

# 5 Essential Leadership Strengths

The background of the cover features a silhouette of three people climbing a jagged mountain peak. The scene is set against a vibrant sunset or sunrise sky, with warm orange and yellow hues. The person at the top of the peak is standing and raising their right arm in a gesture of triumph. The other two individuals are positioned lower on the mountain, with one person reaching out to assist the other. The overall composition conveys a sense of teamwork, perseverance, and achievement.

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People leadership is not defined by your role or position, it is instead defined by your actions and your ability to positively influence others. Today more than ever, leaders must be talented in a number of ways that go well beyond simply running the team and barking orders. Organisations need leaders that have highly developed people leadership skills and understand the importance of achieving results through people.

To do this, you must understand why people behave the way they do and how you can behave in response to each individual which will allow you to lead more effectively. With a background in psychology, counselling and coaching the truth of the matter is that humans are complex and we need to be able to adapt to them individually. It is not a one size fits all approach.

There are 5 Essential Strengths leaders should have if they wish to successfully lead organisations and people:

1. Communication skills
2. Planning and organising
3. Problem solving and decision making
4. Developing and coaching others
5. Building relationships

There have been many cases that I have witnessed where an organisation loses valuable people due to poor leadership. Most of use have heard the saying - "People don't leave bad jobs, they leave bad bosses". So, the pressure is on for leaders to acknowledge the need for them to grow and develop to fulfill the expectations of their people - or risk losing them to leaders who can and do show true leadership.

Find out why these leadership strengths are so important and how you can develop them in your leadership style!

# Chapter 1: Effective Communication



Effective communication impacts more than just the bottom line. Leaders that can communicate have a team that is clear on the vision, a team that is empowered and inspired, and a team that works together to achieve. Communication skills is one of the most important skills for a leader.

Richard Branson describes communication “as the most important skill a leader can possess”. Why? Because – as a leader – your primary role is to lead. To have a destination in sight, to chart the course to success and to persuade your team to follow you on the journey.

In order for us to influence our people, we need to connect with them and be able to communicate effectively.

When you communicate effectively you minimise confusion, which allows people to understand their role and perform the tasks well. There is nothing more frustrating when communication is complex and confusing and in fact the people around you feel less confident.

However, communication shouldn't be just one-sided. We have all heard that saying before, "Communication is a two-way street." Part of Effective Communication is Effective Listening.

Encourage your team to ask questions, give suggestions, and state their opinions. Creating the opportunity for you and your team to not only have a clear idea of what needs to be done, but it also further strengthens your relationship and trust with another, to become more cohesive.

You might even be pleasantly surprised at the suggestions and opinions your team members might have. As a leader, you are surrounded by a group of people who have their own talents, ideas, and perspectives. It would be a shame not to make the most of it. By engaging with your team, you will have the opportunity to understand their strengths and abilities, and uncover their potential.

**Effective leadership communication is the essential ingredient to success because it creates shared understanding, meaning and connection between you and your team.**

**Before you can develop others, you MUST develop yourself.**

## Chapter 2: Organising and Planning



Organising and planning helps you anticipate needs and problems, and identify available choices.

Organising your work and planning ahead helps you be more efficient and productive. Being well-organised and developing effective plans also allows you to achieve important goals.

Organising your work and planning ahead, is like setting up a roadmap for you and your team to follow. It allows you to define the goal and the steps you need to reach that goal. You can look at things in detail, and even take a look at the bigger picture, giving you a better idea on when the goal can be met and what you need to achieve that goal.

You can easily identify the critical tasks and prioritise what needs to be done. It helps you in assigning the right tasks to the right people. Having plans also allows you to set the standard to each of the tasks that you and your team must go through. It minimises confusion for everyone and allows people to focus on what they need to be doing, rather than worrying if whether or not what they are doing is the right thing to do. There is a great saying that I love from Benjamin Franklin - 'If you fail to plan, you are planning on failing'.

As a coach and consultant I've worked with many leaders in the past decade, and the common characteristics that high-performing leaders share is resourcefulness. They all have the ability to identify and leverage tools that help them perform their role to a greater level.

And this tool is one many leaders are using - The Eisenhower Matrix. It is a simple tool that enables you to look at the long-term outcomes of your daily work.

It is also referred to as the Urgent-Important Matrix (Stephen Covey – 7 habits of highly effective leaders book – made it famous). It gives you the ability to prioritise and organise tasks. Using the Eisenhower Matrix also allows you to oversee all work tasks/assignments and delegate them appropriately to team members.

The great thing about using this matrix is you have all your tasks on one page – so it gives you an overall view of what is on your plate...

### The Eisenhower Matrix of Priorities



The Eisenhower Matrix encourage you to assign tasks into one of four quadrants:

**"Important" and "Urgent" tasks.** These receive the highest priority level and should be your primary focus to complete as soon as possible (most often on the same day).

**"Important", but "Not Urgent" tasks.** These are the long-term goals and tasks that are important but don't have a firm deadline yet. You should schedule them in a timely manner, doing the most urgent ones right after you've finished everything from the "Do" quadrant.

**"Not Important", but "Urgent" tasks.** These tasks are the ones you can delegate to other professionals or appoint to complete yourself if you must, but only after your first and second quadrant tasks are completed.

**"Not Important" and "Not Urgent" tasks.** The tasks are placed in the "Delete" quadrant because you should eliminate doing them. This may vary due to the perception of urgency and importance, but mainly these tasks don't even need to be done and would be considered a complete waste of time by most people.



Or another simpler way to look at it is:

1. **Do first:** Tasks that need to be done that day – critically important and must be completed today.
2. **Schedule:** Important tasks that need to be scheduled – tomorrow or next week.
3. **Delegate:** Urgent work, but not as important and can be delegated to others.
4. **Don't do:** Not important or urgent. Don't do at all.

Delegation skills are important qualities of a good leader, and this is a great tool to optimise your time and your work flow but also make sure you are delegating and not spending time in the weeds or on the dancefloor. There is a saying I am always saying to leaders - get off the dance floor and onto the balcony or get out of the weeds and on the surface - when we look from above we see things differently.

Using tools and frameworks are a great way to motivate yourself and your team. I think we all would feel stressed and lost when staring at a large project with no idea where to begin. Nobody can be motivated when there aren't any clear objectives. As a leader, motivating your team comes part and parcel with the role. By being organised and planning things out, it helps you and your team reduce any uncertainty, and can motivate them to accomplish the goal they clearly understand.

This also sends a positive image, which is so important as leaders. The fact is, being organised enables us to set an example for our team members and more efficiently manage our time. Having clear plans and procedures in place sends a great message to those who work for you.

It says a great deal about your strength as a leader and it goes a long way in building a relationship of trust in the team, and it makes everyone's life easier.

## Chapter 3: Problem Solving



Problem solving in business can be defined as analysing, diagnosing, and resolving problems. Leaders with an aptitude for problem solving have the ability to identify the issue and create solutions to deal with it.

Leaders with effective problem-solving skills are able to guide teams towards the achievement of goals by eliminating frustration, confusion, and misunderstandings before they become unmanageable.

This, I feel, is one of the most essential strengths a leader should have. When everything starts to go wrong, where others might start feeling tense or beginning to panic, a leader is someone who stays calm, doesn't waste time worrying, and makes better use of the time by working on a solution.

I get it problems can be painful and stressful in business but they are also a gift because we learn more about what not to do in the future. There are times when we know that something is going to be an issue, and as leaders, we take the initiative and take steps to resolve it before it gets blown out of proportion. However, there are also times when something unexpected occurs and throws everything off balance.

When problems occur we want leaders who step up and offer guidance and support not just solutions..

The best leaders I have seen are the ones that work with you to analyse the problem, define it and give it clarity, they help you to see how and why it happened, then help to develop a solution and even some alternative solutions to resolve it.

Former United States Secretary of State, Colin Powell, once said that...

"Leadership is *Solving problems*. The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or conclude you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership."

Your team might not be soldiers, but they definitely see you as someone who leads them and someone they can rely on for guidance.

## Chapter 4: Developing and Coaching



As a leader, one of our most important roles is to ensure that we are coaching, developing, supporting, and growing our people in order for them to be the best version of themselves they can be.

Coaching and developing supports employee's professional development and their job satisfaction.

Being in a job where you feel like there is no space to grow can feel demoralising. Coming into work every day thinking, "Here we go again." And stagnating in the same state for a long period of time can make one feel unimportant and unmotivated.

Every person, whether they explicitly say so or not, would want to reach for further heights. We all want to improve and contribute. And many want the opportunity to do so as well.

Having a focus on developing oneself and as well as others is necessary for the long-term. In this world we are living in now, change and innovation happen much faster than it has in the past. And in turn, we must all do better.

Leaders who effectively coach are ranked as a leader people want to work for. This skill of coaching was also ranked higher than any other skill set employees could identify. A coaching leader is the leader of the future... I've said it a million times before. People want to be coached, they want to be better, they want to do better..

Coaching also improves self-awareness, helps people to get a clearer understanding of their role and based on research done by positive psychology researchers it found that staff who are coached increase their effectiveness by 55%.

I have personally coached individuals and teams for over 10 years to improve their effectiveness, communication, and collaboration and a positive outcome of this coaching helped improve their self-esteem and their workplace culture.

It doesn't stop there though. As leaders we must provide opportunities to further develop and grow. We must push them further, build their confidence, support and guide them through failure, and acknowledge success.

Those who are coached to performance, rather than managed to performance, are more committed to and invested in the outcomes of their work and the organisational goals.

People are at the centre of all leadership efforts. Leaders cannot lead effectively unless they understand the people they are leading.

Leaders with strong, trusting, and authentic relationships with their teams know that investing time in building these bonds makes them more effective overall.

As a coaching leader, it is really important to see people for what they are capable of, that you believe that they have greatness inside of them.

That their limits are there only because they haven't yet known how to fix them. Everyone has a pot of gold – everyone has greatness inside them... You just need to help them dig for it.

### **THE MORE WE BELIEVE THEY CAN, THE MORE THEY BELIEVE THEY CAN...**

The thing I absolutely love about coaching is you have the opportunity as a leader to inspire and motivate people to be the best version of themselves. What a gift you have to be able to help others not just in their work but in their world.

I am truly grateful for every single person that I coach... I get to help someone else make the world a better place...and together we get to make a difference.

## ***A Coaching Leader is the LEADER OF THE FUTURE***



## Chapter 5: Building Relationships



Building relationships with your own team and outside of the people you lead is such an essential skill for any leader. It isn't something that can be checked off a to-do list.

People are at the centre of all leadership efforts. Leaders cannot lead effectively unless they understand the people they are leading.

After all, if you think about it, we spend more time with the people we work with than our own families. For at least 8 hours, every day, for at least 5 days, every week is spent with the people you work with.

To be spending that much time with these people and not knowing anything about them would be almost impossible. However, as a leader, it is important to not only maintain your relationship with members of your team but also strengthen it.

When building relationships, it is important to take the time and find opportunities to reach out to others. Listen to them, ask about how they are in their work, their motivators or demotivators, address their concerns, show appreciation in successes, and even something like addressing issues together in a constructive way.

But it isn't all about work it is also about learning more about them, taking the time to ask questions, spending time with them, and getting to know them on a more personal level.

Leaders with strong, trusting and authentic relationships with their teams know that investing time in building these bonds makes them more effective overall.

It is something that we work on every day in the way we carry ourselves, in how we have our conversations, and even in the way we greet other people. In developing your ability to build relationships you are also developing yourself as a leader in other aspects. In learning to build and maintain positive relationships, you also learn to show respect to other people, acknowledge different ideas even if you do not agree with them.

As leaders, we should also realise that the way we act, what we say and how we do operate, affect how we are perceived by other people, the way they perceive the organisation and team they are affiliated with. That's a big cross to bear but you essentially as the leader determine the tone for the team.

Workplaces of today are in need of people with great relationship-building skills. Treat your people and the people around you as you would want to be treated.



Thank you for wanting to be a better leader, for wanting to learn more about the 5 Essential Skills you need to develop as a leader and for wanting to be the leader you want to be but also that your team need you to be.

I hope this book has provided you with some tips and tools to help you build and develop the 5 Essential Skills all successful leaders have.

Developing these skills will allow you to be the leader everyone wished they had.

If you would like to develop your People Leadership Skills at a deeper level then check out our Leadership Excellence Program.

<https://performanceadvisorygroup.com.au/leadership-excellence-program/>

List 3 actions you need to take to move you to being the leader you want to be:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Leadership is a journey, not a destination – never stop learning because life never stops teaching.**

A promotional graphic for the Leadership Excellence Program. At the top, a green banner contains the text "LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE PROGRAM" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Below the banner is a photograph of four diverse business professionals (three men and one woman) in an office setting, smiling and looking at a laptop. To the right of the photo is the logo for "PERFORMANCE ADVISORY GROUP", which features a stylized bar chart with three bars of increasing height. At the bottom, a dark blue banner contains the text "How strong is your leadership?" in white, with "How strong is your" in a smaller font and "leadership?" in a larger, bold font. Below this, in a smaller white font, is the text "Take the Leadership Scorecard by Keynote Speaker, Kylie Denton, and discover in 3 minutes". At the very bottom of the blue banner is the text "Click the link to get started" in white, underlined. The bottom right corner of the graphic features a large, white, stylized double arrow pointing to the right.

***<https://leadershipquiz.scoreapp.com/>***