



Introduction to Leadership

INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP



The Queen's Young Leaders programme discovered, celebrated and supported inspiring young people from across the Commonwealth between 2014 and 2018. It was created by The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, and delivered in partnership with Comic Relief, The Royal Commonwealth Society and The Institute of Continuing Education at The University of Cambridge.

Leading Change was created by Frances Brown at The Institute of Continuing Education, The University of Cambridge for The Queen's Young Leaders Programme.

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For queries on adapting the materials or running the course, please contact the course creator Frances Brown at hello@fbrownwork.com



This module looks at the meaning of leadership

HELLO!

Now is a good time to reflect on your individual approaches to leadership, and how you can learn from each other.

This module is dedicated to exploring the many definitions of leadership. Most importantly, what do you mean when you speak of leaders and leadership, and how do you lead yourself and others?

THIS MODULE IS DIVIDED INTO THREE PARTS, AND WILL DISCUSS:

1. **Pure Leadership: the essence of leadership, leaders, and team members**
 - This will begin with definitions of leadership, leaders, and team members for consideration
 - The features that differentiate leadership from management, teamwork, and power
 - Your personal definitions of 'leader', 'leadership' and 'team members' as they apply to your work, project, and every day life
2. **The Master Leadership Package – key capabilities for effective leadership**
 - A selection of key leadership capabilities
 - Your leadership strengths, and the skills you want to develop
 - Which aspects of leadership are universal versus context-specific and what your capabilities look like in your leadership context
3. **Self Leadership and Management - Realising your Personal Vision**
 - Defining your Personal Vision as a leader
 - Reflecting on what you are doing and why, as well as who is with you on this journey
 - Envisioning your future successes and charting a path for achieving them

USING THESE FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING LEADERSHIP, YOU WILL:

- Reflect on leaders you admire, and craft your personal definition of leadership
- Gain clarity on what unique strengths set you apart as a leader
- Draft your Personal Vision and take measureable steps toward shaping your future

Completing this module will be valuable preparation for the final module, where you will be asked to reflect on how your definition of leadership has changed over the year, and to share a detailed map of your goals for the future.



OUTCOMES

At the end of the module, you will be able to:

- **Clearly articulate which leadership capabilities are most essential for leaders, as well as identifying those you feel are strengths and others that you would like to develop further**
- **Define your Personal Vision, which is the key component of self-leadership**
- **Consider the principles of self-management that are instrumental in making your Personal Vision a reality. These include setting SMART goals**

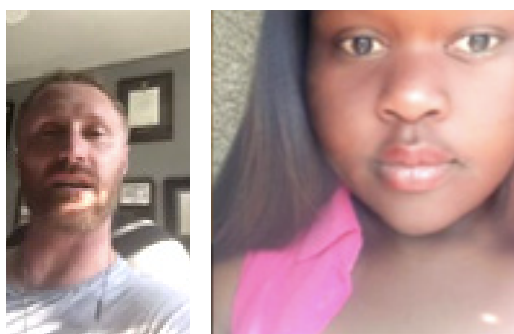
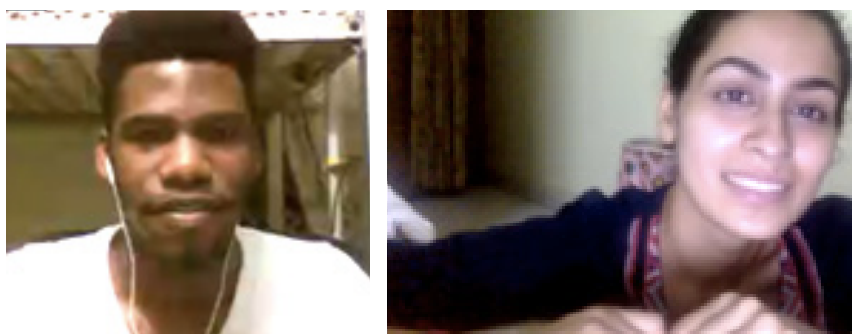
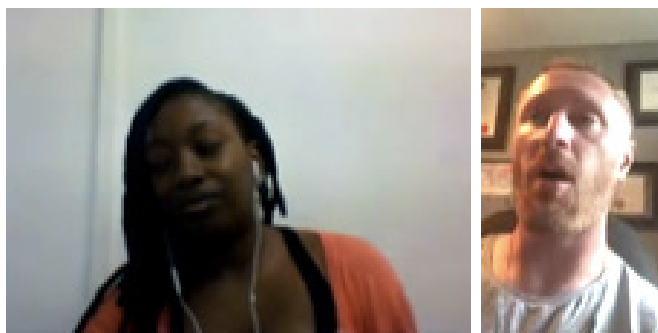


RELATED LEADING CHANGE CONTENT

Module 2: All About Me
>>>

Watch this space for more to come!

MODULE TESTIMONIALS



COURSE ALUMNI SHARE WHAT THEY'VE ACHIEVED AS A RESULT OF THIS MODULE:

"I noticed that I am more accountable"

"In trying to compensate for some skills that I may not have, I have started an online course with the Open University on Future Learn called social enterprise: business doing good."

"I have taken into account some of the weaknesses I have and started to apply good leadership skills in communicating better with others and continue to be the life of the party amongst my team."

ABOUT 'JAASON':

"AMAZINGGGG
GGGGGGG! Jaason is a very fun and talented coach, full of spirit, he is a great challenger."

"Loved his energy and interest in personal stories."

"I think Jaason is brilliant, a lot of passion and knowledge which I found made me really intrigued and really eager to learn more."

"Absolutely amazing. Very down to earth, extremely relatable. He's knowledgeable and willing."

"He really unleashed the true leader in me. I had never understood clearly what being a great leader entails and how to lead either from the front or from behind. I thank him a lot."

"I also like the fact that he put his own flavor into things and went out and beyond to help us to understand what he was saying in a fun and very creative way."

CONTENTS

	WELCOME	08
	THE SESSIONS:	
	SESSION 1: PURE LEADERSHIP	09
	SESSION 2: THE MASTER LEADERSHIP PACKAGE	14
	SESSION 3: SELF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
	WHO’S WHO?	28
	IMAGE CREDITS	29



Welcome

WELCOME!

Hi everyone, I'm Jaason Geerts.

Welcome to Introduction to Leadership. There are three sessions that build on each other in a sequence.

After more than ten years of studying leadership in the post-graduate university context and having served as a leader in the fields of business, sport, community service and education, I'm privileged to be able to share some insights and discussions with you about leadership.



Jaason Geerts

Each session will start with two things: a summary of the key content and a video presentation.

OVERVIEW OF SESSIONS

1

SESSION 1:
PURE LEADERSHIP

2

SESSION 2:
THE MASTER LEADERSHIP PACKAGE

3

SESSION 3:
SELF-LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

MOVING FORWARD

The final few minutes of the video sessions include points to consider moving forward, as well as how these points relate to your final projects. Further reading will also be suggested for those who want to dig deeper.



KEY INFO

For each session there is a list of questions to get you thinking about the topic.

You'll be encouraged to reflect on what you know already and consider how the topic relates to your lives and current leadership/followership situation. It may help you to write them down and then read over them at a later stage to see if your ideas have changed.

These questions are meant to help you get more out of the content included in this document, especially if you answer them before reading the content document.

ICONS



Activity



Reflection



Video



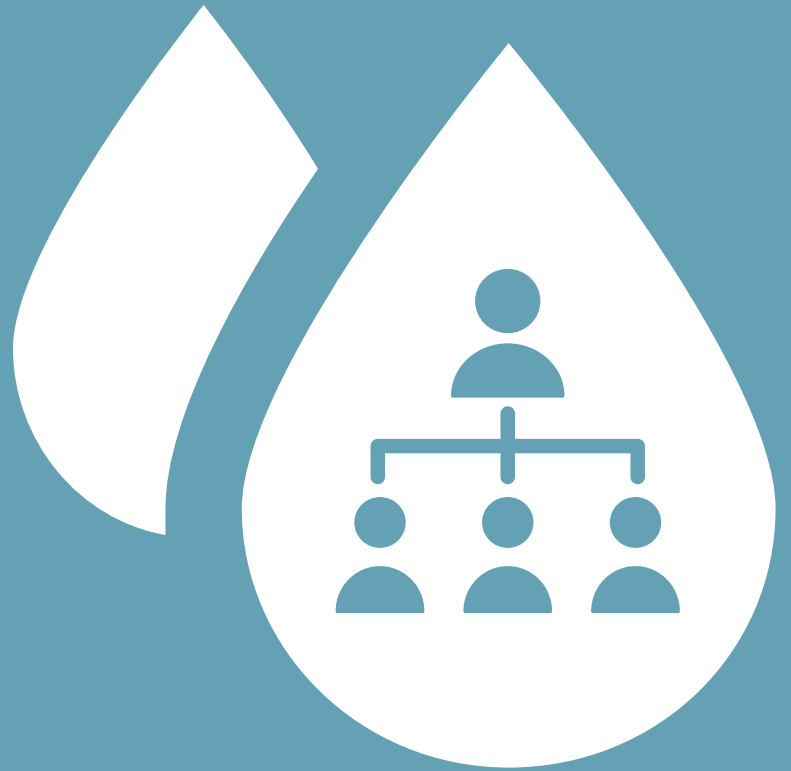
Key info



Example



Summary



Session 1

Pure Leadership

Session 1

PURE LEADERSHIP

with Jaason Geerts



OBJECTIVES:

BY THE END OF THE SESSION, YOU WILL:

- Be offered a variety of definitions of leadership and the theoretical bases for them
- Be asked to consider how leadership is different from management, teamwork, and power
- Be encouraged to consider the extent to which leadership is universal versus context-specific
- Be introduced to the essential features of leadership: vision, inspiration, and strategy
- Be given definitions of “leader” and “team member” (follower)
- Be encouraged to reflect on your own definition of leadership
- Reflect on your own leadership situation and how the principles from the session apply.

Consider the following questions:

- If you completed the introductory module, you have already been asked to define “**leadership**”. Has your definition changed since then? If so, what is your new definition?
- Google definitions of leadership. If there is one you like better than your own, why do you think that one is best?
- Define “**leader**” and “**follower**” in your own words.
- Consider how leadership is different from “**management**,” “**teamwork**,” and “**power**”.
- How does your definition of leadership relate to your current leadership (or followership if you are relating these to a situation where you are part of a team but not the official leader) situation?

If you do not yet have a project, how does your definition of leadership relate to how you envision yourself beginning and executing a project?

OVERVIEW

TOPIC

Pure Leadership – the essence of leadership, leaders, and team members

SUBTOPICS

Definitions, leadership, leader, team member, follower, management, teamwork, power, coercion, inspiration, motivation, vision, strategy

PLACE IN THE SERIES

First of three, the foundation piece

GOAL

This session will provide insight into the essence of leadership and how it relates to your current leadership situation



DEFINITIONS

"In politics, leadership generally refers to the exercise of influence."

– Harvard leadership professor Ronald Heifetz.

Although influence is important, how does this definition differ from "popularity" or being "destructive"?

"The office or position of a leader"

– Merriam-Webster dictionary.

This one gives no indication that leadership involves any activity or relationships with others, as if one person sitting in an office with "Leader" on the door is a good description of leadership.

"Leaders inducing followers to act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations ... of both leaders and followers."

– Iconic leadership author James MacGregor Burns.

"Inducing" makes it seem like a leader is putting others in a coma and implies a very one-way relationship.

"A leader is anyone willing to help."

– Harvard professor Margaret Wheatley.

While this is very inclusive, it does not appear to be any different from the definition of a friend and makes no distinction between the role of a/the leader and team members/followers..

Essentially, it is helpful to begin with a definition of leadership that separates it from other things so that we have a common language and understanding from which to move forward.

The definition offered below is the product of my Master's thesis, which analyses dozens of studies and definitions of "leadership" and "leader" before concluding with this:

Leadership is the process of leaders collaborating meaningfully and progressively with team members to realise a shared vision.

"Process" means that it is not only a position (the lone leader sitting in an office) or relationship (leaders and team members who have distinct roles but may not actually do anything), but a two-way, ongoing interaction that necessarily involves leaders and team members working together.

"Collaborating" means that team members contribute voluntarily and meaningfully; they are not treated as brainless followers (or overlooked altogether by only speaking of the leader).

"Progressively" that progress is being made toward the shared vision as a result of a strategy.

"Shared vision" means that leadership necessarily involves change. Management, by contrast, is about making the current situation more efficient, whereas leadership is about achieving something new – changing one's environment and growing together at the same time.

CONTENT SHEET

Leadership has been described as the most discussed and least understood phenomenon. This is partly attributable to the fact that there is no universally-accepted definition.



DEFINITION

Leadership is the process of leaders collaborating meaningfully and progressively with team members to realise a shared vision.

A leader is someone who takes responsibility for realising the shared vision in a given situation and setting the strategy, as well as ensuring that the organisational culture is a facilitator of this process.

"The given situation" means that as the leadership process moves on, people can shift roles from leaders to team members and vice versa at different times. This is similar to a football team captain who is substituted off during a match. S/he passes the captain's armband to another player who becomes the leader as part of the same overall mission.

"Takes responsibility" means that even though the leader does not always need to be the front person (e.g. the one making the big speech), s/he is accountable for the process' success.

"Sets the strategy" means that the leader is responsible for generating and communicating the plan of how the team will realise the shared vision. Devising the strategy is often done in collaboration or discussion with other leaders and/or team members.

"Organisational culture" is difficult to define but it has a significant impact on whether good leadership is successful in advancing progress towards the shared vision. It involves ensuring there are adequate resources (personnel, financial, technical, and developmental) to support the leadership effort, as well as a general sense that innovation experimentation is valued and supported by those at all levels of the organisation.

A team member is anyone who collaborates voluntarily in realising the shared vision.

"Collaborates" means that they are aware they are contributing intentionally to the process and are not forced/coerced to do so.

It is important to remember that most of life operates somewhere between management – *"I'd rather not, but I generally agree with the system"* – and leadership, the pure form of *"I want to."*

For example, no one likes paying parking fines, but most people generally agree with the parking system because they understand what would happen if there were no parking fines. No spots! This type of system is called voluntary coercion – one is forced but agrees with the system.

"Power" on the other hand, involves total coercion, such as in prisons or military takeovers, where one is forced and may not agree.

Leadership, in its purest form, involves no coercion, just sheer belief in the vision and the process. Good examples of this are people who say that they would go to work even if they wouldn't get in trouble if they didn't and even if they weren't being paid. They work because they love their job and believe in it.

Realistically, leadership needs to be reinforced by management and the two complement each other symbiotically. It is virtually impossible to have leadership without management because otherwise there would be lots of great ideas and excitement, but no follow-through. Too often, however, management is rampant, but the essential components of leadership – vision, collaboration, inspiration, and strategy – are nowhere to be found!



FINAL THOUGHT

We'll leave you with a final quote to summarise a key component of pure leadership:

“

There is nothing under heaven that can buy voluntary commitment.

”

– Stephen Covey



REFLECTION

SESSION 1: NOW WHAT? QUESTIONS

1. If you could clone yourself and the clone would “do your job” – the management stuff that has to be done, such as answering e-mails, going to meetings etc. – which would leave you free to do only leadership, how would you spend your time?
2. How can you block off time in your schedule every week to spend even a little time doing your answer to question 1?
3. When you close your eyes and imagine where your organisation could go, is that described in a clear shared vision? If not, it’s time to craft one. If so, does everyone who works with you know what it is? How can you generate further progress towards realising it?
4. To what extent are those with whom you work purely inspired – they truly believe in the cause and would work for free? How can you improve their motivation?
5. To what extent is the strategy to realise the shared vision clear? Do those with whom you work understand how their part contributes?
6. To what extent do you feel that your organisational culture is supportive and leadership-friendly? What resources are available to facilitate and encourage innovation and experimentation (including time you give to others)?



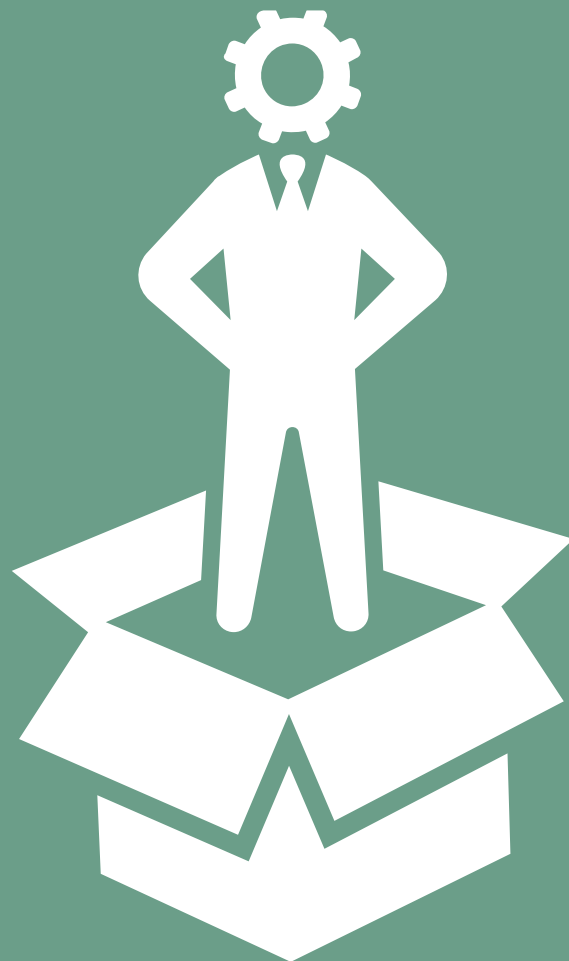
KEY INFO

SESSION 1: FURTHER READING

Below is a selection of solid, well-known books on leadership.

Good to Great is what they use at West Point (the U.S. Military Academy) and has an outstanding methodology and some surprising findings. The Rost book is an excellent discussion point-for-point of the elements of a definition, a structure I followed for my first Master’s thesis and referenced in the Session 1 video. The first Heifetz book, though over 20 years old, still has a widespread influence. The Pfeffer book needs to definitely be read with a grain of salt. He is controversial intentionally, but it is important not to take all his points at face value.

- Collins, *Good to Great*
- Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*
- Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers*
- Heifetz and Linsky, *Leadership on the Line*
- Heifetz, Grashow, and Linsky, *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*
- Komives and Wagner, *Leadership for a Better World*
- Kostenbaum, *Leadership, the Inner Side of Greatness*
- Northouse, *Leadership* (4th ed.)
- Pfeffer, *Leadership BS*
- Rost, *Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*



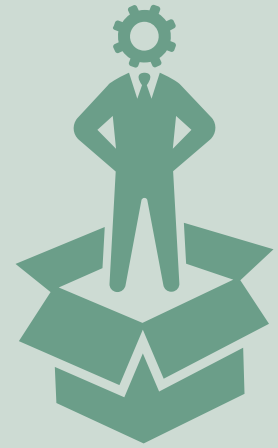
Session 2

The Master Leadership Package

Session 2

THE MASTER LEADERSHIP PACKAGE

with Jaason Geerts



OBJECTIVES:

BY THE END OF THE SESSION, YOU WILL:

- Consider a selection of key leadership capabilities
 - Understand how the key capabilities relate to the process of leadership
 - Consider the extent to which leadership is universal versus context-specific
 - Be encouraged to reflect on what these capabilities look like in your leadership context
 - Reflect on which capabilities you have as strengths and which you would like to develop
- ** For the remainder of this session, “capabilities” will be used synonymously with skills, qualities, and competencies. Capabilities can be defined as the knowledge, skills, and qualities people need to be able to perform a particular function (i.e. what they need to be able to do and to be).

OVERVIEW

TOPIC

The Master Leadership Package – Key capabilities for effective leadership

SUBTOPICS

Leadership, leader, skills, qualities, capabilities, competencies

PLACE IN THE SERIES

Second of three, following the essence of leadership

GOAL

This session will provide insight into the key leadership capabilities and how they relate to your current leadership situation

- A Think of three leaders you respect the most (they can – but need not – be people you have met). For each one, identify two or three capabilities that make them strong leaders in your eyes.
- B Are there any other leadership capabilities that you think are key, which are not listed in your answer for A? If so, what are they?
- C Which leadership capabilities are most important in your current leadership (or followership if you are not currently in a leadership role) situation?



CONTENT SHEET

REVIEW FROM PREVIOUS SESSION (SESSION 1):

Leadership is a process that essentially involves three fundamental things: vision (of the future), inspiration (rather than forcing others to do things), and strategy (the plan of how we are going to make the vision a reality, which includes a supportive organisational culture).

Similar to definitions of leadership, there is no single universally-agreed upon set of leadership capabilities. There is, however, a set of capabilities that appear to be applicable to some extent to any leadership situation (when taken as a whole, rather than a specific moment in time). What follows below is again the product of my Master's dissertation that includes an analysis of dozens of studies and lists of leadership capabilities before concluding with a synthesised set.

LEADERSHIP, IS IT UNIVERSAL OR CONTEXT-SPECIFIC?

The core principles of leadership appear to be to a large extent universal.

For example, can you imagine an entire leadership process where leaders and team members did not need a shared vision as a source of motivation?

- The **application** of leadership and its key capabilities requires context-specific modification based on many variables, such as size of the organisation, organisational context (e.g. start-up, merger, opening a new office), culture, domain (e.g. military versus healthcare), etc.
- In addition to variables that appear to be fixed (but are not), such as the culture external to the organisation (e.g. location, local customs etc.), leaders must **adapt** their style or approach according to the whole set of circumstances in any given moment. For example, leaders need to act in a more autocratic manner in a crisis (e.g. a fire) than the same leaders do in a non-crisis ("peacetime") situation, where they often tend to be more democratic.
- One nuance: there is strong evidence that leaders who are highly skilled at the core business of the organisation (such as an exceptional surgeon as the CEO of a hospital versus a non-clinical business person in the same role) produce the best results at the operational and financial levels. This has been tested in multiple professional domains.

For example, Dr Amanda Goodall studied NBA basketball coaches and found that the most successful by far were coaches who had been all-star players themselves. These coaches outperformed coaches who had been NBA players but not all-stars and those who had never been professional players.



LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS CHECKLIST

How many of the following leadership characteristics do you recognise in yourself:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Honest | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Forward-looking (vision) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Inspiring | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Competent | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What are the implications for us? There are two:

- 1) We should strive to be the best we can at the main thing that our organisations do.
- 2) If we are leading people more technically skilled than we are (e.g. a programmer in a software company), we should make sure to gain their approval before making major decisions. This will add credibility to our leadership and buy-in from these key performers.

Master (Key) Leadership Capabilities (from my Master's thesis):

EFFECTIVE LEADERS

- 1 Have integrity and are trustworthy**
 - This means being honest, responsible, credible, competent, dependable, and adaptable
 - The aforementioned credibility can derive from competence in the core business of the organisation, as mentioned above
 - Lead by example
- 2 Are knowledgeable, well-informed, decisive, and set the strategy**
 - Are lifelong learners and understand their organisation, enterprise, and global situation
 - This knowledge is most credible when it comes from being highly skilled in the core business of the organisation
 - Are courageous, systems thinkers, and take calculated risks
- 3 Craft a shared vision, inspire others, and nurture a supportive organisational culture**
 - Communicate a vision that is principle-centred, forward-looking, and unique
 - Ensure team members are aligned with the vision, but remain creative contributors
 - Nurture an organisational culture that enables and celebrates innovation and experimentation, as well as providing the resources to make this successful
- 4 Enable others, foster collaboration, and nurture adaptability**
 - Value team members and provide the necessary information, guidance, and resources
 - Generate a culture of trust with interdependent teams and promote vision-based problem solving and adaptability
- 5 Develop excellent communication and interpersonal skills**
 - Listen with empathy, give clear direction, and nurture healthy relationships
- 6 Promote excellence and individual and team development**
 - Determine prioritised expectations (including roles and goals, definite consequences and remediation options) with team members, and demand accountability. This refers to individuals and teams
 - Offer ongoing guidance and follow-through by providing several forms of feedback
- 7 Build community, make participation enjoyable, and serve the team and organisation**



CAPABILITIES SHORT LIST

In their book, *The Leadership Challenge* (2008), James Kouzes and Barry Posner gathered questionnaire responses on the "characteristics of admired leaders" from more than 75,000 people in six continents over 25 years:

1. Honest
2. Forward-looking (vision)
3. Inspiring
4. Competent



EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP CHECKLIST

How many of the following leadership capabilities do you recognise in yourself:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Have integrity and are trustworthy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are knowledgeable, well-informed, decisive, and set the strategy | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Craft a shared vision, inspire others and nurture a supportive organisational culture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Enable others, foster collaboration, and nurture adaptability | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Develop excellent communication and interpersonal skills | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Promote excellence and individual and team development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Build community, make participation enjoyable, and serve the team and organisation. | <input type="checkbox"/> |



REFLECTION

SESSION 2: NOW WHAT? QUESTIONS

From the list of leadership skills in the video or on the Content Sheet, identify:

1. Two that you consider strengths of yours
2. One you would like to develop and how you plan on developing it
3. One that you need someone else to compensate for and identify a person in your organisation who can do it.



KEY INFO

SESSION 2: FURTHER READING

Below is a small selection of excellent books on leadership skills. They are all classics and have enjoyed an extremely widespread influence.

Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*

Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*

Kouzes and Posner, *The Leadership Challenge*

Napoleon Hill, *The Law of Success* (for those who like long reads) or *Think and Grow Rich* (for those who prefer a condensed version of similar content)

John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

Kenneth H. Blanchard and Spencer Johnson, *The One Minute Manager*

Steven Pressfield, *The War of Art*

Robin Sharma, *The Leader Who Had No Title*



Session 3

Self Leadership & Management

Session 3

SELF LEADERSHIP
AND MANAGEMENT

with Jaason Geerts

VIDEO
AVAILABLE*Watch now >>>*

OBJECTIVES:

BY THE END OF THE SESSION, YOU WILL:

- Be encouraged to reflect on your character qualities, skills, knowledge, and experience
- Consider and (re)formulate your own Personal Vision
- Reflect on three other self-leadership questions related to your Personal Vision
- Be offered a series of self-management questions to help direct your time to make your Personal Vision a reality
- Be challenged to create self-evaluation checkpoints and check that the indicators of progress principles from the session apply to your Personal Vision

Consider the following questions:

- A What special character qualities do you have? (If you need more direction on what these are, see below; but try to answer without reading on)
- B What special skills do you have?
- C If you were to summarise yourself for an employer in five words, what would they be?
- D How much of your time in a given week would you say you spend on what's most important to your future?

OVERVIEW



TOPIC

Self Leadership and Management - Realising your Personal Vision

SUBTOPICS

Self Leadership, Self-Management, Personal Visions

PLACE IN THE SERIES

Third of three, following the essence of leadership and key leadership capabilities

GOAL

This session will introduce the concept of self-leadership and self-management (two things that are often used interchangeably). It outlines the five key questions to guide the self-leadership process and lists a series of self-management tasks to make the former successful.





CONTENT SHEET

Although self-leadership (and self-management) is a contradiction in terms, since leadership necessarily involves more than one person, it is a very common and helpful metaphor for how individuals can take charge of their lives.

Most of this session will involve what we will call “*self-leadership*”. The final piece will discuss “*self-management*”, which includes measures you can take to make self-leadership successful.

REVIEW FROM PREVIOUS SESSIONS

SESSION 1:

Leadership is a process that essentially involves three fundamental things: vision (of the future), inspiration (rather than forcing others to do things), and strategy (the plan of how we are going to make the vision a reality, which includes a supportive organisational culture).

SESSION 2:

Key leadership skills: “Leaders ...”

- 1 Have integrity and are trustworthy
- 2 Are knowledgeable, well-informed, decisive, and set the strategy
- 3 Craft a shared vision, inspire others, and nurture a supportive organisational culture
- 4 Enable others, foster collaboration, and nurture adaptability
- 5 Develop excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- 6 Promote excellence and individual and team development
- 7 Build community, make participation enjoyable, and serve the team and the organisation

SELF-LEADERSHIP

Self-leadership is essentially crafting your Personal Vision (explained below) and ensuring that you are clear on your motivation and strategy for achieving it.

The five questions that can effectively guide the self-leadership process are: What can you do? What is your personal vision? What are you doing? What are you doing it for? Who is around you through it all?

We will cover these questions in more detail on the following pages...



QUESTIONS

- 1 WHAT CAN YOU DO?
- 2 WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL VISION?
- 3 WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
- 4 WHAT ARE YOU DOING IT FOR?
- 5 WHO IS AROUND YOU THROUGH IT ALL?

1. WHAT CAN YOU DO?

This refers to your character qualities, skills, knowledge, experience, hobbies, and networks that can enable you to achieve your Personal Vision and help others.

CHARACTER QUALITIES are personality strengths, such as being naturally organised, having excellent social skills and finding it easy to get on with lots of people, having a knack for analytics or problem solving, or being very calm under pressure.

SKILLS include talents or abilities you have developed, such as playing the piano, public speaking, being an engineer, teamwork skills, and leadership skills (naturally). You might also look to the list of leadership skills from Session 2 for ideas.

KNOWLEDGE comes from the combination of formal education, training, and experience.

EXPERIENCE provides credibility that you will likely be successful in similar and related endeavours in the future, partly based on the on-the-job learning one develops through work, team, and leadership experiences.

HOBBIES are things you love doing, your choices for how you spend your free time.

NETWORKS are contacts you have who can help advise you, give you references, collaborate with you, or perhaps provide you with a position.

The collection of the things above forms the background to crafting your Personal Vision. All of these things can be enhanced or developed; however, one's Personal Vision should to a large extent spring from one's natural abilities and preferences.

2. WHAT IS YOUR *PERSONAL VISION*?

THE VISION ASPECT OF LEADERSHIP

One crafts one's Personal Vision by reflecting on the following two questions:

- A** In 10 years, who do you want to **be** and what do you want to be **doing** professionally/with your life?

A more specific answer will be more motivating than a vague one. For example, *"I want to be a geography teacher"* is less motivating than, *"I want to be an extremely knowledgeable, creative geography teacher who brings the best out in her students."*

- B** What is your **unique differentiator** (i.e. what separates you from everyone else who is striving for a similar career)?

This can refer to one thing specifically (e.g. *"I want to be an internationally-renowned architect"*) or a combination of things that makes you unique (e.g. *"I want to be an expert architect who makes outreach to disadvantaged communities a priority"*).



QUESTIONS

- 1** IN 10 YEARS, WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE AND WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE DOING PROFESSIONALLY/ WITH YOUR LIFE?
- 2** WHAT IS YOUR UNIQUE DIFFERENTIATOR? (i.e. what separates you from everyone else who is striving for a similar career)

Lastly, you might think on how your Personal Vision aligns with or contributes to the vision of your current organisation(s).

3. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

THE STRATEGY ASPECT OF LEADERSHIP

This is a two-part question. It relates mainly to an inward, you-centred focus: what are you doing to realise your Personal Vision?

It also refers outwardly: what are you doing with your unique abilities for the sake of others?

4. WHAT ARE YOU DOING IT *FOR*?

THE INSPIRATION/MOTIVATION ASPECT OF LEADERSHIP

It is helpful to remind oneself of why one has chosen one's specific Personal Vision. Doing so is motivating and gives one a sense of purpose and meaning.

5. WHO IS *AROUND YOU* THROUGH IT ALL?

THE RELATIONSHIPS ASPECT OF LEADERSHIP

It is also important to remind oneself of one's most meaningful relationships, both personal and professional. This is often the major thing that gets sacrificed at the expense of career aspirations, that while striving for our dreams, we often neglect those most important to us.

CLARIFYING YOUR PERSONAL VISION

MAJOR OR MINOR?

Before moving on, it is helpful to try to separate things that can turn into a viable career versus things that can enhance one's career or remain as a hobby. For example, my sister went to an Arts high school where she specialised in drama. Her ambition was never to be a professional actor; however, the skills she developed in her time at school surely add a good deal to her job as a family doctor (and make her more interesting than someone who has only ever done one thing). Others play in bands in their spare time, learn a language just for fun, travel, and pursue other interests.

DON'T SETTLE!!

This is not to dissuade people from striving for very ambitious goals like making an Olympic team; but rather, to reassure them that even if that skill or ambition does not materialise into a career on its own, it can still enrich one's career and life in other ways.

SELF-MANAGEMENT: STRATEGY - WORKING TOWARDS YOUR PERSONAL VISION

Self-management is the set of steps one takes to make realising one's Personal Vision possible. These include:

1 RECONNAISSANCE – DO YOUR HOMEWORK

In order to make your Personal Vision a reality, you need to find out as much as you can:

- What is the job/lifestyle really like? Asking those who are currently doing it is a good way to ensure if it is really for you. It is helpful to ask yourself if what you hear seems to suit your skills and interests.
- For a career, what credentials do you need in terms of academics, training, fitness (e.g. for the military), experience, finances (e.g. base of funding to launch a business, tuition fees for an academic programme), resources (e.g. if you plan to start a school, you will need x, y, z etc.). Make sure you verify these with people in the industry.

2 MAP OUT THE PATH

Starting with the Personal Vision, work backwards from each aspect of it to create a map with as many specifics as possible from where you are now to realising the Personal Vision.

3 SEQUENCE AND PRIORITISE

Sequence and prioritise the various commitments and interests you currently have and those you will need to realise your Personal Vision. "Sequence" means list them in a linear, structured order (e.g. first, I must do X before I can do Y and then explore options for Z). "Prioritise" involves dividing things that seem essential to realise your Personal Vision from those that seem potentially helpful but non-essential. For example, going to a national conference might be very interesting and might lead to new ideas and helpful connections, but should not be prioritised at the expense of a major assignment for a university programme to which you have committed.

4 SET SMART GOALS WITH CHECKPOINTS

Vague goals are rarely effective. SMART goals, on the other hand, help keep us on track. These involve:

- Specific
- Measureable
- Attainable
- Relevant
- Time-based



KEY INFO

SELF-MANAGEMENT
STEPS TO REALISING
ONE'S PERSONAL VISION
POSSIBLE:

Reconnaissance

Map out the path

Sequence & prioritise

Set SMART goals

Identify relationships

Identify lifestyles

Verify your time

5 IDENTIFY RELATIONSHIPS THAT ARE NEEDED OR HELPFUL

As intimated above, it is important to recognise which people are key to success in terms of realising our Personal Visions. These relationships require maintenance.

6 IDENTIFY THE LIFESTYLE THINGS YOU NEED

– **health (fitness, diet, sleep, down time), friends, and family**

Often overlooked are the personal things that are not only key to one's happiness, but also to one's productivity. It is important to be clear about what one needs in terms of the work/life balance to avoid bitterness, resentment, and burnout.

7 VERIFY THAT YOU ARE SPENDING THE MOST AMOUNT OF YOUR TIME ON WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT

Even though we may be clear in our minds about what is most important, it is vital that our schedule (how we spend our time) reflects that.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU'RE NOT SURE WHAT YOUR PERSONAL VISION IS

For some, it is very troubling to not know what the long-term plan is; it can lead to feeling aimless or de-motivated.

Here are two suggestions:

A TAKE THE NEXT RIGHT STEP

For example, if you are interested in a temporary internship that you feel confident will enrich you, but are not sure where it might lead after, then it makes sense to do your best at the internship. Focusing on the present or immediate future, instead of waiting for the long-term plan to make itself apparent, might be best in this situation.

B IDENTIFY WHAT YOU LOVE: PASSIONS, TASKS AND SKILLS

Once you've done that, search for an academic programme or a job that allows you to do all of them (or as many as possible). For example, you might say, *"I'm not sure what I want to do, but I do know I love working with kids, I'm quite artistic and good at crafts, I love traveling, and I like working for myself."* That could lead to a career introducing educational craft ideas to primary school classes in different cities, you might decide on another career with crafts as a part-time small business, or you might keep traveling as a hobby during your vacation time.

THREE FINAL STEPS

1 COMMUNICATE YOUR PERSONAL VISION TO OTHERS OFTEN

This will lead to new ideas and introductions to people who can help and doing so also functions as a kind of social contract that can be motivating. This means that telling your friends and family about your dream makes it more likely that they will ask you about it and encourage you to achieve it, which means that you are less likely for those reasons to slack or let the idea dissipate.

2 KNOW WHEN TO ASK FOR HELP

This is important both to compensate for areas in which you are less strong and when you have taken on too much to deliver on your promises in the given timeframe.

3 FIND A MENTOR AND, SEPARATELY, A COACH

A mentor can help guide you as and when you need it and a coach can help keep you on track by asking the right questions and helping you assess your ongoing progress towards achieving your Personal Vision.



KEY INFO

THE FINAL THREE STEPS:

Communicate
your vision

Ask for help

Find a mentor
and a coach



REFLECTION

SESSION 3: NOW WHAT? QUESTIONS

1. Answer the self-leadership questions from the video and the Content Sheet and go through the self-management checklist.
2. Review the responses to 1) with two separate friends
3. Identify someone who can serve as a peer coach
4. Identify someone who can serve as a mentor
5. Review your responses to 1) with your coach and mentor



KEY INFO

SESSION 3: FURTHER READING

Below is a selection of fantastic books of self-leadership and self-management. The idea that underpins most of them is that once we are clear about our over-arching purpose, our work takes on new meaning and that motivates us. The Covey and Blanchard books are good on the self-management side.

Blanchard, *The One Minute Manager*

Covey, Merrill & Merrill, *First Things First*

Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

Kielburger, *Me to We*

Kushner, *When All You've Ever Wanted Isn't Enough*

Sharma, *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari*

WHO'S WHO

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He has served as a senior research consultant at the Yale School of Medicine and Business, the UK Defence Academy, the Zurich School of Business, and the Cass Business School (London).

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Page 28: Jaason Geerts

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