

10 LEADERSHIP QUALITIES NEEDED TO MANAGE UNCERTAINTY

PRACTICAL CHECKLIST

Practical checklist of top leadership qualities from the world's most recognised experts and thought leaders.



1 Self-awareness

Know your impact

—

2 Empathy

Love differences in others

—

3 Vulnerability and humility

Trust and be trusted

—

4 Team builder

Empower others

—

5 Growth mindset

Keep learning

—

6 Communication

Be clear and positive

—

7 Commitment to improvement

Be a better you

—

8 Scientific thinking

Question assumptions

—

9 Active listener

Stay curious longer

—

10 Digital competency

Keep up, and then some

—



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INTRODUCTION

It's time to take stock of the past two years and look to the future. How can you become a better leader for that lies ahead in 2023? It will be significantly disrupted.

90% of staff don't want a daily commute; up to two in five plan to change career.

Business and technology have merged, so too home and work life. Leaders may feel burnt out, rushed, or unqualified for more change.

Happily, embracing this vulnerability is a key to uniting the team, inspiring followers, and reaching goals. 'Human' skills like learning, emotional intelligence, empathy, and listening help to guide others in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world.

Dr Michelle McQuaid, founder of Wellbeing Lab, told Growth Faculty that caring for workplace wellbeing begins with ME, WE and US.

ME	How is each individual?
WE	How are we doing with our teams?
US	How are we doing at an organisational level?

To shine a light on the top qualities for leaders, we only had to turn to the quality business books and global thought leaders we've featured for our Leadership Pass holders at Growth Faculty.

LEADERS ARE THE LOWEST HANGING FRUIT IN YOUR WELLBEING STRATEGY IN TERMS OF HOW YOU CAN CARE FOR YOUR TEAMS.

→ Dr Michelle McQuaid



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BRILLIANT IDEAS FOR INSPIRED LEADERSHIP



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WHAT'S THE BEST DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP?

Jim Collins, American researcher, speaker and consultant on leadership and business management, and author of business classic *Good to Great*, defines leadership this way:

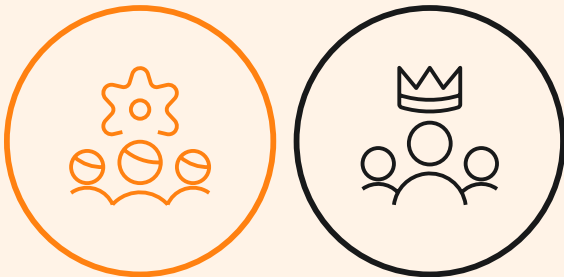
Leadership is the art of getting people to do what must be done.

It sounds so simple, yet becoming a great leader who can inspire others to do their best work takes continual learning and practise.

**LEADERSHIP IS
THE ART OF
GETTING PEOPLE
TO DO WHAT
MUST BE DONE.**

→ Jim Collins

MANAGEMENT vs LEADERSHIP



Management and leadership are not mutually exclusive, but management is seen as concerned with 'small picture' things and leadership 'big picture' things. Author of *Leading at The Speed of Trust* and *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* Stephen R. Covey explains:

"Managers are busy cutting the undergrowth of the jungle. It's the leader who climbs the tallest tree, surveys the situation and yells down 'Wrong jungle!'"

**MANAGEMENT IS DOING THINGS
RIGHT — LEADERSHIP IS DOING
THE RIGHT THINGS.**

→ Steven R. Covey

2022 LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES

The pandemic that devastated the world in 2020 left thousands of companies unable to function. Many were forced out of business, their workforce decimated, and lives forever changed by restrictions to halt the spread of Covid-19.

Nobody can predict what lies ahead but the rate of change is increasing and is itself a disruptive force. Here are 10 challenges we've identified:

- 1 **Mental health and wellbeing**
1 in 5 are anxious
- 2 **Remote and hybrid workforce**
90% want flexibility
- 3 **Diversity and inclusion**
46% are not their true selves at work
- 4 **Reskilling and upskilling**
Staying relevant is critical
- 5 **Staff retention and recruitment/skills shortage**
Threat to growth
- 6 **Climate change**
Pressure to reduce emissions
- 7 **AI & other new technologies**
Rapid changes
- 8 **Cybersecurity and data privacy obligations**
Investment needed
- 9 **Disruption to global supply chains**
Worse before better
- 10 **Post-pandemic world**
Reassurances needed



"I THINK THE WORLD WOULD BE A BETTER PLACE IF EVERYONE PUT ON SCIENTIST GOGGLES A LITTLE MORE OFTEN".

ADAM GRANT



Mental health and wellbeing

1 in 5 are experiencing an anxiety disorder at any one time in the workplace, says Dawn O'Neil AM, former CEO of Lifeline and Beyond Blue. Causes include pandemic uncertainty, job demands, change fatigue, bullying, trauma, social isolation, poor coping strategies, or chronic pain.



Remote and hybrid workforce

A 2021 PwC survey found 90% of Australians want to keep working from home in some capacity. 75% want hybrid work, 16% prefer fully remote. To keep staff onside, companies are told to offer flexibility where possible.



Diversity and inclusion

Half (46%) of Australian workers feel unable to be their true selves at work some or all of the time, according to a 2020 Indeed survey. 30% of LGBTIQ+ employees, and 29% of workers who have a disability, say they fear criticism when speaking up at work. A third of Baby Boomers say they hide part of their identity at work.



Reskilling and upskilling

Companies must plan for "dynamic rather than static tomorrows" according to PwC Director Tim Rawlings. His company found 75% of Australians were ready to learn new skills to stay employed.

2022 LEADERSHIP CHALLENGES



Staff retention and recruitment/skills shortage

78% of Australian CEOs say that “availability of key skills is a top threat to growth” (PwC). Some roles have sat vacant for almost four months, according to Business Insider. With everything now digitised, huge industries from hospitality to banking are now feeling the pinch, it says.



Disruption to global supply chains

Tim Uy of Moody's Analytics was reported by CNBC to predict supply chain problems “will get worse before they get better” well into 2022. Moody's report says there are bottlenecks in every link of the supply chain—labour, containers, shipping, ports, trucks, railroads, air, and warehouses.



Climate change

Extreme weather events are already happening, and pressure to reduce emissions is coming from stakeholders, as well as scientists. The Australian Council of Superannuation Investors reports 94 of the ASX200 companies had set and revealed a decarbonisation target. Climate Conference COP26 magnified the urgency of action.



Post-pandemic world

There are more factors than the divisions between the vaccinated and unvaccinated. It's a new era of instability and fear, and uncertainty permeates many areas of society. A PwC survey in 2021 shows 56% of Australians think few people will have stable, long-term employment in the future (defined as a job lasting more than two years).



AI and other new technologies

A study from McKinsey Global Institute suggests that by 2030 automation will displace between 400 and 800 million jobs, requiring as many as 375 million people to switch job categories entirely.



Cybersecurity and data privacy obligations

40% of Australian businesses told a 2021 IDC report that cybersecurity skills were the most important skills investment that their organisation needs to build, rebuild, or hire in the first wave of economic recovery.

**NOBODY CAN
PREDICT WHAT
LIES AHEAD
BUT THE RATE
OF CHANGE IS
INCREASING.**

10 LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

To face future challenges your job is to engage a team of 'A' players to contribute their best. These qualities will get you there.

1 Self awareness

Without self-awareness you fail to see the patterns in your behaviours and thinking. This can negatively impact all that you say, see, touch, and hear. A 5-year Harvard research programme discovered that although 95% of people think they're self-aware, only 10 to 15% actually are. An HBR survey found 99% of employees reported working with at least one person who had "a complete lack of insight into how they came across". Around 50% said they'd worked with four such people. This can lead to stress, decreased motivation, and a greater likelihood of leaving their job.

2 Empathy

A survey by Growth Faculty of our member database on the "one characteristic every leader should possess" saw empathy high on the list. Athena founder and CEO Frances Quinn explained it well:

Every leader should have a deep fascination in the perspectives of others. Without this, they will fail to understand their team, build relationships, and provide effective leadership.

Empathy is critical in being authentic on diversity and inclusion, mental health and wellbeing, sustainability and more. In an interview with us, former U.S. Navy Captain and author of *Leadership is Language*, Lieut. David Marquet said diverse voices and divergent thinking makes a company more adaptive, more agile, more resilient, and more profitable.

3 Vulnerability and humility

Vulnerability leads to trust, not the other way round. And trust is the essential building block for teamwork, feeling safe, and being productive. Research professor and author of *Dare to Lead* Brené Brown told us being vulnerable is what helps humans plan, communicate, and work together. She says it's the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change. True belonging, she explains in her book *Daring Greatly*, only happens when we present our authentic, imperfect selves to the world. This takes courage, vulnerability, and humility.



Michael Dell, CEO and chairman of Dell Technologies in his book *Play Nice But Win*.



"Trustworthiness, ethics, and integrity are paramount. You can't be successful over time without these values. Have confidence, not arrogance. Humility, not ego. Practice openness, fairness, and authenticity".

...

4 Team builder

Jim Collins calls this "The right people on the bus" in *Good to Great*. He writes: "... the single biggest constraint on the success of any organisation is the ability to get, and to hang on to, enough of the right people."

His 3 truths about building the right team:

- First, if you begin with 'who', you can more easily adapt to a fast-changing world.
- Second, if you have the right people on your bus, you don't need to worry about motivating them. The right people are self-motivated.
- And third, if you have the wrong people on the bus, nothing else matters. You may be headed in the right direction, but you still won't achieve greatness. Great vision with mediocre people still produces mediocre results.

Quality people will follow a leader who has a strong vision which offers them meaning and purpose in their work and a safe workplace where they can be themselves and develop their skills.



10 LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

5 Growth mindset/lifelong learner

Studies show that workers who maintain their ability to learn outpace other professionals. (McKinsey). A leadership mindset, the term coined in 2006 by Carol Dweck can be a fixed or growth mindset. A fixed mindset sees leadership as something you're born with. A growth mindset believes leadership is a learned skill. As Dell founder and author of *Play Nice But Win* Michael Dell says "Success is not a straight line up. It's fail, learn, try again, then (you hope) succeed."

6 Communication

Congratulate the leadership team who leave a meeting with a clear message about what was decided and promptly tell their direct reports, who then tell their direct reports. This is called "cascading communication" and global speaker and bestselling author Patrick Lencioni has explained at Growth Faculty events how highly effective it can be. Why? Because of message consistency, timeliness of delivery, and live, real-time communication. End each meeting with the question "What are we going to go back and tell our people?" to ensure everyone is on the same page.

7 Commitment to improvement

Former CEO of PepsiCo Indra Nooyi, returning to Growth Faculty as a Global Headliner in 2022, is a powerhouse of continual improvement. The author of *My Life in Full* says:

"If you want to lift the performance of the organisation, you have to lift yourself... my message to my team was always meet my bar, and that bar would constantly be moved up."

New Zealand rugby team the All Blacks are a world class case study in improvement, with a team mantra Leave the jersey in a better place. Self-improvement is embedded in the culture, says Legacy author James Kerr in our book club interview. It allows every player to step up under pressure, make good decisions, and execute with accuracy.

8 Scientific thinking

When you think like a scientist, "You look for reasons why you might be wrong, not just reasons why you must be right," says Adam Grant in *Think Again*. Each plan is a hypothesis so contrary opinions are welcomed. In one study, "those entrepreneurs that we taught to think like scientists brought in more than 40 times the revenue of the control group," he said in our 2021 interview. Jim Collins says leadership is equally about creating a climate where the truth is heard, and the brutal facts confronted.

9 Active listener

A great term by Michael Bungay Stanier is staying curious longer. The global speaker and author of *The Advice Trap* told Growth Faculty one of the most compelling things you can do after asking a question is to genuinely listen to the answer.

"Stay curious, my friend," he says.

Former Google executive Kim Scott interviewed by us about her *Radical Candor* says a first step for you as leader is to listen to the ideas that people on your team have and create a culture in which they listen to each other.

**MAKE SURE IDEAS DON'T
GET CRUSHED BEFORE
EVERYONE FULLY
UNDERSTANDS THEIR
POTENTIAL USEFULNESS.**

10 Digital competency

Digital native Millennials and Generation Z make up 64% of the world's population. That could be why a *Forbes* study found a lack of digital skills had a substantial negative impact on employees' perceived effectiveness of their leader. Poor digital skills were seen as more negative than the extent to which excellent skills were seen as positive. High competency in digital skills is just 'permission to play' for leaders in 2023.

**CREATE A CULTURE
IN WHICH THEY LISTEN.**

SUMMARY

Good leadership is difficult. And enormously rewarding. Research proves leadership can be learned, so concentrating on the 10 leadership qualities set out here will see that you attract more of the top people, enjoy work more, solve more problems, and win a bigger slice of the customer pie.

“At the end of the day, people want to be led by those they respect, who have a clear vision and direction for the business.” — Collingwood Search UK

Remember, all leaders have strengths and weaknesses. It's not about being perfect, it's about playing to your strengths and developing more leadership qualities to empower others. As our Leadership Pass holders are discovering, good leadership is about becoming a better you. And, the better leader you are, the better your team will be too.

Good luck in 2023!

“IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE TO PROPOSE AN IDEA THAT MIGHT FAIL. IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE TO CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO. IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE TO RESIST THE URGE TO SETTLE. WHEN YOU IDENTIFY THE DISCOMFORT, YOU'VE FOUND THE PLACE WHERE A LEADER IS NEEDED. IF YOU'RE NOT UNCOMFORTABLE IN YOUR WORK AS A LEADER, IT'S ALMOST CERTAIN YOU'RE NOT REACHING YOUR POTENTIAL AS A LEADER.”

SETH GODIN



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