

THE SKILLS YOU NEED GUIDE TO LEADERSHIP

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

Developing The Personal Skills
You Need To Lead



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Skills You Need

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“Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them.”

William Shakespeare, Twelfth Night

Developing leadership skills is an ongoing process. While many of the skills that you need to lead are essential in life more generally, such as good communication skills, others are more specific to leadership positions.

This eBook focuses on the personal skills that are likely to be new or unfamiliar to you when you first take up a leadership position. These skills are about you rather than how you relate to other people, which is covered in the third eBook in this series, *Leading and Managing Others: Developing the Skills You Need to Lead People and Teams*. The eBook explains each skill and gives you some ideas about how you can develop and practise it.

Like the first eBook in this series, *Learning to Lead: Understanding Leadership and Developing Your Leadership Style*, it is designed for those considering, or just starting, their first leadership post. Established leaders, however, should also be able to find some interesting ideas.

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PART 2:

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Developing the Personal Skills You Need to Lead

1

An Introduction to Skills for Leadership

It is a cliché, perhaps, but nonetheless true that you cannot manage and lead others well unless and until you can manage yourself, both rationally and emotionally.

The first step to leadership is therefore to recognise and manage your emotions.

To do so, you need to develop your emotional intelligence: the ability to understand your own and others' emotions, and use those ethically to deliver the required results.

You can then learn to use a combination of emotion and reason to make decisions and to decide on the 'right' course of action. This will help you to stand firm as a leader when there are many different options, and you are not sure which to pursue. At the same time, it is helpful to understand what motivates you, so that you can keep yourself focused when times are hard.

All these are very much internal issues: they are about what is going on in your head. Others will see the results, but not necessarily the process.

Leaders also need to develop good organisational skills.

Leaders need to be able to manage what is going on in their own work and lives, and also those around them. This is essential to good delegation and management. Some of us find organisation much easier than others. If you are one of those who finds it harder, you have two choices as a leader.

You can either learn to do it yourself, using some of the ideas in this eBook, or you can surround yourself with people who can do it for you, and learn to delegate effectively. Delegation is covered in the next of our series of eBooks on leadership, *Leading and Managing Others: Developing the Skills You Need to Lead People and Teams*.

Leaders also need very good thinking skills.

Strategic thinking, in particular, has in recent years become an area associated with leadership. Every aspiring leader needs to have 'strategic thinking skills' on their CV, and it is probably the area that most concerns new leaders. However, there is no magic to being able to think strategically and we provide some ideas to help you get started.

Other useful thinking skills for leaders include creative thinking and innovating. Again, there is no 'magic bullet', but we hope that this book will help you to start using some techniques and ideas with confidence.



2

Recognising and Managing your Emotions

It is important to be able to understand your emotions and those of others since this is the first step towards managing them. The key to emotional intelligence is using and harnessing your emotions, but not being governed entirely by them, and instead being able to apply reason to them. This can be very difficult because emotions are fundamental to being human, and can sometimes be very strong.

**The full eBook
is available at**

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