





Transition to leadership:

The transition from being a great individual contributor to being a leader of others is one of the most important and challenging career stages. If this first leadership transition does not go well, it often delivers a negative ripple effect that can dim future career prospects. The bad news is, more than 50% of first-time managers get lower performance evaluations as leaders than they did as individual contributors. The good news is, when the transition goes well, it can produce positive career results that are amplified far into the future.

As a first time-manager, you will need a new set of communication skills to motivate and inspire your team. Some of the most critical skills include: setting effective goals, diagnosing motivation problems, providing feedback, reinforcing good performance, correcting undesired behavior and resolving conflicts. Research suggests that mastering interpersonal skills early in your career can create a lasting effect on your reputation and ability as a leader.

Who is a true leader?

A true leader does more than manage others. They enable the individuals on their team to reach their highest potentials. By being a true leader, you show others that you can inspire and motivate your team for the good of the organization.



What's makes a good leader?

A great leader creates and nurtures other leaders. A great leader possess a clear vision, is courageous, has integrity, honesty, humility and clear focus. He or she is a strategic planner and believes in teamwork.

Qualities of Effective Leaders:

Top 10 best leadership qualities that you can start putting into practice immediately.

Vision:

Great leaders have a vision... one that allows them to plan their moves strategically to reach their goals.

Those with great leadership qualities focus on the future while maintaining a positive attitude; they're more concerned with the opportunities of tomorrow rather than the problems of the past.

Courage:

One of the more important leadership qualities and characteristics is courage. Having courage means that you are willing to take risks in order to achieve your goals. While many people can dream big, only leaders and risk-takers understand that taking a risk and failing is still more productive than not taking a risk at all.

Integritya:

Having integrity and a reputation of being honest helps leaders gain the trust and respect of their colleagues and their teams.

As a leader, your decisions should be based on the betterment of the group, rather than self-gain. People should look to you for inspiration and aspire to follow in your footsteps. They should know that your moral compass does not waver.



Humility:

Being a great leader means raising your team up to succeed. This means admitting when someone knows more than you and giving them the opportunity to take initiative. It means being conscious of your power, but never letting it get the best of you.

Humility doesn't mean that you're weak or unsure of yourself. It means that you have the self-confidence and self-awareness to recognize the value of others without feeling threatened.

It means that you are willing to admit you could be wrong, that you recognize you may not have all the answers. And it means that you give credit where credit is due – which many people struggle to do.

If your goal is to be a good or great leader, learn how to embrace humility.

Focus:

"Successful people maintain a positive focus in life no matter what is going on around them. They stay focused on their past successes rather than their past failures, and on the next action steps, they need to take to get them closer to the fulfillment of their goals rather than all the other distractions that life presents to them. – Jack Canfield

In order to be a good leader, one must have true focus; focus on their goals, focus on the needs of their team, and focus on the bigger picture. Without focus, your efforts will be misguided.

Cooperation:

One of the most important leadership qualities is cooperation. Cooperation is the process of working together to reach the same end.

Good leaders have the ability to get everyone on the team on the same page in order to get something done.

This ability is critical to your success as a leader because it will create a helpful and collaborative environment within your team that allows for the best work.



Clear Communication:

Another characteristic of a good leader is the ability to effectively and persuasively. Clear communication begins with the <u>ability to stop, listen, think, and proceed slowly.</u>

Being able to clearly communicate with your team will create an open dialogue that allows your team to ask questions, voice concerns, and problem-solve. When people understand the assignment clearly and can openly communicate about it, there will be fewer errors and issues overall.

Honesty:

When you ask yourself how to be a better leader, never forget honesty. It allows you to gain trust with your team and keep the focus on the vision. When leaders are dishonest and ingenuine, it becomes difficult to keep everyone moving in the same direction. Your team will lose trust not only with you but with your efforts. This will create a chaotic environment full of gossip and drama.

Empathy:

It's important to check on your team and make sure they feel understood. A team that feels heard will be much more willing to cooperate and participate.

To be truly empathetic means to have the ability to put yourself into someone else's shoes, recognize if they are feeling burnt out, and enact ways to provide support. Without empathy, you'll find yourself pushing people to succeed without giving them the tools to do so, which will only push them away.



Ability To Delegate:

"If you want to do a few small things right, do them yourself. If you want to do great things and make a big impact, learn to delegate."

– John C. Maxwell

Delegating tasks shows your employees that you trust them and their work. This will motivate them to produce high-quality work in order to keep your trust and respect.

Great leaders are able to successfully delegate tasks and goals to other members of their team based on their strengths. This is why it's so important to get to know your team. Strategically delegating allows you to put the right work in front of the right people.

There are many different styles of leadership, but we will focus on 7 of the most common here.

Transactional leadership:

This leadership style helps to establish roles and responsibilities by using incentivization to motivate employees.

For example, a transactional leader might motivate their team with a scheduled bonus for generating a certain number of leads in a quarter.



Transformational leadership:

Transformational leadership is a popular style among growthoriented companies as it encourages employees to see what they are capable of.

This type of leader will constantly push their team outside of their comfort zones.

For example, a transformational leader might provide their employees with a list of goals with deadlines. While they may seem straightforward at first, the manager might start adding more challenging goals or pick up the pace of deadlines.

Servant leadership:

The servant leadership style can be a very effective model for empowering teams and boosting morale.

Servant style leadership means prioritizing the needs of your team above all else. A leader or manager using this style of leadership will focus their energy on elevating and developing their teams. An example of this style could be a manager investing their time in a project to helping a team member develop a specific skillset, regardless of how much this slows down the process and takes up their own time.



Democratic leadership:

Democratic leadership is an extremely effective leadership style because it empowers team members at all levels to feel empowered within the organization.

In this leadership style, the leader makes decisions taking into account the input of all team members, regardless of their seniority or expertise.

An example of democratic leadership in action is a meeting in which a leader might provide the team with a few decision-related options. After an open discussion about the options, the leader would take into account the team members' thoughts and feedback or open the decision up to a vote.

Autocratic leadership:

This leadership style is one of the least effective ways of practicing leadership.

In this style, the leader makes decisions without taking input from any stakeholders. Team members are expected to adhere to the decision however the leader sees fit.

An example of autocratic leadership could be when a team manager decides to take on a new project without consulting anyone on the team about capacity, strategic relevance, or practicality.



Bureaucratic leadership:

Another ineffective leadership style is the bureaucratic leadership style. Unlike autocratic leadership, this style might consider the input of team members. However, if that input conflicts with existing policy the leader will likely reject it. This style of leadership is commonly found in larger and older organizations who have successful processes already in place. Bureaucratic leadership is quick to shut down innovation and discourages new ways of thinking and achieving ambitious goals.

Laissez-Faire leadership:

The laissez-Faire leadership style is often found in younger startups.

In this leadership style, leaders put nearly all the decision making power in the hands of their employees.

For example, a leader might not set official policies around project deadlines or working hours for their employees.

While this style of leadership can empower employees to set their own goals and work in a way that works best for them, it can also limit professional development and overlook strategic growth opportunities.



Which leadership style is the best?

With the exception of autocratic and bureaucratic styles, each of the other 5 different leadership styles can be beneficial depending on the project or circumstance.

Servant and democratic leadership styles can produce the best long term results for teams and create nurturing team cultures.

Transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles may not always be the most effective, but can provide value on a case-by-case basis.

A mentoring relationship is a great place to practice these leadership styles. Open up a discussion with your mentor or mentee about how this might look within your mentorship.





Important Leadership Skills Every Great Leader Has

Listening:

Listening is a vital leadership skill. A leader's listening skills play an important role in team building. A good leader must connect with their teams and show concern for them and their work. By listening to team members, it will make them feel important and respected, which will help them perform to their best abilities.

How to be a good listener:

- · Give the speaker your full attention and maintain eye contact
- Let the speaker finish speaking, don't make assumptions and judgments until the end of the speech
- · Watch your body language by being engaged with the speaker. For example, smile and nod at the appropriate time
- Show the speaker you understand by rephrasing what he/she is saying
- Ask questions to get more information
- · Evaluate carefully what the speaker said before you respond

Critical Thinking:

In order to be a critical thinker, a successful leader will gather information and then analyze and understand the information before acting. Critical thinking focuses on how you approach questions and problems. In order to be a good critical thinker, you must question everything.



How To Think Critically:

- Be informed by collecting information from many sources, including books, the internet, and consulting with employees and colleagues
- · Make sure you have all the facts before making a decision
- · Keep an open mind and ask questions
- · Be aware of your biases and avoid letting them influence your decision
- · Place more value on facts rather than opinions
- · You may encounter difficulties, but never give up
- · After analyzing all the options, decide which one will be best

Giving Feedback:

Successfully providing constructive feedback is a vital leadership skill. Feedback is a great opportunity for the receiver to learn what they can change or alter and how they can improve. Additionally, it is a great opportunity for the leader to help the team function more effectively. Feedback helps promote trust and respect for leaders and team members as well as relieve stress.





How to give feedback:

Give feedback immediately after the behavior occurs in a respectful way tailored to the individual and explain what they did wrong

Explain the effect the error had

Listen to the individual's response to the feedback Tell the individual what they can do better

End on a positive note by thanking the individual for all that they do for the organization

Follow up on the team member's performance and offer praise if there is an improvement

Always tell the team member what they did that deserved praise. This will help with confidence and motivation.



Time Management:

Good time management skills are essential in order to become a great leader. With that being said, time management is challenging. To overcome some of the challenges, it is important to make good use of your time and always plan for the unexpected on a daily basis. Be realistic with yourself, there is only so much one can get done.

Ways to manage your time:

- · Identify short and long-term goals
- · Make daily to-do lists
- · Prioritize the most important items that must be done first
- · Plan your time accordingly to complete the tasks
- Don't spend a lot of time on a task that can be done by somebody else
- Add time into schedule for unexpected tasks Your schedule must be realistic and if it causes you stress, adjust your schedule to cause you less stress.



Planning and Implementation:

Planning is important in order to complete your goals. A plan will help guide your team. The planning process involves setting objectives and goals and preparing plans and schedules for implementation. Leaders are forced to look beyond their everyday activities and plan for the future.

When decisions need to be made, leaders will consider how it will affect the future. Setting goals is the start of any plan and they reinforce what the organization is trying to achieve.

How to plan and implement:

- Determine what you want to achieve by setting goals
- List the steps that will have to be taken in order to achieve these goals
- · Prioritize and plan accordingly by setting deadlines
- · Delegate tasks to each team member
- Anticipate potential problems and turn them into possibilities. This will help the team think more creatively.

As a leader, your responsibility is to communicate the goal to each team member in a way that motivates and excites them.



Organization and Delegation

Leaders must be well organized in order to help team members accomplish their goals and objectives. Leaders must then delegate tasks to other team members so they can perform functions that require special authority. A good leader relies on other team members to carry out various responsibilities assigned to them.

The team leader must provide structure and organization so the team operates effectively and efficiently. Set expectations for team members for when the goal must be completed by.

How to organize:

- Divide work into tasks and sub-tasks to prevent overlapping assignments
- Provide the team with the resources needed to get the job done
- Assign responsibility to each team member
- Use a suitable communication network to provide feedback and more things are performing



Motivation:

A leader must be able to motivate their team. A team that is easily motivated will overcome obstacles to achieve goals. A good leader will understand the different needs of each team member and knows ways to satisfy them. By creating a great environment, it will support and encourage team members.

How to motivate:

- When people believe in what they are doing, they feel good about their work
- · Reward team members for their work
- Don't reward the wrong people or team members won't value the reward
- Provide clear direction and purpose Identify what motivates your team and provide them with a reward system that they will value. Make team members feel important and treat them with respect. Praise team members when they achieve desired goals and targets.

Wrapping Up:

There is no doubt that each business needs great leaders. Being a leader is not easy, but by accomplishing all of the above leadership skills, your company will be in great hands. Always do more than what is expected of you in the workplace.

