



Leadership Skills

Materials:

- Worksheet

Brainstorm

Think of some leaders in your life, what common qualities do you think they have?

Discuss: Leadership is the ability to take charge and lead others in the right direction. There are a lot of great examples of leaders throughout history and in all facets of life. Great leaders can inspire political movements and social change. There are leaders in your family, your community, spiritual organizations, politics, sports, business, and the list could go on. Common qualities that all effective leaders have are good decision-making, effective problem solving, positive relationship building, conflict resolution, communication skills, empathy, critical thinking, and teamwork—all things we've learned about in this course.

Dive in! There are 5 major styles of leadership: authoritarian, participative, delegative, transactional, and transformational. An authoritarian leader provides clear expectations for what needs to be done as well as when and how to do them. Sometimes they make decisions without consulting others. This style of leadership is best applied when there is little time for decisions to be made or the leader has the most knowledge out of the group. A leader who has a participative style shares their power with others for decisions. Considered the most effective style of leadership, a participative leader offers guidance and participates in the group. Followers feel like they are part of the team, feel engaged, and are more motivated and creative. They allow input from others and encourage participation but still make the final decisions in any process. Delegative leaders tend to leave the decision-making to the members of the group. This style is useful in situations where a group needs to rely on highly qualified experts. Transactional leaders set goals and reward their team for achieving them. If the goal is not made, the team member does not receive the reward. Finally, transformational leaders create a vision and inspire others to follow it. Leaders may not stick to one style; they often use a mixture depending on their situation.

Let's focus on your potential as a leader. The process for becoming a leader can be lifelong, but we all possess leadership skills that we can practice and improve upon throughout our lives. Remember that it takes learning, effort, patience and practice to be an effective leader. The earlier



High School

you recognize your abilities, learn new skills, and practice them, the easier it will become. Thinking about the different leadership styles, which skills do you think you currently possess? Are there other skills that you think good leaders use that you also possess?

Activity: Today, we're going to reflect on all the useful skills we possess in order to develop our leadership skills with an Identity Chart. This kind of chart is designed to help you identify your unique qualities and traits. We can use this tool to reflect on the skills we see in ourselves as well as what others see in us. We may not always agree with how others may view us, but it helps us gain insight into ourselves. Your name goes at the center of the chart. In the boxes around your name, you will list leadership qualities that you possess. You can work by yourself or with a partner to complete the chart.

Reflect: What leadership qualities are your strengths? What leadership qualities do you need to improve? How will you benefit from these improvements?

Extend and Enrich: Take a leadership quiz to see where you are on the leadership skills scale and set some goals for yourself to improve your leadership skills.

Professional Development: Northeastern University identifies 5 top leadership skills: Self-development, team development, strategic thinking and acting, ethical practice and civic-mindedness, and innovation. How do you use your leadership skills in the classroom?