

Techniques for Improving Leadership Skills

The range of leadership skills is vast. A project manager must strive to become a strong leader, which requires continuous learning to acquire new knowledge and skills or improve their shortcomings.

Objectives

After completing this reading, you will be able to:

- Describe proven techniques to improve leadership skills
- Summarize leadership best practices

Techniques to Improve Leadership Skills

PMI shares several tools, techniques, and skills essential to leadership success.

- **Apply Critical Thinking:** Recognize your personal biases. Use disciplined, rational, logical, and evidence-based thinking. Avoid being swayed by false premises, analogies, emotional appeals, and other faulty logic.
- **Improve Your Emotional Intelligence:** Work to increase self-awareness and self-management skills. Strive to become more socially aware and improve your social skills.
- **Decision-Making:** Understand the consequence of decisions that must be made. Determine the right method and tools to reach decisions based on the situation and severity of the consequences.
- **Conflict Management:** Work to create a culture and environment where fear of conflict is not a factor. Understand different conflict management techniques to match the situation. Differentiate between functional and dysfunctional conflict.

Leadership Best Practices

PMI shares several tips and best practices essential to leadership success. Here is a summary of their guidance.

- **Establish and maintain a vision:** Share the project purpose and benefits. This will often act as a catalyst for the team to commit their time and energy in the right direction to achieve the project's purpose.
- **Understand motivation:** Take time to understand what motivates the team and individual team members. Individualize conversations to provide reasons for the

team to commit and perform. Understand diversity and that everyone's motivational triggers are different.

- **Tailor your leadership style:** Understand situational leadership and how it is applied. Work smartly to determine each stakeholder's state of readiness to support the project and adjust your leadership approach accordingly.
- **Set the example:** Provide guidance and direction for the team. Be willing to practice the behaviors that you are asking the team to embrace.
- **Be accessible:** Be available when the team needs your guidance. Recognize and reward high performers.