
Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Self-Paced Course

In this course you will explore and develop your unique leadership style, and identify what kind of leadership would be most effective for your particular situation. You will create a personalized plan for developing your communication style, as well as the way you lead individuals and teams.

This text is from an online version of the course, and as such may contain references to links and other functions that are not accessible through this downloadable version.

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Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Course Overview

Course Description

Welcome! I am pleased you are taking this leadership development class. This class is more than just traditional online learning. It's a personal journey of sorts, during which you will be asked to spend time reflecting on your current leadership style and commit to creating a plan for developing new skills.

It's a trip worth taking. One person, with vision, action and conviction can have an impact on the greater community. In this course we will focus on developing your capacity to lead so that you can have that kind of an impact. How you choose to use your leadership skills is up to you. But by assessing those skills (identifying what kind of leader you are right now), by learning new leadership skills, and by challenging yourself to lead more effectively, you will be moving forward on your personal journey.

Traditional ideas about leadership have been transforming. We're moving away from an approach that sees leadership as hierarchical and top-down toward a more contemporary process that sees leadership as people-centered and empowering. During this six-part course, we will examine the attributes, skills, and techniques of successful leaders; explore your personal leadership style, strengths, and weaknesses; and create a plan for your ongoing leadership growth and success.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Define your personal concept of leadership and identify where you currently are on the leadership journey
- Define your vision statement
- Identify the important leadership qualities and behaviors you wish to learn or refine
- Understand the importance of your communication style and how it affects your ability to lead
- Identify and apply strategies for enhancing individual relationships
- Identify and apply strategies for leading teams

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 1: Introduction

Welcome! I am pleased you are taking this leadership development class. We will begin with a live online meeting where we will have a chance to introduce each other and discuss your personal goals for this mentorship.

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

In our first session, we will get to know each other better and discuss your personal activism goals, so that we can make sure to focus our time together on your needs. We will define a set of objectives for the mentorship that we will add them to the course files so that you can refer to them throughout the mentorship.

We will also go over the structure of the online course and how we will work together.

Objectives

- Review the course topics and tools
- Agree on a set of objectives for the mentorship
- Draft a Personal Leadership Plan

The Personal Leadership Plan

An important part of ongoing leadership development is the immediate application and practice of newly learned skills. During this course you were introduced to a variety of leadership skills and techniques that will better enable you to inspire high performance in others.

Research suggests that you will significantly increase the likelihood of your accomplishing your goals, vision, and plans if you write them down. Research further suggests that the longer you wait to apply and practice what you have learned, the less likely you will be to successfully transfer these skills into real-world applications.

As you fill out the form, take time to reflect now on the information covered in the six classes and identify four things you will do within the next 10 days to reinforce or apply what you've learned. Consider your development needs in relation to your organization, cause, or movement's needs, or another situation you are currently in. Relating them to

real-world learning will ensure that the skills get practiced now. Ten days from now, you will choose another four things you will commit to over the next 10 days and incorporate them with the four things identified earlier.

Personal Leadership Plan Template

Name: *Add your name here*

Date: *Add the date here*

<u>Development Area</u>	<u>Specific Action(s)</u>	<u>Target Dates</u>	<u>Resources for Support</u>
<i>What skills do you want to develop, i.e. leading teams, communicating effectively, developing your vision..</i>	<i>What will you do to develop this skill, i.e. schedule regular meetings with your team, ask for feedback on your communication style, draft your vision statement_</i>	<i>By when will you start this action.</i>	<i>What help or support do you need to take this action, i.e. read more about this skill, meet with another leader to learn about their leadership skills.</i>

Assignment: Personal Reflection

In preparation for our next session, please respond to the following questions. You should plan on returning to these questions frequently as you travel through your leadership journey and revising them.

- Describe your leadership style.
- Assuming you incorporate at least four new skills into your current leadership style over the next six months, describe what kind of leader you will be?
- What is your vision statement?
- What one thing could you start doing today to increase your leadership effectiveness?
- What one thing could you stop doing today to increase your leadership effectiveness?
- How important is increasing your leadership skills to you?
- What will increasing your leadership skills mean to you and your effectiveness?
- What will ignoring the need to grow your leadership skills mean to you and your effectiveness?
- How will you know you are increasing your leadership skills; who can provide you with regular feedback?

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 2: Creating Your Leadership Vision

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

All great leaders possess two things: they know where they are going, and they are able to persuade others to follow. The secret to their success is *vision*. Note that in this class we will be focusing on creating your leadership vision for an organization, cause, or movement. It is recommended that you also create a personal vision to help guide your life.

With vision, a leader's passion is felt among her followers. Others share the vision and want to join in the effort to achieve it. It's the vision that makes them willing to give their time and energy. They want to accomplish the same goal. Without vision, people get tired and lose focus. Followers begin to look for another leader, and consequently, nothing happens. A vision is necessary to ensure that the purpose of a leader's work is clear to everyone. The vision becomes the rallying call of an organization, cause, or movement.

Objectives

By the end of this class you should be able to:

- Describe the value of vision
- Understand the process of identifying vision
- Create or refine your own vision

Reading 1: The Importance of a Vision Statement

A vision describes the future direction of an organization, cause, or movement. It must be greater than the individual person who creates it. Its accomplishments must be the result of others bringing their own resources to the effort. The successful leader is always looking for others to make her vision a reality. If she is not able to articulate a clear vision to others and inspire them to join her, she is simply a visionary person as opposed to a leader with a vision.

The vision that guides large and small organizations, causes, or movements is like a beacon that shines through all the changes that inevitably occur. Visions need to be

captured and recorded in a vision statement, so that followers can refer back to them, reminding themselves who they are and where they are going.

Some visions are brief statements, others are full-page documents, and still others might be created in bullet form. As long as the statement captures the core elements of the vision and speaks to each follower, the format doesn't matter.

There is a good chance that as the journey toward a vision progresses, the vision statement might need some adjustment. Make certain that any changes are agreed to, recorded in the vision statement, and distributed to all who are affected.

By having a vision and clearly communicating it to others, leaders are able to attract committed and energized people. These people become the followers. The vision creates meaning in the followers' lives, establishes a standard of excellence, and bridges the present and the future.

It is key to note that people do not follow a dream – they follow the leader who has that dream and also has the ability to communicate it effectively. Vision in the beginning will make a leader. But for the vision to grow and gather followers, the leader must take responsibility for it.

Leaders must let their followers see how much they care before the followers will understand the vision. Followers must 'buy into' the leader before they 'buy into' the leader's vision. In order to allow followers to see how much their leader cares, the leader must cultivate trust among others. Leaders must understand their followers' hopes and dreams and build the bridge between their vision and their followers' needs and goals.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

- Consider a leader you admire. What was her vision?
- How does the vision you've just described serve the followers' needs?
- How have followers learned about the vision?

Reading 2: Developing a Vision

The first step in creating a shared vision is to do the homework. Because things are always changing, leaders must continually analyze whether there is a need for whatever it is they want to do.

And because people see what they are prepared to see, leaders must develop the ability to see things as others see them, rather than just as they see them. In creating a vision statement, a successful leader must ask:

- What do others see?
- Why do they see it that way?

- How can I change their way of looking at this?

The next step is to really look inside yourself to see what you care most about, what you most value. What change do you want to make happen? You must be very clear about your goals:

- What is on the horizon for you?
- What is your dream?
- How would you like to change the world?
- How do you want to be remembered?
- What things do you find absorbing and most interesting?
- If you had unlimited resources, what would you accomplish?
- Given your current resources, what can you accomplish now -- in the short-term; in the long-term?

Now it is time to review the information you have gathered and reduce it to its most basic core elements. These elements must reflect what you most value and want to achieve. The final step is drafting the vision. The vision statement should focus on your purpose and not be preoccupied with the 'how to' or the operational 'nuts and bolts' of the work. It must be clear and simple so that followers can see how they can be part of its success.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Before our next session, please reflect on the questions below. Write your answers in a one to two page Word document, add your name at the top and submit it using the drop-box below.

- What is on the horizon for you?
- What is your dream?
- If you had unlimited resources, what would you accomplish?
- Given your current resources, what can you accomplish now; in the short-term; in the long-term?

Think about your followers (from any leadership situation, current or past):

- Could they articulate your vision?
- What do they see? Why do they see it that way?
- What do you see?
- Identify the common themes.
- Do you want to change their perception? If so, what specific steps can you take to do this?

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 3: Identifying the Key Leadership Attributes

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

In our third session, we will identify some key attributes of leaders and focus on how to build and refine the skills most frequently associated with and expected of leaders.

Leadership attributes are the inner or personal qualities that constitute effective leadership. These attributes include personal characteristics such as values, character, motives, habits, traits, competencies, style, behaviors, and skills.

However, like love, truth or wisdom, leadership cannot adequately be defined simply by listing attributes. In fact, leadership styles and attributes will differ and be influenced by various leaders' personalities. At the core, leaders must be role models for others, visible champions of high standards of professional and ethical behavior. Not many of these characteristics are imbued in leaders by default. They have to be learned and earned, and they must be continuously developed and enhanced.

Objectives

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Identify key leadership attributes
- Understand a process for developing these skills
- Assess your current leadership skills

Reading 1: Key Leadership Attributes

Personal attributes associated with leadership include a blend of knowledge, expertise, and competency. Some key behaviors and specific actions are:

Behaving Ethically

- Learning about the ethical issues and concerns that affect an organization, cause, or movement
- Adopting a balanced, open-minded approach to the ethical concerns of others
- Considering the ethical issues and implications of all personal and organizational activity

- Raising and discussing ethical issues before proposing or agreeing to decisions
- Resisting pressures from others to achieve objectives by unethical means.

Thinking Strategically

- Learning about and understanding how the bigger agenda or objectives can work together
- Helping to create and communicate a vision that can be understood and supported by people at all levels
- Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the organization, cause, or movement, as well as the opportunities and threats facing it
- Understanding how the strategic objectives are influenced by current and forecast influences
- Helping create a vision that can be understood and supported.

Communicating Effectively

- Being responsive to messages and signals from the internal and external environments
- Making effective use of communication channels from and to all levels within the organization, cause, or movement; encouraging the exchange of information
- Listening carefully and thoughtfully to others, including those with opposing views
- Selecting personal communication styles that are appropriate to the different situations and audiences.

Gathering Information

- Establishing multiple channels and networks that generate a constant flow of information from within and outside the organization, cause, or movement
- Regularly and consistently gathering, analyzing, challenging, and using the information gathered.

Making Decisions

- Establishing a consistent approach to the analysis of information
- Drawing on personal experience and knowledge to identify current and potential problems
- Considering a range of solutions before selecting the final one
- Ensuring that the selected decision is feasible, achievable, and affordable

- Considering the impact of the decision on all stakeholders, at all levels, before approving implementation.

Developing Effective Teams

- Appreciating the contribution of others
- Ensuring that individuals and teams are kept informed of plans, developments, and issues that will affect them
- Providing personal support for the implementation and maintenance of development activities for individuals and teams at all levels.

Making Decisions

- Understanding and responding to personal roles and responsibilities
- Adopting a leading role in initiating action and decision making
- Taking personal responsibility for decisions and actions
- Being properly prepared for involvement in activities and events
- Being confident and professional in dealing with change and challenges
- Refusing unreasonable demands
- Defending and protecting individuals and teams from unfair or discriminatory actions
- Remaining professional in manner at all times.

Concentrating on Results

- Contributing to the establishment of the organization, cause, or movement's culture that demands high standards and high levels of performance
- Focusing on objectives and planned outcomes
- Dealing with issues and problems when they arise
- Planning personal work and the work of others in ways that make best use of available resources
- Delegating appropriately; giving personal attention to the critical issues and events.

Making Decisions

- Reflecting regularly on personal performance and progress
- Asking for feedback on personal performance
- Changing personal behavior in the light of feedback received
- Being responsible for your own personal development needs.

Presenting a Positive Image

- Adopting a leading role in initiating action and decision making
- Behaving in a professional manner at all times
- Being open-minded and responsive to the needs of others
- Visibly working toward goals
- Adopting an ethical approach to all activity
- Being supportive of others
- Demonstrating fairness and integrity at all times.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

- Which of the key leadership attributes in Reading 1, “Key Leadership Attributes,” best describe you? Why?
- What other attributes, not already on the list, can you identify as important to you?
- Describe at least two situations in which your strongest attributes helped you be a more effective leader.
- Which attributes are most challenging for you?
- What would it mean to you and your organization, cause, or movement if these attributes were no longer challenging and in fact became your very strongest attributes?

Reading 2: Building Skills

As learned earlier, leadership skills can be learned or honed. Noted leadership experts James Kouzes and Barry Posner identified five leadership practices in their international bestseller, *The Leadership Challenge*. They believe that these five simple principles, and the specific skill building steps suggested under each, will ensure that a leader has the necessary foundation to develop into a top leader:

Leadership Practice 1: Model the Way

Skills to develop:

- set a personal example of what you expect of others
- spend time and energy making certain that the people you work with adhere to the agreed upon principles and standards
- follow through on commitments
- ask for feedback

- build consensus around the shared vision

Leadership Practice 2: Inspire a Shared Vision

Skills to develop:

- talk about future trends that will influence how the work gets done
- describe a compelling image of what the future could be like
- appeal to others to share an exciting dream of the future
- show others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision
- paint the ‘big picture’ of what you want to accomplish

Leadership Practice 3: Challenge the Process

Skills to develop:

- seek out challenging opportunities to test your skills and abilities
- challenge people to try out new and innovative ways to do things
- search outside the formal boundaries of thinking for innovative ways to improve things
- make certain the goals are achievable, the plans are concrete, and establish measurable milestones for projects and programs
- experiment and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure

Leadership Practice 4: Enable Others to Act

Skills to develop:

- develop cooperative relationships among people you work with
- listen actively to diverse points of view
- treat others with dignity and respect
- support the decisions that people make
- give people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work
- ensure that people grow in their work by learning new skills and developing themselves

Leadership Practice 5: Encourage the Heart

Skills to develop:

- praise people for a job well done
- let people know about your confidence in their abilities
- make sure people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of the effort
- publicly recognize people who exemplify commitment to shared values
- find ways to celebrate accomplishments
- give people plenty of appreciation and support for their contributions

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Which of the leadership practices listed in Reading 2, “Building Skills,” would you rate yourself highest in; lowest in?

Note a specific example in which you modeled three of the five practices.

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 4: Communicating Your Leadership

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

In an earlier session, we focused on creating your vision. We talked about the necessity of ensuring that your vision is clearly communicated to others. In this class, we will focus on how to communicate your leadership so that others understand it and can connect with it. Talking is easy; truly communicating with others requires greater skill. When you do not understand others, you cannot connect, relate, influence, collaborate, or resolve conflicts with them – and you certainly cannot lead them.

Interacting with people who are unsure, angry, or have a different point of view or approach can be difficult, because we become less skilled when caught up in emotional encounters with others. However, when we have a clear vision and when we truly listen to followers to ensure that their needs and perspectives are heard and understood, we are able to communicate in a more powerful way.

Good communication skills, just like leadership skills, can be continuously learned and honed.

Objectives

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Understand key communication styles and identify ways you can communicate with different people
- Understand the ramifications of active listening and learn new listening skills
- Create action steps for improving your leadership communications

Reading 1: Different Communication Styles

There is a great deal of research available about different communication styles. People hear and process information differently, depending on their dominant communication style. A leader needs to understand this and consider ways to best reach her followers. Although a leader needs a strong, consistent voice and message, understanding other people's communication styles allows leaders to adapt communications to reach a broader audience.

One model for understanding people better and communicating more effectively is to consider people's primary communication style differences:

- **Action (A): People with this style communicate from the WHAT perspective: what are the results, objectives, what is being achieved, what is being done.** These communicators tend to be pragmatic, impatient, decisive, energetic, and willing to challenge others. In order to more effectively communicate and lead them, you must be receptive to their desire to understand the results and be open to their feedback and direct approach.
- **Process (PR): People with this style communicate from the HOW perspective: what are the strategies, plans, facts, details.** These communicators tend to be systematic, factual, and unemotional. In order to more effectively communicate and lead them, you must be receptive to their desire to understand the process and be open to their need to analyze and test out things.
- **People (P): People with this style communicate from the WHO perspective: they value relationships, other people, and teamwork.** These communicators tend to be spontaneous, empathetic, warm, and subjective. In order to more effectively communicate and lead them you must be receptive to their desire for warmth and spontaneous communications that allow them to deeply connect with the leaders.
- **Idea (I): People with this style communicate from the WHY perspective: they value concepts, theories, innovation.** These communicators tend to be charismatic, sometimes difficult to understand, full of ideas, provocative, unrealistic. In order to more effectively communicate and lead them, you must be receptive to their need to look at things from another perspective and be open to considering other options and alternatives.

Another approach for understanding communication style differences is to identify people's learning preference. With this knowledge, communicators can then communicate in the audience's preferred mode:

- **Visual people need to actually see what is being talked about:** they request to "see it in writing" or actually form pictures in their minds. Visual communicators are often extensive note takers. They may use words and phrases such as, "This is how I see it," "look at it this way," or "I think I'm getting the picture."
- **Auditory people learn by hearing.** They often listen to entire lectures or presentations without taking any notes. They generally like to ask, "How does this sound?" "Can we discuss this?" or "Are you hearing me?"
- **Kinesthetic people think in terms of sensations or feeling.** They often move their hands as they talk, and respond physically as well as verbally. They like phrases such as, "How does this feel to you?" "I'm comfortable with that idea," or "Are you aware of this?"

To become aware of others' communication styles, a leader must listen carefully. Once the leader understands, she can more confidently reach others because she can speak their language. It is important to clarify that leaders do not alter their message, but rather can speak more intentionally about their vision.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Before our next session, please answer the following questions.

- What kind of communicator are you? Are you an A, PR, PE, or I? Give an example of how you use your dominant communication style to reach others?
- How do you prefer to receive information---are you more of a visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learner?
- Think of one of your followers. How can you use what you're learning here to better communicate with him?
- How do you connect with people who communicate information differently than you?

Reading 2: Communicating Effectively

A leader needs to make decisions about with whom she communicates, what needs to be communicated, when to communicate it, and how to communicate it.

Who to communicate with:

Some leaders limit their communications about change on a "need to know basis." However, effective change leaders recognize that almost any change will have effects on most people in an organization, cause, or movement, no matter how removed they are from the change, and communicate broadly as opposed to only a few people.

What to communicate:

Leaders must be tactical in determining what information needs to be shared. Effective leaders seek to empower others, and sharing all appropriate information allows others to see the big picture and remain engaged.

When to communicate it:

Timing is crucial to the communications process. Unless there is a reason to withhold information, strong leaders consider the ramifications of the information and share it as soon as possible.

How to communicate it:

Strong leaders are direct, transparent, and authentic in their communication approach. Their goal is always to move things forward and use every opportunity to communicate honestly and openly.

Effective leaders hone the skill of understanding themselves and others. They must constantly increase their understanding of the impact of their behavior and communications on others. In his book, People Smart, Developing Your Interpersonal Intelligence, psychologist Mel Silverman outlines a three-step approach to better understand people. He contends that understanding others is an active process that requires leaders to use all of their senses:

1. Listening and Observing: give your undivided attention, demonstrate your interest and observe nonverbal cues.
2. Clarifying the Meaning: ask open-ended questions, paraphrase and respond to feelings.
3. Interpreting Behavior: diagnose others' concerns, assess personal styles, and recognize the impact of differences.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Assess yourself in the following key communication skills:

- I listen with an open mind to the ideas and opinions of others
- I look at issues through others' perspectives and communicate to their communication style preference
- I clarify the meaning of what others are saying by asking open-ended questions

What will improving in these areas mean to you?

What would being a great communicator mean to your leadership potential?

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 5: Developing Others

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

In our fifth class we will focus on one of the most important skills of leadership: developing other people to share in and assist you with implementing your vision. Enabling and encouraging others is an essential skill for success. A leader who attempts to do it all alone will have a tough time reaching the greatest heights, and may even fail.

People development takes commitment and time. You must make time to nurture your relationships with your followers and with potential future leaders. The single most important way to ensure you are honing your people-development skills is to be a model others can follow. Lead others by looking through their eyes. Truly seek to understand their perspective, their strengths, and their abilities to grow as leaders.

Objectives

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Understand the value and principles of developing others
- Identify the development steps
- Create strategies for developing your followers

Reading 1: Primary People-Development Skills

Strengthening and developing others is the process of turning followers into leaders – essentially making people capable of stepping into leadership roles. In order to develop future leaders, leaders must:

- Understand others
- Motivate others
- Provide assistance to others

Leaders must seek to understand those they lead.

Followers want to feel worthwhile – they want to feel as if they have something to contribute.

Leaders can help future leaders increase their self-esteem and gain new leadership skills. By encouraging people to be engaged and challenged, leaders can help a person find satisfaction and rise to new levels of responsibility.

Leaders must seek to motivate those they lead.

Followers want to join in a group or pursue a cause that will have lasting impact. They need to see that what they are doing is not wasted effort, but is in fact leading to something that really matters. Motivation comes not from activity alone, but also from the desire to reach the end result.

Something as simple as including future leaders in the goal-setting process can be motivating and can ensure that the future leaders feel invested in the process and the outcome. Seeing goals become reality and helping to shape the future is fulfilling.

Other meaningful ways to motivate people include providing encouragement and clear expectations about what is needed from them. People perform better when they have some control over their work and their time.

Leaders must seek to provide the right assistance to their followers.

Leaders must identify their followers' strengths and help followers work on their weaknesses. Leaders must truly spend time with their followers and commit to helping their followers develop and grow. This can be one of the most time-consuming parts of developing others because it requires ongoing support and other resources to continue learning.

Some leadership experts go even further and say that in order to most effectively lead others, leaders must continually seek ways to 'hand off' their leadership role to future leaders. According to leadership expert Diane Tracy in [10 Steps to Empowerment](#), the more a leader empowers others, the more the leader grows in her leadership.

Tracy's recommended steps for empowering others include:

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities with purpose
- Give authority commensurate with responsibility
- Communicate challenging standards that define excellence
- Give people the tools to meet standards
- Give people information
- Give people feedback
- Offer recognition and incentive to perform
- Create an environment of trust
- Give people permission to fail
- Be respectful

Assignment: Personal Reflection

- How are you developing your followers? Be specific.
- List two people you are currently developing or will commit to developing over the next six months. What skills does each person need to grow? How will you set aside the time to mentor them?
- What more could you be doing to set up your followers for success?

Reading 2: Development Steps

Some leaders still believe it is someone else's job to develop their organization, cause, or movement's future leaders. However, the longer a leader clings to this limited mindset, the further behind she will fall. So, if developing others is a leader's responsibility, how specifically does the leader do it? How does the leader train and develop others to grow in responsibility when she is not a trainer and is already committed to and responsible for leading the group? Here are three major steps:

The leader must believe in the necessity of growing others or no one else in the organization, cause, or movement will.

- The leader must create a clear, concise vision and implementation plan that helps others see what the organization, cause, or movement will look like in the future and what its future leaders need to be prepared to do.
- The leader must establish an organization, cause, or movement that provides development opportunities for all followers, not just a select few.

By becoming personally involved in and focused on the development of others, leaders can demonstrate their commitment to others, and they also create an opportunity to take an active role in deciding the skills, projects, and responsibilities that need to be developed in or provided to future leaders. And by focusing on more than a few select followers, leaders create a culture in which every follower has the potential to grow as a leader.

To develop followers, leaders need to provide opportunities that allow them to solve problems, manage projects, and, most importantly, to think for themselves. Leaders must look for ways to create a culture that clearly states that developing others is a responsibility and not an option.

In addition, leaders must always be looking for opportunities to foster an environment of greater accountability among future leaders. These leaders must be held to high standards. They will serve as models for others to follow. This new level of accountability results in feelings of ownership.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

What does your organization, cause, or movement need in terms of future leaders?

What can you do now to identify leadership growth opportunities for others?

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 6: Leading Teams

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

In our last session, we focused on developing individuals. In this class we will focus on developing and leading teams. Most successful leaders will influence many people and develop a successful team around them. A great leader develops a team of people who can achieve great results. This means that the leader's influence and effectiveness begins to multiply (working through others) instead of just adding up (working by yourself).

Developing and leading teams is hard work. We will focus on what comprises a great team and how you can best develop and lead your team.

Objectives

By the end of this class, you should be able to:

- Understand the primary components of strong team leadership
- Identify the role the leader plays in supporting the team
- Create strategies for leading your team

Reading 1: High Performing Teams

Effective teams share a variety of characteristics, including:

- Great leadership
- Strong team members
- Motivation and encouragement
- Understanding of shared goals
- Understanding of the 'big picture'
- Commitment to ongoing learning and improvement

Leading a team requires a strong leader. A great team leader must understand her team and motivate and empower the individual team members. Excellent leaders create the right environment for their team to thrive. They believe in their team and they gain the team's loyalty by showing and acting in a caring way. Team leaders state clearly what is expected

from each team member, offer guidance where needed, and provide rewards according to individual team contributions.

Choosing the right players for the team, and then putting them in the right places, are keys to success. It is crucial to know what kind of followers the team needs. This starts with a clear understanding of team roles and responsibilities.

Teams need encouragement to be great.

When encouraged to take risks, make a difference, and play to win, teams commit to doing their best and understand that when the team wins, each individual on the team wins. Teams that are comprised of people who all play it safe continually miss opportunities to win and seldom make much progress. Team leaders must design a team mission, lay out the vision, and then encourage pride in team membership.

An effective team has common goals.

Effective teams have agreed-upon goals that are simple, measurable, and clearly relevant to the team's task. Each goal includes key measurable metrics that are available to everyone on the team, and which can be used to determine the team effectiveness and improvement. Understanding and working toward these common goals as a unit is crucial to the team's effectiveness.

On an effective team, each member understands the context of the team's work.

That includes understanding the relevance of her role and how it influences the effectiveness of others and the overall team effort. Too often, people are asked to work on part of a task without being told how their role contributes to the desired end result, much less how their efforts are affecting the ability of others to do their work. Understanding the big picture promotes collaboration, increases commitment, and improves quality.

An effective team works collaboratively, as a unit.

An effective team collaborates and creates a culture of interdependency. These things can defuse blaming behavior and stimulate opportunities for learning and improvement. Without this sense of interdependency in responsibility and reward, blaming behaviors can occur, which will quickly erode team effectiveness.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Please complete the following questions before our next session.

- How well are you leading your team? If you are not currently leading a team, consider a team you are currently part of—how could the team be better lead?
- What would a highly effective team be able to accomplish for your organization, cause, or movement?

Reading 2: Leading a High Performing Team

Leading teams takes practice and time. Below are specific roles the leader must play to ensure that the team has the leadership and support it needs to succeed:

- **Help the team identify its purpose.** Followers work more effectively when they understand the goals they are trying to achieve. It is the leader's job to help the team see the desired outcome of their efforts and help them set specific goals and milestones along the way.
- **Set the scope and boundaries.** Teams need to know what they should tackle and what is "too big" or not their responsibility. By helping teams manage the scope of their work, leaders will keep them more focused and on target to reach the goals more quickly.
- **Show your belief.** If the leader does not believe in the team concept, she will not effectively lead teams. If leaders do believe both in the concept and in a particular team's potential, the leaders need to let the team know that. The leader must show through both words and actions that she believes in them. Once the team has purpose and goals and the leader's support, they are on their way to success.
- **Define the leader's role.** The leader's role is to lead, not to do the work or make all of the decisions. Clarify this with the team. Allow the team to understand that their experience, knowledge, and intellect are key to the team's success.
- **Be a supporter.** A leader must actively support the team. She cannot just delegate the work to the team and be gone. Teams will experience obstacles and roadblocks, and it is the leader's job to remove those roadblocks, find additional resources, and generally provide support.
- **Be a facilitator.** A leader's job is to help the team succeed. She must provide guidance when needed, while pulling back when not needed. An effective team leader wants the team to succeed and to develop toward greater future achievement.

Assignment: Personal Reflection

Please complete the following questions before our next session.

- How would you like to be viewed as a team leader? What personal characteristics do you bring to this role?
- Consider two highly effective team leaders you have known. What did they do to provide the team the foundation it needed to succeed?

Develop Your Personal Leadership Style

Lesson 7: Personal Leadership Plan Review

Lesson Overview and Objectives

Overview

As we reach the end of our mentorship, we will focus our remaining time discussing your areas of specific concern. We will review and update your personal leadership plan to reflect the work you have done over the past few weeks.

Objectives

By the end of this class, you will:

- Clarify areas of specific concern
- Update your personal leadership plan
- Identify a specific assignment for your final session that meets your personal needs.

The Personal Leadership Plan

Review your Personal Leadership Plan. Reflect now on the information we have discussed, and how well you have implemented the things you had set out to do reinforce and apply what you've learned. Choose another four things you will commit to doing incorporate them with the four things identified earlier.