

# LEADERSHIP

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Leadership skills can help you in all aspects of your career, from applying for jobs to seeking career advancement.

One of many soft skills that employers value, leadership skills often in corporate several different personality traits and communication abilities that are useful for anyone to learn and practice over time.

Knowing the definitions of leadership skills and seeing relevant examples can be especially helpful when you're writing your resume.

## **What are leadership skills?**

If you're applying for jobs that require you to take initiative and be a leader—whether as a manager or among your peers—you should list leadership skills on your resume.

Leadership skills are skills you use when organizing other people to reach a shared goal. Whether you're in a management position or leading a project, leadership skills require you to motivate others to complete a series of tasks, often according to a schedule. Leadership is not just one skill but rather a combination of several different skills working together.

Some examples of skills that make a strong leader include:

- Patience
- Empathy
- Active listening
- Reliability
- Dependability
- Creativity
- Positivity
- Effective feedback
- Timely communication
- Team building
- Flexibility
- Risk-taking
- Ability to teach and mentor

### **Why are leadership skills important?**

Effective leaders are essential to any organization. They can help build strong teams within a business and ensure projects, initiatives or other work functions are performed successfully. Because the skills of a leader involve multiple interpersonal and communication skills, anyone can exercise and hone their leadership abilities.

Most people have seen the results of both effective and ineffective leaders on the job. Good leaders increase employee engagement, support a positive environment and help remove obstacles for their team. Good leadership is also contagious, inspiring colleagues to apply positive leadership traits in their own work.

## **Top 6 leadership skills**

Almost any positive soft skill might be considered a leadership skill. For example, active listening helps leaders bring projects to completion by hearing the ideas and concerns of the team. Empathy, for example, helps leaders understand how their team feels about their workload, environment and workplace relationships.

Here is a list of must-have leadership skills that may prove valuable to anyone



## **1. Decisiveness**

Effective leaders are those who can make decisions quickly with the information they have. Effective decision-making comes with time and experience. As you become more familiar with your specific industry, you'll be able to make decisions faster, even when you don't have all of the necessary information. Decisiveness is seen as a valuable leadership skill because it can help move projects efficiency.



## **2. Integrity**

Integrity is often seen as just truthfulness or honesty but in many cases, it also means having and standing by a set of strong values. Integrity in the workplace often means being able to make ethical choices and helping the company maintain a positive image. All businesses seek to hire workers who have a strong sense of integrity.





### **3. Relationship building** (or team building)

Leadership requires the ability to build and maintain a strong and collaborative team of individuals working toward the same goal. Team building requires other leadership strengths, like effective communication skills and conflict resolution.



## **4. Problem-solving**

Good leaders are skilled at problem-solving issues that arise on the job. Effective problem solving often requires staying calm and identifying a step-by-step solution. Problem-solving skills can help leaders make quick decisions, resolve obstacles with their team and external teams alike, and ensure projects are completed on time.



## 5. Dependability

Being a dependable leader means that people can trust and rely on you. A dependable person follows through on plans and keeps promises. The strong relationships built by a dependable leader create a resilient team that is able to work through difficulties.



## **6. Ability to teach and mentor**

One of the skills that differentiates leadership from many other competencies is the ability to teach and mentor. Effectively teaching colleagues or direct reports how to grow in their careers helps organizations scale. Often, this skill requires that leaders think less about themselves and more about how to make their team as a whole successful.

## **How to improve your leadership skills**

You can practice good leadership skills in any role, at any level. For example, showing up on time to meetings and turning in work on schedule shows dependability. Offering support and coaching to less experienced colleagues is also an example of leadership. If it seems like a good fit for you, you might consider seeking out leadership roles to develop and practice your leadership skills.

**Here are some examples of additional ways you can develop your leadership skills:**

### **Identify your leadership style**

While you will use different styles of leadership for different occasions, identifying your leadership style can help you refine specific skills that will be effective for your team or project. You might use your team or project's goals to help identify what leadership styles will be most effective for you.

## **Find resources like books or podcasts about leadership.**

A self-study on leadership may help you get a better understanding of how to develop your leadership skills. Many books on the subject exist, including the 1937 Dale Carnegie book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, which has been a favorite among many business leaders for decades. There are also many pod casts and video workshops you can find offered at no cost online.

## **Participate in leadership training courses or workshops.**

You can find both in-person and online courses that help teach leadership skills. In person courses, in particular, often include practice sessions and role play.

## **Find leadership activities outside of work.**

If you have trouble finding leadership opportunities on the job, you may be able to find them outside of your workplace. This can include taking the lead in organizing activities.

## **Study leadership styles you admire.**

When you see leaders you admire whether they are at your job or in your community, take note of the specific qualities they have that make them a great leader. Focus on ways you can develop those qualities and apply them in your work. It might also be helpful to set specific goals toward developing one practice at a time.

## **Find a mentor.**

The best way to learn is by studying under those you admire most. If possible, ask a leader you respect to mentor you on a weekly

or monthly basis. They can help you set goals toward becoming a better leader by developing skills and using them.

## **How to highlight leadership skills when applying for jobs**

If being a leader is one of your career goals, you should include leadership skills on your resume. Try incorporating key traits you possess that are may be valuable to future employers. You may be able to present those skills in different areas of your resume, such as the skills and achievements sections as well as in the experience section. Your cover letter is also a good place to showcase leadership ability.

## **Leadership skills for resume**

The two sections where you can include your leadership skills on your resume or Indeed



Resume are your skills section and the achievements section. The skills section can include leadership skills that you believe any of your professional references can verify on your behalf. Meanwhile, your achievements list can include awards or honors that reflect leadership.

### **Leadership skills for cover letter**

Your cover letter provides an opportunity to help a potential employer understand you better. To share leadership skills in a cover letter, pick one or two accomplishments and describe which skill you used and what the outcome was. For example, if you were the project manager for an important initiative, you might explain how you brought the team together around a shared goal and include a metric that demonstrates the success of the project.

Leadership skills can be the foundation of career advancement for both managers and individual contributors. Employers of all sizes value people with leadership traits, meaning this is a worthwhile skill set to develop in any industry.





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