

The Leadership Development Library – Sort Cards

## TITLE CARD

**VERY  
IMPORTANT**



The Leadership Development Library – Sort Cards

## TITLE CARD

# IMPORTANT



The Leadership Development Library – Sort Cards

## TITLE CARD

**LESS  
IMPORTANT**



The Leadership Development Library – Sort Cards

## TITLE CARD

# CRITICAL TO VISION, MISSION, AND STRATEGY



The Leadership Development Library - Sort Cards

## TITLE CARD

**GOOD TO  
HAVE**



# AGILE

## WHY IT MATTERS

The expectation that leaders be steady and stable has evolved as the world of work and business has evolved and become more complex. Today's leaders are also expected to be flexible and quick to react. The world in which leader's work has turned into a world of constant commotion and fluctuation. Leaders need the ability to "go with the flow" and "adapt on the fly." Leaders that are agile can adjust to change with a nimbleness that keeps their organization relevant. The organization is empowered by their ability to respond to the unpredictable with steadiness and grace. Leaders that are not agile will find themselves snapping when what they thought was predictable suddenly turns unpredictable.



# AMBITIOUS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Without dreaming big nothing of significance will ever happen to a person or an organization. It is those with ambition who change the world, not those who are content with just being “average.” Breakthroughs don’t come until someone is willing to take a risk, do something different, and break the status quo. Leaders that are ambitious have the motivation to push themselves and others to the very edge of their possibilities and beliefs. They drive themselves to go higher and farther than others have gone. They believe they can attain what others have rarely attained. Leaders that aren’t ambitious won’t ever provoke themselves or others to surpass the limitations of their own capabilities and expectations.



# APPROACHABLE

## WHY IT MATTERS

A leader can't lead people who are intimidated to approach or interact with them. Leaders that are approachable do more than just implement an "open door policy." Through their demeanor and interpersonal skills, they make it comfortable and non-threatening for people to be around them. Leaders that are approachable learn and know things other leaders don't because their people come to them, don't hide things from them, and feel safe telling them the truth. Equipped with the knowledge of things as they really are, leaders that are approachable can advance their vision forward. Leaders that are not approachable will find their people avoiding and hiding things from them, and will never see reality clearly.





# CARING

## WHY IT MATTERS

People will always give more to leaders who care about them than those that don't. People who feel cared for by a leader will do their very best for that leader. People want a strong and determined leader, but they also want a leader who is considerate, compassionate, aware of their individual circumstances, and kind. Leaders that demonstrate care for others win the hearts, minds, devotion, and allegiance of those they lead. Because they care about their people, their people in return care about them, and do all they can to make them a success. Leaders who don't care about those they lead, but who see them as simply a tool in a toolbox, will ultimately be treated, supported, and viewed in an equivalent manner.



# COMPASSIONATE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Work and life can be demanding and arduous. People will always go through periods of highs and lows, some of their own making, but most often not. At times, what people need most from their leader are understanding, patience, kindness, consideration, and sympathy. Leaders that are compassionate garner the absolute loyalty of their people because of the support they lend through difficult experiences. Compassionate leaders see their people as more than just employees, and in turn, their people see them as more than just their boss. Their show of compassion leads to trust, and absolute loyalty. Leaders that are not compassionate will eventually find themselves alone; experiencing the absence of benevolence they first showed.



# CULTURALLY ADEPT

## WHY IT MATTERS

The modern environment in which organizations operate has been transformed. Leaders can no longer be concerned with just their own “back yard.” To some degree the now interconnected nature of the world influences everyone and everything. Leaders that are culturally adept build bridges across the world, its peoples, and its cultures to enlarge their purposes. They extend their sphere of influence and find opportunities to grow beyond their borders. Leaders that are not culturally adept may constrain their influence within the boundaries of where they physically operate, miss opportunities to expand and increase, take missteps that ruin the hope of international success, or get swallowed up by influences they never saw coming.



# DECISIVE

## WHY IT MATTERS

As the one ultimately accountable, leaders are responsible to make decisions. They choose which path to take when faced with difficult questions. They know that being decisive means having a convincing opinion, and making their decisions in a way that instills confidence in others. Leaders that are decisive make the right decision, at the right time, in the right way, and don't look back. If they are proven wrong, they are humble enough to change direction. Leaders that are not decisive, and who meander undecidedly or hesitantly around hard choices, waste time, miss opportunities, become inhibitors to the work instead of contributors, cause critical delays, and slowly lose the confidence of those they lead.



# DETAIL ORIENTED

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders are ultimately responsible for everything good and bad that happens in their organization. Without micromanaging their people, great leaders have the ability to ensure that no detail falls through the cracks, is forgotten, goes undone, or passes by unnoticed. Leaders that are detail oriented bring comprehensiveness, completeness, finality, and safety to the work. They manage the big picture, but keep track of the day-to-day activities. Leaders that are not detail oriented place their organization at the mercy of the unknown as they allow for simple mistakes and errors that could have been avoided had they been more attentive. Their inability to pay focused attention to detail allows preventable mistakes to create big problems.



# EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can't lead people if they don't understand people. Emotional intelligence is the ability to read people in different situations and discern how to best react and work successfully with them. Leaders with strong emotional intelligence are comfortable in social situations because they can sense what other people are thinking and feeling and know how to respond. Their ability to react to people appropriately leads to stronger relationships, partnerships, and opportunities. Leaders that possess low emotional intelligence often find themselves saying or doing things in social situations they later regret or wish they could take back. At best they are awkward, at worst they are unaware of their own negative impact.



# ETHICAL

## WHY IT MATTERS

There have been situations when one unethical act by one individual has put entire organizations on a path towards collapse. Unethical behavior in exchange for favor or gain is dishonest and corrupt. Leaders that are ethical don't have to worry about lurking consequences that could raise their head at any time because of past behavior. Because of their conviction to be ethical they are trusted. They keep their organization on firm footing instead of robbing the future for short-term gains. Leaders that are unethical in their behavior not only invite a permanent cloud of anxiety and deception to accompany them everywhere they go, but they put themselves and those they work with on a collision course with potential disaster.



# FLEXIBLE

## WHY IT MATTERS

With the speed at which conditions change in today's world it is imperative a leader can wisely and quickly adjust course. The ability to be flexible and make necessary change, or be comfortable operating in unpredictable settings, is a leadership necessity. Leaders that are flexible save people and organizations from disastrous situations caused by the challenge of hitting a "moving target." They are able to alter course, modify direction, revise existing plans and strategies and invent new approaches when problems arise. Leaders who can't be flexible are a liability to their organization as they become an anchor that keeps their organizational ship from freely flowing across the changing currents of their customers, industry, and competition.





# HONEST

## WHY IT MATTERS

Honesty is the foundation upon which everything in an organization is built. The foundation of honesty includes the trust that people are telling the truth, the trust that they will keep their commitments, and the trust that they are doing things the right way. Leaders that are honest say things how they really are, do what they agree to do, and be who they commit to be. Their commitment to honesty provides the strength upon which their organization can confidently build. Leaders that are dishonest with their people, customers, partners, or other stakeholders set their clocks on borrowed time. Eventually they will see the seemingly strong foundation upon which they have dishonestly built their work and relationships fall apart.



# PATIENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

It takes time to be successful. No matter how hard or fast a leader works, the debt to time must always be paid. Rarely do big and important things happen overnight or all at once. Changes in people, forward progress in work, and steps towards results take place piece-by-piece, step-by-step, bit-by-bit. Leaders that are patient stay persistent and anxiously engaged while not becoming distracted or discouraged. Because they are patient they don't overreact while waiting for time to run its course. Leaders that are impatient are susceptible to making rash decisions, rushing to unfounded judgments, acting irrationally, and prematurely abandoning good things, and getting in the way of the work's slow but steady progress.



# POLITICALLY SAVVY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations are like a maze, and it requires skill and knowledge to navigate them successfully. People, processes, personalities, culture, history, competing interests, and differing ways of thinking can clash together at any time. This maze can make it difficult to know how to get ideas adopted, influence work, and accomplish results. Leaders who are politically savvy know how to avoid the unseen landmines that await their misstep, and how to use and influence the realities of their political workplace to their advantage. They get more work done because they know how to get work done. Leaders who aren't politically savvy can end up like a ship's captain who tries to steer their vessel through heavy fog and storms without a compass.



# RESULTS ORIENTED

## WHY IT MATTERS

Nothing else a leader does matters if they can't deliver results. The whole purpose of leadership is to help other people accomplish things they might not have been able to accomplish if left to their own devices. If results don't happen, leadership isn't happening. Leaders that are results oriented keep their ultimate focus, and the focus of those they lead, on accomplishing the goals and objectives that have been set. They do everything in their power to deliver results, and are willing to make personal sacrifices to achieve them if necessary. Leaders that are not results oriented, and who can't get the job done, will ultimately be replaced by someone who can, even if they are a great leader in other ways.



# SELF AWARE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Without the ability to see yourself as you really are it is impossible to know how to avoid becoming the biggest obstacle to your own success. A leader needs a realistic vision of themselves to become who they need to become. Leaders that are self-aware are genuine and real. They know how to apply their strengths, sure up their weaknesses, and find their blind spots. They believe they can improve, and seek to improve. Their self-awareness makes them feel confident instead of making them insecure because they know the boundaries of their limitations. Leaders that are not self-aware are oblivious of how to apply their strengths, sure up their weaknesses, or ensure their blind spots don't lead to gaping holes in their performance and ability to lead well.



# SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders need to lead from the front. This implies they are skilled at what they do. They have mastered their profession to the point that those around them look to them for direction, teaching, decision-making, and guidance. Leaders that are subject matter experts garner trust and followership from their people and win the ability to lead them because people know they know what they are doing. Because their employees feel their leader is an expert, they are quick to line up behind them and take their counsel. Leaders that don't have high levels of subject matter expertise will find themselves trapped in their own incompetence, and will ultimately be consumed by the complexity and intricacy of the work they lead but can never seem to unravel.



# TOLERANT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders don't lead groups of look-a-likes. They lead groups of people who are inherently different from each other in the way they look, think, act, feel, and experience the world. Leaders that are tolerant of others build bridges of understanding and trust that celebrate diversity and add a vibrancy to the work. They don't just tolerate differences; they celebrate differences. Leaders who show tolerance see their personal growth and that of their organization propelled forward because of their ability to work well with those who are different than themselves. Leaders that aren't tolerant of others cut themselves off from those whose differences might have enlightened and expanded their understanding, and filled the gaps halting their progress.



# TRANSPARENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Transparency means ensuring everyone in the organization knows what is happening. It means that no one is left in the dark. Transparency means being willing to share information, even if it isn't good news. Leaders that are transparent nurture trust in the organization because people know where they stand, what is going on, and how to succeed. They know that if they are wrong, or something in the organization is wrong, they will know about it. Leaders that fail to be transparent engender a quiet disruption in the organization. They leave people wondering if their leader is dependable, if they themselves are trusted, and if they have the whole context of what is happening and why.





# VALUE DRIVEN

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders need an anchor to keep them steadfast and grounded in all they do. Because of the multiple forces pulling at them each day, leaders know they need to have core values upon which their thoughts, actions, desires, and decisions are based. Leaders that are value driven survive the constant barrage of work, decisions, pressure, and stress that comes their way. Their values become like a compass, giving direction to all they do. Leaders that are value driven are able to determine what to do and be consistent in all they do by tying everything back to their core values. Leaders without a set of personal values may become a victim to their own unanchored leadership, and the inconsistency they provide.



# ANTICIPATE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Anticipation is the ability to foresee and prepare for the unknown. It is taking the time to think through every outcome and contingency that could happen in order to ensure you are ready if they do happen. Leaders who can anticipate see farther ahead than their peers do. They keep their eyes to the future. They stay one step in front of the pack, and are rarely caught by surprise. Because they can see things before others do, or see things others don't, they are the first in line to resolve, take advantage of, or avoid what is coming around the corner. Leaders that don't anticipate what is coming may find their best efforts derailed when they are caught off guard by what they should have seen and been ready to handle.



# ASK HARD QUESTIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

The role of the leader is to confront the harsh realities everyone else in the organization is hesitant to confront. They ask the questions others are afraid to ask and answer. They want to know the truth, no matter if it is good news or bad news, and if it is difficult to get or more readily accessible. Leaders that ask hard questions get to the core of the hardest issues and the most difficult problems while making accurate assessments and correct decisions. Their knowledge of what to do comes because of their efforts to really understand the problems they are trying to solve. Leaders that shy away from asking hard questions will never unearth the roots of the issues they are trying to resolve, allowing those issues to come back again and again.



# ASSESS TALENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

An organization's ability to propel itself forward has a direct correlation to the talent of its people. The best team, comprised of the most talented players, will always have the best chance to win. Leaders that accurately assess talent surround themselves with top performers and other strong leaders by consistently hiring the right people and placing them in the right positions. Because they have the best people, placed in situations where they can continuously succeed, they go farther and faster than everyone else. Leaders that can't assess talent accurately will block their ability to succeed with people who aren't qualified for their jobs, are overmatched by their work, or who provide more problems and drag on the organization than solutions and lift.



# BE ACCOUNTABLE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Personal accountability is key to getting work done and getting it done right. Being accountable is self-motivation and self-control at their highest level. It is doing what you commit to do without needing someone else prodding you or reminding you to get it done. Leaders who are accountable to themselves deliver the highest-level results to their organization because they don't give themselves any other option. Their willingness to be held accountable gives them the moral authority to hold everyone else accountable too. To them, nothing short of 100% accountability will suffice. Leaders that don't hold themselves accountable lack the moral authority required to hold anyone else accountable, and lose their ability to drive results.



# BE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

## WHY IT MATTERS

No company or organization is an island. Each is part of a larger community of organizations or businesses in their immediate area and the world at large. It is essential that companies focus not only on what is good for them, but on what is good for those around them. Leaders that are socially responsible do more than make a profit, they make the world a better place. They reap the blessings that come from their success, and turn some of those blessings into investments that improve society. Leaders that neglect their duty to be socially responsible may find their success indirectly impaired as they fail to receive the soft and hard benefits that come from being seen as more than just a money-making machine.



# BREAK DOWN SILOS

## WHY IT MATTERS

As organizations increase in size and complexity the natural tendency is for people and work to become more isolated and secluded. Isolation means the work of an organization is done in vacuums, with nobody knowing what anyone else is doing, and people staying out of each other's way instead of working together for their mutual benefit. Leaders who break down silos between people and work exploit the full strength of the organization as they push people to work together with openness and interconnectedness. Leaders who fail to break down silos will see missed opportunities, unharnessed potential, wasted resources, duplicated work, miscommunication, and continued inefficiency eat away at their hopes for success.



# BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

## WHY IT MATTERS

No matter how many other forces work together to shape the world of work, the truth remains that work happens through and because of strong relationships. Relationships with people who can help you succeed are the fuel to growth and progress, both inside and outside the organization. Leaders that form strong relationships have the foundation they need to move the work farther along than they ever could have by themselves. Their people relationships give them opportunities they couldn't find in any other way. Leaders that can't build relationships with other people may find themselves lacking the support, partnerships, resources, or backing they need to do anything more than steadily meet the status quo.





# BUILD TEAMS

## WHY IT MATTERS

In today's organizations success doesn't come from having the best individual contributors, success comes from having the best and most unified teams. Leaders that form strong teams are able to unify and harness the abilities of their people and put them to work in a shared direction for a common goal. They bring great individual contributors together to form a diverse group of people who can accomplish more together than any one individual could have accomplished by themselves. Leaders that can't form strong teams end up with people that resemble a rowboat that spins in circles, with each passenger rowing at different speeds, in different directions, with a different idea of where to go.



# BUILD TRUST

## WHY IT MATTERS

The world of work is based on the currency of trust. Trust is at the foundation of every successful venture between both people and their organizations. Without trust there is very little, if anything, a leader can accomplish that is worthwhile. Without trust people won't follow, listen, take a risk for, align to, or go the extra mile for their leader. Leaders that build trust with those they lead receive their absolute most dedicated efforts. Their people are willing to follow them anywhere, even if they don't understand why or what they are being asked to do. Leaders who don't build trust with those they lead will always feel like they are being second guessed by their people's words or their actions.



# COACH OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Nobody knows how to do something new the first time they try to do it. People are always better when someone with experience takes an interest in their success and helps them master what is new or unknown. People benefit from learning the lessons learned by those who have done what they haven't done. They benefit from hearing the wisdom of those who have experienced what they haven't experienced. Leaders that effectively coach others see their people perform better because of their personal interest in ensuring they know what to do, and how to do it. Leaders that fail to coach others abandon their people's performance to chance, or their own untested ability, opening up the door to potential failure.



# COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Communication is the medium through which leadership influence travels. Without communication leadership can't exist, because at its core leadership is about sharing thoughts, feelings, and ideas to rally people to a cause. It is communication that gets people to see, start, stop, or change their direction. It is communication that helps people forge new relationships, understand each other, and resolve disagreements. Leaders that communicate effectively move people to accomplish extraordinary things by the words they say, the vision they paint, and the feelings they share. Leaders that struggle to communicate well will struggle to excite people about the work, keep them aligned, and elevate them to greatness.



# CONDUCT WORKFORCE PLANNING

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations succeed or fail based on the composition and capability of the people who make up their workforce. It is people who do the real work in an organization, and today's workforce is volatile, prone to movement, and unpredictable. With competition for talent at its highest, people can be present one minute and out the door the next. Leaders that conduct workforce planning ensure their organization will have the right people, at the right times, in the right places, and with the right skills to accomplish the work of the future. Leaders that fail to conduct workforce planning risk having a workforce that is misaligned, unprepared to contribute, or incapable of meeting the performance demands required of them.



# CONFRONT ISSUES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Issues that start small and get ignored inevitably turn into bigger issues the longer they are allowed to fester. They grow and propagate until they can cause havoc in an organization. It is the role of a leader to confront issues early on and ensure their quick and proper resolution. Leaders who have the courage to appropriately confront issues, in relation to either their people or the work itself, pull the weeds out of their organization before their roots grow so deep it is hard to remove them. Leaders that fail to confront issues, either out of a lack of responsibility or a lack of courage, set their organization up to receive the long-term backlash that comes from issues that are allowed to propagate unattended.



# COUNSEL WITH OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

No leader is smart enough to see every issue, make every decision, solve every problem, or accomplish every task by them self. Many people working together will always do more and do it better than a single person working alone. Leaders that counsel with others benefit from the perspective and wisdom that comes from harvesting the thoughts, expertise, wisdom, and experiences of others. They are able to do more because they are able to see not just through their own eyes, but those of others too. Leaders that refuse to counsel with others, and persist in the belief that they can do just fine by themselves, waste the real safety, wisdom, understanding and strength that could have helped them to achieve greater success.



# CREATE A CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Creating a culture of accountability in an organization means more than just holding people responsible for what they do or don't do. It means creating a culture where work gets done without the boss always having to be standing over their employees' shoulders making sure they are doing what they are supposed to do. Leaders that create a culture of accountability see work getting done without their constant presence and oversight. They instill in people a feeling of self-motivation that leads them to want to give their best. Leaders that fail to create a culture of accountability have to accept the reality that nothing will get done unless they personally ensure people are always anxiously engaged in the right things.





# CREATE A LEARNING CULTURE

## WHY IT MATTERS

The competitive world of work is always changing, growing, and being refreshed. Organizations have to change, grow, and refresh themselves at an equal pace. This only happens if the culture within an organization is dialed into learning. Leaders that create a learning culture create within their organizations the drive to acquire new understanding, find new ways of doing things, and discover the unknown. They open the way for continuous improvement. Leaders that fail to create an expectation of continuous learning risk leaving their organization in the trap of “doing things the way they have always been done.” They risk falling behind those that are constantly consuming, investing in, and implementing new knowledge.



# CREATE A POSITIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

People respond to and reflect the environment around them. If the environment invites positivity and creativity, people are more likely to be positive and creative. If the environment invites stress, fear, and anxiety, people are more likely to be stressful, fearful, and anxious. An organization's work environment is influenced by its leader perhaps more than any other single factor. Leaders that create a positive work environment make the workplace setting a strategic advantage. They create a place and a feeling that allows employees to do their best work and be their best self. Leaders that fail to create a positive work environment set their people up for failure simply because they don't like being at work.



# CREATE ALIGNMENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

A straight road is always the fastest route between two points. In terms of leadership, alignment means ensuring everything in an organization is fine-tuned and in synch so there is a straight path to achieving results. Leaders that create real alignment between people and the organization's work ensure the full energy of the organization is pointed in the right direction. They get the very most there is to be had out of people, processes, and tools. Leaders that fail to create alignment in an organization invite inefficiency, confusion, misdirection, waste, contention, missed opportunity, and failed commitment. Their inability to align the organization leads to dispersed strength instead of well harnessed and focused energy.



# CREATE INTEGRATION

## WHY IT MATTERS

Because they have a higher vantage point in the organization, leaders can see how everything that happens should fit and work together. They know that integration isn't something that happens without an instigator. They know it is their responsibility to ensure that what should be connected gets connected. Leaders that create integration take their organization to the highest levels of efficiency and productivity because the right people, projects, processes, and tools are all appropriately woven together to provide the greatest impact. Leaders that fail to create integration between their people and their work invite duplication of effort, wasted resources, disharmony, and misalignment.



# CREATE UNITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

When people work together and pull in the same direction their impact can be exponentially stronger than if they had worked individually. People aren't only happier and feel more energy when unity exists, but their performance is also magnified. People will always give more to their work when they feel committed to those they work with. Leaders that can create a real feeling of unity among those they lead will find their people accomplishing more than they thought possible, while having fun doing it. They will see their people fight for results and for each other. Those leaders that fail to engender a feeling of unity will find their people struggling to get along, pulling in different directions, and feeling distrust and indifference towards the work.



# DELEGATE EFFECTIVELY

## WHY IT MATTERS

The role of a leader is to direct others in doing the work, not to do all the work themselves. Leaders see how all the individual pieces fit together, and orchestrate all those involved to fulfill their unique contribution while working towards the same end goal. Leaders that delegate effectively get everyone at their disposal to contribute to their fullest. Their ability to delegate also frees their own time to focus on the bigger picture and on the things that they can uniquely do as the leader. Leaders that don't delegate effectively limit what the organization can achieve and the growth of the people involved because of their unwillingness to relinquish the work and trust others to get the job done well.



# DEMONSTRATE INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Of the many skills a leader must have if they are to succeed, one of the most important might be working effectively with other people. Working well with people is more than an inescapable part of a leader's job. Working well with people, be it their subordinates, peers, or other leaders, is a leader's job. Leaders that can successfully interact with others have the greatest opportunity to gain their sincere followership and guide them to achieve outstanding results. Leaders who don't know how to interact well with other people, or who have poor interpersonal skills, will never win the power to direct those who surround them for good. People will always hesitate to respond to a leader they don't feel connected to.



# DESIGN ORGANIZATIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations perform to the level of their design, no more and no less. They accomplish what they are designed to accomplish. They produce what they are designed to produce. Organizations are like puzzles that need to be assembled with care or they will be full of inefficiency and misdirection. Poor organizational design can lead to unproductive use of precious resources and stalled performance. Leaders that know how to effectively design organizations turn them into well-oiled machines. Leaders that fail to design organizations look to blame people's poor performance for their lack of results, when the truth is the organization's poor performance is only a reflection of its poor design.





# DEVELOP FUTURE LEADERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

At some point, every leader will move on and leave the future success of the organization to the next generation. They will entrust their legacy to the hands of others. It is the role of leaders to ensure that the next generation is identified, developed and prepared to assume their leadership roles when they are needed. Leaders that identify and develop future leaders put the organization in a position to succeed long after they are gone. They ensure the organization doesn't fall hostage to unanticipated leadership changeover. Leaders that fail to identify and develop future leaders carelessly turn the organization's future over to chance, as they are required to gamble on leaders that are unproven or underprepared.



# DEVELOP OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders take people as they are and help them become something more. They see through people's limitations to find their potential. Because of their positive influence they lift everyone else around them to a higher standard, and in so doing, lift the entire organization. Their people are continuously more capable of delivering high performance and consistent results because they are continuously acquiring the skills and abilities they need to succeed. Leaders that invest in developing other people receive from their employee's greater commitment, more sincere engagement, deeper loyalty, and stronger performance. Leaders that don't develop their people leave their skills, growth, performance, and results potentially stunted.



# DEVELOP THEMSELVES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can never be content with their current level of knowledge, skills, attributes, and capabilities. Because the world is continually changing and progressing, they are determined to continuously change and progress too. They know their level of competence today will meet today's needs, but that tomorrow's needs will require something more. Leaders that develop themselves invest their time in their own learning, and prepare themselves to accomplish whatever they are asked to do, whenever they are asked to do it. Leaders who fail to develop themselves, either their professional skills or their leadership abilities, risk one day coming to work only to find they are no longer qualified to do their own job.



# DIRECT THE WORK

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders stand at the head, set the tone, direct the pace, chart the course, and show the way. They aren't afraid to be at the front, rallying those around them. They see the big picture, know what needs to happen, why it needs to happen, when it needs to happen, and how it all fits together. Leaders that effectively direct the work keep everyone in the organization marching forward in a unified march and an unaltered course. They bring together all the necessary parts and pieces to ensure results are achieved. Leaders that fail to effectively direct the work leave people wondering what they should do and where the organization is going. They create a culture of confusion, inefficiency, and disarray.



# DISCOVER CUSTOMER NEEDS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Customers are the people who give an organization life. Organizations exist to meet the needs of their customers. A good rule for business success is that if you don't know what your customers need, you may not be able to give them what they want. Without knowing customer desires organizations have little hope of creating solutions that will win their business. Leaders who can effectively discover their customer's needs, and who can hone the people and resources of their organization to meet them, will consistently achieve their targets, be relevant, and stay profitable over time. Leaders who fail to discover their customer's needs may end up with lots of great products and services, and no one who wants them.



# DRIVE CHANGE

## WHY IT MATTERS

The organizations that can break free from their past and present traditions are those that can outlast and outpace their competition. Everything changes, and organizations need to be able to change too. When it comes to progress and sustained staying power, dealing with change is one of the great dividers between the leadership “haves” and “have not’s.” Leaders who can identify where change needs to happen, create strong change management plans, and march those plans forward with cautious assertiveness are the leaders who create organizations that stay relevant over time. Leaders that don’t know how to drive change, and who stay glued to how things have always been, are those who risk eventually becoming only a memory.



# DRIVE PERFORMANCE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders need to deliver top-notch results, and help other people do the same. For leaders, performance is not an option, it is a way of life. They know that unless they are driving real performance it matters very little what other good comes from the leadership they can provide. Leaders who drive performance take good people and good organizations and turn them into great people and great organizations. Through their leadership influence they help achieve results faster, stronger, cheaper, and better. Leaders who don't drive performance may deliver results that are adequate or even self-sustaining, but they will never be able to create the business outcomes that end up propelling an organization to the top.



# EMPOWER OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

The role of a leader isn't to do people's work for them. It is to help people do their own work, in the very best way. Leaders know they are the link between the vision and resources of the organization and the employee. They are the fuel that drives the engines of individuals and teams to push forward and accomplish their goals. Leaders that know how to empower people will travel farther and faster down the road to results because they free and enable their people to think, act, make decisions, and help amazing things to happen. Leaders that do the opposite, and micromanage people, give them a bridle and harness that will ultimately prove to restrict the results they could have produced and the people they could have become.





# ENGAGE PEOPLE

## WHY IT MATTERS

The role of a leader is to get people sincerely involved, and motivate them to give their very best. It is the leader's responsibility to influence hearts and minds so people want to do more than just show up for work. They inspire people to give beyond their normal level of contribution and really embrace the organization's vision and cause. Leaders that have the ability to engage people do more than just put people to work, they succeed in getting them to give their best to the work because they want to, not because they have to. Leaders that can't fully engage people will feel like they are running a ship at half-mast. Their people will be physically present, but their care, desire, belief, and motivation will always feel like it is lacking.



# EXERCISE SOUND JUDGEMENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders have the final say for the most complex and critical decisions. They are counted on to make the right choice in both small and large matters. They know their decisions can affect the outcomes and future of the organization and its people either for good or for bad. Leaders that exercise sound judgment break down every situation, assess it, pull it apart, and accurately determine the best way to move forward. Even when time is short, and the pressure is on, they make the right call. Leaders that lack sound judgment may rush to assumptions, hurry decisions, or read situations incorrectly. They put everything at risk by their inability to correctly determine what should be done when faced with competing paths to choose from.



# FACILITATE GROUPS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Although leaders need to be able to work with people individually, most of their leadership influence will be felt in larger group settings. Be it a meeting, presentation, council, committee, or team, leaders must be able to facilitate, lead, and direct small or large groups of people effectively. Leaders who facilitate groups are able to coalesce, unite, order, direct, and keep them on a path to achieve their purpose. They stand at the front, know where they are going, lead the discussion, involve everyone, and get the best result. Leaders who lack the ability to effectively facilitate groups can cause confusion, frustration, disorder, dissolution, disunity, and ultimately allow the doors of group progress to become unhinged.



# FOLLOW THEIR LEADERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Almost every leader in an organization reports to another leader. This means leaders can't just be good leaders, they also have to be good followers. As leaders follow their leaders, alignment is created from the bottom of the organization all the way to the top. Leaders that follow their leaders ensure that the chain of command stays strong, the organization stays uniformly focused on its target, and results are systematically achieved. They exemplify the loyalty they hope others will show them. Leaders that refuse to follow their leaders become a weak link in the leadership chain, spawn misalignment, roadblock results, limit their growth and that of others, and through their actions put the work of the organization at risk.



# GET ORGANIZED

## WHY IT MATTERS

From tasks, to people, to projects, everything a leader does requires some form of organization. Leaders by nature are required to manage large amounts of complex work. It is critical in doing so that nothing is forgotten or gets off track. Leaders with a strong system for getting and staying organized accomplish more than others do, and they do it better. Their ability to get organized enables them to keep everyone and everything moving in the same direction while also doing the work that is uniquely their own. Their aptitude for organization allows them to accomplish more with less. Leaders who can't get organized will eventually become consumed by their work and leave the door wide open for critical mistakes to occur.



# GIVE FEEDBACK

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders are supposed to make people better and ensure their work hits its intended target. They can't meet either of these purposes if they are afraid to tell people the truth, speak up, say how things really are, and give sincere feedback. They know that leaders can't lead people unless they are willing to be honest and upfront with them. Leaders that effectively give both positive and negative feedback allow the people who work with them to grow their personal abilities and succeed in delivering their assigned results. Leaders that hesitate to tell people the truth about their behavior or performance allow them to blindly continue down paths that lead to nowhere and fall into traps that they could have been directed how to miss.



# GIVE RECOGNITION

## WHY IT MATTERS

Few things will inspire people to continue to give their very best efforts like receiving sincere gratitude for the work they do. Few things will garner more loyalty towards a leader than a sincere and well-timed “thank you.” Most people work hard, and try to give their best, and a moment of recognition can make all the difference. Leaders that know how to appropriately give employee recognition motivate their people to greater performance and help them feel happy, valued, and appreciated while doing it. Leaders that fail to show gratitude, or give recognition, may see steady declines in people’s willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty because they feel underappreciated and undervalued.



# GIVE STRONG PRESENTATIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders lead through the words they speak and the ideas they can convincingly communicate. A leader can't fulfill their role unless they can stand in front of small and large groups of people and teach, discuss, share, persuade, and present. Leaders know it is their job to communicate in a way that gets everyone on the same page, excited about the planned direction. Leaders that give strong presentations can persuade people's thinking, align them to their ideas, win them to their cause, and empower them with knowledge. Leaders that can't give strong presentations, and fail in their efforts to educate, direct, and inspire those who fall under their leadership, won't ever be able to create the understanding and unity required for sustained success.






# HAVE PERSONAL INTEGRITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations, partnerships, and relationships are built on integrity, which leads to trust. Integrity is central to the work place. People won't trust each other unless they can believe each other. Some of the greatest collapses and most poignant disasters in the business world have come because of a breach in personal and organizational integrity. If a leader shows personal integrity their people and stakeholders will trust them enough to let them lead. Trustworthy leaders are given the wheel and are allowed to steer. If leaders don't have personal integrity they not only risk their and the organization's success, but they risk putting other people inside and outside their organization in harm's way through their dishonest and selfish actions.



# HIRE AND STAFF

## WHY IT MATTERS

The organizations that win in today's competitive marketplace are the organizations with the best and most talented people. People are an organizations most important asset. They are the key to long-term relevance and success. Nothing good can happen without talented people behind it. Leaders that can attract, hire, and staff their organizations with top talent gain the single greatest advantage they can in their mission to rise above their competition and satisfy their customer's demands. Leaders that fail to hire strong candidates and staff their organizations with the right people at the right time won't have to wonder what went wrong when they are outpaced and outlasted by their rivals.



# IMPROVE CONTINUOUSLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Improvement doesn't happen by itself. Improvement is the result of a mindset that is never satisfied with current results or how things are done. To leaders who excel at continuous improvement, "good enough" is never good enough. Leaders who practice continuous improvement deliver improved value to their stakeholders and customers as a natural result of improving how the organization operates. They are there to make things better. Leaders that become content with current performance and ways of doing work will eventually be passed up by their competition, glossed over by their customers, and find their time as the leader short lived because of their passivity and stagnation.



# IMPROVE PROCESSES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders make things better. Instead of allowing work to stagnate or digress, they push to improve how it is done and refine it to their expectation for perfection. Leaders that improve processes examine the most fundamental levels of how work is performed in their organization to see where large and small gains can be made to do the work with greater effectiveness and efficiency. They know that even small gains in cost, timeliness, and quality will help them to increase their value and returns. Leaders that overlook process improvement for more glamorous or less tedious leadership activities will ultimately fail to make the kind of difference that separates the good organizations from those that are truly great.



# INFLUENCE AND PERSUADE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders need followers. Sometimes those followers come forward on their own. Most of the time those followers need to be convinced why they should join a leader in their cause. Leaders need to be able to gain commitment from people who can help them accomplish their vision and work. Leaders who can influence and persuade people will gain the supporters and partners that are critical if they want to achieve their goals. They will go beyond having people who work for them to having people who really believe in and care about what they are trying to do. Leaders that can't influence and persuade people will find themselves working towards their objectives alone, without the hearts, minds, and next-level support of those who surround them.



# INNOVATE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Innovation is looking past what is, to see what could be. It is change, in action. The world is seeing fast-paced transformation everywhere you look. With that transformation, it is the innovators who are modifying the rules for how to play the game and coming out on top. Leaders who excel at producing innovations create the products and services of tomorrow. They creatively lead their organizations through problems and difficulties that would stop others in their tracks. They know that organizations can only survive so long without altering what they do or how they do it. Leaders that fail to innovate will be overwhelmed by those who do, and see their organizations potentially relegated to no more than a footnote in history.



# INSPIRE OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders have the opportunity to help people do and achieve more than they ever could if left to themselves and their own devices. People sometimes need someone else to challenge and drive them if they are going to give and be the very best that they can. They need someone to help them see and feel what they might not see and feel themselves. Leaders that inspire others will get more accomplished and go farther because they can reach inside of people and touch the part of them that longs to be extraordinary and make a lasting difference to the world in which they live. Leaders that fail to inspire their people never harness the full potential for good that is lying dormant inside of them, just waiting to be ignited.



# KNOW THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

## WHY IT MATTERS

If a driver keeps his head down, never looking out the windows of his vehicle to see what is around him, he won't get very far before disaster strikes. Leaders likewise know they can't successfully get to their desired destination until they know where they are, and what surrounds them. They triangulate their position and set their course based on what they see in the environment in which they operate. Leaders who study and know their external environment are more informed when determining their position, where they can take the organization, and how to reach their goals and objectives. Leaders who don't know their external environment will be unable to see clearly the threats or opportunities that exist around them.





# LEVERAGE DIVERSITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

There is safety in having a wide diversity of people, thoughts, and approaches. Diversity creates clarity. The more diverse an organization is the more likely they are to uncover every issue, see every angle, perceive both sides of every story, make the right decisions, and take the right actions. Leaders that leverage diversity by surrounding themselves with people who have differences in their thinking, experience, personality, background, and expertise provide the organization with the security it needs to step confidently into the future without getting trapped by its own ignorance. Leaders that fail to leverage diversity put their organization at risk of being overpowered and overcome by its own uniformity.



# LISTEN OPENLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Before people can be led, they must be understood. It is hard to lead a complete stranger. If a leader doesn't understand what their people think, feel, need, or want they will never know how to personally and most effectively lead them and help them succeed. The type of understanding and insight a leader needs only comes as they truly listen to what their people have to say through both their verbal spoken language and their non-verbal cues. Their goal is to understand their people, not just listen to them. Leaders who listen to their people connect with them in a way that gives them the ability to fully direct their work. Leaders who don't listen to their people risk becoming disconnected from them.



# MAINTAIN COMPOSURE

## WHY IT MATTERS

It is the leader's role to set the tone for everyone else. A small ripple created by a leader can create waves in an organization. Because of the microscope fashioned on a leader, it is critical that they maintain their composure no matter how difficult, stressful, or complex the situation is that they are facing. Leaders that maintain their composure in the hard times provide people the steadiness they need to continue moving forward and ultimately succeed. They give their people a strong and trusted foundation to stand on. Leaders that lose their composure when things get tough hold the organization hostage by the way their emotional outbursts dampen the work climate and the mood and demeanor of everybody else.



# MAINTAIN WORK-LIFE BALANCE

## WHY IT MATTERS

The amount of time and energy that a leader dedicates to their work will be directly proportional to their overall wellbeing. If time at work is too little or too much, it can cause an unhealthy imbalance to what should be a well-rounded approach to life. A person can't be their very best at work if their life comprises nothing but work. Leaders that help people maintain balance between their work duties and their personal life will increase their people's dedication and performance on the job. They will keep them from becoming worn out or worn down. Leaders that break the balance between people's work and personal life plant seeds of animosity that will someday turn against them as people begin to wonder what it is all for.



# MAKE GOOD DECISIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

The success of any organization is driven to a large degree on the correct or incorrect decisions of its leaders. When it comes to any key organizational component, be it strategy, marketing, human resources, operations, research and development, etc., the leader's ability to make the right decision can bring lasting success and the wrong decision can bring irrecoverable disaster. Leaders that make good decisions put their organization on the right course. They know they can't be perfect, but more often than not leaders make choices that prove correct over time. Leaders that make poor decisions ultimately drive the organization into error and obscurity as they make one costly mistake after another.



# MAKE INCLUSIVE DECISIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

One of the misconceptions of leadership is that people will blindly follow a leader wherever they decide to go. People follow leaders they believe in, and that belief is won in part when they are included in making important decisions that affect them. Leaders that include others in the decision-making process garner trust, belief, loyalty, and voluntary followership. People know why their leader is doing what they are doing so they are more apt to jump on board and help make them successful. Leaders that make decisions in a vacuum, without including other people, leave their followers on the outside, wondering what is happening, why it is happening, and to what degree they should lend their support.



# MAKE WORK FUN

## WHY IT MATTERS

People will always perform better if they like where they are, whom they are with, and what they are doing. Happy people are hard-working people. Work is work, but leaders who make the work fun and the workplace enjoyable will instill in their people a more positive and optimistic enthusiasm for what they do each day. Leaders who program the work environment to allow people to enjoy their time working will see their people exhibit more energy, creativity, drive, and passion. Their people will naturally want to give more of themselves to their responsibilities. Leaders who make the workplace a dreary destination will see that feeling reflected in people's actions, demeanor, and performance.



# MANAGE CHANGE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Change has always existed, it exists today, it will always exist, and it needs to. Progress, advancement, and evolution can't occur without the vehicle of change driving it forward. Change is the reason for every progress in today's modern world of work and living. Without change, nothing would ever improve. As important as change is, it can also sometimes be disruptive, troublesome, uninvited, and a cause of anxiety as people adjust to new realities. Leaders that manage change direct the change process in a way that enables people to understand it, accept it, and adapt to its benefits and consequences. Leaders that fail to manage change cause disarray, confusion, conflict, loss of morale, and a potential downturn in results.





# MANAGE CONFLICT

## WHY IT MATTERS

Inherent in every relationship are potential episodes of conflict. In the workplace, conflict between people and ideas will always exist and should always exist. It is on the other side of healthy conflict, the clashing of different ideas and ways of seeing the world, that the most correct decisions and actions are often discovered. Leaders that can manage conflict are able to harness the natural differences that exist between people to determine the best path to take. They help people work through their differences in a way that allows them to maintain a strong relationship. Leaders who can't manage conflict allow healthy debate and disagreement to turn into disputes that inhibit the progress of the work and generate damaged trust and hurt feelings.



# MANAGE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Customer relationships are the life blood of an organization or business. When customers are happy and loyal the sky is the limit. No matter how good an organization's products and services may be, if customer relationships are not strategically won, effectively built, and profitably maintained, the organization may eventually fail. Leaders that successfully manage customer relationships provide the oxygen and fuel their organization needs to stay profitable and viable over time. Leaders that don't effectively manage customer relationships cause their organization to be in constant sales mode, trying to find new business to backfill the customers they couldn't keep, all the while wondering when they might lose financial viability.



# MANAGE FINANCES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations can only stay viable if they maintain a strong financial foundation, and manage their finances in an ethical, legal, and accurate way. Maintaining a strong financial foundation is a key responsibility of leadership. Leaders have to know how the finances of their organizations are tracked and managed. When leaders allow for poor financial management the survival of the business or organization can literally hang in the balance. Leaders that manage finances effectively provide for the financial safety and viability of their organization now and in the future. Leaders that either inappropriately or poorly manage organization finances will find themselves in ruin, potentially facing legal action due to their irresponsibility.



# MANAGE HUMAN RESOURCES

## WHY IT MATTERS

People are at the heart of everything an organization does. No matter what other assets an organization possesses, they will amount to little if it doesn't have people that are qualified and dedicated to their work. People are the greatest competitive asset an organization can acquire. They are what makes an organization truly great. Leaders that manage human resources effectively bring the best people into the organization, place them in the right jobs, grow them to do great things, and empower them to take the organization to new heights. Leaders that ineffectively manage human resources may risk setting the organization back by either failing to acquire or wasting the most important resource they have.



# MANAGE PERFORMANCE

## WHY IT MATTERS

People need help and encouragement to succeed. If people's individual performance isn't managed well it will rarely ever improve, and may struggle to meet expectations. Everyone benefits from having someone else there to help them rise to a higher standard and push to achieve more. Leaders who manage the performance of their people with respect, sincere interest, high expectations, honesty, and consistency help them to achieve results they may never have been able to achieve on their own. Leaders who don't effectively manage people's performance will never draw from their people everything that they have to offer, or help them become all they could have become if someone had invested in them more.



# MANAGE PROCESSES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Processes create clarity, accountability, and organization. They make order out of chaos and complexity. They help people know what to do, and in what order, so they get their work done correctly and predictably. Processes are the means of making sure nothing gets missed, everything gets done in the very best way, and people know their responsibilities and the individual role they play. Leaders that manage processes lead the organization to get their work done in the most effective and efficient way. They give the organization the stability and structure it needs to succeed. Leaders that don't manage processes effectively can cause disorder, confusion, frustration, and loss of productivity.



# MANAGE PROJECTS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Millions of dollars and hours of productivity are wasted every year because of poorly managed projects that fail to meet their objectives, timeliness, and budgets. Of even greater potential consequence is the cost of the lost opportunities these failed projects represent to their organizations. Leaders that successfully manage projects meet their requirements for cost, timeliness, and quality. They deliver results in such an effective and efficient way that the value they provide to their customers and stakeholders opens doors to future opportunities. Leaders that fail to effectively manage projects by either overrunning their costs, taking too much time, or creating a faulty end product are likely to be passed up when future opportunities appear.



# MANAGE RISK

## WHY IT MATTERS

Risk is a part of any organization's work. The degree of risk in a leader's work may be small or it may be great, but it will always exist. It cannot be negated or ignored. The skill of a leader in managing risk can mean the difference between being best-in-class or being stuck in the middle of the pack. Leaders who successfully and wisely manage risk use it as a vehicle to jump ahead of their competition and create break-through wins for their organization. Leaders who don't effectively manage risk can see their best-laid plans and intentions frustrated. Looking back, they will see that they missed opportunities that could have provided a significant return on investment if they had been willing and wise enough to take a chance.





# MANAGE TECHNOLOGY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Technology is the foundation upon which modern businesses and organizations have to build if they want to compete in today's ultra-modern world. Technology solutions allow organizations to do their work better, faster, and cheaper. Leaders that effectively manage technology position themselves to meet the needs of their customers and stakeholders and transact with them in the very best and most personalized way. Leaders that fail to effectively manage technology, either through ignoring its use, making unwise investments in the wrong technologies, or poorly implementing chosen solutions, can see technology turn into a stumbling block to the future of their organization instead of a bridge.



# MANAGE THE BUSINESS

## WHY IT MATTERS

It doesn't matter how good you are as a leader if you can't lead the day-to-day operations of your business or organization and accomplish your overarching mandate. Leaders have to spend time being visionary, but they also have to be able to get into the nuts and bolts of moving the practical work of the organization forward on a daily basis. They have to be able to make the business side of their organization successful. Leaders who manage their business effectively get the results that are expected of them. Leaders who can't manage their business will see every other leadership attribute they possess quickly become obsolete as they struggle to just keep the basic operations of the organization afloat.



# MANAGE TIME

## WHY IT MATTERS

Time is one of the few things that once it is lost can never be reclaimed. When time is managed well it can be a leader's greatest asset. When it is not managed well it can be a leader's greatest threat. Leaders who manage their time effectively are able to make more progress and get more done than other people, turning themselves and those they lead into invaluable resources to their organization. Leaders that do not manage their time well turn themselves and those they lead into liabilities as their unwise use of time leads to very real consequences. The consequences of their inability to manage time ends up being measured in reduced productivity, loss of professional trust, and missed opportunities.



# MEASURE PERFORMANCE

## WHY IT MATTERS

To know how to improve, a leader must first know where to improve. Knowing where to improve only happens as a leader creates meaningful measures to gauge performance. A leader that measures performance not only provides people with an extra incentive to give their best, but also the insight needed to fine-tune work to make it as efficient as possible. Because they measure performance, their people and organization know where they stand and are better positioned to meet the results they are designed to achieve. Leaders who don't measure performance can't assess how well the work is progressing, won't know where it needs to improve, and risk being blind to the reality of what is really happening.



# MENTOR OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can only ever be as good as the people that surround them. If the people surrounding a leader don't have the ability to consistently achieve results, then results will always be just out of reach, despite any individual heroics a leader may provide. Leaders who are able to mentor others can take people from their current level of capability and performance to where they need to be, ensuring both the short and long-term success of the individual and the organization. To make the organization better, they focus on making individual people better. Leaders that fail to mentor other people put their own success at risk by failing to invest in helping them gain the capability and know-how to get their job done right.



# MOTIVATE OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

The ability to continuously press forward in a self-motivated and fast-paced manner is a difficult feat for many people to achieve. Leaders need to be able to put fuel in other people's engines to keep them going. People naturally need a reminder of why their hard work matters, why it is worth the sacrifice, and what is at stake if they succeed or fail. Leaders that motivate others instill within them the desire to give their very best and deliver top-notch results, even when they aren't sure they can keep pace or keep going. Leaders that don't effectively motivate their people may see them eventually yield to the daily grind of the workplace and fall short of delivering consistently high performance.



# NEGOTIATE

## WHY IT MATTERS

In businesses and organizations everything that happens occurs between two or more people, groups, or entities. Each side of every issue will always have needs and goals they are trying to meet that may not be the same as those on the opposite side of the table. Leaders who negotiate well are able to strike win-win agreements that meet their needs, demands, and goals, but do it in a way that simultaneously helps others to do the same. They can reach compromise in a way that creates strong long-term relationships. Leaders who can't effectively negotiate will find themselves alone, struggling to meet their goals on their own accord, without the strength and safety that comes from effectively joining forces with others.



# NETWORK

## WHY IT MATTERS

All business takes place across interwoven networks of people relationships. The pathway to leadership success can sometimes be paved more by whom a leader knows than what a leader knows. The relationships a leader has established with key people can open doors to new prospects, provide learning, bring assistance, or deliver a partner when it is needed most. Leaders who have strong networks with other leaders have the relationships they need to help them in times of opportunity or difficulty. Leaders that fail to create strong networks with other people will often be left without needed colleagues to turn to when times get tough, or when they can't meet their goals without someone else's help.





# ONBOARD NEW EMPLOYEES

## WHY IT MATTERS

The most opportune time to influence the long-term success and alignment of new employees to the organization's mission, vision, and culture is the moment they walk through the door for their first day of work. It is not easy for new employees to face new people, new work, a new culture, new expectations, new managers, and a new environment. Leaders who onboard new employees, by providing them with strategic experiences to initiate their employment, provide a foundation that will jumpstart their future success. Leaders who fail to effectively onboard new employees risk prolonging the amount of time it takes for them to become comfortable and reliable contributors to the organization.



# OVERCOME CHALLENGES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Nothing worthwhile ever has or ever will come easy. There will always be unexpected challenges and problems when striving for success, despite the best-laid plans. Leaders know that leadership isn't about surviving the times of peace and calm, it is about surviving the storms. Leaders who overcome challenges get results despite the hurdles they need to jump over. They ignore the naysayers who claim the obstacles in their path are too great to be overcome. They believe they can do what other people think can't be done. Leaders who don't overcome challenges, who let roadblocks divert their course or discourage their ambitions, will always come up short of accomplishing anything of real significance.



# PARTNER WITH OTHERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

By definition, leaders work with other people. You can't be a true leader by working alone. Leaders know they can't fly solo and hope to accomplish all that has to be done. They know they will always be most successful when they can rally the support of other people to their cause. They work to create, nurture, and turn strategic partnerships to their advantage. Leaders that successfully partner with others reach greater levels of success than those that don't because the strength of many will always be greater than the strength of the few. Leaders who fail in partnering with others will never harness or wield the collective power and thrust required to deliver extraordinary results to their stakeholders.



# PLAN EFFECTIVELY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Reaching a hard goal requires intentional and thoughtful planning. Whether it is preparing for a single day of personal work, or bringing together multiple people and large amounts of resources to focus on a project that takes large amounts of time, effective planning is often the differentiator between leaders who succeed and those who don't. Leaders who plan effectively empower themselves to accomplish great things. Their planning allows them to do what they say they will do, how they say they will do it, when they say they will do it. They are entrusted to lead the most important projects and initiatives. On the other hand, leaders who can't effectively plan work will rarely be entrusted with significant work to do.



# SEEK AND ACT ON FEEDBACK

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can never be satisfied with the status quo. They can never assume they can stop learning. Leaders become leaders by constantly seeking to improve their skills, knowledge, and character traits, but they know how difficult it is to see one's self with perfect clarity. Everybody has blind spots and needs to rely on the help of other people to know where they can improve and how they can improve. Leaders who seek and act on feedback from those around them see themselves with greater clarity and put themselves on the path of continual growth. Leaders who don't seek feedback, or who resist or fail to act on feedback will improve at nothing but anchoring themselves to their own stagnation.



# SET EXPECTATIONS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Unclear expectations are very often at the root of discord and confusion between people and their leader. It is the role of the leader to make sure that expectations are perfectly clear. They need to ensure people understand where to go, and how to get there. If a leader does not know how to set expectations in terms of what needs to be achieved, and the parameters for doing so, they will only cause problems and frustration. Leaders who effectively set expectations place their people on a clear and unquestionable path to do their work and deliver high performance. Leaders who don't set expectations well will wonder, and leave their people to wonder, if time and resources are being used in the very best way to achieve the very best results.



# SET GOALS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Good goals give direction, set a course, allow people to plot their progress, and motivate them to give a little more than they maybe otherwise would have. Leaders set goals, but they do so carefully, knowing that when not executed properly goals can discourage people and dishearten the moral and culture of an organization instead of focusing it. A leader that sets and uses goals correctly sets a high standard for performance and encourages a tenacity in those they lead to deliver performance that is above their own expectations, but not beyond their reach. A leader that doesn't set goals effectively can either create a lack of urgency with non-compelling goals or a feeling of imminent failure because their goals feel unachievable.



# SET PRIORITIES

## WHY IT MATTERS

With everything a leader can do, it is imperative they are able to define what they must do. There will always be more to do than an individual or an organization can ever accomplish. It is left to the leader to sift through the possibilities of everything that could be done to determine what should be done. Leaders that set clear priorities give their people a clear target to aim for. They harness the collective strength of the whole organization to focus on achieving a clear direction. Leaders that fail to set clear priorities will dilute the strength of their organization over too many efforts, setting them up to potentially fall short. They will cause confusion, misalignment, and frustration for those who just want to know what they are expected to do.





# SET STRATEGY

## WHY IT MATTERS

The role of a leader is to take their organization to new heights via a profound vision and clearly defined mission. To accomplish their vision a leader has to make it concrete by defining a strategy that translates it into everyday work. They have to have a strategy that defines what to do, who does it, where it happens, when, and how it should be done. Leaders who set strategy organize and unite the entire thrust of their organization around accomplishing its goals in a clear and systematic way. Everyone knows the destination, direction, and path they are to take. Leaders who don't set a clear strategy for their work leave their organization without direction, effectively leaving their vision leaderless.



# SET THE VISION

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can't lead until they have a vision for where they need to go, and a strong definition of the mission they are trying to achieve. They won't acquire followers unless they can paint a picture of the future in a way that inspires other people to freely opt-in and help make it happen. They take their organization to places others haven't even thought of yet. Leaders that set vision see the possibilities of what can be achieved, and have the ability to rally others around them to work towards a common goal. Leaders that can't set a vision will never harness the collective power of the organization to do something extraordinary, because they fail to define where they are going or how they plan to get there.



# SHARE INFORMATION

## WHY IT MATTERS

People can't do what is expected of them unless they have the knowledge they need to do their job. With the many moving parts in a modern organization, it is important employees are being allowed to see the complete picture of what they need to know to be successful in their work. Leaders that are effective at keeping people informed empower them with the knowledge they need to succeed, when they need it most. They don't handicap people by withholding what they need to know. Leaders who do hoard information, or don't communicate it promptly or properly, fester frustration inside their people and handicap their ability to choose correct courses of action and make informed decisions.



# SHOW CONVICTION

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can't lead effectively until they know what drives them, what they believe in, what they value, what their goals are, and what they are willing to do to achieve them. Nothing worthwhile has ever come easy. Leaders who show conviction run over challenges and obstacles to their work instead of being deterred or distracted by them. They don't stop pushing until they achieve their desired results. Leaders who don't show conviction for what they are trying to accomplish, or have the fortitude to see it through, are more likely to come up short when they face difficult challenges. In a complex world that introduces extensive roadblocks at every turn, a leader cannot give a halfhearted effort and still end up on top.



# SHOW INITIATIVE

## WHY IT MATTERS

Today's organizations are too large, too busy, and too complicated for leaders to have to tell people what to do or need to be informed about everything that is taking place at all times. Leaders who take initiative do more with less need for direction because they don't require instructions to decide the best way to get things done. They just make things happen. They see what requires their attention and they take care of it. They are valued because they are leaders in deed and action, and not in word only. Leaders who don't take initiative, and need to be directed in all their responsibilities, will make their employers question exactly what it is they are leading, and will find themselves replaced by someone who can take action without needing constant oversight.



# SHOW LEARNING AGILITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

If leaders want to stay relevant they have to be able to learn at the speed of change. With the ever-expanding world, there comes a constant flow of new problems, challenges, and opportunities. Leaders can no longer specialize in one discipline and live out their career perfecting a single skill or trade. Leaders need to be agile enough to wear many hats simultaneously. Leaders that show learning agility, by becoming whoever they need to become at any moment, stay relevant to their organizations over time because of their ability to learn anything at any time. Leaders who don't show learning agility will be pushed aside as their outdated skillset and inability to learn new things makes them an obstacle instead of an answer.



# ORGANIZATIONAL AGILITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations are more spread out, differentiated, diverse, and complex than they have ever been in modern history. Achieving excellence in organizations today requires much more than just doing your own job well. To make significant contributions and deliver top-notch results leaders need to be able to navigate the complex organizational landscapes and interpersonal relationships that will affect their work. Leaders who show organizational agility have the relationships and cultural know-how to get work done and drive real progress. Leaders who can't navigate their organization will be swallowed up in the undercurrent of the historical, cultural, and political factors that influence how work gets done.



# SIMPLIFY COMPLEXITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

People can remember, understand, and perform their responsibilities best when things are kept simple. Simplicity can directly lead to saved time, energy, and resources. With the ever-increasing complexity that comes from modernization and globalization in today's business world, leaders need more than ever to remember to keep things simple. Simplicity leads to understanding, understanding leads to informed action, and informed action leads to results. Leaders who simplify complexity put people and their organization on a long-term track to success. Leaders who fail to simplify complexity will cause confusion and see their chance for success drowned in their own rivers of unnecessary convolution.





# SOLVE PROBLEMS

## WHY IT MATTERS

There is no easy path to great results. There is never a guarantee of success. There is no clear road to achievement. Even the best-laid plans will encounter twists and turns and unpredictable trouble. In times of solution-seeking people look to their leaders for guidance and help. Leaders who can solve problems clear the roadways for their people and organization to continue progressing even when road blocks arise. They make obstacles passible that for a moment seem impassible. Leaders who can't solve problems will see their work and ambitions debilitated and frustrated time and time again. By not being able to solve problems today, they diminish their chances of tasting the fruits of success tomorrow.



# SPEAK UP

## WHY IT MATTERS

If a leader can't verbalize what they think and feel in decision-making, meetings, or conversations with other people, they can't lead effectively. Silent leaders can't lead. Leaders get people to follow them because they know what has to be done, have strong opinions, and say what needs to be said, in the right way, regardless of the consequences. Leaders that speak up make known where they stand, and give convincing reasons for why others should agree with them. They turn the tide on discussions, issues, and critical situations by voicing their opinions in a respectful but confident way. Leaders who don't speak up prove their inability to lead and represent others through their inability to openly represent themselves.



# SUCCESSION PLAN

## WHY IT MATTERS

Organizations cannot survive without a strong pipeline of future leaders who are ready to step up and assume new roles when called upon. Without any advance notice, an organization can find itself with a critical leadership vacancy that needs to be filled. Leaders who successfully succession plan, by identifying future leaders from either inside or outside their organization, place the organization on strong footings for the future. They know that no matter what surprises or changes come, they will have the leaders they need, when they need them, and where they need them. Leaders who don't succession plan risk being left without a qualified leader when they need them most and suffering the imminent fallout.



# TAKE ACTION

## WHY IT MATTERS

Things don't move forward by them self without help. Results don't come out of nothing. Success doesn't come without effort. Issues, problems, and opportunities don't get resolved unless someone takes the initiative to do it. Leaders that take action get the work of the organization done while others are still thinking and talking about what to do. They are getting results while others are just getting started. They are focused on delivering value in an impressive way. Leaders that don't take action, or hesitate when action needs to be taken, can only watch as others pass them by. By failing to get things moving they see productivity fall, problems go unresolved, and potential opportunities dry up.



# THINK AND ACT GLOBALLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

From a business perspective, the once sprawling and expansive world is shrinking at an exhausting pace. The evolution of technology has made it possible to be in every part of the world in a single day. Competitors and customers now come from anywhere and at any time and can either make or break a business or organization. Leaders who think and act globally spread the success of their organization across borders. They don't limit their work to a geography. They create success beyond their own backyards. Leaders who don't know how to think and act globally risk not seeing the potential opportunities or threats that exist, and if they do, they risk responding to them in ways that do more harm than good.



# THINK CREATIVELY

## WHY IT MATTERS

There are many benefits that come with the modern business world, but it also brings problems, challenges, and opportunities that have never been faced before. Leaders can't rely on a textbook to learn exactly what to do in every situation. To come out on top, leaders need to be able to see solutions that others can't see, find answers they can't find, create opportunities others don't think to create, and overcome challenges that halt others in their tracks. Leaders who think creatively put themselves one step ahead by being the first to take hold of new opportunities and break free from limitations. Leaders who can't think creatively are halted in their tracks by the problems and challenges that combine to blockade their growth and success.



# THINK STRATEGICALLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders today have more variables to juggle when plotting their work than at any other time in history. Customers and competitors are becoming more and more complex. Business functions, such as marketing and technology, are constantly changing. The world in which leader's work is continually shifting. Political and societal factors are deepening. Leaders who think strategically plot paths that can be safely and successfully traveled to reach their desired destination. Leaders who can't think strategically, and maneuver their organization through the decisions, opportunities, and challenges they are sure to face, will find themselves falling into the pitfalls that dot today's business landscape.



# THRIVE IN AMBIGUITY

## WHY IT MATTERS

The days of being able to count on things staying steady and predictable are literally a thing of the past. Leaders who succeed in today's modern world don't rely on a stable workplace or fixed workday to get results. They have learned to prosper amidst ambiguity, and are not deterred by regularly shifting winds. They become anchors of steadiness for those they lead, and their organization, in the currents of transformation that surround them. Leaders who have the ability to perform at high levels amidst the unknown make their value immeasurable. Leaders who can't thrive in ambiguity, or who can't succeed unless there is calm and predictability, will be overcome when their safe moorings disappear.





# TRACK NEW TECHNOLOGY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Today's organizations are part of the greatest technology era in history. More and more often the key differentiator between top organizations and those that are not is their ability to quickly adopt and execute new technology services, products, and business solutions that make life easier and better. Leaders who track new technology stay one step ahead of their competitors because they see the possibilities before others do. They are the first to implement game-changing technology services and solutions. When customers are literally carrying the whole world in their hands in the form of electronic devices, leaders who fail to track new technology and foresee how it can change their business will be surpassed by those that do.



# TREAT PEOPLE FAIRLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

Leaders can't force people to follow them. They know that the decision to follow a leader is made voluntarily, and that people will more readily choose to follow their leader if they trust them, and feel they are treated with fairness and respect. If people feel their leader leads with preferentialism, favors some people over others, makes decisions based on how much they do or don't like someone, or is unfair in any way, they will always feel threatened. Leaders who treat people fairly can win their hearts, and consequently, see their people become more devoted and loyal. Leaders who don't treat people fairly may see them refuse to give anything more than is absolutely required, and hesitate to back them up when it is needed the most.



# WORK ACROSS BOUNDARIES

## WHY IT MATTERS

Whether they exist between people, departments, or organizations, boundaries prohibit results and complicate work. Differences between people, teams, organizations, goals, cultures, experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds will always exist and prove to slow the work down if they are not breached. Leaders who can work across boundaries break through the walls, blockades, and barriers to their success. They refuse to be trapped by them. Their ability to work across boundaries signals their ability to advance the work forward no matter the obstacle. Leaders who can't work across boundaries are left to imagine would they could have accomplished if they weren't confined and limited by the impasses they allow to trap them.



# WORK WITH SENIOR LEADERS

## WHY IT MATTERS

Every leader has someone else who leads them. Every leader has a boss. Like anyone else, leaders have to be concerned about keeping their leaders happy, meeting their needs, fulfilling their demands, and proving they are the best person for the job. Leaders who work well with senior leaders are equally good at “managing up” the organization as they are at “managing down.” They gain the full support, trust, and freedom they need to do their work and meet their goals. Leaders who don’t work well with senior leaders will find themselves without the confidence, resources, or opportunities they need to accomplish anything of significance. They will see their leaders constantly hovering over them checking their moves, wondering if they will last.



# WRITE PROFESSIONALLY

## WHY IT MATTERS

The job of a leader is to take people places. The vehicle through which that journey most often happens is communication, and much of the communication that leaders provide takes place through writing. Leaders who write effectively deliver powerful and cohesive messages that keep their organization aligned, on track, and informed. They know how to exert great influence through written words. Leaders who can't write effectively open themselves up to the risk of being misunderstood or misrepresented, and having their credibility brought into question. If a leader can't convey their thoughts in writing, or do it without obvious error, they will struggle to reach those they lead or gain their full professional confidence.

