



Leadership Palette Overview

Apple University



Defining the Palette

Apple University created the Leadership Palette (or LP) to capture essential qualities that are vital and in many ways distinctive to Apple culture. These 24 Attributes represent what successful leaders here demonstrate when they are at their best — and that includes people at all levels, in roles formally seen as leadership and not. The Leadership Palette can help you achieve results in a way that reflects and reinforces (or even strengthens) Apple's culture.

How to use it

These Attributes are meant to inspire and invite reflection:

- They provide language to help you check your thinking, or someone else's.
- They guide conversations by introducing a common vocabulary.
- They can help you stay focused on what matters, rally those around you, and point to potential areas for growth and development.

You can layer or mix Attributes like colors on a painter's palette, and no project or role requires someone to demonstrate all of them at any one time.

Uncommon Sense

Uncommon sense is about seeing what is evident but not recognized. It is discerning what will make sense in hindsight, and having the confidence to move forward in spite of uncertainty.



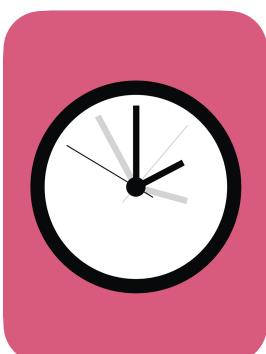
Think clearly

For almost any decision, there are many relevant considerations, but it's likely that only a few are truly important enough to guide the way forward. Thinking clearly is about distilling big decisions down to their determinative factors. It involves a hard look at the data and a healthy dose of intuition.



Focus and simplify

When an approach to something feels too complicated to be right, it probably is. Solving problems requires both stripping out what is not essential and identifying what is. Focusing and simplifying takes concentrated attention and an unrelenting drive to get to the heart of the matter.



Sense the moment

From pitching ideas to launching new products, sensing the moment means understanding the subtleties of good timing. It's knowing when to hold back and when to engage, how to push without rushing, and when to stop.



See around corners

Focusing exclusively on current problems and opportunities means missing the big picture ahead. Seeing around corners is looking beyond daily demands to identify and discuss trajectories — the technological, the organizational, and the social — that will be critical for you and others to anticipate and plan for.

Imaginative Intelligence

Imaginative intelligence is the ability to create something that does not exist but should. It is the product of deep functional expertise and bursts of ingenuity. It doesn't happen through creativity or brains alone — it requires both imagination and intelligence.



Innovate down to the details

At Apple we focus on getting the big ideas right, and at the same time we love diving deep into the details. Everyone's work offers countless moments to delight others and improve their experiences. To do so requires a focus on novel, inventive, creative, or thoughtful approaches to even the smallest details.



Demand difference

Doing what's right for Apple means not settling for common approaches, conventional wisdom, or simply the way we've always done things. Demanding difference is about seeking new paths and points of view, continually challenging the status quo.



Stay curious

To assume you've figured it all out is a recipe for mediocrity. Staying curious means continually asking why and why not. It's about being inquisitive in pursuit of excellence, exploring perspectives other than your own, and presuming there's always more for you to learn.



Approach problems flexibly

Approaching problems flexibly begins with the recognition that we do things differently at Apple. As a result, the best solution isn't always the one that seems easiest or most direct. Taking on challenges successfully here requires a willingness to adapt and modify your approach, without compromising on the outcome.

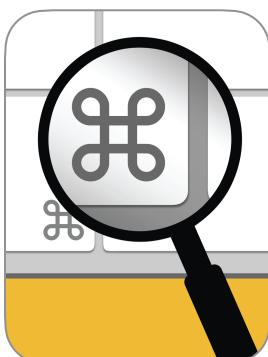
Cultural Tenacity

Cultural tenacity is the commitment to uphold what makes Apple, Apple. It means behaving in a way that is consistent with the culture, ideals, and values of this organization.



Fight for excellence

It takes courage to resist the gravitational pull of "good enough." Fighting for excellence means digging deep — and inspiring others — to strive to get it right, every time. It also requires being honest when something isn't excellent or when we're settling, and trying to learn from those experiences.



Obsess over the customer experience

Most companies care about the customer experience. At Apple, we obsess over it. This starts with imagining how the widest range of customers might experience our products and services — and not just how they will work, but how they will make people feel. It culminates in seamlessly integrating everything we make in a way that's simple, surprising, and delightful.



Wrestle with Apple's premises

No company believes just one thing at every moment. What makes Apple different is that we don't try to eliminate competing or conflicting aspects of our culture, our goals, or our values. Instead, we hold the tensions — grappling with them and endeavoring, in good faith, to understand their origins.



Demonstrate integrity

Apple has an enormous impact on and in the world. As such, we aim to hold ourselves to the highest possible standards, not only in what we make but also in how we work. Demonstrating integrity means upholding our values in all that we do, and actively modeling honesty and accountability in matters great and small.

Accountability Without Control

Being responsible for the success of a project can be challenging when you don't oversee all the pieces. Accountability without control works when we deliver on our own expertise, trust others to deliver on theirs, and ensure a successful outcome through deep collaboration.



Drive what matters

Driving what matters is not just about selecting the right tasks to focus on from among the multiple things competing for your attention. It's also about effectively influencing others to zero in on what's critical — and let go of what's not.



Cut through ambiguity

Things at Apple aren't always clear, and you may never have all of the information or visibility that you desire. Cutting through ambiguity means finding the right path despite haziness or uncertainty. It's also about blazing that path rather than waiting on others or deferring responsibility.



Own the hard calls

Owning the hard calls means making tough decisions and standing behind them. It includes buy-in, negotiation, pushback, push-through — and sometimes pulling the plug on a project in which considerable time and energy have been invested.

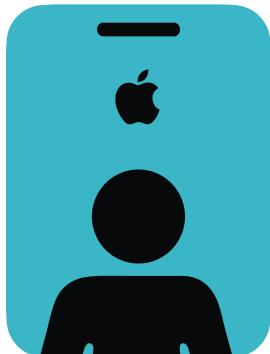


Listen, challenge, and commit

Listening is the first step in a healthy debate. Understanding a wide variety of other perspectives allows you to challenge them productively. But once a decision has been made, whether or not it was yours, committing to it is what moves us forward.

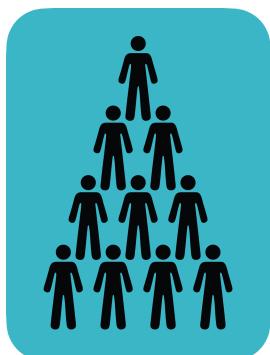
Capacity to Connect

Apple is a relationship-driven company. Having meaningful connections enables the creativity and collaboration that leads to one's best work. But this isn't about just charisma — it's having authenticity, humility, curiosity, and a willingness to teach and learn from others.



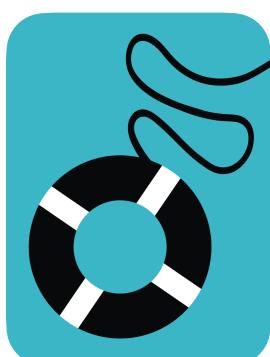
Know people

There's no way to be successful here as a solo operator. Getting things done requires knowing who else to involve and when. And truly involving them means knowing how they see the world, what they believe, and what they care about. Ultimately, really knowing people will carry you well beyond the immediate task and push you toward a deep and lasting impact at Apple.



Foster trust

Achieving anything great at Apple requires having trusting relationships that can withstand pressure, ambiguity, and debate — the unique challenges of our structure, culture, and collaborative work. Building those relationships starts with demonstrating your expertise, doing what you say you'll do, acknowledging mistakes, and displaying empathy.



Give help

At Apple, we often depend on each other to get our work done. Sometimes this means enlisting the help of others, but it also requires that we be willing to give of ourselves. Giving help is about going out of your way to ensure that someone else succeeds without worrying about what's in it for you. It goes beyond responding to requests — it's proactively looking to share your expertise and experience on everything from specific projects to the company and culture as a whole.



Seek expertise and experience

We all have something to learn. Seeking expertise and experience is about recognizing our shortcomings and supplementing them with the talents of a diverse group of people. It means caring deeply enough about the end result to involve the right experts at the right time.

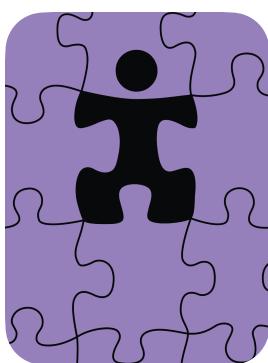
Team Catalyst

Apple is built on great teams. Being an effective leader here depends on assembling the right mix of people, motivating them, and helping them do their best work together. Your impact on the team should be felt across the organization, and continue long after you leave.



Attract, develop, and share talent

Each of us has a role to play in building strong, diverse teams with a range of skills, experiences, and perspectives. But the responsibility doesn't end with bringing people in. Investing in their development and supporting their growth also has lasting benefits both for the individuals and for Apple.



Make action meaningful

Each of us plays a small role in something much bigger, but sometimes it's hard to make that connection. To make action meaningful is to remind your colleagues — and sometimes yourself — about why the work matters and the impact it has. It's about instilling a sense of pride in each person's contribution, regardless of its size or scope.



Instill candor and resilience

Saying what needs to be said can be difficult, but it's essential in a culture that relies on passionate debate, intense collaboration, and deep integration of efforts. You need to be prepared to give — and hear — honest feedback with openness and care, and to treat it as an invitation to improve. It's an ongoing practice, as well as a capability to foster in others.



Plan for scale and succession

Good leaders — at every level — think beyond the short-term reality and needs of the moment when it comes to both people and processes. They're always asking, "What happens if?" when it comes to changes in scale and scope, and laying the groundwork for future challenges.

Visit university.apple.com/palette
to dive deeper into everything the LP offers.

