

5 Ways to Boost Your Leadership Skills

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With the end of the year looming, now is the prime opportunity to reflect on the state of your organization. Is your marketplace position what you want? Are you achieving your goals on pace with the original plan? And most importantly, are you — as an individual — doing the right things to help achieve positive outcomes?

Today's health-care workplace can be a frantic environment. But, affecting change in an organization starts with you, as an individual leader. By taking a look inward, you can position yourself as a better leader for your team. You have the tools within you (or can take steps to acquire these tools) to improve the outcomes of projects that you do for your organization.

But how do you identify them and use them in your everyday leadership responsibilities?

Consider the following five ways to optimize who you are in order for you to become a better leader.

1. Put a greater emphasis on integrity.

How your team performs is a **direct** result of how you lead. Are you focused on inspiring your team through your words and actions? Look at yourself as others view you. Concentrate on being a positive, effective role model.

2. Focus on real communication.

Relying too heavily on voice mail and e-mail for efficiency leads to assumptions. We miss out on intuitive dialogue and don't share the important thoughts that can only be exchanged by talking to each other. Make an effort to talk face-to-face. Really listen to what that person is saying.

3. Empower the people around you.

Too often, middle management staff hesitates to move forward, even if senior management has approved a strategy because they've been burned before. Empower everyone in your organization to implement the plan. Observe the pride of ownership your team will have as a result.

4. Squash silo thinking.

In attempting to protect what's ours, silo thinking has become a pattern of behavior. We lose sight of our core business, become fragmented and fail to build a strategy that's good for the organization. Bring together your individual teams and re-emphasize the value of working together to achieve common goals.

5. Avoid reacting and start acting.

We always think there's no time to think about our strategy, test it or get others involved in it. Concentrate on acting, not reacting. Delegate responsibilities on a project. Empower others to take action. Stay focused on the reason your organization is in business in the first place.

