

WALL STREET JOURNAL
bestselling author

Success Factors

ICONS OF SUCCESS

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**LEADERSHIP
CHALLENGE**

WES BERRY

keynote speaker | wordsmith

***Business
Quick
Reads***
Series Volume 3

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ICONS OF SUCCESS: LEADERSHIP

By: Wes Berry

Part 1

Defining Leadership

“A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

— Rosalynn Carter, former first lady of the United States

Chapter 1

What Is a Leader?

The culture of an enterprise is the responsibility of leadership. And without a culture of honesty, compassion, and boldness, the difficult times will overwhelm any hope of success.

Milton Hershey possessed all three of those qualities.

Hershey was an extraordinary entrepreneur who founded one of the most successful chocolate companies in the world. His impact extends far beyond the world of business, and his leadership style and commitment to social responsibility continue to inspire people to this day.

Hershey was born on September 13, 1857, in a small town in Pennsylvania. His parents were German immigrants, and his father worked as a

carpenter. Hershey had a difficult childhood, and he struggled in school due to a learning disability. At the age of 14, Hershey dropped out of school and began working as an apprentice to a printer.

Despite his lack of formal education, Hershey had an entrepreneurial spirit from a young age. He tried his hand at several businesses before he found success in the world of candy making. In 1876, Hershey founded his first candy company, which he named the Lancaster Caramel Company. The company was successful, and by the turn of the century, Hershey was a millionaire.

However, Hershey was not satisfied with just making caramels. He had a vision of creating a chocolate company that would produce high-quality chocolate at an affordable price. Hershey believed that everyone should be able to enjoy the taste of chocolate, not just the wealthy.

In 1893, Hershey attended the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, where he saw

the machinery used to make chocolate. He was fascinated by the process and knew that he had found his next venture. Hershey sold the Lancaster Caramel Company and used the proceeds to build his first chocolate factory in 1900 in Derry Township, Pennsylvania.

Hershey's new chocolate company was a success from the start. He was able to produce high-quality chocolate at an affordable price, thanks to his innovative manufacturing process and his commitment to efficiency. Hershey was also known for his marketing genius, and he used advertising to create a demand for his products. However, Hershey's impact went far beyond the world of business.

Compassionate Leadership

Hershey was a firm believer in the power of community and believed that businesses had a responsibility to give back to the community to help

create a better world for everyone. In 1903, Hershey established the Hershey Industrial School (now known as the Milton Hershey School), a school for orphaned boys. Hershey believed that education was the key to success, and he wanted to provide his students with a high-quality education that would prepare them for successful careers.

The Hershey Industrial School was just the beginning of Hershey's commitment to social responsibility. He built a model town, Hershey, Pennsylvania, to provide housing and other amenities for his workers. The town included schools, churches, a hospital, and even a park. Hershey also provided his employees with opportunities to learn new skills and advance in their careers.

During World War II, Hershey provided chocolate bars to American soldiers as part of their rations. He believed that the soldiers deserved a

taste of home, and he wanted to support the war effort in any way he could.

Today, Hershey's leadership style and commitment to social responsibility continue to inspire business leaders and entrepreneurs around the world. Many companies have adopted Hershey's model of giving back to the community and investing in education, and his philosophy of creating a better world through business is still relevant.

According to a study by the *Harvard Business Review*, companies that prioritize social responsibility and sustainability outperform their peers in the long term. Hershey's success is a testament to this philosophy, and his commitment to social responsibility helped him to build a successful business that has lasted for over a century.

In a recent article in *Forbes*, Hershey was named one of the most generous philanthropists in

American history. His commitment to social responsibility and his belief in the power of education have left a lasting impact on the world, and his legacy continues to inspire generations of entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Hershey's leadership style was characterized by a hands-on approach, a commitment to innovation, and a deep sense of responsibility to his employees and his community. He was known for his innovative ideas and his willingness to take risks, even when others thought he was crazy.

Hershey's impact can still be seen today. The Hershey Company is still one of the largest producers of chocolate in the world, and the town of Hershey, Pennsylvania still exists as a model community. The Milton Hershey School continues to provide a high-quality education to students, and the Hershey Trust Company continues to manage Hershey's assets and invest in the community.

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Milton Hershey was an extraordinary entrepreneur and a visionary leader who believed that businesses had a responsibility to give back to the community. His commitment to social responsibility and his belief in the power of education have left a lasting impact on the world, and his legacy continues to inspire generations of business leaders today. Hershey's success is a testament to the power of innovation, community, and social responsibility, and his story serves as a reminder that businesses can be a force for good in the world.

Honest Leadership

Consider two companies. In Company A, the CEO acts unilaterally. They may consult others for their opinions, but just as often, they act on their own, making decisions that have a direct impact on

the company's bottom line. They may be successful, but with the rest of the executives cut out of the decision-making process, there's no mechanism for communicating any problems that may be developing. Even if bad news does make it through, the messenger is usually held responsible.

In Company B, however, the CEO emphasizes collaboration with their executives. They consult frequently with their teams, asking for opinions and encouraging respectful debate. The decision-making process is transparent and inclusive, and each team member feels their views are respected, even if the CEO decides to go in another direction.

Now consider the corporate culture below the executive level. In Company A, the executives are more likely to be disengaged, concerned with protecting their position within the company. As a result, they treat their employees the same way,

making spurious decisions and punishing any failures to avoid blame creeping uphill.

Company B, in contrast, will probably have a much more collaborative culture, encouraging each employee to think of themselves as stakeholders. These workers will likely be more engaged, and they tend to consider the interests of the company to be the same as their interests. The idea of punishment is abandoned in favor of encouragement, turning failures into opportunities for future success.

Now, which company would you rather be a part of?

This is especially true when it comes to a culture of honesty. By emphasizing the values and principles that guide your company, you reinforce a sense of honesty throughout your entire organization, from the leadership all the way through the rank and file.

When you model the right behavior and you emphasize the idea of mutual respect, then there's every reason to believe that your team will act with honesty, too.

What Is a Leader?

Like most things in life, in trying to define a leader, there's a simple answer, and there's the more complicated one. On the simplest, most basic level, a leader is someone who . . . well, someone who leads others in the pursuit of a specific goal. That goal can be anything from victory on the battlefield to dominance in the business world, or even getting a group of friends out of an escape room.

While that definition of leadership is fine in a general sense, it leaves out a lot of the details we need to consider in order to think about how leadership actually works—in other words, what makes a leader? Is leadership about taking control

of a group? Is it about relentlessly pursuing a goal, whatever the consequences? Or is it pushing your team as hard as possible, attempting to get as much performance as you can?

I'm guessing you all know that I'm going to say no, it isn't any of those things.

Well, not those things specifically, at least. If leadership is about guiding a group of people to achieve a goal, then you can think of bold, unconventional leadership as guiding a group to do what others think is impossible.

We've all known leaders in our lives, good and bad. We've had bosses, parents, coaches, Boy or Girl Scout leaders, religious leaders, politicians, and so on. We've had the opportunity to observe how these people lead others in pursuit of a goal, and we've seen the successes and the setbacks they've gone through, which some have surely handled better than others. The great leaders to a

person are bold and embrace unconventional ways and means; they burn the box.

Managers vs. Leaders

Often, the terms manager and leader get used interchangeably. For the most part, that's not that big a deal. Managers do often take on leadership responsibilities, and leaders will often have to manage people and situations. However, it's worth looking at the difference between the two, especially in learning how to practice unconventional leadership.

Think of a football team, specifically the quarterback. If you watch enough football and listen to the announcers, you've probably heard the term "game manager" more than once.

There are certain quarterbacks who are skilled enough to be on the football field, but they lack the transcendent athletic talent and the visionary abilities of the top-tier players at their

position. The main responsibility of this game-manager-style quarterback is not to lose the game. They make smart passes, avoid costly turnovers, and rely mostly on the running game for offense. These teams also usually rely on a stout defense to keep the other team out of the endzone, rather than on the quarterback, scoring a bunch of points.

On the other hand, you'll also find gunslingers, the guys who'll throw the ball all over the field. These players act boldly by taking chances and usually win much more than they lose. Gunslingers come in with the mindset that they're going to beat you. They're the ones who want the ball at the end of the game, knowing that when they have the ball in their hands, they can score in a matter of seconds.

In many ways, the game manager/gunslinger comparison is a lot like the comparison between a manager and a leader. Good managers know all of their responsibilities, all of

the points they have to hit and the boxes they have to check. They're motivated to finish everything by doing it the right way.

Leaders, on the other hand, are more like gunslinging quarterbacks. A true leader, in any situation, is the one who wants the ball in their hands when it counts. They thrive on the challenge of accomplishing the goal no matter what the circumstances, and they're willing to take some calculated risks to get there. They'll almost certainly make mistakes, but instead of crumbling or breaking down, bold leaders respond by learning from those mistakes and coming out even stronger.

There's nothing wrong with being a manager. The world needs people who can get jobs done efficiently. But the world needs bold leaders, too.

The best managers are the ones who can make the transition to the more demanding, more

challenging, and ultimately more satisfying role of leadership. As Peter Drucker says, “Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things.”³

If you’re still asking yourself what makes a good leader, then you’re in exactly the right place. There’s no one-size-fits-all solution to leadership, no matter how many how-to guides or self-help books you read. After all, individuality and originality are key in bold, unconventional leadership.

When someone tries to prescribe a single vision of “the ideal leader,” what they’re really trying to do is build a box around you so tall that you can’t see outside of it.

When it comes to unconventional leadership, if you’re trying to think outside the box, you’ve already lost. That means you’re still thinking around the box, even if you’re not inside it. Instead, you need to burn the box. Don’t just step

outside of it, don't merely knock it down. Burning the box frees you from preconceived notions of what it means to be a leader.

In its place, you have the freedom to define leadership for yourself. In this sense, bold unconventional leadership is a mindset, a way of thinking about your goals, how you want to achieve them, and how you're going to bring your team along with you. What follows are some guidelines to help you develop the right mindset to be a leader in any given situation.

Bold and Unconventional Leadership

There is no recipe to create the perfect leader. Different people have different styles of leadership, and what works in one situation might not work at all in another. Instead, the best way to develop unconventional leadership skills is to invest in the qualities that allow you to bring your team to success. Let's take a look at a few:

Vision

Becoming a head coach wasn't easy for Tony Dungy. After a three-year playing career in Pittsburgh and San Francisco, Dungy became an assistant coach. He spent a total of 17 years coaching defenses. He interviewed four times for a head coaching spot, but it wasn't until the Tampa Bay Buccaneers came knocking in 1996 that he finally got the job he'd wanted for so long.

At that time, Tampa Bay was a failing franchise; their team name was synonymous with failure. The team hadn't made the playoffs since 1982, in which year they finished only 5-4 after a 57-day-long player strike shortened their season. Since then, the team had been mediocre at best. They brought Dungy aboard to try and right the ship.

Dungy took a different approach from most coaches. Football is a game of strategy, of moves and countermoves. For most coaches, that means

training players to make quick decisions based on their analysis of what's happening around them. Some players have to watch the ball, other players the clock. Everything in football happens in fractions of a second.

But Dungy saw things differently. He didn't want his players thinking much at all. Instead, Dungy wanted his Bucs to simply react based on situations and tactics he'd have them practice over and over. The goal was to play faster than the other team—to get in position faster, to make initial reads faster, and to execute faster. This would leave the other team vulnerable to making mistakes as they tried to catch up to the Bucs.

It took more than a full season before it really sank in for fans that the Bucs were actually winning. While Dungy was fired prematurely after the 2001 season, he watched the team he built win the Super Bowl the next year, all while he was instilling the same lessons in the Indianapolis

Colts, who won the Super Bowl with him as head coach in 2007.

Dungy's bold and unconventional approach to coaching was what made his success possible in both Tampa Bay and Indianapolis. Thanks to his years of playing and coaching football, he had a deep understanding of the advantage his teams would have by simply thinking less and reacting more. He had the courage and the tenacity to pursue his vision of a successful football team, even when it flew in the face of the traditional coaching styles that players and front offices wanted (because they were familiar).

When it comes to leadership, having a goal is important . . . but not enough. What's more important is **vision**, which is how you intend to pursue your goal, including the timeline and mile markers.

Having vision as a leader means you're able to picture (in your mind) the necessary strategy to

achieve a goal—from the broadest strokes to the finest details. Envisioning any potential setbacks you might encounter and how you might cope with them is key. Leaders with vision know how to establish a set of reasonable deadlines (it's not good to be overly ambitious and set your team up for failure). They also know how to establish signposts to help them measure progress.

A leader's vision empowers them to think strategically and consider each tactic as it relates to the overall goal. This means that some moves may seem counterintuitive. Consider Dungy's team that first year. They lost game after game, but he remained determined to instill the right mindset in his team. He was facing pressure from the media, the fans, and many inside the Tampa Bay organization to change his methods. Dungy knew his tactics were working, and that his strategy would lead to more wins if he was given enough time.

Of course, it helps to have the courage to relentlessly pursue your vision, as well. Naturally, you may experience fear when trying something new. That fear can be good—it can drive you to work hard to limit your chances of failure. But, if you're not careful, it can also hold you back from pursuing your vision.

Paolo Coelho writes in his masterpiece *The Alchemist* that “the secret of life . . . is to fall seven times and to get up eight times.”⁴ Fear of failure is the only certain path to failure. If you let fear take control of you, you'll never be able to achieve your vision. Be willing to fail—in fact, embrace the failure. Learn from your mistakes and defeats, and come back stronger and more prepared.

Flexibility

While having a clear, well-defined vision is critical to your success as a leader, don't let that vision become so rigid that it grows breakable,

ready to shatter as soon as stress is applied. If your vision doesn't allow for stumbling blocks or hurdles, which are inevitable in every aspect of life, you might be surprised at how quickly everything can fall apart.

Just like a blacksmith has to balance strength with weight and resilience, leaders need to figure out how to pursue their distinct vision and be ready and able to react to setbacks.

This makes flexibility an invaluable quality for leaders. Without it, you won't be able to roll with the punches, and you might lose sight of your vision.

When you respond to a setback with determination instead of despair, you not only improve your chances of getting past it, but you inspire the rest of your team to rise up to the challenge, too.

Flexibility is also a valuable characteristic to have when it comes to managing a team, since a

team is made up of diverse people with a wide array of strengths and weaknesses. The best leaders know how to leverage the strengths of each team member to offset the weaknesses of others without letting those strengths define each person. You'll see why this is important in the next section.

Empathy and Development

As a leader, it's all too easy to become hyper-focused on your vision and forget about the people you need in order to achieve your goal. The best leaders are the ones who balance that pursuit with the needs of their team, including their mental well-being and their professional development. This requires a good sense of empathy and intuition.

Your team is, of course, made of human beings. Like all other humans, they have needs and wants, and they go through good times and bad times. I'm not saying you have to be a therapist.

That's the last thing I'd suggest. But you should be responsive to the needs of your team, and notice if someone appears to be struggling. Don't be afraid to ask questions in order to understand why someone's performance is not up to snuff. There's a good chance it's something very solvable.

As a leader, you should be demanding. Ask your team to give their all in pursuit of the overarching goal. Most of the time, people respond well to being challenged and enjoy the satisfaction of solving a really tough problem. In fact, those challenges go a long way to helping your team members develop the skills that will serve them—and you—in future projects.

It's important to recognize success and hard work and to be generous with praise. According to a 2019 Gallup poll, 52% of people leaving their job said their workplace could have done something to prevent them from leaving.⁵

In other words, for more than half of the people changing jobs, they left only because their organization wasn't responsive to their needs. Often, responsiveness simply means acknowledging the hard work your team is doing. You'd be amazed how far a few kind words can go.

Communication

No matter how strongly you embody your vision, or how deeply you feel appreciation for your team, the whole thing can easily be derailed by poor communication. Whether it's a poorly worded email that causes anxiety among your team, a vague and uninformative press release, or a lackluster speech, bad communication can weaken your message and crush your vision. Worst of all, it may cause your team to lose faith in your ability to lead.

While you should be able to craft clear and concise written communications, the most important area of communication for leaders is public speaking.

Public speaking is about more than just transmitting information—it's about transmitting energy. You can deliver the same words in the same place at the same time, but if your speech is uninspiring, the result will be disappointing.

Consider Steve Jobs, whose Apple keynotes were legendary. He knew that his product announcements weren't just about showing people the new offerings from his company. The real focus of his keynotes was to build momentum for his products, focusing less on the technical capabilities and more on how they would fundamentally transform a customer's life. While the iPhone might have been a success regardless, there's no denying the impact Jobs made during his speeches on iPhone sales.

Now, I'm not saying you have to be Steve Jobs. You just need to learn how to be yourself in front of people and to communicate clearly and effectively, all while inspiring confidence and energy in your listeners. You might consider a public speaking course at a local college, or else participating in Toastmasters International. No matter how you do it, investing in your public speaking skills is an investment in your leadership skills.

Creativity

According to former Zappos CEO Tony Hsieh, creativity is what separates unconventional entrepreneurs from more traditionally oriented businesspeople.

“What I love about being an entrepreneur is that it’s really about creativity,” he told CNBC. “I think that people . . . love being handed a bunch of different constraints and then try to figure out what

to do with it—those are the people that want to be entrepreneurs.”⁶

When Hsieh came onboard at Zappos in 2000, the company totaled \$1.6 million in sales. In 2009, that total was over \$1 billion. What made this possible was Hsieh’s creative approach to making online shoe shopping as easy and comfortable as possible, while also focusing on creating a positive work experience.

It was this creativity and openness that led Hsieh to institute a new organizational management structure in 2013. Dubbed “holacracy,” Zappos embraced a decentralized structure that had employees “self-manage” so administrators could keep their focus on the company’s larger goals. While the company still has a leadership structure to determine goals and implement strategy, by and large Hsieh empowered employees to become stakeholders in the company. This has led to Zappos being

frequently listed as one of America's best places to work.

If you want to talk about burning the box, here's a great example. Hsieh took a company that was already very successful and completely changed the corporate structure in a very unique, creative way in order to make his company function better and more efficiently. Refusing to be constrained by corporate tradition, Hsieh took a risk and turned his company into one of the best workplaces in the country.

When it comes to determining your vision and your strategic approaches, it's in your best interest to embrace creativity. Look for ideas that are so far outside of the box they may be unrecognizable. Of course, just having the idea doesn't mean you need to implement it. But it could lead you to a new, even better idea. One that might pay unexpected dividends.

The best way to train your creativity is to develop a lifelong commitment to learning. Read everything you can, from academic papers to trade magazines. Attend conferences and lectures, watch interviews online, and talk to absolutely everyone. Not only will this help you stay on the cutting edge of your industry and keep up with new technology and emerging trends, but it can also give you the spark you need to develop your own ideas.

Competitiveness

On some level it goes without saying that, if you're in business, you are competitive. Most people who lack drive end up stalled somewhere along the way, usually somewhere in middle management. If you're not competitive, you're not really a leader.

But competitiveness is also a natural byproduct of embracing the five characteristics I just laid out. The difference is that you'll be

competing as an unconventional leader. Be like Tony Dungy's teams were: faster, more responsive, ready to react. Be a lean, mean leading machine.

Keep in mind that you can be too competitive and overdo the "doing it alone" part of leadership. This can limit your success and sometimes means your ego has replaced your vision. When you leave your ego out of the equation, you'll be more willing to accept you're not perfect and that perhaps you could use advice or insight from an outside source.

Leaders Are Human Beings, Too

No matter how much they might deny it, leaders are people, too, and they have strengths and failings like anyone else. I'd like to take just a moment to look at two pieces of advice for leaders on how they should carry themselves.

Humility

There are few things worse than an arrogant leader—especially one who has no reason to be arrogant. Even if you've earned the right to be proud of your achievements, you can quickly do damage to your team's morale by holding yourself superior.

Instead, the best leaders are humble, crediting their team for their successes and shouldering the blame themselves. This can be a challenge, of course, since no one likes to take blame. But this kind of humility is actually a reflection of strength. Only those who are afraid of failure are willing to point the finger at their team. Those with inner strength and self-assurance are willing to shoulder responsibility.

Integrity

Hold onto your integrity at all costs. I'm serious. No matter how much we'd like to believe

that this should go unsaid, the fact is that it's surprisingly easy to let matters of integrity slide. It can be as simple as making a small promise that you aren't able to keep.

While it may seem like an insignificant thing to you, the fact is that people will remember. If you lose your integrity, it can be almost impossible to recover it.

In any relationship, whether at home or at work, your integrity represents the value of your word. If you let that value diminish, major distrust will likely spread among your team. Before you realize it, you'll have lost influence over people and situations. When you maintain your integrity, then no matter what else happens, you can still look at yourself in the mirror and know that you remained true to yourself and your values.

What It Means to Be a Leader

As I said before, there's no one type of "perfect" leader. It's a mindset and a methodology for getting a group of people—each with their own identity and interests—to work together in pursuit of a larger, universal goal. There are infinite paths to be taken toward achieving that goal, and your job as a leader is to make sure you all work together in following one of those paths.

No matter what, leadership isn't about learning to be someone else. It's about being the best possible version of yourself, a tactic you can then use to pursue your vision alongside your team. When you lead by example, you're providing a model for your team to follow. You set the tone, you set the goal, and you set the strategy. But it's the team that has to execute.

When you're developing your leadership style, it's fine to be inspired by other great leaders of history. But don't be afraid to burn the box, to

step outside of the traditional forms of leadership and corporate structure in order to find what's best for you and your vision. You have to decide for yourself what it means to be an unconventional leader. Once you do, you have the means necessary to accomplish the impossible.

Let's take a deeper look into how to be a the type of leader that any organization would love to have on board.

Part 2

Creating Great Leaders

“There is almost no limit to the potential of an organization that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them.”

—John C. Maxwell

Chapter 2

Identify Leadership Potential

One of my favorite Super Bowl commercials has always been the Anheuser-Busch Clydesdales. They've become an icon for the brand, and they are beautiful to watch.

The man at the helm of that organization, Michel Doukeris, President and CEO of Anheuser-Busch, contributes much of the success of the company to the people they hire. In an interview for *Forbes* magazine, he described his leadership style this way:

“For me, it starts with our people. Focus on recruiting the best talent, then inspire people to reach their full potential. Establish a clear vision

and then empower the team to lead the company's future growth."

In any organization, identifying individuals with the potential to become effective leaders is crucial for long-term success. Leadership is not solely determined by job titles or formal authority; instead, it often emerges from a combination of personal qualities, skills, and a commitment to growth. In this chapter, we will explore five key points to help identify leadership potential within a team or group.

1. Observe Initiative, Problem-Solving Skills, and Responsibility

Leadership often begins with the ability to take initiative, solve problems, and shoulder responsibilities. Observing individuals who consistently demonstrate these qualities can provide valuable insights into their leadership potential. In a professional setting, look for those

who don't wait to be told what to do but instead proactively seek out opportunities to contribute. They may take on additional tasks, suggest improvements, or volunteer for challenging projects. Let's look at two important characteristics of leadership:

- *Problem-solving skills.* Problem-solving skills are a strong indicator of leadership potential. This is an individual who not only identifies problems but also takes ownership of finding solutions. Leaders are those who can navigate through challenges, think critically, and come up with innovative solutions. When evaluating potential leaders, pay attention to how individuals approach problems, whether they seek input from others, and how effectively they implement and communicate their solutions.

- *Responsibility.* Responsibility is another crucial aspect of leadership potential. Leaders are individuals who are accountable for their actions and take responsibility for the outcomes, whether positive or negative. Those who consistently demonstrate a sense of accountability are more likely to excel in leadership roles. Keep an eye out for team members who go above and beyond their assigned tasks, willingly take on extra responsibilities, and hold themselves accountable for the success of the team or project.

2. Inspiring and Motivating Others

Effective leaders have the ability to inspire and motivate others, even without holding a formal

position of authority. Leadership is not just about managing tasks; it's about influencing and energizing those around you to achieve common goals. When assessing leadership potential, observe individuals who naturally inspire and motivate their peers. Here are some qualities to look for:

- *Individuals who exhibit certain qualities* such as enthusiasm, passion, and a positive attitude.
- *Individuals who lead by example*, setting high standards for themselves and inspire others to follow suit.
- *Individuals who have the ability to communicate a compelling vision* and align the team towards common objectives. Look for individuals who can articulate a clear vision for the future, communicate it

effectively, and motivate others to contribute their best efforts.

Importantly, leadership is not about commanding compliance but rather fostering a sense of shared purpose and collaboration. Individuals who can build strong relationships, create a positive team culture, and encourage collective achievement are likely to possess the qualities of a potential leader.

3. Demonstrating Strong Communication and Decision-Making Abilities

Communication is at the heart of effective leadership. Leaders must be able to convey their ideas clearly, listen actively, and foster open and transparent communication within the team.

Leadership involves making decisions, often in complex and ambiguous situations. Therefore, strong decision-making skills are a

critical aspect of leadership potential. Look for individuals who can analyze information and different perspectives to make informed decisions. Effective decision-makers are those who are not afraid to take calculated risks, learn from their mistakes, and adapt their approach based on feedback and changing circumstances.

During team interactions, pay attention to how individuals communicate their ideas, provide feedback, and handle conflicts. Leaders are often those who can navigate difficult conversations diplomatically, ensuring that communication remains constructive and focused on solutions.

4. Stepping Up in Group Settings and Collaborative Attitude

Leadership often reveals itself in group settings where individuals have the opportunity to collaborate and work together towards common goals. When identifying leadership potential,

observe how individuals behave in team environments. Let's look at two key factors:

- *Leaders should look for those who naturally step up to take on leadership roles.* This can manifest in various ways, such as facilitating discussions, organizing tasks, or coordinating efforts. Effective leaders are team players who contribute to the overall success of the group.
- *Good leaders have a collaborative attitude, the key to achieving shared objectives.* Leaders recognize the value of diverse perspectives and contributions, fostering an inclusive environment where every team member feels heard and valued. Individuals who actively seek input from others, encourage diverse opinions, and contribute positively to team dynamics are likely to possess the collaborative mindset essential for effective leadership.

5. Considering Long-Term Commitment and Growth Potential

Identifying leadership potential goes beyond current skills and behaviors. It involves assessing an individual's long-term commitment to personal and professional growth.

Consider the individual's attitude towards personal development and learning opportunities. Leaders are often those who seek out challenges, welcome feedback, and actively pursue skill enhancement. Assess whether individuals have a growth mindset—a belief that their abilities can be developed over time through dedication and hard work.

Furthermore, evaluate the long-term commitment of potential leaders to the organization's mission and values. Leaders align themselves with the purpose and values of the organization, contributing to a sense of shared identity. Those who see their role as a meaningful

contribution to a larger purpose are more likely to exhibit the dedication and passion required for effective leadership.

Conclusion

Identifying leadership potential is a multifaceted process that requires a keen eye for observation and an understanding of the qualities that contribute to effective leadership. By focusing on initiative, problem-solving skills, responsibility, the ability to inspire, strong communication and decision-making abilities, collaborative attitudes, and a commitment to long-term growth, organizations can identify individuals with the potential to lead and drive success.

Ultimately, effective leadership is not confined to those with formal titles or positions of authority. It can emerge from individuals at any level of an organization, making the identification

of leadership potential a critical aspect of talent management and organizational development.

Like Doukeris of Anheuser-Busch, focus on leadership qualities of the people you hire, and they can help you take your organization to the top.

Chapter 3

Providing Mentorship for Leadership Development

When I was young and my florist business was struggling, I asked an older, wiser fellow named Leo Harrawood for advice. He asked me to meet him at 6:30 a.m. at a restaurant to talk. I showed up on time, and it changed my life.

Mentorship plays a pivotal role in the development of emerging leaders. It is a dynamic relationship that goes beyond imparting knowledge; it involves guidance, support, and a shared commitment to personal and professional growth. In this chapter, we will explore five key points for providing effective mentorship to

potential leaders, and how speaking with Leo helped to mold the man I am today.

1. Pair Potential Leaders with Experienced Mentors

This is a strategic move that can significantly impact leadership development. An experienced mentor brings a wealth of knowledge, insights, and practical wisdom gained through years of professional experience. This pairing creates a symbiotic relationship where the mentor guides and supports the mentee's growth while gaining fresh perspectives and staying connected to the evolving dynamics of the organization.

Leo wasn't necessarily an "experienced mentor", but he was indeed experienced. He had been a WWII veteran who was now in his mid-fifties, and he was one of the most dynamic, remarkable-in-every-way people I have ever had the great pleasure of meeting.

When selecting mentors, consider individuals who:

- Have a track record of successful leadership
- Are committed to personal development
- Have excellent interpersonal skills
- Can provide constructive feedback
- Share valuable insights
- Act as role models for aspiring leaders

The mentorship pairing is not solely based on hierarchy or job titles. It's about matching personalities, skills, and aspirations. A successful mentor-mentee relationship is built on mutual respect, trust, and a shared commitment to learning and growth.

2. Encourage Regular One-on-One Meetings to Discuss Goals and Challenges

Regular one-on-one meetings between mentors and mentees are crucial for fostering a strong relationship. These meetings provide a dedicated space for open communication, goal setting, and addressing challenges, and it ensures that the mentorship remains an ongoing and impactful process.

During these sessions, potential leaders can discuss their professional goals, both short-term and long-term. The mentor can provide guidance on how to align these goals with the overall vision of the organization and offer insights into potential career paths. These meetings also create an opportunity for mentors to understand the unique challenges and aspirations of their mentees, tailoring advice and support accordingly.

Encourage mentees to come prepared with specific topics or questions to help make the most of the one-on-one time. The mentor serves not only

as a source of guidance but also as a sounding board for the mentee's thoughts and ideas.

3. Offer Guidance on Decision-Making, Conflict Resolution, and Strategic Thinking

One of the primary roles of a mentor is to offer guidance on crucial aspects of leadership, including decision-making, conflict resolution, and strategic thinking. These skills are essential for navigating the complexities of leadership roles and contributing to the overall success of the organization. Let's look further into these three skills:

- *Mentorship provides a platform for discussing real-world decisions and their implications.* Mentors can share their experiences with decision-making processes, including how to gather relevant

information, assess risks, and make sound choices. Through these discussions, potential leaders can refine their decision-making skills and gain confidence in handling challenging situations.

- *Conflicts are inevitable in any professional setting, and mentors can offer strategies for effective conflict resolution.* They can emphasize the importance of open communication, active listening, and finding common ground. Sharing personal experiences of managing conflicts within a team or organization helps mentees learn from practical examples.
- *Strategic thinking is a key leadership competency.* Mentors can guide potential leaders in understanding the bigger picture, aligning actions with organizational goals, and making decisions that contribute to long-term success.

4. Share Personal Experiences and Stories to Inspire and Educate

The power of mentorship lies in the exchange of personal experiences and stories. Mentors who draw from their own journeys can provide valuable anecdotes that inspire and educate potential leaders. These stories humanize the mentor, making their insights more relatable and actionable. Success stories offer inspiration and motivation, demonstrating that with dedication and hard work, significant achievements are possible. On the other hand, stories of challenges and setbacks provide valuable lessons, teaching mentees that resilience and adaptability are integral to leadership.

The mentor's personal experiences also serve as a bridge between theory and practice. Leadership principles and concepts come to life when woven into narratives of real-world

situations. The storytelling aspect of mentorship imparts knowledge and instills a sense of camaraderie and shared experience.

5. Foster a Supportive Relationship Where Mentees Can Seek Advice

A successful mentorship relationship is built on a foundation of trust and openness. Mentees should feel comfortable asking questions, seeking advice, and expressing concerns without fear of judgment. Fostering a supportive environment is essential for the mentee to fully benefit from the mentor's guidance.

Mentors can actively encourage an open dialogue by expressing genuine interest in the mentee's thoughts and perspectives. Creating a space where mentees feel heard and understood promotes a sense of psychological safety. This, in turn, allows potential leaders to explore ideas,

share challenges, and seek guidance without hesitation.

Supportive mentorship also encompasses the personal growth and well-being of the mentee. Mentors can inquire about the mentee's overall job satisfaction, work-life balance, and personal development goals. By taking a holistic approach to mentorship, mentors contribute to the mentee's overall success and fulfillment.

Conclusion

Effective mentorship is a reciprocal relationship that benefits both mentors and mentees. By pairing potential leaders with experienced mentors, encouraging regular one-on-one meetings, offering guidance on critical leadership skills, sharing personal experiences, and fostering a supportive environment, organizations can cultivate a culture of continuous learning and development.

Mentorship is not a one-size-fits-all approach; it requires customization based on the unique needs and goals of each mentee. As organizations invest in mentorship programs, they contribute to the growth of their leadership pipeline, ensuring a steady supply of capable and confident leaders ready to navigate the challenges of a dynamic and competitive business landscape.

Chapter 4

Delegating Responsibility for Leadership Development

Have you ever heard the saying, “if you want it done right, do it yourself?” Unfortunately, too many leaders believe that and live by it. One of the hardest things for leaders is to stop *doing*, and start *leading*.

The truth is, you can’t do it all. And you can’t do it all well. There are others out there who have a specific set of skills different from your own. To be a great leader, you’ll want to learn to recognize those skills in others, and then delegate those tasks out.

Effective delegation is a cornerstone of leadership development. By entrusting individuals with responsibilities, you can distribute workloads,

foster skill development, encourage autonomy, and instill a sense of ownership. In this chapter, we will explore five key points for delegating responsibility as a strategy for cultivating leadership potential.

1. Entrusting Individuals with Tasks that Match Their Skills and Interests

Your employees can get excited about your goals and what's possible, but they'll be even more on board if they understand their part in making it happen. Different people are good at different things, and passionate about different things. Delegating responsibility begins with a thorough understanding of individuals' skills, strengths, and interests. Then you can align tasks with the capabilities and passions of the team members, creating a synergy that enhances both productivity and job satisfaction.

Assessing the potential of an individual involves recognizing their expertise, understanding

their career aspirations, and acknowledging any specific areas they are eager to explore. Assigning tasks that resonate with an individual's skills and interests ensures a higher likelihood of success and fosters a sense of engagement and motivation.

For example, if a team member excels in data analysis and has expressed an interest in process improvement, delegating a project that involves analyzing workflows and suggesting improvements aligns their skills with their professional aspirations. This targeted approach to delegation sets the stage for the individual to succeed as well as develop and showcase their leadership potential.

2. Provide Opportunities for Them to Lead Small Projects or Initiatives

This allows individuals to practice decision-making, project management, and team coordination in a controlled environment. Leaders

can identify other potential leaders by assessing their performance in these smaller roles. Individuals who thrive in leading small projects demonstrate initiative, organizational skills, and the ability to motivate and coordinate a team. Moreover, these opportunities provide valuable insights into their leadership style, communication skills, and problem-solving abilities.

Assigning leadership roles in smaller projects also mitigates risk and allows leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of potential leaders without exposing the organization to significant challenges. It creates a platform for individuals to showcase their capabilities and for leaders to gauge their readiness for more substantial responsibilities.

3. Offer Guidance and Resources While Allowing Autonomy in Decision-Making

Effective delegation strikes a balance between providing guidance and allowing

autonomy in decision-making. Guidance can come in the form of regular check-ins, feedback sessions, and access to mentorship. However, it is important to resist the temptation to micromanage. Allowing individuals freedom to make decisions, even if they occasionally make mistakes, is essential for their growth and development as leaders.

Autonomy in decision-making empowers individuals, instills confidence, and encourages accountability. It is through facing challenges, making decisions, and learning from outcomes that individuals truly develop their leadership skills. Leaders should view delegation as a way to distribute tasks and also as a strategy for nurturing independent and capable leaders within the organization.

4. Gradually Increase the Complexity of Responsibilities to Promote Growth

Delegation of responsibility should be a progressive and strategic process. Once individuals have successfully handled smaller projects and demonstrated competence, leaders can gradually increase the complexity of their responsibilities. This incremental approach ensures that they are continually challenged, promotes individual growth, and prepares them for future leadership roles.

Increasing responsibility can involve assigning larger projects, expanding the scope of their current role, or entrusting them with cross-functional initiatives. The goal is to stretch their capabilities without overwhelming them, providing a balance between challenge and support. Assess your team members' performance and readiness for increased responsibility and adjust your delegation strategy accordingly. As individuals take on more

complex tasks, they are better positioned to assume leadership roles with broader responsibilities in the future.

5. Recognize and Celebrate Their Achievements as Leaders

Recognition and celebration are powerful motivators that reinforce positive behavior and accomplishments. Leaders should actively acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of individuals who have taken on leadership responsibilities. Recognition can take various forms, including public praise, awards, or opportunities to showcase their work to the broader organization. This serves as validation for their efforts and encourages a culture where leadership development is valued and celebrated.

Moreover, recognition creates a positive feedback loop, motivating individuals to continue seeking leadership opportunities and challenges. It

reinforces the idea that their contributions are not only noticed but also appreciated by the organization. More on this in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

Delegating responsibility is a strategic and dynamic process that plays a crucial role in leadership development. By entrusting individuals with tasks that match their skills and interests, leaders can create a culture of empowerment and growth.

Leadership development through delegation is about fostering an environment where individuals can thrive, learn, and contribute meaningfully to the organization's success. It'll take a load off of your shoulders and open up the chance for some new, different views, enhancing your organization's success in the future.

Chapter 5

Encourage Continuous Learning

Albert Einstein said, “Intellectual growth could commence at birth and cease only at death.”

Learning is an exciting adventure that can take us many places. The more we learn, the better we’re able to think strategically, overcome failure, and even think outside the box.

When it comes to bold, new, and unconventional thinking, perhaps no one fits the bill better than Lord Horatio Nelson. Born in 1758, Nelson joined the British Royal Navy as a young man and quickly rose through the ranks, taking command of his own ship at age 20. Nelson made a name for himself as an excellent military leader with a fine strategic mind and bold leadership ability.

But what set Nelson apart from his fellow British military men was his bold and even unconventional thinking. Unlike his contemporaries, Nelson preferred to lead through love rather than intimidation, combining his personal courage and charisma with his commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of his crew and his superiors. Nelson had something of an independent streak, which would bolster him up well throughout his military career.

In one instance, during the Battle of Copenhagen, the British fleet took heavy fire from the Danish Navy, leading Nelson's superior Admiral Sir Hyde Parker to give the signal to retreat. Nelson, who had lost sight in his right eye at Calvi some years before, looked to his lieutenant and said, "You know, Foley . . . I have only one eye. I have a right to be blind sometimes." He put his spyglass to his ruined eye, looked about, and said, "I declare, I really do not see the signal."

Nelson held on, and the Royal Navy was victorious. This is actually the origin of the expression “turning a blind eye.” Nelson went on to win a great victory and a few weeks later was dictating terms in Copenhagen.

Compared to his contemporaries, Nelson was a different kind of a leader, an original thinker who refused to be forced into a certain frame by the traditions of the British Royal Navy or society as a whole, for that matter. In 1797, for instance, Nelson began an affair with the married Lady Emma Hamilton.

While taking a lover was not unusual at the time, Nelson went a step further and actually left his wife, whom he did not love, for the woman that he did. Despite the social pressures that looked down on such a deed (divorce was extremely stigmatized and illegal until the 19th century), Nelson felt compelled to follow his heart, no matter what others might say.

Nelson became perhaps the most highly regarded admiral in British history, largely because of his unconventionality. He wasn't afraid to take risks, he adjusted and adapted to setbacks in creative ways, and he led his forces with the kind of empathy that rendered sailors and soldiers willing to sacrifice their lives for the defense of their country. In short, Admiral Nelson was bold and didn't just think outside of the box—he refused to acknowledge that the box even existed.

What about you? Can you think outside of the box? While I don't recommend taking a lover, but Nelson's independent streak and energy towards trying new things is something that should be considered.

In the fast-paced and ever-evolving landscape of today's business world, continuous learning is not just a luxury but a necessity, especially for those aspiring to leadership roles.

This chapter delves into five key points for fostering a culture of continuous learning.

1. Suggest Leadership-Focused Books, Courses, and Workshops

Continuous learning often begins with access to quality resources that inspire and educate. Leaders can encourage continuous learning by suggesting leadership-focused books, courses, and workshops. These resources provide individuals with valuable insights, new perspectives, and practical strategies for leadership development. Let's look into them:

- *There is a vast array of books* dedicated to leadership principles, strategies, and case studies. Leaders can recommend titles that cover a range of topics, and suggesting books allows individuals to explore leadership concepts at their own pace and

gain diverse perspectives from renowned authors. You can find them through a Google Search, or looking up Amazon's bestsellers list of books on Leadership. Or, if you prefer a hand-on approach, visit the areas where they are shelved in your local bookstore or library. Great leaders should have a shelf or two of these books on hand for their employees to borrow and read.

- *Online platforms* offer a plethora of leadership courses, ranging from foundational principles to specialized topics like emotional intelligence and strategic leadership. Leaders can recommend relevant courses based on the individual's current role and future aspirations. Investing in online courses provides a structured and interactive way to acquire new skills and knowledge.

- *Interactive workshops* provide hands-on experiences and opportunities for collaboration. Leaders can suggest workshops that focus on specific leadership competencies or industry-specific challenges. Workshops foster skill development and offer a platform for networking and exchanging ideas with peers.

2. Support Attendance at Seminars and Conferences Related to Leadership Development

As someone who regularly speaks on leadership, I can't recommend this more! Attending seminars and conferences is a powerful way to stay ahead of industry trends, gain exposure to thought leaders, and engage in discussions that stimulate personal and professional growth. Let's look at them closer:

- *Seminars and conferences provide unparalleled networking opportunities.* Encouraging team members to attend allows them to connect with industry professionals, potential mentors, and like-minded individuals. Networking can lead to valuable collaborations, partnerships, and insights that contribute to leadership development.
- *Conferences often feature keynote speakers and panel discussions led by industry experts and thought leaders.* Exposure to these individuals can broaden perspectives, inspire innovative thinking, and provide valuable insights into successful leadership practices. Leaders can guide their team members towards events that align with their developmental goals.

- *After attending conferences, encourage team members to share their learnings with the wider team.* This knowledge-sharing approach reinforces the learning for the individual and contributes to a culture of continuous improvement within the organization.

3. Advocate for Ongoing Personal and Professional Growth

Leadership development is a continuous journey. Leaders should actively advocate for ongoing personal and professional growth within their teams. This involves fostering a mindset that values continuous improvement and embraces challenges as opportunities for learning. Here are three methods for encouraging growth:

- *Create individual development plans for your team members that outline specific*

goals, areas for improvement, and a roadmap for achieving them. These plans should be revisited regularly, allowing for adjustments based on evolving priorities and career aspirations.

- *Provide constructive feedback.* Leaders should engage in regular discussions with their team members, offering feedback on strengths, areas for improvement, and growth opportunities. Additionally, coaching sessions can be instrumental in guiding individuals through challenges and helping them reach their full potential.
- *Create a culture that encourages calculated risk-taking.* This fosters an environment where individuals feel empowered to step outside their comfort zones. When individuals are encouraged to take on new challenges, they are more likely to encounter learning opportunities that

contribute to their personal and professional growth.

4. Discuss Lessons Learned from Various Leadership Styles and Figures

Leadership is a multifaceted concept with numerous styles and approaches. Leaders should facilitate discussions about lessons learned from various leadership styles and figures. This exposes team members to diverse perspectives and helps them identify the leadership principles that resonate most with their personal style. Here are some sources for lessons and information:

- *Examining real-world case studies of successful leaders* provides valuable insights into the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed. Leaders can facilitate discussions around these case studies, encouraging team members to

extract lessons and apply them to their own leadership journeys.

- *Inviting guest speakers* who have demonstrated exemplary leadership can be an enriching experience. These speakers can share their personal stories, leadership philosophies, and the lessons they've learned throughout their careers. Hearing from accomplished leaders firsthand adds a human dimension to leadership lessons.
- *Team members can learn a great deal from each other* in peer-to-peer learning sessions. Leaders can facilitate sessions where individuals share their experiences, challenges, and successes. This collaborative approach fosters a culture of continuous learning within the team.

5. Create a Culture that Values Learning and Self-Improvement

Leaders play a pivotal role in shaping organizational culture, therefore they must actively work towards creating a culture that values learning and self-improvement. This involves aligning organizational policies, practices, and incentives with the principles of continuous learning. Let's explore those ideas further:

- *Acknowledge and recognize individuals who invest time and effort in continuous learning.* Leaders can implement recognition programs that highlight achievements related to professional development and growth. This recognition can be in the form of awards, public commendations, or opportunities for increased visibility within the organization.
- *Link learning and development goals with performance reviews* to reinforce the

importance of continuous learning. By including discussions about individual growth and development in performance assessments, leaders signal that learning is an integral part of career progression.

- *Proactively provide access to learning resources within the organization.* This includes subscriptions to online learning platforms, access to industry publications, and opportunities to participate in skill-building workshops. Making these resources readily available demonstrates a commitment to supporting continuous learning.

Conclusion

Encouraging continuous learning for leadership development is a strategic investment in the future success of individuals and the organization as a whole. By following the

guidelines in this chapter, you can raise yourself and your team above the normal, fostering new ideas and leading others to think outside the box. . Organizations that prioritize and foster continuous learning are better positioned to navigate challenges, cultivate strong leadership pipelines, and achieve sustained success in the ever-evolving business landscape.

Now that you have them excited about learning, let's take a look at setting some high expectations.

Chapter 6

Setting High Expectations for Leadership Development

In 2006, the Ford Motor Company was in trouble. On the brink of bankruptcy, this iconic American brand was on the ropes. Declining car sales had led to a financial crisis within the company, and the public perception of the quality of Ford automobiles had plummeted.

Something needed to change—but first, they needed to find the right person to guide the company.

After being rebuffed by two other automobile executives, Ford made the bold and unconventional choice to turn to Boeing executive Alan Mulally. While he was new to the automotive

industry, he didn't hesitate to begin taking steps to secure the future of his company.

Mulally took out a massive \$23.6 billion loan, putting up all of Ford's assets as collateral—including Ford's famous blue oval logo.

While this loan—which allowed Ford to avoid taking a government bailout in 2008—was a major part of the successful rejuvenation of the company, even more important was Mulally's transformation of Ford's corporate culture.

Early on, Mulally attended a weekly business status meeting. According to COO Mark Fields, Mulally noticed something strange from the very beginning. “Ford uses a color code for topics—green for good, yellow for a potential issue, red for a problem—and everything was green.” Mulally thought that odd for a company losing billions.

Fields himself had a problem with a new product launch, a liftgate issue with the new Ford

Edge that could delay its release. “I said, ‘Code it red,’ and they said, ‘Are you sure you want to do that?’”

When it was Fields’ turn, he boldly labeled the Edge release red. “I could feel the chairs move away from the table,” Fields said. “I said, ‘We have a problem, and I’d love to have help from manufacturing and quality to help resolve it.’ Alan turns to me and starts clapping. The next week, everybody’s chart looks like a rainbow.”

That single moment may have saved the Ford Motor Company from failing completely.

Before Mulally entered the picture, Ford looked like a poster child for a corporate culture of fear. Individuals were afraid to voice problems or concerns, afraid that they would be blamed. They feared they might find themselves no longer considered for promotions, or worse, out of a job. Instead, they kept their concerns to themselves, painting a Bob Ross-style picture full of happy

little trees while the reality of the situation was much more dire.

Mulally encouraged a culture of openness, collaboration, and discussion. Rather than whitewashing any potential problems, he insisted that they be brought to everyone's attention as soon as possible. That way, issues could be dealt with quickly, saving the company the headache of having to try to recover from mistakes by preventing them in the first place.

Still, Mulally exercised control over the meetings, making sure that every voice was heard and established a culture of respect. "They don't bring their big books anymore, because I'm not going to grind them with as many questions as I can to humiliate them," says Mulally. He also insists that everyone pays attention, which means no cell phones or side conversations are allowed. "If somebody starts to talk or they don't respect each other, the meeting just stops. They know I've

removed vice presidents because they couldn't stop talking because they thought they were so damn important.”¹

Mulally's focus on changing the culture at Ford paid dividends. The quality of their cars increased, and they avoided the difficulties faced by other American automakers during the Great Recession, thanks in large part to an attitude shift that focused on solving problems rather than pretending that they don't exist.

The Mulally story is an excellent example of the ways that bold leadership can set the tone for an entire company. One person who makes a clear decision about the values of the company and the principles by which it acts, can set in motion a drastic change in how each person in a company thinks and behaves.

Setting high expectations is a crucial element in nurturing leadership potential within individuals. This chapter explores five key points

for leaders to effectively set high expectations, thereby creating an environment that encourages and propels aspiring leaders toward their full potential. Let's take a look.

1. Clearly Communicate Your Belief in Their Leadership Potential

One of the foundational elements of setting high expectations is the explicit communication of belief in individuals' leadership potential. It feels good to hear someone say, "I know you can do it." You should say it with a genuine and unwavering confidence in your team members' ability to step into leadership roles. This affirmation serves as a powerful motivator, instilling a sense of self-assurance and encouraging individuals to aim for greater heights.

Clear communication involves more than just expressing faith in their abilities; it requires leaders to articulate the specific qualities, skills,

and strengths they observe in individuals that contribute to their leadership potential. This validates their current capabilities and also provides a roadmap for the development areas they can focus on, creating a psychological environment where they feel supported and motivated to surpass even their own expectations.

2. Set Challenging Goals that Require Them to Demonstrate Leadership Skills

High expectations are often manifested through the setting of challenging and ambitious goals. When leaders set goals that demand the demonstration of leadership skills, individuals are compelled to stretch beyond their comfort zones and cultivate the qualities necessary for effective leadership.

These goals should be carefully crafted to align with both organizational objectives and the developmental needs of the individuals. They

should require individuals to exercise strategic thinking, decision-making, and effective communication—essential leadership competencies. Furthermore, the challenging nature of the goals serves as a constant reminder of the high expectations set by leaders. It encourages a mindset of continuous improvement and resilience, as individuals recognize that achieving ambitious objectives requires continuous effort and refinement of their leadership capabilities.

3. Provide Opportunities for Them to Interact with Higher-Ups and Decision-Makers

Interacting with higher-ups and decision-makers is a valuable component of leadership development. Leaders can provide opportunities for team members to interact with those in senior positions, which offers a broader perspective and positions individuals as key contributors within the

organization. Let's look at some examples of interactive avenues:

- *Pairing team members with senior leaders in mentorship programs* provides a structured platform for learning and networking. This dynamic offers insights into the organizational landscape, decision-making processes, and leadership strategies.
- *Involvement in cross-functional projects* exposes individuals to a diverse range of colleagues, including those in influential roles. This provides a chance to collaborate with decision-makers and also showcases their leadership potential in a broader context.

- *Encouraging attendance at networking events, industry conferences, or even internal gatherings fosters connections with key decision-makers. These interactions contribute to building a professional network and emphasize the importance of their contributions within the organization.*

4. Share Your Vision for Their Growth and Advancement Within the Organization

Articulating a vision for individuals' growth and advancement within the organization is a powerful motivator. Leaders should take an active role in outlining a clear path for how team members can progress in their careers, which involves personalized discussions about potential career paths, skill development, and the acquisition of experiences that align with their aspirations. Leaders should share insights into the competencies required for advancement, emphasizing the

correlation between leadership development and career progression.

The vision should not be a generic one-size-fits-all approach but tailored to each individual's strengths, interests, and growth areas. By demonstrating a vested interest in their professional journey, leaders signal that high expectations are not just about current performance but are part of a strategic plan for long-term success.

5. Hold Them Accountable for Their Actions and Decisions

Accountability is a cornerstone of setting high expectations. Leaders must establish a culture where individuals are held responsible for their actions and decisions. This accountability is not punitive but rather a mechanism for reinforcing the standards set for leadership development. Let's look at three ways leaders can encourage accountability:

- *Leaders should clearly communicate expectations regarding performance, behavior, and adherence to organizational values. This clarity ensures that individuals understand the standards against which their actions will be evaluated.*
- *Regular feedback is essential for growth. Leaders should offer constructive feedback that highlights areas of achievement and opportunities for improvement. This feedback serves as a guide for individuals to align their actions with the high expectations set by leaders.*
- *Accountability should be framed as an integral part of the learning and development process. Individuals should understand that being accountable for their decisions and actions is a pathway to*

refining their leadership skills and advancing in their careers.

Conclusion

I can't overstate how important it is for business leaders to constantly be aware of their corporate culture. Everything starts from the top, and the style and tone of collaboration, teamwork, and integrity flows downhill.

Setting high expectations is one way to ensure that individuals are moving towards a common, upward goal. When you actively engage in these practices, they create an environment that values continuous improvement, resilience, and the pursuit of excellence for both the individual and the organization as a whole.

But when you expect so much of someone, it sure helps to let them know how much they are appreciated. Next, let's take a look at some ways to

constructively offer feedback, and also recognition, to the people in your organization.

Chapter 7

Offering Feedback and Recognition for Leadership Development

I love getting a thank you card in the mail. Texts and emails are great too but there's nothing like getting mail that isn't a bill, and knowing that someone took the time to pick out a card and writing something in it. It's personal, touching, and honestly, makes my day. Whether it's for a wedding gift or a gesture after one of my speaking events, I enjoy it the same.

Likewise, I also appreciate feedback after I speak. Sometimes it comes in the form of gratitude and people telling me what I've learned. But I also like to know constructive criticism. Did I speak loud enough? Was the presentation easy to

follow? Did you like my jokes? 😊 This feedback helps me improve myself for the next venue.

Feedback and recognition are both potent tools in leadership development, shaping the growth and effectiveness of aspiring leaders. Nothing keeps you more in tune with your people than regularly checking in. Having regular feedback sessions keeps the lines of communication open and keeps goals on track. Offering regular recognitions ensures that your people know they are appreciated, and also keeps you attuned to their successes. It's a win-win situation for everyone.

Here are five key points on how leaders can provide meaningful feedback and recognition to foster continuous improvement and inspire individuals along their leadership journey.

1. Regularly Provide Constructive Feedback on Their Leadership Efforts

Constructive feedback is the cornerstone of leadership development. Regular and insightful feedback provides individuals with a clear understanding of their strengths, areas for improvement, and the impact of their leadership efforts. When offering feedback, leaders should strive for a balanced approach that acknowledges achievements and provides guidance for growth. Here are three key ideas to remember regarding feedback:

- *Timeliness is crucial when providing feedback.* Addressing leadership efforts promptly allows individuals to connect their actions with outcomes, fostering a deeper understanding of their impact.
- *Vague feedback is less actionable.* Leaders should be specific about what behaviors or

actions they are addressing. Specific feedback enables individuals to pinpoint areas of success or improvement.

- *While addressing areas for improvement is essential, recognizing and highlighting positive aspects of leadership efforts is equally important.* This balance reinforces strengths while motivating individuals to address developmental opportunities.

2. Recognize Their Achievements and Improvements Openly

Recognition serves as a powerful motivator, reinforcing positive behavior and achievements. Leaders should openly acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of individuals, creating a culture that values and appreciates leadership efforts. Let's look closer at different forms of recognition:

- *Whenever possible, recognition should be public and visible.* Public acknowledgment not only boosts the morale of the individual being recognized but also sets a positive example for the entire team. Some organizations have a board in the breakroom where they post “Employee of the Month” and others have a designated parking space for that employee.
- *Consider tangible rewards such as certificates, awards, or other forms of acknowledgment.* Tangible rewards serve as lasting reminders of accomplishments and motivate individuals to strive for further success.
- *Beyond celebrating achievements, leaders should recognize and applaud continuous improvement efforts.* Acknowledging the commitment to learning and growth

reinforces the value placed on the journey, not just the destination.

3. Highlight Instances Where They Effectively Influenced and Inspired Others

Effective leadership is often reflected in one's ability to influence and inspire others.

Leaders should actively highlight instances where individuals have demonstrated these qualities, whether through collaboration, motivation, or the ability to rally a team toward a common goal. Here are some examples of how leaders can influence others:

- *Leaders can emphasize the importance of influencing and inspiring by leading by example.* Sharing personal stories of successful leadership moments and their impact reinforces the qualities valued in the organization.

- *When providing feedback, leaders should draw a clear connection between an individual's actions and their influence on others.* Understanding the direct impact of leadership efforts reinforces the significance of these behaviors.
- *Individuals should be encouraged to share their own stories of successful leadership moments.* This provides them with a platform to showcase their abilities and also contributes to a culture of shared learning and inspiration.

4. Address Areas for Improvement with Actionable Suggestions

Feedback is most effective when it provides actionable insights for improvement. When addressing areas for development, leaders should guide individuals toward tangible steps they can

take to enhance their leadership skills. Let's explore how to increase the effectiveness of feedback:

- *Be specific and concrete.* Rather than vague statements, leaders should provide specific examples and actionable suggestions. This clarity helps individuals understand precisely what needs improvement and how to go about it.
- *Frame Feedback Positively.* Constructive feedback should be framed in a positive light, emphasizing growth opportunities rather than shortcomings. A positive framing encourages individuals to view feedback as a catalyst for improvement rather than as criticism.
- *Engage individuals in collaborative goal-setting* based on the feedback provided. This empowers them to take ownership of

their development and ensures that goals are aligned with organizational objectives.

5. Encourage a Growth-Oriented Mindset When Receiving Feedback

Feedback is a two-way street; individuals must be open to receiving feedback to benefit fully from the developmental process. Leaders should actively encourage an environment where individuals see feedback as a valuable tool for learning and improvement. Here are three ways to encourage a growth-oriented mindset:

- *Normalize the process of giving and receiving feedback.* Emphasize that feedback is a natural part of professional growth and an essential component of leadership development.
- *Position feedback as an opportunity for learning and development* rather than as a

critique. Effective mentors should reinforce the idea that even the most accomplished leaders continually seek feedback to refine their skills.

- *Leaders should model the behavior* they wish to see in others. Demonstrating openness to feedback and actively seeking input from peers and subordinates sets a positive example for the entire team.

Conclusion

Offering feedback and recognition is an art that, when mastered, becomes a catalyst for leadership development. Leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the culture of their teams by providing timely and constructive feedback, recognizing achievements openly, highlighting instances of effective influence, addressing improvement areas

with actionable suggestions, and encouraging a growth-oriented mindset.

And it never hurts to send a “thank-you” note, either.

Ultimately, effective feedback and recognition foster a culture of continuous improvement and success within the organization.

Chapter 8

Promoting Cross-Functional Experience

The iPhone is probably one of the greatest examples of cross functional collaboration. Not surprisingly, Apple Inc. is often at the forefront of anything innovative.

Here's the story.

Steve Jobs initiated "Project Purple," a secret internal initiative that ultimately resulted in the first iPhone. He pulled together a group of different types of engineers: hardware engineers, software engineers, and design engineers, who all worked closely together to build the first prototypes. The team would present their findings on a regular basis to managers, as well as Steve Jobs

himself. It wasn't easy. There are reports that communication was challenging and working together not always easy, especially under the deadlines, but they managed to pull it off.

To further promote cross-functional experiences, an engineer from the Project Purple team led the marketing campaign. He even starred in the first video about the iPhone.

This mix of talent not only gave individuals a chance to see how the “other side” works, but it allowed them to try other skill sets. In short, experiencing different jobs allowed them to not only create but effectively market a new product. And it obviously worked. Today the iPhone is one of Apple's biggest sources of revenue.

Cross-functional experience is a strong catalyst for leadership development, providing individuals with a broader perspective and supporting adaptability in dynamic work environments. Here are some ways that you can

strategically promote cross-functional experience to nurture well-rounded leaders.

1. Assign Individuals to Work on Projects Outside Their Comfort Zones

One of the most effective ways to promote cross-functional experience is by deliberately assigning individuals to projects that take them beyond their comfort zones, such as Apple's engineer initiating the marketing campaign for the iPhone. Stepping into unfamiliar territory challenges individuals to develop new skills, adapt to different working styles, and broaden their understanding of the organization. Let's look at some examples of how leaders can encourage individuals to expand their horizons:

- *Offer Strategic Project Assignments.*
Leaders can strategically identify projects that align with organizational goals while

requiring skills and expertise from various departments. These assignments should stretch individuals' capabilities, encouraging them to acquire new knowledge and collaborate with diverse teams.

- *Encourage Risk-Taking.* Cross-functional projects inherently involve a degree of risk, as individuals navigate uncharted territories. Leaders should create an environment where calculated risk-taking is encouraged, emphasizing that growth often occurs outside of one's comfort zone.
- *Provide Support and Resources.* Individuals embarking on cross-functional projects may encounter challenges, so leaders should ensure that adequate support and resources are available, fostering an environment where individuals feel empowered to take on new challenges.

2. Expose Them to Various Departments and Roles Within the Organization

Cross-functional experience thrives on exposure to various departments and roles within the organization. Leaders can facilitate this exposure by creating structured opportunities for individuals to rotate or collaborate across different functional areas. Let's explore some opportunities:

- *Implementing rotation programs* allows individuals to experience different facets of the organization. Whether it's spending time in marketing, finance, operations, or other departments, these programs provide a comprehensive view of the organization's inner workings.
- *Encourage individuals to shadow colleagues* in different roles or engage in

mentorship programs. Direct exposure to the day-to-day responsibilities of colleagues fosters a deeper understanding of their roles and the interconnectedness of different functions.

- *Promote cross-functional collaboration by initiating projects that require contributions from multiple departments.* This collaborative approach not only breaks down silos but also encourages individuals to appreciate the unique perspectives and expertise each department brings to the table.

3. Encourage Them to Collaborate with Colleagues from Different Backgrounds

Effective cross-functional experience is not just about exposure to different roles but also about collaboration with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. Leaders should actively encourage

individuals to seek out and engage with colleagues who bring different skills, experiences, and perspectives to the table. Here are some ways to increase diversity:

- *Leaders can emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion within the organization through initiatives.* Actively support initiatives that bring together individuals from different backgrounds, creating an environment where collaboration thrives.
- *Structure teams to be cross-functional,* bringing together individuals with varied expertise to work collectively on projects. This promotes collaboration and enables individuals to learn from each other and leverage diverse skill sets.

- *Training on cultural competency* will enhance individuals' ability to collaborate effectively with colleagues from diverse backgrounds. This training can include understanding different communication styles, cultural nuances, and the value of diversity in problem-solving.

4. Broaden Their Perspective and Foster Adaptability

The value of cross-functional experience lies in its ability to broaden individuals' perspectives and foster adaptability. Leaders should actively communicate that a broad perspective is essential for effective leadership in complex and dynamic environments. Let's look at some ways leaders can support these valued outcomes:

- *Leaders should position adaptability as a core competency for leadership within the organization.* They should communicate that leaders who can navigate diverse challenges, adapt to changing circumstances, and embrace new perspectives are crucial for the organization's success.
- *Individuals should be actively encouraged to seek learning opportunities from different functions.* This could involve attending training sessions, participating in knowledge-sharing forums, or engaging in informal conversations with colleagues from various departments.
- *Leaders who can see the big picture* are better equipped to make informed decisions that consider the impact on various departments and the organization as a

whole. Individuals should understand that cross-functional experience contributes to a holistic understanding of the organization.

5. Reinforce the Importance of the Organization as a Whole

This overarching perspective is critical for effective decision-making, strategic planning, and the development of leaders who can navigate the complexities of the business landscape. Let's explore how leaders can encourage the understanding of organizations:

- *Leaders should help individuals see how their contributions, even within specific departments or projects, align with and contribute to the overall goals of the organization.* This connection reinforces the idea that every role plays a crucial part in the organization's success.

- *Leadership training programs* emphasize the significance of holistic leadership. These programs can include modules on organizational strategy, cross-functional collaboration, and the integration of various functions.
- *Leaders should regularly communicate the organizational vision, goals, and strategies.* This communication ensures that individuals are aligned with the broader objectives and understand how their work fits into the larger narrative of the organization.

Conclusion

Most of the time, cross-functional collaboration results in less stress and more success. Of course, there will be communications issues and frustrations when you are pairing different types of individuals together. But as they

work through that and learn each other's roles, a newer, better and stronger team will most likely result. As with the Apple iPhone, when your organization promotes cross-functional experience, it will hopefully lead to success beyond your wildest dreams.

Hey Siri, what do you think?

Chapter 9

Creating Leadership Opportunities

There is nothing more inspiring than watching a leader open a door to create an opportunity for another leader. While it can be true that “too many cooks spoil the broth”, the fact is, for most employees the #1 thing they want from their job is the opportunity for growth and development, even above cash bonuses.

You may be afraid they’ll leave if you train them too well. But they will leave if they are bored also. Providing leadership opportunities is a strategic approach to fostering the development of individuals aspiring to leadership roles.

Let’s look at some ways that leaders can actively create opportunities for their team

members to step into leadership roles, contributing to their professional growth and the overall success of the organization.

1. Identify Situations Where They Can Lead Team Meetings or Discussions

One of the fundamental ways to create leadership opportunities is by identifying situations where individuals can take the lead in team meetings or discussions. This exposure not only enhances their visibility within the team but also provides a platform to showcase and develop their leadership skills. Here are some examples of leadership opportunities:

- *Leaders should encourage individuals to take on the role of facilitating team meetings.* This involves setting the agenda, guiding discussions, and ensuring that the team stays focused on its objectives.

Leaders should provide support and constructive feedback to help them refine their facilitation skills.

- *Identify opportunities for team members to lead problem-solving sessions or discussions around challenges the team is facing.* This not only allows them to showcase their analytical and critical-thinking skills but also positions them as contributors to the team's success.
- *Encourage Cross-Functional Collaboration Meetings.* In situations involving collaboration with other departments or teams, individuals can lead joint meetings. This cross-functional exposure not only expands their leadership experience but also fosters collaboration across the organization.

2. Nominate Them for Leadership Roles in Committees or Task Forces

Committees and task forces are excellent arenas for leadership development. Leaders can actively nominate team members for these roles, providing them with opportunities to lead and contribute to initiatives beyond their immediate team. Let's look closer at committees and task forces:

- *Identify relevant committees within the organization*, such as those focused on strategic planning, diversity and inclusion, or process improvement. Nominate individuals to represent their team's perspective and actively participate in committee discussions.
- *Task Forces*. These are often formed to address specific challenges or

opportunities. Nominating individuals to lead or participate in task forces allows them to demonstrate leadership in a focused and time-bound context, contributing to the resolution of critical issues.

- *Cross-Functional Task Forces: These offer a more comprehensive leadership experience, and provide individuals with exposure to different parts of the organization, fostering a broader understanding of the business landscape.*

3. Encourage Them to Initiate and Organize Events or Workshops

This is a proactive way for individuals to showcase their leadership abilities. Leaders can encourage team members to take the lead in planning and executing such initiatives. Here are some specific events that they could contribute to:

- *Individuals can organize workshops where they share their expertise on a particular subject.* This not only positions them as subject matter experts but also allows them to practice leadership skills in coordinating and delivering the workshop.
- *Individuals can organize team-building events or activities.* This provides an opportunity for them to demonstrate their organizational and interpersonal skills, contributing to a positive team culture.
- *Individuals can take the lead in organizing networking events within or outside the organization.* This allows individuals to showcase their leadership in fostering connections and collaboration. This is particularly valuable for roles that require relationship-building skills.

4. Let Individuals Represent the Team or Department in Higher-Level Discussions

Representation in higher-level discussions is a significant leadership opportunity. Leaders should actively give individuals the chance to represent the team or department in meetings or discussions with higher-ups, allowing them to develop skills in advocacy, communication, and strategic thinking. Let's look at some examples:

- *Cross-Functional Meetings:* In situations involving discussions that span multiple teams or departments, individuals can represent their team's perspective. This provides exposure to higher-level decision-making processes and demonstrates their ability to communicate effectively at a broader organizational level.

- *Presentations to Leadership:* Encourage team members to prepare and deliver presentations to higher-level leadership. This could involve sharing team achievements, proposing new initiatives, or providing updates on ongoing projects. The experience of presenting to leadership fosters confidence and communication skills.
- *Strategic Planning Sessions:* When the organization is involved in strategic planning or decision-making sessions, team members should participate. This exposure not only contributes to their understanding of organizational strategy but also positions them as contributors to the strategic direction of the company.

5. Champion Their Leadership Roles in Projects that Align with Their Skills

Leaders can actively champion the leadership roles of individuals by strategically assigning them to projects that align with their skills, interests, and aspirations. This targeted approach ensures that individuals are placed in situations where they can excel and develop their leadership abilities. Let's look at some projects to involve individuals in:

- *Skill-Aligned Projects:* Identify projects that align with the specific skills and strengths of individuals. This could include projects requiring strong analytical abilities, creative problem-solving, or effective communication. Placing individuals in projects that align with their skills enhances their chances of successful leadership.
- *Developmental Projects:* Assign individuals to projects that provide developmental opportunities aligned with

their career goals. This could involve exposure to new technologies, industries, or leadership challenges. The intentional alignment of projects with developmental goals ensures a purposeful and enriching leadership experience.

- **Innovative Initiatives:** For individuals with a passion for innovation, they can lead projects focused on introducing new processes, technologies, or products. This allows them to showcase their leadership in driving innovation within the organization.

Conclusion

It takes a strong leader to offer others the same opportunities. Ultimately, by offering them opportunities to lead, you will weed out those who wish to lead, and those who are content with their current roles. Not everyone wants to lead, or is made to lead, but creating leadership opportunities

for those who do is a strategic imperative that will contribute to the growth and success of both individuals and the organization.

Chapter 10

Cultivating Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is the capacity to recognize and manage one's own moods, and to be able to recognize the moods of others as well. It's having empathy for others. It's elevating your self-awareness, and the awareness of your surroundings.

Some of our strongest and best films involve characters with high emotional intelligence. Sure, in any good story they have to overcome something, but think about the dialogue in good character-driven stories. Someone is hurting or joyful, or struggling to figure out something like a relationship or a job decision. A good friend/colleague/family member notices they are struggling, comes to them and asks how they

are. They reply that they are okay, but the friend/colleague/family member insists that they don't seem okay. Then ensues a discussion, which not only involves active listening on the part of the friend/colleague/family member, but allows our struggling main character to share what is burdening them.

I know. . .we're not writing screenplays, but in truth, isn't some of this emotional stuff what make the world go round? Communication, and the awareness of what our fellow humans are feeling? Don't we all, to some want, want to be noticed?

Before I wax all emotional, I'll move into the discussion of cultivating emotional intelligence in the workplace.

This chapter explores five key points on how leaders can actively cultivate emotional intelligence in their team members, enhancing their ability to navigate complex interpersonal dynamics and excel as leaders.

1. Teach Them to Understand and Manage Their Own Emotions

Understanding and managing one's own emotions is foundational to emotional intelligence. Guide your team members in developing this aspect of emotional intelligence by providing tools and insights for self-awareness and self-regulation. Here are some tools you can use:

- Emotional Awareness: Start by fostering an awareness of individual emotions, such as encouraging team members to reflect on their emotional states and identifying the specific emotions they are experiencing and the triggers that lead to those emotions.
- *Mindfulness practices* help individuals stay present and observe their emotions without judgment. Mindfulness can include

activities such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or journaling.

- *Self-Regulation Techniques:* Teach techniques for self-regulation, empowering individuals to manage their emotions effectively. This may involve developing strategies for coping with stress, frustration, or other challenging emotions in a constructive manner.

2. Encourage Active Listening and Empathy Toward Others

Active listening and empathy are essential components of emotional intelligence, enabling individuals to understand and respond to the emotions of those around them. Leaders can foster these skills through intentional coaching and experiential learning. Let's look at some examples:

- *Active Listening Training:* Provide training on active listening skills, emphasizing the importance of fully engaging with others during conversations. This includes making eye contact, avoiding interruptions, and summarizing or paraphrasing to demonstrate understanding.
- *Empathy Building Exercises:* These exercises allow team members to step into the shoes of others. This could involve role-playing scenarios, sharing personal experiences, or participating in activities that promote understanding of different perspectives.
- *Encourage Perspective-Taking:* Stress the significance of perspective-taking, wherein individuals actively try to understand situations from the viewpoint of their colleagues. This fosters a culture of

empathy and strengthens team relationships.

3. Discuss the Importance of Effective Communication and Conflict Resolution

Effective communication is at the heart of emotional intelligence, and leaders play a crucial role in guiding individuals toward clear and constructive interactions. Additionally, conflict resolution skills are vital for maintaining positive team dynamics. Here are some ways communication can be strengthened:

- *Communication Workshops: Leaders can conduct workshops on effective communication, covering aspects such as clear articulation, non-verbal cues, and the importance of context. Practical exercises can be incorporated to reinforce these principles.*

- *Conflict Resolution Training:* Provide training on conflict resolution strategies, emphasizing the value of addressing conflicts in a timely and constructive manner. Teach individuals how to navigate disagreements while preserving relationships and fostering mutual understanding.
- *Model Effective Communication:* Leaders should model effective communication in their interactions with team members. This includes being transparent, providing constructive feedback, and actively seeking input from others.

4. Guide Them in Adapting Their Leadership Style to Different Personalities

Adapting leadership styles to different personalities is a hallmark of emotionally

intelligent leaders. Leaders should guide their team members in recognizing and flexing their leadership approach based on the diverse personalities within the team. Here's some ways both leaders and team members can better understand learning styles:

- *Personality assessments* help individuals understand their own preferences and those of their colleagues. Tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or the DiSC Personality Assessment can provide valuable insights.
- *Leadership Style Workshops*: Leaders can conduct these to teach how different leadership styles align with various personality traits. Encourage individuals to reflect on their own leadership tendencies and consider how they might adapt their approach to better connect with others.

- *Pair individual with seasoned leaders who can serve as mentors.* Exposure to leaders with diverse leadership styles allows individuals to learn firsthand about the adaptability required in leadership roles.

5. Stress the Significance of Building Positive Relationships

Positive relationships form the bedrock of effective teamwork and leadership. Leaders should emphasize the importance of building and nurturing positive relationships within the team and across the organization. Let's explore some examples of positive relationship building:

- *Team-building activities* promote camaraderie and collaboration. These activities can range from offsite retreats to smaller, regular team-building exercises that foster a sense of unity.

- *Encourage a culture of recognition and appreciation* where team members acknowledge each other's contributions. This can include formal recognition programs as well as informal expressions of gratitude.
- *Foster a Positive Team Culture:* By guiding individuals in creating a positive team culture, they learn to value mutual support, inclusivity, and a shared sense of purpose. Positive relationships increase team morale and productivity.

Conclusion

It takes a strong person to be vulnerable and reach out to communicate with others in your workplace. But leading by example and then moving to cultivate emotional intelligence in others is a transformative journey that enhances an

individual's ability to navigate the complexities of human interaction. By teaching training potential leaders to have emotional intelligence, you are developing individuals who will not only be better leaders, but who will in turn, make the world (and workplace) just a little bit better as well.

Chapter 11

Leading by Example

Jerry Rice is considered by many to be the best wide receiver in the history of NFL football. He got that way by hard work. Even when he was in high school, he worked harder than all of his teammates, pushing himself to run more and harder in the humid heat of rural Mississippi. When he made the NFL, Rice always showed up early for team meetings, he encouraged his teammates to run sprints with him, uphill, like he had done in high school. Then, after they went home, he'd spend 2 ½ hours lifting weights, six days a week. When the team left for trips, he was always early or on time for the bus.

It paid off. He still holds NFL records, and he also gained the respect of his teammates and others in football.

Leading by example is a powerful leadership approach that transcends words and relies on the influential impact of actions.

How can business leaders authentically lead by example, shaping the behaviors and qualities they wish to instill in their team members? Let's take a look.

1. Demonstrate Leadership Behaviors and Qualities in Your Own Actions

Like Jerry Rice, business leaders can begin by a consistent demonstration of leadership behaviors and qualities through personal actions. As a leader, your conduct becomes a template for the team, shaping their understanding of what it means to lead effectively. Let's look at four examples of leadership behavior:

- *Integrity and Ethical Conduct:* Model Leaders should model unwavering integrity and ethical behavior in every aspect of your work. They should demonstrate honesty, fairness, and a commitment to ethical decision-making, setting the standard for ethical conduct within the team.
- *Accountability:* Leaders should also take ownership of their own responsibilities and actions. When mistakes occur, acknowledge them, learn from them, and showcase how accountability contributes to personal and team growth.
- *Initiative and Proactiveness:* By exhibiting a proactive approach to problem-solving and decision-making, it shows the value of taking initiative and demonstrate how

proactive leadership contributes to the team's success.

- *Resilience and Adaptability:* In the face of challenges or setbacks, leaders should display resilience and adaptability. Overcoming obstacles is a natural part of leadership, and resilience is crucial for navigating uncertainties.

2. Be Transparent About Your Decision-Making Process

Transparency in decision-making is a cornerstone of effective leadership. By openly sharing your decision-making process, you provide insight into the rationale behind choices, fostering trust and understanding within the team. Here are some ways to display transparency:

- *Communicate Intent:* Clearly communicate the intent behind your decisions and explain the goals, considerations, and factors that influenced your choice. This transparency helps team members understand the context and purpose of decisions.
- *Solicit Input:* Demonstrate a willingness to seek input from the team before making decisions. This shows that diverse perspectives are valued and that decisions are made with a comprehensive understanding of the situation.
- *Address Uncertainties:* Acknowledge when decisions are made in the face of uncertainties. Transparency about the challenges and unknowns reinforces that leadership requires making informed choices, even when the path forward is not entirely clear.

3. Share Your Challenges and How You've Overcome Them as a Leader

Vulnerability is a powerful tool in leadership. Sharing your challenges and detailing how you've overcome them provides valuable lessons for your team and cultivates a culture that embraces growth and resilience. Let's look closer at some examples:

- *Share personal anecdotes about challenges* you've faced in your leadership journey and discuss the specific actions you took to address these challenges and the lessons learned along the way.
- *Setbacks are opportunities for learning and growth.* By illustrating instances where setbacks led to positive changes, improvements, or new perspectives, it

reinforces the idea that challenges are integral to professional development.

- *Cultivate a growth mindset.* This frames challenges as opportunities for improvement. Leader should demonstrate that their mindset is focused on continuous learning and that obstacles are steppingstones to success.

4. Illustrate How to Manage Responsibilities, Conflicts, and Expectations

Effective leadership involves adeptly managing responsibilities, navigating conflicts, and setting clear expectations. Leaders can guide their teams by illustrating how these aspects are handled in a constructive and solution-oriented manner. Let's dive into some examples:

- *Demonstrate effective delegation.* Effective delegation allocates responsibilities based on individual strengths and skills. It also fosters collaboration and empowers team members to take ownership of their tasks.
- *Illustrate constructive conflict resolution techniques.* Open communication, active listening, and finding mutually beneficial solutions contributes to a positive team dynamic.
- *Clearly communicate expectations for individual and team performance.* Setting expectations is a proactive measure that aligns everyone toward common goals and contributes to the overall success of the team.

5. Show Them That Leadership Is About Serving Others and Fostering Growth

A leadership approach centered on service and growth cultivates a positive and collaborative team culture. Leaders can model this perspective by prioritizing the needs of the team and actively fostering an environment conducive to personal and professional development. Here's some ways leaders can encourage a service-orientated culture:

- *Embrace the principles of servant leadership* by prioritizing the well-being and growth of team members. Servant leadership involves leading with humility, empathy, and a genuine commitment to serving the needs of others.
- *Provide mentorship and active support of the professional development of team members* demonstrating that leadership is

not just about achieving personal success but also about facilitating the success of others.

- *Celebrate the achievements and milestones of team members.* This illustrates that leadership involves recognizing and appreciating the contributions of each individual, creating a positive and motivated team culture.

Conclusion

Leading by example is not a passive leadership style; it requires intentional and consistent effort to model the behaviors and qualities you wish to instill in your team. By following the above examples, you can contribute to the development of a positive and empowered team.

By leading by example, leaders create a culture where team members feel inspired, supported, and motivated to emulate the same principles of effective leadership. In doing so, they lay the foundation for a resilient, collaborative, and high-performing team that thrives under their guidance. This provides a domino effect, as leaders you have trained move on to create effective leaders of their own.

Part 3

Different Leaders for Different Times

*“Great leaders are not defined by the
absence of weakness, but rather by the
presence of clear strengths.”*

—John Peter Zenger

Chapter 12

Determining Leadership Style

Leadership styles can vary significantly, and different situations may call for different approaches. For example, it takes a certain type of leader to lead their army into battle. While, on the other hand, it takes a different type of leader to run an awareness campaign for hungry children. Both require good communication, the respect of their peers, empathy, and an inspiring character.

There have been (and still are) leaders who have been anything but empathetic or compassionate. I can think of many leaders and kings throughout history who have led their people unjustly.

A person's character and background go along way towards creating the leader they will be.

The situation at hand also determines the type of leader that is needed.

Here is an outline of some common leadership styles:

1. Autocratic Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader makes decisions unilaterally without consulting the team.
- *Key Characteristics:* Authoritative, directive, centralized decision-making.
- *Appropriate Situations:* Crisis situations, when quick decisions are needed.

2. Democratic Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader involves the team in decision-making processes, seeking input and consensus.
- *Key Characteristics:* Collaborative, participative, open communication.

- *Appropriate Situations:* When creativity and diverse perspectives are required.

3. Laissez-Faire Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader takes a hands-off approach, allowing the team to make decisions on their own.
- *Key Characteristics:* Non-interfering, trusting, delegation-focused.
- *Appropriate Situations:* When the team is highly skilled and motivated.

4. Transformational Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader inspires and motivates the team to achieve their best by fostering a shared vision.
- *Key Characteristics:* Visionary, inspirational, charismatic.

- *Appropriate Situations:* Times of significant organizational change or when a new direction is needed.

5. Transactional Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader focuses on setting clear expectations and rewarding or punishing based on performance.
- *Key Characteristics:* Transactional, contingent reward, management by exception.
- *Appropriate Situations:* Task-oriented projects with well-defined goals.

6. Servant Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader prioritizes the needs of the team members, aiming to serve and support their growth.
- *Key Characteristics:* Empathetic, humble, supportive.
- *Appropriate Situations:* Cultivating a positive and collaborative organizational culture.

7. Charismatic Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader relies on charm, persuasion, and personal appeal to influence and inspire others.
- *Key Characteristics:* Charismatic, persuasive, visionary.
- *Appropriate Situations:* Situations where inspiration and motivation are crucial.

8. Situational Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader adapts their style based on the specific needs of the situation and the maturity of the team.
- *Key Characteristics:* Flexible, adaptive, context-dependent.
- *Appropriate Situations:* When dealing with diverse teams or dynamic environments.

9. Coaching Leadership:

- *Description:* The leader focuses on developing individual team members by providing guidance and support.
- *Key Characteristics:* Mentoring, developmental feedback, long-term growth focus.
- *Appropriate Situations:* When building individual skills and fostering long-term development.

It's important to note that effective leaders often employ a combination of these styles depending on the context and the people they are leading. Additionally, leadership styles can evolve over time as leaders learn and adapt to different situations.

No matter which type of leader you are, or which type of situation you are leading, you can foster an attitude and skill set that will help you seek out and in turn, mentor evolving leaders in your organization.

As Ronald Reagan once said, “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.”

Go out and become the leader you were meant to be!

**ALMOST THE END! YOU STILL NEED TO
COMPLETE THE 7-DAY CHALLENGE!**

7-Day Leadership Challenge

Why Accept this Challenge?

There are five main reasons to accept this 7-Day Challenge, particularly one presented by the author of a book you are reading:

1. **Personal growth:** By taking on a challenge, you can push yourself to learn and develop new skills, which can help you grow both personally and professionally.
2. **Improved performance:** A challenge can motivate you to improve your performance and

achieve better results, which can benefit both you and your organization.

3. Increased insight: A challenge can force you to focus your attention on a specific area, leading to deeper understanding and greater insight. This can help you make more informed decisions and drive innovation in your organization.

4. Satisfaction of fulfilling a challenging task: Successfully completing a challenge can give you a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that comes from overcoming obstacles and achieving a difficult goal. This can boost your confidence and inspire you to take on new challenges in the future.

5. Mastering the Secret of Desire: By applying yourself to these challenges you will complete the journey of discovery that is the promise of this book.

In the case of a challenge presented by the author of a book you are reading, accepting the challenge can also provide a unique opportunity to learn from an expert in the field and apply the insights and strategies presented in the book to real-world scenarios. This can help you deepen your understanding of the material and enhance your ability to apply it in your own work.

Day 1: Define Leadership and its Importance

Leadership is the ability to inspire, influence, and guide others towards a common goal or objective. It involves taking the initiative to make decisions, set direction, and mobilize resources. Leadership is crucial for any organization's success because it sets the tone for the culture, inspires employees, and ensures that the team stays on track towards achieving its objectives. Without effective leadership, organizations can flounder, lose direction, and ultimately fail.

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Day 2: Focus on Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative leadership is an approach that emphasizes working together to achieve a common goal. Instead of relying on a top-down approach, collaborative leadership involves engaging employees, asking for their opinions, and encouraging respectful debate. This approach helps to create a more inclusive and transparent decision-making process that ensures everyone's views are respected. As a result, teams tend to be more engaged, and employees are more likely to consider themselves stakeholders in the organization's success.

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Day 3: Develop a Culture of Honesty

Honesty is crucial for any successful organization. Leaders should prioritize honesty in all interactions, from the executive level to the rank and file. By modeling the right behavior and emphasizing mutual respect, leaders can create a culture of honesty that permeates the entire organization. When employees feel that they can be honest and open, they are more likely to communicate effectively, collaborate, and work towards achieving the organization's objectives.

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Day 4: Invest in Empathy and Development

As a leader, it's essential to balance your vision and goals with the needs of your team. This requires empathy, intuition, and the ability to develop your employees both personally and professionally. By investing in your team's well-being and development, you can inspire them to work harder, stay motivated, and achieve their full potential. Good leaders recognize the value of each employee and help them to grow and thrive.

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Day 5: Focus on Communication

Effective communication is critical for any successful leader. Poor communication can cause confusion, anxiety, and a lack of direction. Leaders should prioritize communication at all levels, ensuring that their messages are clear, concise, and easily understood. This requires both written and verbal communication skills, as well as active listening and the ability to adapt your communication style to your audience.

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Day 6: Emphasize Bold and Unconventional Leadership

Leadership is not a one-size-fits-all approach. Different situations require different styles of leadership, and successful leaders are those who can adapt and think outside the box. Leaders who are willing to take risks, challenge the status quo, and embrace change are more likely to succeed in today's rapidly changing business environment. This requires a willingness to be bold and unconventional, to think creatively, and to encourage others to do the same.

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Day 7: Contemplation Day

On the final day of the challenge, take some time to reflect on your leadership style and the lessons you have learned. Consider areas where you can improve and set goals for your ongoing development as a leader. Remember that leadership is a continuous journey, and there is always more to learn and achieve. Take the time to celebrate your successes and commit to being the best leader you can be.

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In conclusion, achieving and maintaining this quality of leadership requires intentional effort

and self-reflection. By setting clear goals, communicating effectively, leading by example, empowering your team, building relationships, learning and growing, and taking time for contemplation and reflection, you can become a more effective and successful leader. Use these seven days as a starting point for your leadership journey, and continue to challenge yourself to improve and grow as a leader.

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