

LEAD YOUR LIFE



5 Steps to Master
Everyday Leadership Skills

Introduction

To be a leader, you don't have to be in a leadership role. There are excellent skills you can learn from leaders that can be applied in your daily life to increase your chance of succeeding with your personal and professional goals. The first step to master leadership skills is to be aware of what they are.

Step 1: Learning What Leadership Skills Are

Leadership plays many roles to ensure the smooth functioning of a group. Here are critical skills of a leader:

Strategic Thinking

One of the skills sought and expected of leaders is undoubtedly the ability to think, plan, and act strategically. This skill allows you to identify opportunities that will bring value to your life; it also allows you to challenge the status quo and move toward abundance.

Inspiring and Motivating

An inspirational leader helps you bring out the best in yourself. A motivating leader pushes others' to do more and brings out the best in others. People who work for an inspiring leader are enthusiastic, encouraged, energized, motivated, and engaged.

Critical Thinking, Analyzing and Problem-Solving Abilities

Too often, we focus on the symptoms rather than the cause. When a leader is faced with a problem, he utilizes critical thinking and analyzes the problem finding solutions. A leader will identify the real issues underlying the symptoms by asking the right questions. Instead of stating the obvious (or the problem), the leader will provide ideas for solutions.

Demonstrating Transparency, Integrity, and Honesty

To be successful in life, you have to be very honest because dishonesty always catches up with us. It is impossible to succeed without developing a solid reputation for honesty and integrity. Interpersonal relationships are based on trust, and you cannot trust someone dishonest. As a leader, integrity is a crucial success factor, and the most critical persuasive tool a leader has. Honesty is the basis on which all other aspects are based. The leader is a model of integrity for others, and it's about being a role model to inspire others to behave similarly.

Recognize Others

Great leaders are not afraid to recognize the skills of others and also support others in their development. The leader truly believes that everybody has the opportunity to learn and grow.

Learning, Creating and Innovating

Not only are leaders supportive of others' learning, but they also thrive in learning new things. They love creating and innovating in their area of expertise. They are not afraid to say they don't know and learn about it. Leaders embrace changes as an opportunity to grow.

Driving Results

Leaders know how to drive results because their goal is clear, and they know how it relates to others. That is why they drive results because they know how to engage others in actions that will lead them to success. They understand how people are involved in the goal and find ways to spark that passion in others to move forward.

Communicating in a Powerful and Effective Way

It is one thing to know where you are going; it is another to be able to communicate it in a clear way that others understand you. A leader's communication is clear, open, and in alignment with their actions. The biggest communication tool a leader has is his behavior. What you see is what you get.

Building Relationships

It is believed that most leaders who are in a leadership role have acquired that role because of the relationship they have built. You are probably familiar with the following expression: “It is not what you know, but who you know.” Knowing how to build relationships is vital if you want to be a strong leader. Not many people will follow a person they cannot relate to.

Step 2: Assessing Your Skills

Since leadership is not a skill most of us are born with, it becomes essential to be aware of assessing our skills. Discover where you lack and what you need to improve on. The following questions will help you have an idea of your leadership skills and how much work you need to dedicate to your development.

Here are 14 questions that will help you define your leadership abilities.

1. Can you identify your three main strengths?
2. Can you identify your three main areas of concern?
3. Do your actions reflect your words and values?
4. Do you listen carefully to the ideas of those who disagree with you?
5. Are you bold enough to ask for feedback on your behaviors and use the information you gather as a tool to get to know yourself better?
6. When others do something wrong, do you take the time to help them see what they need to change and how they can solve problems?
7. Do you have the ability to assess the state of your environment and shape it to be better?
8. Do you have the ability to communicate a vision or goal?
9. Do you have the ability to mobilize people?
10. Do you have a propensity to encourage rather than criticize?

11. Do you have the ability to take risks?
12. Do you have a sense of innovation and creativity?
13. Do you have the ability to make decisions quickly?
14. Are you inspiring and admired by your employees?

Step 3: Become Self-Aware

Cultivating self-awareness means developing the ability to observe yourself with patience and benevolence to get to know yourself and recognize your ways of functioning as a leader to transform them. It is the fundamental foundation on which other skills and qualities can be built to ensure the well-being of yourself and those around you.

Here's a simple activity to help you become more aware.

1. Regularly during the day, take short breaks between tasks, and take a few seconds just to breathe. You stop everything you are doing 30, 20, or even 5 seconds and concentrate only on your breathing.
2. When you practice mindfulness breathing, you forget what you were doing, what you are going to do next, and you focus only on your breath, and the present moment. You are just observing the air come in and watching the air go out. You feel your belly inflation with air and then deflation. You visualize the path of the air when you inhale and when you exhale. And as soon as you become aware that you are giving energy to a thought, then smile and slowly return to your breathing. Try it now.
3. Stop reading and take a few conscious breaths. Or just one. Stop what you were doing and take a deep breath in and out. Put all your attention on it, not only your lungs breathing, but your whole body. Every cell in your body stops and enjoys that breath.

Step 4: Practice Courage

We all need a strong leader who knows how to make difficult decisions, who knows how to protect others and stay the course in difficult times.

A good leader does not give up at the first difficulty encountered: he accepts failures as tests and knows that the path to the goal is not a long, calm river. In the face of adversity, the leader must sharpen up, show even more determination to reach the goal, and must have learned from his mistakes. Here are a few ways to be courageous:

- Admit That You Are Afraid
- Accept Your Fear
- Observe Your Fears
- Be Vulnerable
- Surrender
- Find an Inspiration
- Be Resilient
- Nothing Is Perfect.
- Try Something Difficult
- Train Yourself to Be Conscious
- Create a Plan

The next step will help you with your plan.

Step 5: Move Into Action

The best people to lead others in creating a plan and succeed are coaches. They are trained to do precisely that. One of the tools they use that is very efficient is called the GROW model.

It can be used to reach a personal goal or a professional objective. Whatever the subject, whatever the problem, the mere existence of a solution to be found or a choice to be made can justify the four phases of the GROW model because it allows you to draw on your resources.

The GROW model's name is simply an acronym of the four steps, which are Goal, Reality, Options, and Will. Let's walk you through the steps.

GOAL (G)

We are going to start by identifying your goal or your objective. This can be the objective itself or the expected result. Be clear, concrete, and always focus on the target.

What do you want to accomplish in life?

How will you know that you have reached that goal?

How does life look like when you have accomplished that goal?

The goal should be specific enough to give you a direction. The objective can evolve during the various steps of the GROW model, but it should not be major unless it is an important lesson to learn.

REALITY (R)

In the reality phase, you will be describing the current situation and how is the current situation limiting you or empowering you to reach your goal. List the weaknesses and strengths you have for achieving this objective.

What are the barriers to my goal?

What resources do I have to help me with my goal?

What limiting belief do I have in reaching my goal?

This phase will help you understand the situation and what led to it. It is useful to approach the situation from a cognitive, but especially emotional, perspective. This step uncovers the interferences (beliefs, objections, etc.) that oppose the achievement of the objective.

OPTIONS (O)

This step is essential. It is crucial to consider all options, including the most far-fetched ones. It is to know how to get out of standard solutions, being creative, innovating. Considering everything also makes it possible to rationally eliminate those inappropriate solutions that haunt us (ex: the magic pill that will lead you to weight loss).

List all the possible actions to help you reach your goal.

If you had a magic wand, what option would you choose to realize your objective?

What if you could start all over, what would you do differently?

This phase allows you to think of new opportunities to achieve your goal; What has not yet been done and which could contribute significantly to the achievement of the objective. It will help you support the implementation of behaviors, improvement of a process, and modification of the time frame. Brainstorm all the ideas that come to mind without judging them or limiting yourself. This phase is the time to dream.

WILL (W)

The last phase is about commitment and actions. It is the phase where you decide what you will do.

What is the first step or action?

How will you hold yourself accountable for that first step?

How will you know that you have completed the first step?

The steps that will be made among the different options will involve a strong commitment to action that can produce change. This action may consist of doing nothing, changing a way of doing something, or a way to stop doing something. The important thing is to check the congruence of the commitment to action.

Once you have completed a cycle, go back to the option phase, and see if you can accomplish another action, repeat it until you reach your goal. As you can see, the GROW model is adaptable and straightforward. It is a perfect tool for the leader in planning for success.

By applying the five steps above, you will acquire the skills, knowledge and tools that will help you on your journey to lead your life.