



1.03 Leadership & Self-Awareness

Inventing Your Leadership Style

Finding the Leader Within

"Changing Lives One Workplace at a Time"

Ivy Consulting Group, Inc.
www.IvyConsultingGroup.org



Inventing Your Leadership Style

As a small business owner, you have taken on an entirely new and unfamiliar responsibility. There is a multitude of responsibilities unique to a business owner that employees seldom recognize.

First and foremost, you committed yourself. You have, or in some cases, dreamt of one-day taking control of your future and doing something more with your life. You conducted research, spoke with your loved ones, and made the leap knowing that the odds were stacked against you.

Next, you commit your loved ones. The ones who count on you to provide food, clothing, and shelter. The ones who rely on you to be there when you need them the most. This commitment, for most, is the driving force behind the long hours and sacrifices you make to realize your dream.

Third, you made or will commit your employees. Employees who will, in time, seem more like family than merely a name in the office with a job to do. Hire the right ones to share your dream and buy into your vision, and you will feel the weight of this commitment and the unexpected responsibility that comes with it.

You also commit to your customers, who count on you to care about them, understand their needs, recommend the right product, and (when you offer services) deliver on your promise to be there when they need you the most.

Finally, some of you are committed to the company or companies that gave you this tremendous opportunity. Never get too big to forget how you started. Hundreds of thousands of entrepreneurs have paved the way for you to take advantage of the incredible opportunity we call business ownership.

What kind of impact do you think you have on others now?

Does your impact match the results that you would like to have? If you are not sure, ask for feedback from those around you. Your friends, family, coworkers, and a few employees may be an excellent place to start. Let them know that you are working on self-improvement and that you value their opinion. Make them feel safe and don't try and justify your actions or get defensive when they give you their opinion. Hearing feedback like this can be hard to take in, and you may experience feelings of insult, hurt, or even anger. Resist your temptation to overreact and take it all in. Look for everyday observations and consider what people tell you as objective information you can use to be a better leader.

Leaders are made, not born. If you don't consider yourself a great leader, or even a good one, the good news is that it is never too late to learn. To do this, you must want to work on yourself as a person, to know yourself inside and out. If you genuinely want to become a great leader, never stop developing yourself and looking for new ways to lead your team to greatness!

Self-Awareness

We have all heard that while we may not have control over what happens to us, we can control our reaction to it. This is because our past experiences significantly influence who we are and how we react to others daily.

Self-awareness gives you an understanding of where you are today from a realistic point of view that can provide the insight to lead your team to greatness. And to lead your team, you must be aware of how your decisions and attitudes impact others around you. From how you communicate your message to how you listen and respond to their words, your influence can affect others' perceptions of who you are and the actions of those who follow.



When you start to realize the importance of having an accurate view of whom you are, combined with an understanding of why you react the way you do, it is then and only then that you can grow into a leader that others want to follow. You'll also begin to live a rich and fulfilling life. And when you feel comfortable with this process, share your experiences of self-awareness with others.

Don't be afraid to admit your faults and be a role model for others to follow. Tell them how becoming more aware of whom you have impacted your life positively and encourage them to do the same. Tell them how you did it and mentor them through the process.

Leadership is not about standing on a podium and getting others to do what you want them to do...*Leadership is about leading yourself and taking complete responsibility for your life. It's about admitting your strengths and weaknesses and not being afraid to ask for help. It's about living with passion, purpose, and integrity always. It's about doing the right thing even when no one else is watching and setting an example to make this world a better place. And that's why anyone can become a leader if they are courageous enough to try.*

Why Do You Lead the Way You Do?

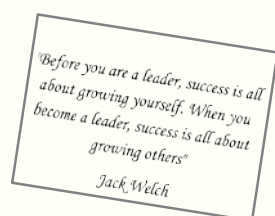
When you think of “leadership,” what is the first thing that comes to mind? A politician? A spiritual leader you admire? A corporate executive who enjoys the public spotlight? Leaders take on many roles, and as a business owner, you are a leader by default.

Contrary to popular belief that leaders are born, leadership skills can be learned and sharpened over time. Developing your style to lead your team effectively is crucial to your success. The first step is to understand your role as a leader, why you lead the way you do, and what you can do to improve your leadership style.

While this thought may sit well for some, many business owners resist seeing themselves as leaders. But if you are one of these people, don’t worry; you are not alone. Bill Gates and Warren Buffet both admit to being misunderstood, introverted leaders. A concept discussed in Jennifer Kahnweiler’s book, *The Introverted Leader*. And the best news is that you don’t have to lead from a platform in front of a vast audience - you can do it from the comfort of your home or office.

Dream big! Most business owners fail not because their dreams are too big, but rather their dreams are too small, and their approach is too conservative. Owners who fall into this category are often their top sales associates and customer service representative. At some point, they hire staff, and agitations start showing because the business isn’t on a solid foundation. A solid foundation includes business planning, employee agreements, responsibilities, and procedures of how the company is expected to operate. Like many business owners who fail, they see every dollar going out as an expense without realizing the moment they must pick up and do that task. As a result, they are not able to focus on other essential activities, and the cost of the failure to identify or value their time is ultimately the reason for their demise.

The good news is that it’s not too late, no matter where you are in your business. You have taken your first step by hiring a business consultant with a proven track record and background in helping business owners like you. In just a few short months, you will be on your way to improving your leadership ability and, ultimately, your life. Nothing in business is more rewarding than developing a company that operates systematically. This allows you to focus on the activities that you love to do. Because, in the end, that’s all that matters anyway, isn’t it? A business that gives you a better life instead of ruining it. Put the hard work, time, and money into your business to develop the systems that will provide the best result, and then sit back and watch how your business will return the favor.



Personal Traits that Produce Great Leadership Styles

Certain traits consistently show signs of creating great leaders. The good news for the day is that most of the characteristics can be mastered when it is done for the right reasons. Reengineering your agency to represent the values you hold probably means some adjustments to how you lead others. Below are some personality traits that have produced happy, productive, and goal-driven leaders your staff can respect and look up to.

Self-Confidence: believing in your judgment, ability, and power to achieve.

Positive Attitude: The uplifting manner, feeling, or position you take about a person or a situation.

Resilience: Your ability to recover from a negative or unusual situation.

Emotional Control: Maintaining your feelings in an acceptable way when challenged.

Organized: Having a structure that makes it easy to carry out a wide variety of activities quickly and reliably.

Intuitive: The ability to perceive situations and needs beforehand.

Empathetic: Your intellectual ability to understand the thoughts, attitudes, and feelings of others.

Self-Disciplined: Training yourself to control your conduct to allow for self-improvement.

Leadership Styles that Hinder Your Vision

The most important part of this lesson is that you gain knowledge of leadership practices' positive and negative sides. You can change your ways if you understand why certain behaviors generate specific results. When you know your dysfunctions, you can begin to make efforts to change how you react. Now that you are in touch with the real you, you need to be honest with yourself and your coach. Be honest and open about the behaviors you may be engaging in as we review the most common pitfalls of leadership. Even the most successful consultants cannot help you if you are unwilling to recognize your dysfunctions. Every leadership choice you make from this point forward will either help the agency or hinder it. The option is yours. This section contains educational material that can alter your leadership thoughts.

Most business owners have some beliefs, attitudes, and actions in all of the categories below. The idea is not to remove all the behaviors and be perfect. The idea is to limit the frequency to where none of the harmful types dominate your leadership style. Just try and understand the behaviors and focus on changes that can improve your leadership choices. First, you must recognize the negative behaviors and know what adjustments you would like to make to your leadership style. Second, you must identify what triggers those behaviors and make a conscious choice to respond differently.

The following styles represent nearly all dysfunctions that leaders use:

1

Lack of Vision, Inspiration, and Expectations Leader

Usually, the owner unintentionally creates an environment where the staff is unmotivated because the pathway to success is unclear. The staff and the problem-solving are primarily reactive. Good-quality employees can be led into the weeds and seem confused and frustrated by the chaos created by this leadership challenge. Some owners are defensive by nature to avoid the fear of failure generated by this style. As a result, they cannot see the forest through the trees.

2

Lack of Responsible Behavior Leader

This behavior can be masked so that it is difficult to know this is a problem. Usually, the leader becomes dependent on the responsibility of others, and as a consequence, teamwork appears to be a strength. The overlapping job descriptions not clearly defined make it impossible to know what is wrong. Sometimes this is seen in family businesses where everyone is doing as much as possible to help. The reality is that everyone is confused about who is in charge. Usually, this problem is uncovered by noticing that accountability is a struggle, integrity is compromised, and ethics may be questioned due to unclear job descriptions. Most of the time, the expenses are not being managed well either.

3

The Detached Leader

This leadership style tends to lack involvement, lives in denial, and the owner is usually content with the business, indecisive, and lacks proper communication. The behavior leads to the staff filling in for your weaknesses by leading without direction. As a result, the employees drive towards individual goals, destroying teamwork's true purpose. Although the business will still appear to have loyal staff who is quite capable, opportunities are limited to the thoughts of self-serving employees who lack authentic leadership. Often the leader will behave this way to avoid conflict or to deal with things crucial to the owner's success. You would say the leader is disconnected and hiding from the owner's responsibilities.

4

Over Achievers

Although this term sounds positive, we all know that having a leader who wants to cut corners and achieve great things without genuine caring is doomed to fail. Thoughts of this leadership type will have trouble caring about the customer experience details. When the passions of an agency owner are held back by a results-driven attitude without positive leadership qualities, they will invent and create powerful business plans with their hard-working demanding expectations. This type of leadership will also have difficulty motivating and reaching staff members with their vision. They will have trouble accepting input of a negative nature or signs of failure. Often they are hung up in the fulfillment aspect of being an entrepreneur, which leads to difficulty dealing with anything negative about the business.

5

The Know-It-All Leader

This type of leadership struggles with delegating because they know how to do everything better than everyone. They babysit employees rather than promote personal growth. Unconsciously this is a needy leadership type. There is a problem-solving desire, one who has the answers to everyone's issues. The result is that they function overwhelmed and fail to use the staff correctly. The leader can be stern since they are always trying to achieve more than is reasonable. Sometimes you will see this person self-sabotage their business without even realizing or understanding what went wrong. In the leader's eyes, they took care of (rescued) their staff and should be grateful instead of stifled. Too much responsibility can be harmful to a leader. Try and focus on a work/life balance.

6

The Toxic Leader

This leader is willing to bend their ethics and integrity to achieve success. Attitudes of discrimination, leading others by fear, arrogance, irritability, and even verbal abuse are present. The staff usually struggle with teamwork since everyone is protecting their position. The leader may be shallow and lacking self-confidence. There is never a better way to do things for this type of leader. It's my way or the highway mentality. Extraordinarily selfish and undisciplined leaders usually become aggressive as a coping mechanism to promote their values. This type of leader will take credit for others' ideas and not even feel guilty about them. They also lack emotional involvement and have a lack of responsibility for their actions or consequences.

7

Micromanager Leader

This leadership style is better known as the over-controlling perfectionist. The office staff is driven to please the leader instead of focused on driving results. Business processes are designed to provide control instead of allowing the team the autonomy to get things done. Not being able to control human behavior, micromanagers' reactions result from the fear of things not going as planned. Developing your vision is not a one-person show. Leaders of this type have difficulty holding others accountable since they use anger and frustration where coaching and constructive criticism belong. If your staff is not growing at the pace you need, they know the boss will take over and do it their way. This type of staff will not see the point in dedicating significant effort to the team's success. Usually, low performing, stifled, non-passionate staff members are created by this type of leadership.

8

The Distracted Leader

This type is a scattered leader. Although a creative visionary, this leader is attracted to the next new and exciting idea at the expense of focus and achievement. Waiting and holding still can be almost impossible in this style. Tendencies to Band-Aid agitations make it impossible to solve real problems productively. This leader is irritated that the agency staff is not as motivated or passionate as desired. Since they are constantly distracted, the ability to measure results and understand what works and what doesn't get pushed to the back burner for the newest idea. Many great ideas are started and not finished, which limits the ability to achieve the result.

9

The Fear Me Leader

Signs of this leadership style include leaders who do not handle staffing issues and process designs that do not drive the intended results or get fixed since the leader is paralyzed by fear. If you feel parts of the business function reactively only, it could be a sign that the leader is avoiding tasks that may lead to failure. You might be working hard but not practical because you are hiding from various leadership responsibilities. Try not to look at things from the worst possible angle.

10

The Commanding and Controlling Leader

This leader runs the business with an iron fist, demanding that everything is done to specific standards with little room for staff input. Rarely accepted feedback and ignored ideas generated by the staff are expected. There are no rewards or praise since this leader demands what he wants and desires. What marks this leader is a lack of trust, setting unrealistic goals, zero tolerance for mistakes, and borders on abuse when confronted with bad news. They are frequently seen using the wrong tone of voice and choice of body language. The focus is on blame instead of solutions.

This style would surface only when you are running behind schedule and have all the facts to solve a particular situation. Even then, it should only be used with specific projects or tasks using the utmost sensitivity and care. Watch your choice of words and tones of voice when using this style.

You probably realize by now that you have specific characteristics from many areas. We all do and being aware of them is a start to developing new leadership skills.

Changing Styles

In this section, we will give you advice that can adapt your thoughts regarding your leadership style.

The **Best Friend Leader** should focus on figuring out what aspect you would feel inspired to showcase in your business. Tie meaning to why you became an owner and focus on the purpose of your business choices. If you make discoveries, share them with your staff to adjust their image of you. Having their respect and trust will lead to innovation and streamlined processes. The team may have great ideas; brainstorm with them. As a result, you will grow your business value proposition.

The **Shared Responsibility Leader** should face the fact that they are part of the problem. The development of your leader is necessary. Lead by example, and be a mentor to your people. Realize that being responsible is the key to securing your freedom. Irresponsibility or lack of responsibility lets staff with respect issues lead your business. If they follow your pattern, it will be a disaster. Take action to develop your leadership style as a priority.

The **Detached Leader** should focus on providing leadership to their staff. Watch for over-dependency on particular staff members. If disconnected for a reason that includes not being more involved, hire the right person with the right leadership skills to be your Business Manager. Beware that this type of leadership may devalue your operation when the time comes to sell your business. Focus on providing strategic game plans

*"When you're a manager, you work for your company. When you're a leader, your company works for you."
-Stan Slap*

and why you feel this is important to the staff. Make sure the team understands why you are this type of leader and how much you trust and respect the staff to fulfill your vision. Develop performance-based rewards and bonuses.

The **Over Achieving Leader** should focus on the fact that life is about the special moments with people, not goals and what you achieve. You're robbing yourself of the reasons you work in the first place. Ask yourself if your life is being served by the business, or is it the other way around? How do you define happiness? Realize that enjoying life will be inspirational and help you work more effectively in less time.

Know-it-all Leaders should focus on building trust and giving others room to grow. It's time to get to know your staffs' strengths and weaknesses so you can focus on improving them. If you know it all then hire the right people and let them fulfill the company vision.

The **Toxic Leader** should focus on developing an understanding that people drive the business, and they will drive it well if you commit to engaging in positive leadership behaviors. Otherwise, you will experience high turnover that will eat your profits and force your staff to live in a toxic culture 40 hours a week.

Micro-manager Leaders should focus on Empowerment to give staff the ability to be creative and make mistakes without blaming them for trying on new ideas for improvement. Take responsibility that you are responsible for the negative impact on your staff and focus on developing new leadership objectives. Management is not defined as control. Innovation and creativity drive better results from various personalities and positions. Consider talking to a coach about changing your image to supporting autonomy with a culture of ownership—Reward creative thinking and streamline processes.

The Distracted Leader should focus on scheduling time to manage their staff. Try to focus on what is important rather than what is constantly pulling you off course. Urgent is not what's important to you; it's essential to someone else. Use scheduling to hold yourself accountable and commit to finishing the things you start. Sometimes less is more. Learn to say no. Stay focused.

“You will get all you want in life, if you help enough other people get what they want.”

Zig Ziglar

The Fear Me Leader should focus on challenging themselves to face the concerns of the business one at a time. Not acting is a choice to fail. Instead, give yourself credit for having the insight necessary to make changes that will drive different results. It's ok to fail if you learn from it. Before long, you will be successful at handling conflict and problem-solving. Ask a coach for help if you're having staffing issues. Try to embrace the discomfort of fear in exchange for professional growth; it's worth it. Try using positive self-talk to silence the anxiety.

The Controlling and Demanding Leader should focus on people skills. Having a team who looks up to and respects you is a reward worth trying out. Having them live in fear stifles their ability to be creative and drive success. Your staff will do so much for you with a bit of praise and appreciation. Try to include your staff more often when planning and resolving concerns. If you show respect to the team, they will respect their positions and let their actual skills shine through. Over time a culture of ownership can be achieved and prove to be very rewarding to the business.

There will be plenty of other problems in the future. This is as good a time as any to get ahead of them."

- ◆ What leadership strengths do you bring to the table?
- ◆ What leadership weaknesses are you now aware?
- ◆ Which leadership styles are you committed to changing?
- ◆ What areas are you most interested in developing?
- ◆ Does your staff feel appreciated? Why or why not?
- ◆ Do your customers enjoy the experience you created for them? Why or why not?
- ◆ Do you understand why your leadership style attracts the right or the wrong people?
- ◆ What leadership qualities are holding you back from achieving your vision?
- ◆ Which skills will be a priority for you to master for your vision to be possible?
- ◆ Did any leadership styles make you think of prior bosses in your life? What styles were they? Did they influence your style?
- ◆ Did this lesson generate any

concerns if you have managers in your business? Please explain.

- ◆ Write down your definition of failure and success.
- ◆ How do you hold others accountable?
- ◆ Do you reply to emails, messages, and interruptions from your staff? Why or why not?
- ◆ How do you handle conflict or any situation needing confrontation?
- ◆ Which employee would be the most painful if they quit? Why?
- ◆ What part of leadership are you most comfortable with?
- ◆ Do you involve staff in the strategic planning of the business?
- ◆ Do you have a handle on measuring the results of your processes to see if they are meeting the business's needs?
- ◆ Will you set new goals with deadlines to improve your style? Why or why not?

Leadership vs. Management

Although similar, the leader is always the visionary who brings the big picture into perspective. At the same time, the management is the one who implements the vision. Therefore, the business owner should have expertise in both areas.

The leader is the heart of the business and the one responsible for its success. Sometimes that means improving the leader for the benefit of the agency. After all, broken leaders will create agencies with the best intentions and wonder why it doesn't work as planned.

Management keeps up with details of specific areas of the business. They focus on efficiency, staffing concerns, deadlines, and where the budget for a particular project stand. There is a distinct difference between the manager and leadership hats you wear.

So, whether you have an Office Manager or not, be aware of the differences. Fulfill each role using the proper skill set.

While you may wear the hat of both leader and manager for several years in your small business, it should be your goal as an owner to develop a manager who understands and appreciates your values, vision, and direction you would like to take your company. But don't hire this person too early! Labeling an employee as "office manager" before your team is in place can often be a costly mistake. Titles should not be thrown around to make others happy or to simply relieve you of the apparent responsibility of management in general.

Developing Leadership Skills

Certain qualities exist inside outstanding leaders. Leadership is a learned behavior. The key to improving your leadership skills is to obtain the knowledge and practice it until your reactions become part of who you are.

Before leading others, you must hold yourself accountable for your results and set an example for others to follow. Here are a few examples of what you can do to improve your leadership skills and the performance of your team:

1. Be real, open, and honest at all times.
2. Never allow your integrity to be compromised.
3. Communicate often and deliver a consistent message.
4. Know what you want to accomplish but keep an open mind to new ideas.
5. Share your vision and stay true to your dream.
6. Deliver on your promises. Be careful not to overpromise and under-deliver.
7. Hire the right people and give them the tools they need to be successful.
8. Study great leaders throughout your career and adapt when needed.

Leadership by Choice

As a business owner, you have a profound impact on your employees. Embrace this responsibility and develop your leadership skills wisely. Don't be afraid to mentor your people and get to know them personally. Understand their dreams and passion for life. Provide them an opportunity to grow and develop into the professionals they've always wanted to be. And if, after you've gotten to know them well, you see that remaining in your business for the long term is not in their interests, make it clear that you want to make this time together as profitable for them as it is for you.

Create an environment where your people feel challenged and supported. In a high-performing environment, your employees will take pride in their work and complete ownership of their results. And when your employees are happy, feel inspired, and take ownership of their results, your customers will feel appreciated, your business will grow, and your life will be rewarded in the process.

You can become the leader you've always wanted to be, and we are honored to help you along the way!

By hiring a Certified Ivy Consultant with a track record of success in your field, you have taken a huge step in developing your Leadership Skills. Of course, improvement is difficult when so many problems need your attention. However, this strategic work will shape your business structure and help you create the systems which will eventually allow you to one day take a step back and say, “This is what I imagined...this is the life I always dreamed of.”

Most small business owners never take the time and put forth the effort required to enjoy this level of success. You can see the opportunity in front of you, and this may be your only chance to change the direction of your business and your life. Put in the hard work now and stay true to your dream.



Create The Vision! Share The Vision!

Improve Your Inner Leader!

Empower Your Staff!

Stay True to Your Dream!

Start Today!