TAKING YOUR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGERIAL ABILITIES TO THE NEXT LEVEL: A SELF-ASSESSMENT

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"The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual."
~ Samuel Smiles, 1859 ~

Benefits. Doing this assessment and development plan can help you to:

- name the management and leadership strengths you have and the abilities you want to develop further
- consider a range of ways to develop specific abilities
- create a manageable, inspiring process for your progress
- assist individuals, groups and organizations to improve performance and outcomes
- obtain information for considering and doing 360 assessments and other kinds of feedback

Since management and leadership abilities often overlap and reinforce one another, they are listed together. However, there are important differences. Effective leaders tend to inspire others and influence the big picture in the present and future. Effective managers may do this too, but they are more focused on getting the work done through others.

Make this process as easy as possible. I hope you won't be daunted by the long list of abilities below. Many overlap and reinforce one another. Many you have already. Many are easy to develop further. And many may not relate to your current situation or what you want to do in the future. So skip over any you wish.

Doing your self-assessment is not as time-consuming as you may anticipate. People who have used it say it takes about 15 minutes to work through the list. Based on your choices, organizing for action by creating your development plan could take less than 45 minutes.

Just indicate your first reactions rather than over think your responses. Initial responses are often the most authentic and useful.

Your Assessment. For each ability listed below, you'll see a scale of 1 to 5 (highest) at

the left.

- Circle the number that reflects your current level of mastery, based on how you perform in supportive or at least neutral situations. Be generous rather than hard on yourself in your self-evaluations.
- Feel free to change any description to match your style, values and context.
- Add abilities that are not listed in the spaces provided at the end of each grouping.

Working with people

1 2 3 4 5   1.   Adapting interpersonal skills to particular situations and people, while remaining true to self

1 2 3 4 5   2.   Being available and responsive to supervisors

1 2 3 4 5   3.   Being available and responsive to colleagues

1 2 3 4 5   4.   Being available and responsive to subordinates

1 2 3 4 5   5.   Being available and responsive to clients/customers/stakeholders

1 2 3 4 5   6.   Encouraging and maintaining teamwork

1 2 3 4 5   7.   Encouraging and maintaining coordination with other work groups

1 2 3 4 5   8.   Coaching and developing others

1 2 3 4 5   9.   Gathering and interpreting verbal and nonverbal information

1 2 3 4 5   10.   Involving others in creating goals and objectives

1 2 3 4 5   11.   Facilitating group discussion

1 2 3 4 5   12.   Delegating and sharing power

1 2 3 4 5   13.   Providing regular, useful, concrete feedback to others on their work

1 2 3 4 5   14.   Inspiring trust and respect in subordinates

1 2 3 4 5   15.   Understanding different cultures, preferences, generations and beliefs

1 2 3 4 5   16.   Honoring differences in work styles that are effective and adjusting your own to support mutually beneficial outcomes

1 2 3 4 5   17.   Sharing information and ideas

1 2 3 4 5   18.   Managing human resources

1 2 3 4 5   19.   Understanding how rushing others and piling on work without regard to priorities affect motivation, relationships and outcomes

1 2 3 4 5   20.   Developing and maintaining strong relationships with relevant people outside the organization

1 2 3 4 5   21.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   22.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   23.   _____

Working with ideas and information

1 2 3 4 5   24 .   Managing useful information about past, current and future work

1 2 3 4 5   25.   Maintaining, deepening and testing subject matter expertise

1 2 3 4 5   26.   Understanding subjects and issues outside immediate function and their connections to organization purpose

1 2 3 4 5   27.   Writing appropriate to goals, recipients and situation

1 2 3 4 5   28.   Communicating useful information and ideas in conversation

1 2 3 4 5   29.   Speaking publicly

1 2 3 4 5   30.   Analyzing information and other data

1 2 3 4 5   31.   Synthesizing information from disparate sources

1 2 3 4 5   32.   Thinking critically

1 2 3 4 5   33.   Distinguishing between big picture and details

1 2 3 4 5   34.   Using time and other resources effectively

1 2 3 4 5   35.   Demonstrating how to use meetings for true problem solving and decision making

1 2 3 4 5   36.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   37.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   38.   _____

Working with things, products and services

1 2 3 4 5   39.   Using and expanding technical skills related to work

1 2 3 4 5   40.   Using administrative skills to support goals and objectives

1 2 3 4 5   41.   Maintaining and expanding knowledge of products and services

1 2 3 4 5   42.   Knowing about comparable and complementary products and services provided by others

1 2 3 4 5   43.   Exploring how to improve and expand successful products and services

1 2 3 4 5   44,   Developing new, effective products and services

1 2 3 4 5   45.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   46.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   47.   _____

Taking goal-related action

1 2 3 4 5   48.   Planning

1 2 3 4 5   49.   Anticipating short-term problems and issues

1 2 3 4 5   50.   Planning strategically

1 2 3 4 5   51.   Determining and meeting priorities

1 2 3 4 5   52.   Achieving agreed-upon organizational goals

1 2 3 4 5   53.   Completing tasks in timely way

1 2 3 4 5   54.   Supporting organizational mission

1 2 3 4 5   55,   Encouraging and leading new directions

1 2 3 4 5   56.   Establishing and maintaining performance standards in concert with people responsible for meeting them

1 2 3 4 5   57.   Giving timely, fair-minded evaluations based on agreed-upon goals

1 2 3 4 5   58.   Resolving conflict by finding common ground or negotiating

1 2 3 4 5   59.   Mediating

1 2 3 4 5   60.   Solving or at least ameliorating problems

1 2 3 4 5   61.   Creating coalitions and collaborations within the organization

1 2 3 4 5   62.   Creating coalitions and collaborations among organizations, building trust with outside groups

1 2 3 4 5   63.   Developing vision for future with others

1 2 3 4 5   64.   Anticipating influences on and changes in the big picture

1 2 3 4 5   65.   Considering how to address what seems impossible with an open mind

1 2 3 4 5   66.   Transferring knowledge and skills, preparing for succession

1 2 3 4 5   67.   Cross-training

1 2 3 4 5   68.   Leading meetings that use time well and meet goals

1 2 3 4 5   69.   Discussing and updating regularly concrete, mutual expectations about work

1 2 3 4 5   70.   Setting appropriate, effective boundaries in work relationships, processes and designs

1 2 3 4 5   71.   Addressing frankly, concretely and helpfully shortfalls in the performance of people and projects

1 2 3 4 5   72.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   73.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   74.   _____

Enhancing professional qualities and behavior

1 2 3 4 5   75.   Demonstrating presence and feeling self-confident

1 2 3 4 5   76.   Taking responsibility for behavior and actions

1 2 3 4 5   77.   Being accountable for results

1 2 3 4 5   78.   Having emotional balance and control

1 2 3 4 5   79.   Demonstrating ethical conduct and personal integrity in behavior and actions

1 2 3 4 5   80.   Being honest with self and others

1 2 3 4 5   81.   Eliciting, listening to and applying judiciously assessment results and feedback from others

1 2 3 4 5   82.   Being decisive

1 2 3 4 5   83.   Managing stress

1 2 3 4 5   84.   Sustaining physical energy

1 2 3 4 5   85.   Being courageous; taking appropriate risks

1 2 3 4 5   86.   Expressing creativity, resourcefulness, innovativeness

1 2 3 4 5   87.   Using entrepreneurial instincts and skills

1 2 3 4 5   88.   Demonstrating fairness

1 2 3 4 5   89.   Being adaptable and flexible

1 2 3 4 5   90.   Integrating intuition in decision making and action

1 2 3 4 5   91.   Creating authentic proportion in and effective attention to work and other important aspects of life

1 2 3 4 5   92.   Showing curiosity about new ideas, processes and information

1 2 3 4 5   93.   Using political savvy

1 2 3 4 5   94.   Showing sense of humor and proportion

1 2 3 4 5   95.   Being kind and considerate of others

1 2 3 4 5   96.   Continuing to learn in own field and beyond

1 2 3 4 5   97.   Learning from mistakes and developing better approaches

1 2 3 4 5   98.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   99.   _____

1 2 3 4 5   100.   _____

Appreciate your strengths:

- Check all abilities that you labeled 4 or 5.
- Identify any you want to take to level 5.
- Look for common themes among your abilities such as intellectual capacities or communication processes as a way of synthesizing information to find patterns. Yet, avoid such clustering of abilities when they are best considered on their own for development purposes.
- Rejoice in your strengths! Then, when you consider other areas for development, you'll see how they balance your strengths at the 4 and 5 levels.

Prepare for further development:

- Highlight every ability you have labeled 1, 2 or 3,
- Consider whether or not you want or need to develop each one further, checking the ones you do.
- List each ability you will develop further in order of importance to you, your work situation and your professional development. When these three criteria are met, you'll see which abilities are best to put at the top of your list. Identify the level (number) of mastery you want for each of these top priorities.

- Repeat this criteria-setting process above for your strengths that you want to take from level 4 to 5, integrating both lists.

- From your integrated list, identify the top five abilities or clusters with a common themes for your developmental focus. Choose one as the focus for organizing your initial development plan.

- Jot down under <u>Barriers</u>, below, the three most significant ones to moving your first choice to the level of mastery you want. For each barrier, indicate briefly under <u>Actions</u> one step you will take to transcend it.

<u>Barriers</u>   <u>Actions to Transcend Barriers</u>

- Name below two or three partners in your process of development. Consider appropriate colleagues, customers, supervisors, friends and/or subordinates whom you trust and respect --- and preferably like. Ask them for specific support in developing your choice. Offer something of use to them in return or ask them how you can assist them.

- Identify below any additional ways you will use to improve the ability you have chosen to develop. Add your own ideas in the spaces at the end. Put them in priority order in relation to criteria such as cost, accessibility, time involved, efficacy and appeal to you. In general, choose learning situations and opportunities that are as challenging, creative and enjoyable as possible.

  o participating in workshops and other programs, provided by outside sources that encourage practice and follow up
  o learning and practicing regularly on your own
  o reviewing and following up on previous verbal, written and audio-visual feedback and guidance

- studying related books, articles and guides independently or with a small group
- observing others' mistakes to determine what you'll avoid
- studying role models in your organization or similar ones to determine how to expand and deepen your repertoire
- learning from relevant leadership and management examples in the arts, such as literature, film and television
- preparing and delivering formal and informal training that relates to your area of development
- obtaining guidance and feedback from mentors and colleagues
- _____
- _____
- _____

Create your first development plan

- Describe briefly the ability or cluster of abilities you want to improve and why.

- Specify the outcome you want and need, including the level (number) of mastery.

- Indicate the:
    - concrete steps you will take along the time line you draw for completion
    - blocks of time on your calendar you will carve out to learn and practice
    - criteria for evaluating your progress
    - assistance you will obtain, including people and learning processes, from the options you mentioned above

- Use and create opportunities for humor, enjoyment and rewards. If your organization or group does not have such incentives, what can you do to develop them?

Your continuing process of professional development. When you reach the level of mastery you've chosen in your development plan, select another ability or cluster of abilities to strengthen. Use the suggested planning approach above or a version that works better for you --- after a reasonable breather and celebration of accomplishments, of course.

- Take small, steady steps. The more viable choices for learning can probably be integrated into everyday situations.

- Identify ways to practice regularly by scheduling opportunities on your calendar and being alert to unplanned opportunities.

- Get feedback on how you're doing from frank, insightful, kind people.

- Refine your efforts.

- Reward yourself for results.

You're likely to see more concrete results and enjoy the process more with consistent efforts and reinforcement. They usually work better than quick fixes or isolated training situations.

Although this guide implies your developmental process will be linear, neatness is neither necessary nor typical. A person, source for improvement or situation that inspires you to strengthen an important ability could enter your life. You may get a flash of insight or experience discomfort that motivates you in new ways. So, whether or not you want to create and act on a plan, stay alert for and dream up opportunities to strengthen abilities that would be worthwhile and enjoyable to nurture in yourself.

Your experiences will also equip you better to assist others in their development. As a leader and manager, the empathy that emerges from your own learning process can be a catalyst for encouraging others.

FOR ADDITIONAL INSIGHT, LEARNING AND GUIDANCE

Note: This long list is provided in no particular order on purpose to encourage you to skim it all. Choose one or two books to explore, possibly by looking at its table of contents in a library, book store or on www.amazon.com. If you find a book is not as appealing as you thought it would be, by all means move on to another one.

A Manager's Guide to Self-Development by Mike Pedler
The Leadership Odyssey: A Self-Development Guide to New Skills for New Times by
      Carole S. Napolitano and Lida J. Henderson
Best Practices in Organizational Development and Change: Culture, Leadership,
      Retention, Performance Coaching edited by Louis Carter et al
Learning to Lead: The Art of Transforming Managers into Leaders by Jay Alden
      Conger
The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning
      Organization by Peter M. Senge
Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence by Daniel Goleman
The Leader of the Future 2: Visions, Strategies and Practices for the New Era by
      Frances Hesselbein and Marshall Goldsmith
Fit In! The Unofficial Guide to Corporate Culture by Mark Williams
Motivating The "What's In It For Me?" Workforce: Managing Across the Generational
      Divide by Cam Marston

Management and Leadership Development by Christopher Mabey and Tim Finch Lees

Authentic Leadership Theory and Practice, Volume 3: Origins, Effects and Development by editors William L. Gardner, Bruce J. Avolio and Fred O. Walumbwa

Creative Leadership: Skills That Drive Change by Gerard J. Puccio, Mary C. Murdock and Marie Mance

True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership by Bill George and Peter Sims

Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap... and Others Don't by Jim Collins

Good to Great in the Social Sectors by Jim Collins

The Drucker Foundation Self-Assessment Tool: Participant Workbook, revised edition by Peter F. Drucker

A Leader's Legacy by James M. Kouzes and Barry C. Posner

Fun Works: Creating Places Where People Love to Work by Leslie Yerkes

Bridging the Generation Gap: How to Get Radio Babies, Boomers, Gen Xers, and Gen Yers to Work Together and Achieve More by Linda Gravett and Robin Throckmorton

When Generations Collide: Who They Are, Why They Clash, How to Solve the Generation Puzzle at Work by Lynne C. Lancaster

Launching a Leadership Revolution by Chris Brady and Orrin Woodward

Go Put Your Strengths to Work by Marcus Buckingham

Strengthsfinder 2.0 by Tom Rath

Crucial Conversations by Kelly Patterson et al

A Guide to Project Management Body of Knowledge by Project Management Institute

A Whole New Mind by Daniel Pink

Leadership and Self-Deception The Arbinger Institute

What Got You Here Won't Get You There by Marshall Goldsmith

Get Out of Your Own Way by Robert K. Cooper