

Take a Closer Look: 6 Tips for Leadership Success

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Leadership starts with each one of us, no matter what our responsibilities or our job title. And, likewise, we all can effect positive change in our organization by encouraging the leader within. We invite you to make it your goal to focus on each of the following exercises, one per week, in the New Year. Soon you'll be looking at your organization – and especially yourself – in a whole new way.

Focus on Your Skills

Focus on your own skills for a moment and answer the following questions:

Within your program, name three people who are either formal or informal leaders.

Which characteristics in them do you admire most?

What role would you best like to fulfill personally: formal leader, informal leader, mentor, or none of the above?

Which areas do you think you need to enhance to be more effective in this role?

Start a log of leadership opportunities you've identified. Note how you took advantage of them and managed them. What were the results – good and bad?

Evaluate the staff and your team of coworkers. Is there someone in the group that is fairly new and working hard to determine their role on the team? If the answer is yes, share with them some basic leadership techniques. Don't be discouraged if they don't readily embrace your philosophy. Everybody needs time to develop a style that works for them.

Determine if you have any traits that could be perceived as negative. Be honest with yourself! Be brave about asking for feedback, and view it objectively. Then develop an action plan to modify this characteristic.

Evaluate the personality style of those people you lead best or like to be led by. What motivates you? What makes you want to do your best for your team? Personality plays a significant role in our internal relationships, sales activities and leadership interactions.

Enjoy the Process

Remember that change of any sort takes time. Give yourself permission to make some mistakes along the way – after all, it's how we learn how to be successful. And enjoy your role at any level.

