

# Skills to Improve Upon As a Leader



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Leadership isn't a noun. It's a verb. It's a skill set you practice, not merely possess. What that means is that your status as a leader must not signal stasis. In fact, when you're a leader, your own success, as well as that of your team, often depends upon your continued evolution as a leader.

That's a tall order, of course, especially when you're also tasked with supporting the same pursuit of excellence in your employees. The good news is that focusing on improving a small set of core leadership skills will help you to model the continuous development you seek to instill in your team. At the same time, you'll also be optimizing your leadership effectiveness, building the performance of your team one

improvement at a time.

This article explores the essential skills you should improve on today to increase your efficacy as a leader and role model not just for tomorrow.

## **Digital Literacy**

As a leader in today's technology-driven world, one of the most important skills you can cultivate is digital literacy. No matter what your particular industry, your company, and career almost inevitably are rooted in information technology.

Unfortunately, however, not all digital information is created equal, and this can pose a serious risk to your career, your team, and your organization. Digital literacy skills, though, enable you to become a savvier consumer of digital content.

Here are five digital literacy skills that many employers look for when hiring candidates:

1. Independent research
2. Knowledge of terms and platforms
3. Collaboration
4. Adaptation
5. Ability to teach

## **Communication**

The best leaders are also often the best communicators. If you want to inspire, unite, and lead your team, then you have to know how to communicate with them effectively. This is about more than the ability to make a speech, conduct a meeting, or carry on a face-to-face conversation, however.

In the modern workplace, teams are more diverse than ever before. Additionally, with the rise of the virtual office, particularly in the wake of the pandemic, work is being

conducted in more diverse settings than ever before.

This means that you will be required to communicate effectively across a range of media, from text-based communications to live public speaking to the hosting of video-based conferences. Each of these contexts requires a unique approach to communication:

- Email, chat, tasks, and other written forms: language must be softened to prevent miscommunication
- Video and live presentations: presenters must learn to read facial expressions and body language to gauge audience interest

Learning how to adapt your communication strategies to a wide array of situations, contexts, and content is essential for today's business leaders.

## Memory and Learning

When you're a leader, you have a lot on your plate. You have to have strong insight into your team, both as a collective and as individuals. You also have to possess expertise on your organization, including the short-term and long-term needs and goals that shape the company and your role in it. Additionally, you're also expected to be an authority in your field, to have the answers your team and your clients need to ensure success.

That's a pretty significant demand on your mind and memory. This is why improving your memory is one of the best skills you can cultivate. Others include:

- Mindfulness
- Meditation
- Gamification
- Active listening
- Mixing up routines

- Using music

These can significantly improve both your short-term and long-term memory, which can dramatically enhance your effectiveness as a leader.

## **The Takeaway**

Being a good leader doesn't just happen. It's not simply about winning the promotion and being assigned a team. You have to work at it with both diligence and commitment. A good leader, after all, is one who consistently strives to improve and who models this ethos for their team. There are, however, specific essential skills that can be particularly beneficial for leaders, no matter their particular industry. For example, an effective leader in today's workforce possesses robust digital literacy skills, is one who is an excellent communicator regardless of the particular contexts in which they are engaged, and is also one who possesses a keen and reliable memory, no matter how taxed their time, attention, and focus may be.



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