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Example Leadership Skills List: 10 Great Leader Qualities

This page contains example leadership skills, a sample list of leadership skills that good leaders possess.

You can use this example of leadership skills to your advantage for the purposes of:

1. guiding your own leadership behavior and learning;
2. aligning team members around organizational strategy and values;
3. training others;
4. building unity in a time of change.

If you use this information for training or in a group meeting, the following are suggested for how to do so effectively for your group:

- Take one quality listed below and have a 15-30 minute discussion on it in each of your next 10 staff meetings
- Assign one quality to each leader or pair in your group and ask them to make a short presentation on their item to the whole group; encourage group comments and discussion from everyone

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- Have a general discussion on how each of these qualities is (or is not) demonstrated in your organization

Each definition in the list below contains discussion questions to start your group's discussion about that leadership quality.

The more you make such discussions and "mini-training" part of your routine, the more your leaders will focus on and develop these skills.

Ten Basic Skills of Outstanding Leadership

- Integrity
- Vision/strategy
- Communication
- Relationships
- Persuasion
- Adaptability
- Teamwork
- Coaching and Development
- Decision-making
- Planning

Definition and Explanation of the Example Leadership Skills List

Integrity

How deep are your convictions on the things you believe in? What do you believe in SO MUCH about your work that you will stand up to anyone about it? How much are you willing to compromise your important beliefs? To what extent do your behavior and the choices you make align with your guiding values and principles?

Integrity means honesty and more. It refers to having strong internal guiding principles that one does not compromise. It means treating others as you would wish to be treated.

Many experts believe that a solid sense of right and wrong and strong guiding principles are the most essential and basic of all leadership skills

or characteristics. Integrity promotes trust, and not much is accomplished without trust.

Integrity is a skill to the extent that we see it in action. But it goes much deeper than surface actions. It is based on one's guiding beliefs and values, and is an important example of an essential leadership quality.

Integrity (or lack thereof) is reflected in thinking, attitudes, and actions. People can't directly see your level of integrity, but they judge it pretty accurately on a gut level based on your actions and your words.

Vision/strategy

Can you see, do you see where your department, team, and organization are going? How often do you talk about the ways in which what you are doing in your area are related to the overall mission? Do you think and speak inspiringly about what the organization is doing and about the future of the organization?

A leader must have a clear idea where his or her organization and unit are going beyond this month's results or this year's budget. Where is it going in the long term? Even tactical leaders must be clear about this and need to refer frequently to the vision, mission, and values of the organization in their communications with others. Vision is another example of an essential leadership quality.

Communication

How much and how willingly do you speak out and keep information flowing? Conversely, can you keep confidential information private? How often can and do you listen more than you speak in conversations with your employees? How would you assess your communication skills with each of your employees? How do you handle "bad news" when you receive it?

The chief complaint of employees in nearly every organization of all types, whether large or small from any industry segment, is "lack of communication." Communication in the context of leadership refers to both interpersonal communications between the leader and followers and the overall flow of needed information throughout the organization.

Leaders need to learn to be proficient in both the communication that informs and seeks out information (gives them a voice) and the communication that connects interpersonally with others. Communication is another example leadership skill that must be cultivated by all leaders.

Relationships

What is the level of trust and respectful feelings you have with each of your employees? With each of your peers? How easy or difficult is it for you to initiate new relationships? Deepen existing relationships?

Networking (the art of social "schmoozing") is also a relationship skill.

Relationships develop from good interpersonal and group communication skills but relationship skills also go deeper.

A leader who likes dealing with people issues, who can initiate and deepen relationships with others, has a great leadership advantage. This is a leader who can build a team and achieve impressive results.

This kind of leadership is based on personal power (the right kind of power), not position power. Relationship-building is an example of an essential leadership quality.

Persuasion

How persuasive and influential are you? Under what circumstances can you persuade others to your point of view? To what extent do people value your opinion and follow your lead?

The ability to influence others and cause them to move in a particular direction is a highly important skill in leadership. In fact, leadership is often defined as the ability to persuade or influence others to do something they might not have done without the leader's persuasion.

Your ability to be persuasive is directly related to how much people trust you and how good your communication and relationships are. Persuasion (also called influence) is a good example of an essential leadership skill.

Adaptability

To what degree can you relinquish rigidity? Control? When is it easy and when difficult for you to embrace change? How do you react when things don't go as planned?

Adaptability and flexibility in not being bound by a plan are important success factors in leadership today. The leader must move easily from one set of circumstances (the plan) to the next (the plan is not going as expected) and take them all in stride, even when the circumstances are unexpected.

The good leader has to embrace change and see it as opportunity. The leadership skill of adaptability is another example of a critical skill.

Teamwork

To what extent do you value working cooperatively as part of a group? How do you promote teamwork among those you lead? In what ways do you work collaboratively with your peers? How do you handle team conflict?

No one person can do it all. That's why a team, comprised of others with different skill sets, is essential. A leader must know how to build and nurture such a team. A good leader knows when to be a leader and when to be a follower.

The best leaders are good followers when that's what is needed. Building

teamwork is another essential leadership skill example.

Coaching and Development

How do you feel about developing others around you? How do you encourage, nurture, and build the capacity of those you lead? How easy or hard is it for you to set your needs aside and share control with others? Can/do you delegate well?

Developing others is an important role for a leader. Encouraging others to expand their capabilities and take on additional assignments is part of the leader's responsibility. Leaders who feel threatened by the capabilities of others are challenged in this area. Coaching and development are essential skills all leaders must cultivate.

Decision-making

How comfortable are you with having to make the "final decision" on things? Do you have any tendency to decide too quickly without due consideration or, conversely, to gather data, analyze and ponder endlessly and be unable to decide? In what areas do you struggle with making firm decisions and standing up for what you believe?

A leader must be able to wade through information, comprehend what's relevant, make a well-considered decision, and take action based on that decision. Making decisions too quickly or too slowly will impede your leadership effectiveness. Decisiveness is another example of an essential leadership quality.

Planning

How easy is it for you to put together plans for activities and projects, including contingency plans (what will happen IF...)? How easily are you able to focus your attention and stick to your plan, yet without being rigid about it? How do you decide when to push ahead or, instead, to modify your plan?

Planning involves making certain assumptions about the future and taking actions in the present to positively influence that future. To plan means to focus more strategically. Plans are important for guidance and focus, but plans can seldom be cast in stone. Planning is an excellent and necessary example leadership skill.

The above example leadership skills, when taken together, can be used effectively to produce outstanding results and good relationships in any organization.

Would you like to complete a quick checklist to see if you have what it takes to be an effective leader? If so, [click here](#).

Or check out and complete this more-detailed assessment of leadership

abilities. You can rate yourself and/or ask others to rate you for a full 360-degree view of your leadership skills. [Right-click here to download this PDF file.](#)

Scoring for this 360-degree assessment is available here. [Right-click here to download this PDF file.](#)

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