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SELF LEADERSHIP



Self-leadership is essential for leadership development, increasing ownership and confidence and staying relevant for the **future of work**.

Everyone can practice self-leadership, but not everybody does. The practice of self-leadership is to be constantly developing the '**inner game**' (mindset) and the '**outer game**' (action). The inner game consists of Intention, Self-awareness, Self-confidence, and Self-efficacy (self-belief) to achieve 'Personal Mastery', while the outer game consists of influence and impact.

Definition

Founder of Self Leadership International, Andrew Bryant, has defined Self Leadership as 'the practice of intentionally influencing your thinking, feeling, and actions towards your objective/s.' Charles Manz was the first to use the term 'Self-leadership' in 1983 and defined it as; "a comprehensive self-influence perspective that concerns leading oneself". Peter Ducker (2010) said that being a Self-leader is to serve as chief, captain, or CEO of one's own life. Andrew Bryant has developed psychometric tools to measure 3-core competencies of self-leadership:

- **Self-awareness** is the tendency for an individual to focus on and reflect on own psychological processes and inner experiences as well as their relationships with others.
- **Self-learning** is the process by which individuals take the initiative in diagnosing their learning needs, goals, resources, and outcomes.
- **Self-regulation** is the process of modulating attention, emotion, and behavior to a given situation, for the purpose of pursuing a goal.

Thus self-leadership is the ability to influence and direct your own thoughts and actions to successfully reach goals and build a satisfying life. You may consult with others for outside perspectives and opinions, but ultimately, you make your own decisions, motivate yourself to act, and reward yourself for success.

The 8 C's of Self-Leadership

One way to understand the full self-leadership definition is to consider the **8 c's of self-leadership**. These are 8 qualities that great self-leaders have. The stronger you are in these areas, the more success you're likely to have when guiding, motivating, and disciplining yourself to reach big goals.

Try to rate yourself from 1-10 in each area based on past performance as a self-leader. In what areas could you improve?

➤ **Confidence**

Do you trust yourself to make decisions, follow through with plans, and lead even in challenging times? We put confidence at the top of the list because self-leadership requires an incredible amount of self-confidence. You must trust that you have your own best interests at heart and are willing to do what it takes to succeed. If you don't trust your own judgement or ability to lead, you will struggle to guide yourself toward success.

➤ **Calmness**

Can you remain calm, clear-headed, and focused even during difficult circumstances? Great leaders aren't fast to react even when something touches an emotional trigger. They have the mental strength to fully assess the situation and determine the most logical and advantageous response. They stay calm while others fall apart due to stress, uncertainty, disappointment, anxiety, and overwhelm.

➤ **Clarity**

Can you acknowledge and then look beyond your own biases and preconceptions to reach a clear, accurate view of a situation? Every person has their own beliefs and biases. Smart leaders work hard to recognize theirs as well as those of others in their team. They strive to see the big picture and find details clearly so that their decisions aren't based on emotion.

➤ **Curiosity**

Do you pay attention to the world around you and explore new ideas and concepts? Leaders maintain an open mind and are eager to learn new things. When they come across something that conflicts with their own beliefs or is simply new, they take the time to learn more about it. They realize that there's always something valuable to learn.

➤ **Compassion**

Are you aware of your own humanity and compassionate to your own struggles and limitations? Great leaders acknowledge the struggles their team members are facing and take steps to help them grow and overcome. Self-leadership requires you to push and motivate yourself while having a healthy degree of understanding and compassion toward your struggles, limitations, and weaknesses.

➤ **Courage**

When the next step toward a goal requires some risk, can you hold your head high and take the first step in the right direction? The right direction isn't always the easiest, cheapest, or most acceptable to your peers or loved ones. Leading yourself requires you to bravely move in the right direction for your goals regardless of the risks.

➤ **Creativity**

Do you come up with fresh ideas and new options when you approach a problem? Self-leaders think beyond the usual and expected actions to find solutions that are unique or that accelerate results. Creativity is often what allows you to step away from the crowd and stand out in business, dating, and many other worlds. Not everyone is comfortable moving away

from the crowd and doing things that are considered novel or strange, but self-leadership is easier if you have some creativity flowing and are courageous enough to follow those ideas.

➤ **Connectedness**

Do you feel you are a part of larger unit? Self-leadership requires a lot of independent thought and action, but that doesn't work against the importance of brainstorming and acting as a team. Strong self-leaders see their place within larger groups and work hard to pull their weight and help in the accomplishment of collective goals.

Benefits of Self-leadership

➤ **Makes you more efficient and productive**

Employers often look for candidates who have strong self-leadership skills because they know these skills help the company accomplish its goals more efficiently and productively. Employees who have strong self-leadership skills also have the ability to manage their time effectively and to stay organized in their work. This often results in the company benefiting from increased productivity and high-quality work.

➤ **Keeps you motivated and accountable**

One of the greatest personal benefits of self-leadership is that it requires you to stay motivated and to be accountable for your own actions. Having a strong sense of motivation will help you push through challenges when they arise, which can result in you achieving more than you thought you could. Being accountable for your actions requires you to be honest when taking self-inventory and provides you the opportunity to learn and develop new skills.

➤ **Builds stronger relationships with co-workers**

Having strong self-leadership skills will help you build strong relationships with your co-workers, supervisors and managers because they will respect your dedication to your role and your work ethic. Co-workers will be more likely to view you as someone they can count on to complete group tasks and projects, while supervisors and managers will appreciate your ability to be productive without having to be micromanaged.

➤ **Inspires others to follow your lead**

Every great leader needs to have the ability to lead their team by example. This means great leadership begins with self-leadership skills. Because supervisors and managers typically have minimal oversight, if you are in a position of leadership it is important for you to be able to plan and prioritize your own tasks and remain dedicated to completing your work. Even if

you aren't in a position of leadership, showing strong self-leadership skills can still have a positive influence on encouraging your co-workers to be more proactive and productive.

The Four Pillars of Self-Leadership

These are the four elements that together make up the concept of self-leadership. They all complement each other very well, but to be a successful self-leader you need to develop in all four areas.

Self-Leadership Pillar 1: Self-Discovery

When you understand what's important to you, what energises you, what you believe in, and where you want to be; you can make leadership decisions with confidence. Think of all the great leaders in history. They're often considered great because they had the courage to stand up for what they believed in. But to get there, first they had to be 100% clear on what exactly it was that they believed in.

Self-Leadership Pillar 2: Self-Acceptance

Self-Acceptance is about being completely honest with yourself and accepting it without self-criticism or self-sabotage. Importantly, self-acceptance isn't just about accepting your flaws. It's also about accepting and owning your strengths. While most people find it easy to point out their flaws, many of us struggle to openly identify our strengths. When you can honestly identify what you're good at, you can leverage that to get better results.

Self-Leadership Pillar 3: Self-Management

Leaders who can self-manage are more productive, more focused and more able to work independently. Self-management and self-discipline are closely linked. It involves holding yourself accountable and ensuring you manages your time and resources effectively.

Self-management requires self-awareness. You need to understand what habits you already have so that you can replace less desirable habits with more desirable ones. For example, if you're in the habit of checking your phone every half an hour, it's likely to be disrupting your focus. Self-management also means controlling impulses – when you want to react instead of respond. To do this effectively, you need first to be self-aware of what triggers your behaviours and able to apply self-management to remain centred and calm. Self-management builds on self-discovery and self-acceptance by developing positive discipline to work on the things that align with your strengths and values.

Self-Leadership Pillar 4: Self-Growth

Self-Leadership is all about personal growth and becoming a better leader. It's about being completely honest with yourself, but it isn't about self-criticism. It's about recognising what

you're doing, what is and isn't working, and how you can make positive changes. Self-growth is about striving to continuously improve yourself. It requires being open to feedback and creating a development plan to keep you accountable and on track. Committing to self-growth can make a positive impact in your career and helps you to lead by example for those around you.

How to Build Self-Leadership?

Developing self-leadership requires you to become more aware of the thoughts in your mind and then turn them into positive, productive beliefs. That requires a lot of introspection and a much deeper understanding of you.

To understand yourself, write down your daily routine and most recognizable habits.

Why do you do those things?

Why are they important to you?

What do you gain from taking those actions?

Are your habits leading you toward the life you want or just toward the limited life you believe you deserve?

What do you really believe you deserve, and why?

Get honest about your strengths and weaknesses. Try to understand the ways in which you hold yourself back and why you do so. Practice self-compassion to love yourself as you are while pushing yourself to make positive changes. The more you understand yourself and the goals you want to achieve, the better you will get at leading yourself to success.

Self-Leadership Skills

Understanding yourself, or self-awareness, is a process that you can tackle over time through journaling, therapy, and simply paying closer attention to the thoughts crossing your mind. Clear self-leadership skills will help you set goals, hold yourself accountable, and successfully push yourself to new levels of goal achievement.

- **Decision Making** – If you're bad at decision making, you're likely to lead yourself in the wrong direction, slowing your progress toward goals. Learning the principles of solid decision making will strengthen your self-leadership skills.
- **Accountability** – Self-leadership requires you to hold yourself accountable. That means admitting mistakes, acknowledging shortcomings, and taking full responsibility for your life. If you believe your own lie and let yourself off the hook easily, you can't lead yourself toward success.

- **Self-Regulation** – The more you can control your emotions and reactions to external events, the better your self-leadership. Strong leaders act on knowledge, wisdom, and goal orientation rather than pure emotion. If you can't control yourself, it's difficult to lead yourself effectively.
- **Energy Generation** – What most people think of as motivation is simply an abundance of energy pushing in a given direction. Self-leadership requires you to generate that energy and then keep it flowing. Starting from a dead stop requires a big push, and then you will remain motivated and energized if you keep that motion going once you push off.
- **Clear Communication** – Self-leadership requires you to communicate with yourself and others clearly. Learning to speak to yourself with just as much respect and love as you speak to others will take you a long way toward self-mastery and success.

Conclusion:

Every great leader has many important qualities that make them successful. One of the most important of these leadership qualities is a strong sense of self-awareness and the ability to use it to lead by example. Developing self-leadership skills can have many benefits in both your personal and professional life. Self Leadership is not about managing others. It is about leading yourself.

(Reference: Internet Resources)

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