

## Leadership Self-Assessment

*“Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen”\**

### Introduction

The phrase, “It all starts at the top,” states unambiguously where people look to learn what an organization stands for, what it does and what it values. Anyone inside or outside the organization looks to the words, actions, and interpersonal behaviors of its senior leaders to define it. Consequently, four of the most important qualities effective leaders and senior managers cultivate are:

- A high degree of self-awareness and self-management;
- Clarity about personal values;
- Knowledge about how to ‘model the way’; and
- How to motivate and inspire others.

It does not matter how small or large your unit/division is, whether two or 10,000 employees, you are still a leader.

*Accept that being a leader is hard work and is a life-long journey! Leadership cannot be learned by reading or studying about it – it must be lived.*

One of the best ways for leaders to become better leaders is to learn both what they do and do not know about leadership skills and their style, and how to apply very practical management tools in situations requiring leadership.

As explore ways to level-up your leadership skills, we have created a **Leadership Self-Assessment** to give you further insight into effective 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership as you carry out your own responsibilities. Through a series of questions, you will discover your own answers to questions leaders all over the world grapple with as they develop their own leadership skills. Some answers you may already have, some others we hope you will learn during our work together. Others you will find as your mastery of fundamental leadership skills grows.

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\* From Max DePree. *Leadership is an Art*, (New York: Doubleday,1989.)

## Leadership Self-Assessment

The following questions are intended to stimulate your thinking about leadership, how leaders and their values are related to their organizations, and about yourself as a leader. Try to be as specific as possible with your answers, as specificity clarifies thinking. *Remember, this is not a test, and you do not need to hand it in.*

### Questions about Leaders not including yourself and your current work setting:

1. **Who is a leader I really admire and why?** (Choose someone with whom you have some interaction with but who is *not* part of your own organization.) Leaders come in all shapes and forms, backgrounds, and life experiences. Many true leaders do not have a title. They may be a relative, a schoolmate, a teacher/coach/ a member of your community.

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2. **What are that leader's personal values, to the best of my knowledge?**

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3. **From my perspective, how do those personal values get translated into the characteristics of how the organization he/she leads functions?** (List examples of specific actions, interactions and/or policies that reflect the values of the leader).

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4. **How would you describe the culture – ‘the unwritten rules that everyone knows and abides by’ of that leader’s organization? On a scale of 1 to 10, how successful do you think the organization is in fulfilling its purpose?** (Describe specific examples of how the culture helps the organization succeed.)

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5. **When I reflect about this leader I admire, does he/she also have some limitations? What are they? How do I think those limitations are also reflected in the work of the organization and its culture?** Be specific with examples.

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**5. When I think of myself as a leader, what are my core strengths? How do they help me achieve what I'm striving to accomplish for the organization?**

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**6. When I think of myself as a leader, what are my most significant weaknesses? How do they interfere with my role as a leader and as professional colleague to others?**

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**CONGRATULATIONS! You have just begun your leadership journey.** You explored some of your beliefs about leadership, based on your own personal experience with a leader you admire. You have reflected on your most important personal values, and explored how aligned they are with your words, and actions at work. You've stated to yourself what you perceive as your strengths and potential weakness, and how they impact your effectiveness at work. See how much can be learned in a few minutes from the right questions! I'm confident you see yourself more clearly and your leadership potential.