. employees are engaged at work (Gallup, 2024) — a 10-year low

That gap is thin at every level — and it's an opportunity sitting in this room right now.

Own Your Career Path

No one is coming to manage your career for you.

Years 1–3

Explore

Say yes to stretch assignments. Move across business lines. Find what energizes you.

Years 3–5

Choose

Pick a direction and go deep. Become the person everyone calls for that thing.

Years 5+

Lead

Develop others. Build your team. Your advancement now depends on their success.

Relationships ARE the Product

In banking, you don't just sell products — you sell trust.

- Your network at 40 is almost entirely made up of people you met in your 20s.
- Start building relationships now — with colleagues, mentors, clients, and community.
- Be genuinely curious about people. Ask questions. Remember details.
- Follow up. Show up. Follow through. Every time.
- Clients don't leave banks — they leave bankers.

Build Your Network — Starting Right Now

Peer Network

The interns and emerging leaders in this room today are your future colleagues, referral sources, and collaborators. Exchange cards. Connect on LinkedIn today.

Mentor Network

Find 1-2 experienced bankers who will invest in you. Don't wait for a formal program — ask directly: 'Would you be willing to meet monthly?'

Community Network

Join local chambers, civic organizations, and banking associations. Show up, volunteer, and become someone people know and trust.

Industry Network

IBA, ABA, local leadership programs. Get active. The bankers who advance are visible in their industry, not just their institution.

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Show Up for Your Community

- In community banking especially — showing up IS part of the job.
- Join local boards, chambers, and civic organizations.
- Be visible in causes that align with your values and your bank's mission.
- Community involvement generates business, trust, and reputation simultaneously.
- The bankers who become legends in this industry invested in the communities they served.

A Challenge for Today

Before you leave this room today:

Identify ONE organization in your community where you could show up and add value in the next 30 days.

Not because it looks good on a resume.

Because it matters — and because that is what bankers do.

STARTING MONDAY MORNING

- Volunteer for the task nobody wants
- Ask one genuine question in every meeting
- Tell your manager about a mistake before they find out
- Pick one senior mentor — ask one specific question this month
- Notice a struggling teammate and offer to help
- Ask for feedback before your next review, and act on it

Leadership Is the Reputation You're Building Right Now

Pick one shift. Try it this week.

Let's Connect

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"Leadership is not a title. It's a decision. You can lead from where you are — starting today."