Leadership Communication

> *You don't lead by pointing and telling people some place to go. You lead by going to that place and making a case.*
>
> —Ken Kesey

Effective leadership is essential for organizations to succeed and thrive. We can all name a good leader or someone who possesses and displays strong leadership traits. Leadership is essential for a team or organization to move forward toward common goals, but the word has many definitions. A leader is someone who influences and inspires others and effectively drives them toward new visions or outcomes. A leader could be a CEO or a new hire. Anyone who leads a team or individuals forward toward mutual success is a leader.

Name three public figures whom you consider to be effective leaders:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

As you think about these figures, try to understand why you chose them. What traits or talents did they exhibit that made you think of them as leaders? Was it their accomplishments, their actions, their communication style? A leader might lead through official authority and power, or they may lead through inspiration, persuasion, and personal connections.

Leadership is: _____

_____

Principles of Leadership

1. **Treating team members as individuals.** Every team member approaches every task with a unique set of expectations, concerns, and experiences. Stay connected with your team members at all times by asking questions and soliciting feedback.

2. **Being technically proficient.** Take the time to thoroughly train and become skilled in your given profession, then continue to learn and practice so you are able to competently execute your job duties.

3. **Developing the potential of others.** Make sure to recognize the unique talents and abilities of every member of your team and work to empower them so they are able to grow and excel.

4. **Making sound and timely decisions.** Try to make your decisions based on facts rather than emotions or assumptions. Set goals and honor timelines to make sure that you are adhering to a plan.

5. **Developing a coherent team and strategy.** To engage your employees or team members you must create a coherent strategic narrative for the organization or project. Clearly set expectations that reaffirm or adhere to the company's vision and values.

6. **Motivating others to follow or take action.** This is a key to successful leadership. Work to gain the trust and respect of your team by being an honest and open leader with your behavior and actions.

7. **Clearly communicating information and vision.** A team cannot align behind a vision or follow a specific process if it has not been clearly explained or instituted. Set goals, processes, and expectations clearly to avoid confusion, frustration, or low morale.

8. **Leading effectively by example.** If you're in a leadership position, then you know you have a responsibility to your team to serve as a model for them to emulate. A large part of that involves leading them with your own actions.

9. **Seeking and accepting responsibility.** By acknowledging and owning up to errors or mistakes you have made, you will set the tone within your organization for others to emulate. Be accountable and others will be inclined and inspired to do the same.

10. **Knowing personal strengths and limitations.** As a leader, self-awareness is key. You must be able to understand how you are perceived by others within your organization, as well as what your specific strengths and weakness are.

fact According to experts, _____ % of business leaders say it's important to have a mentor.

No two leaders are exactly the same, nor do all leaders possess and exhibit the same set of skills or competencies. There is no definitive list of traits required to be a perfect leader, but most leaders will exhibit similar traits that make them stand out in the eyes of others.

Ten Traits of an Effective Leader

(Please rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 on each trait.)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

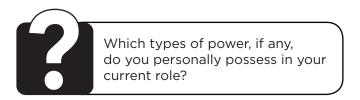*Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.*
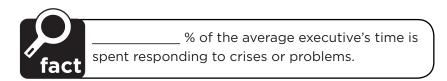—Abraham Lincoln

Leadership and Power

Power is about influence and authority. In essence, when we use power we're utilizing our authority to get something we want or need. Leaders are often in a position of power or influence within an organization. While a leader may hold power, the way he or she wields that power within an organization can differ depending on the leader and the situation.

Below are the five types of power a leader may possess:

1. **Coercive power** is based upon a person's ability to bestow rewards or punishments, in the form of job assignments, schedules, pay, or benefits, to others.

2. **Network power** is based upon who someone knows, or, more importantly, who they can influence, such as other powerful people within the organization.

3. **Expert power** comes from a person's expertise, knowledge, or experience on a given topic or in a given field.

4. **Informational power** can derive from someone who possesses or has access to valuable or important information that others may not know.

5. **Positional power** comes from the position a person holds, such as their title and job responsibilities.

> Which types of power, if any, do you personally possess in your current role?

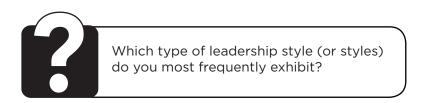> **fact** _____ % of the average executive's time is spent responding to crises or problems.

Five Styles of Leadership

The way someone in the corporate environment provides feedback and direction, implements plans, and manages and motivates people is called leadership style. There are many different leadership styles that can be exhibited by individuals in various fields. A leader will often employ different leadership styles, depending on the individual and the situation in which they are involved.

Five most common leadership styles:

1. **Autocratic leaders** know exactly what they want done, who is to do it, and when it should be completed. They often make decisions without consulting their team members. This can be effective when decisions need to be made quickly but can be detrimental to morale. It can also lead to high levels of absenteeism and employee turnover within an organization.

2. **Democratic leaders** often make the final decision, but they also encourage and include employees and stakeholders in the decision-making process. The democratic style can be a positive and motivational experience because team members feel they are contributing. However, because everyone is included in making decisions, it can often require more time to get things done.

3. **Delegative leaders** (sometimes called *laissez faire leadership*) give employees freedom with regard to how they do their work and how they meet their deadlines. This autonomy often results in high job satisfaction, but can be ineffective or even detrimental if team members do not manage their time well or lack the skills or self-motivation needed to handle their responsibilities effectively.

4. **Transactional leaders** operate via a style that is based primarily on a system of rewards and punishments for job performance. Often leading "by the book," this type of leader is generally more concerned with following existing rules than with making changes to the organization or its processes.

5. **Tranformational leaders** are often brought in when it is necessary to completely change or shift the culture or direction of an organization. This type of leader is usually charismatic and will challenge or inspire team members by creating a sense of excitement and engagement within an organization.

? Which type of leadership style (or styles) do you most frequently exhibit?

Leadership Assessment Test

(Scoring: 1 = Do well, 2 = Do somewhat well, 3 = Don't do well)

Instructions: Please read each statement carefully then rate yourself in terms of how well you think you possess the attribute or perform the leadership skill by circling the number that best reflects your view.

1. I articulate my company's vision and purpose to others.	1	2	3
2. I inspire others to excel and strive to improve.	1	2	3
3. I take a stand for my values.	1	2	3
4. I encourage and nurture others.	1	2	3
5. I deal with issues and concerns promptly.	1	2	3
6. I challenge others to make ethical choices.	1	2	3
7. I make tough decisions regardless of approval or rejection.	1	2	3
8. I actively involve others in all change processes.	1	2	3
9. I encourage interaction and collaboration amongst my team members.	1	2	3
10. I identify and seek to tap people's potential.	1	2	3
11. I solicit input from diverse team members with various perspectives.	1	2	3
12. I motivate others to embrace change.	1	2	3
13. I listen actively to others and am open to their ideas.	1	2	3
14. I lead by setting a positive example.	1	2	3
15. I reward performance and provide constructive feedback.	1	2	3
16. I work effectively with others who are different from me.	1	2	3
17. I leverage networks of people to resource and strengthen my tasks.	1	2	3
18. I manage time effectively and rarely miss deadlines.	1	2	3
19. I follow through on the promises and commitments that I make.	1	2	3
20. I am open to making significant changes in my behavior or processes when necessary.	1	2	3