

## 6.3 TOP WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS

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Whether you consciously aware of it or not, on some level you are continually leading yourself and others – you don't necessarily have to have a large team reporting to you to be considered a leader and to need effective leadership skills.

In one leadership study, qualities such as assertiveness, adaptability, intelligence and conscientiousness were cited as the most important leadership skills. Research clearly shows that transformational leaders – leaders who are positive, inspiring, and who empower and develop followers – are better leaders. They are more valued by followers and have higher performing teams.

As a result, it would only make sense that you strive to improve your leadership skills and get the most out of life for everyone in your sphere.

Consider these 11 tips for how to improve your leadership skills so to become a better leader and think about ways that you can implement these strategies in your daily life at work.

### **1. Have a clear vision**

Take the time to share your vision, your mission and your goals with your team. Your job as a leader is to provide a clear path that your team can follow. Your team also must understand why the goals you have set are valuable to them. Take the time to explain to them, in detail, why and how your vision will not only improve the business, but how it will benefit them in return. Include your team in your strategic planning sessions, ask for feedback and get them to “buy into” your vision for the future of the company.

### **2. Know and utilize your strengths and gifts.**

You have unique gifts and natural leadership skills that you were born with and personal strengths you've developed over your lifetime. Realizing and utilizing these gifts and strengths will assist you in being a formidable leader.

### **3. Be Passionate**

This is one of the most important leadership skills. Would you look to someone for guidance and leadership if they did not truly care about the goals of the group? Of course not! Great leaders are not just focused on getting group members to finish tasks; they have a *genuine passion and enthusiasm* for the projects they work on. Start by thinking of different ways that you can express your zeal. Let people know that you care about their progress. When one person shares something with the rest of the group, be sure to tell them how much you appreciate such contributions.

### **4. Live in accordance with your morals and values.**

Making choices and taking actions out of accordance with your morals and values leaves you with a nagging "bad" feeling. This feeling seeping in from your subconscious mind hinders your success in your career and your relationships. On the other hand, making choices and taking actions aligned with your morals and values helps you succeed almost effortlessly as key leadership skills. People sense integrity and will naturally respect your opinion and leadership.

### **5. Serve as a role model**

The best leaders walk the walk and talk the talk. As a result, group members admire these leaders and work to emulate these behaviors. If you want to become a better leader, work on modeling the qualities that you would like to see in your team members.

### **6. Set definitive goals and follow concrete action plans.**

You have to know where your destination is before you can map out a plan to get there. To improve your leadership skills, first set specific life goals with appropriate timelines. Design your goals by moving backwards from the end of your life to the present week. Then, formulate action plans you can commit to that will get you to where you want to be.

### **7. Maintain a positive attitude.**

No one respects a grumpy or negative person. With a positive attitude you are looking at the bright side of life. People are naturally attracted to you when you have a positive attitude. By being positive, you will lead a happier life, as well as be surrounded by other positive people. You will also magically attract exciting offers and possibilities.

#### **8. Improve communication skills.**

Having great leadership skills includes your being able to clearly and specifically communicate your vision, goals, skills, intentions, and expectations to others. This also includes your ability to listen to what other people are consciously or unconsciously communicating. To become a great communicator, continually strive to improve your verbal, nonverbal, and listening skills.

#### **9. Motivate others to greatness.**

The greatest leaders are those who include everyone in their sphere of influence by recognizing each person's greatest value. To be one of these leaders, look beyond the obvious and see others with insight and compassion. Many of history's greatest leaders have admitted that they rose to the top because another leader recognized and harnessed their potential.

#### **10. Be willing to admit and learn from failures and weaknesses.**

Face it – No one is perfect, and everyone has made a mistake or two in their lives! The most successful leaders know that the key to success is not in avoiding falling or failing, but to learn from their mistakes. As a strong leader, you will also be able to communicate your weaknesses to your team, so that you and your team can appoint someone who excels at that particular task or activity.

#### **11. Continue to educate and improve yourself.**

Great leaders demonstrate effective leadership skills, but most importantly, continue to improve themselves in every possible way. The person who thinks he is an expert, has a lot more to learn. Never stop learning. Be receptive to everyone's perceptions and information from around the world and beyond. Always grow and learn.