

CLD1-6-FCS



## Facilitator's Guide

# Significant Leadership Characteristics

*Character matters; leadership descends from character. —Rush Limbaugh*

### Rationale:

For maximum leadership development potential, it is important for every person to have a strong understanding of what leadership is, what good leadership looks like and how it can vary task and relationship-oriented approaches for maximum leadership development potential.

### Goal:

To recognize significant leadership characteristics for increasing individual leadership development opportunities in a variety of situations

### Program Objectives:

- Distinguish the three basic factors that define leadership.
- Identify characteristics of successful leaders.
- Compare differences between relationship and task-oriented leadership approaches.

### Pre-Program Preparation:

- Copy the *Significant Leadership Characteristics* fact sheet and Characteristics chart for each participant.
- Collect pictures of five to six great leaders such as Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, local community leaders.
- Copy the Question and Quotes handout for each group.
- Make “Task vs. Relationship (Approach) Strengths” cards
- Secure pencils/pens/markers, wall poster/paper, highlighters, baskets/containers marked “task-oriented” and “relationship-oriented”

### Introduction:

Leadership can be seen all around us. From the local pastor to the County Judge Executive to the Little League Baseball coach, leadership is played out in a variety of situations every day. Everyone has the opportunity to be a leader at some time, so it is important that every person have a strong understanding of what leadership is, what good leadership looks like,

and how leadership approaches can vary. Learning about leadership will make you much more effective next time it is your turn to lead.

### Introductory Activity:

Post or show pictures of five to six great leaders. Include individuals such as Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, Napoleon, Mother Theresa. (Continue the list on your own. Include a few local great leaders, so the audience can make a personal connection with the activity.)

Ask the audience to consider the list, and together brainstorm what characteristics and traits make these leaders exceptional. Write the list on flipchart/wall poster. After a few minutes, move into Learning Activity 1 while leaving the list on the board to refer to later.

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### Objective 1. Distinguish the three basic factors that define leadership

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Leadership is important within a wide variety of situations. A good, basic definition of leadership is *to influence others toward a shared goal*. Three important factors shape any leadership definition: Leadership is a group occurrence that is directed by a goal and has a definite structure.

### Learning Activity 1:

Divide the participants into groups and distribute the Leadership Definition Factor Scramble cards, two envelopes to each group. One envelope will have three factors. The other will have three sentences. Have the participants arrange the cards to connect the right factor with the right sentence. Once they're assembled, post the completed sentences with the correct factor for participants to see.

These three factors include:

- **Group occurrence**—A leader cannot practice leadership without at least one person following.

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- **Directed by a goal**—The leader must be leading the group toward a shared goal that followers believe in.
- **Structured**—To be effective, structure is needed within the leader-follower relationship.

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## Objective 2. Identify characteristics of successful leaders

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Effective leaders share many common characteristics. Several of these characteristics are directly tied to the three factors we just discussed. At the beginning of the lesson, we discussed characteristics of great leaders. Let us compare our list of characteristics with a list developed from research studies of effective leaders. (Share the Leadership Characteristics chart.) What similarities exist between the two lists?

### Learning Activity 2: Characteristics Study Activity

- Separate group into small groups of four or five individuals.
- Give each group a Question and Quotes segment and the characteristic chart.
- Participants will compare the Question and Quotes segment with the Leadership Characteristic chart and highlight which characteristics come out in the quote or question they were assigned.
- Each group should be ready to discuss its quotes and question and corresponding characteristics with the group.

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## Objective 3. Compare differences between relationship and task-oriented leadership approaches

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While successful leaders generally share similar characteristics, one way they may differ is by taking a more relationship or task-oriented approach to leadership. A “relationship-oriented” leader focuses first on the leader-follower relationship, and then decides how to accomplish the task. On the other hand, “task-oriented” leaders first consider the task, and then they think through how the leader-follower relationship will be affected. While each of these approaches views the leadership process slightly differently, both are appropriate in different situations.

### Learning Activity 3.

Being more task or relationship-oriented allows leaders to be more effective within different leadership situations. The key is matching the leader demonstrating the right approach (either relationship or task oriented) with the right situation.

Distribute Task vs. Relationship (Approach) Strengths cards to participants. Ask participants to read their cards and place the cards in the appropriate basket, marked “relationship-oriented” or “task-oriented.”

### Relationship-oriented strengths:

Democratic  
Participative  
Inspiring motivation  
Individualized attention to one’s followers  
Reward successful follower behaviors

### Task-oriented strengths:

Autocratic  
Directive  
More likely to ask for what they want  
Skills at negotiation

Being more task or relationship-oriented allows leaders to be more effective within different leadership situations. The key is matching the leader demonstrating the right approach (either relationship or task oriented) with the right situation.

Ask volunteers to select two strength cards from each of the baskets. Read each card and ask the participants to give examples of an Extension Homemaker situation in which the leadership strength would be an effective strategy to influence others toward a shared goal.

## Summary

Just as there are specific factors that contribute toward an accurate definition of leadership, there are also some common characteristics shared by effective leaders. Realizing what characteristics are associated with successful leaders is important for personal leadership development, and helps give the individual a clear picture of who they are as a leader. The same is true for an individual’s preferred approach to leadership. By understanding how leadership styles differ for more task or relationship oriented men and women, people can be put into the right situations in order to excel as a leader.

## References

- Northouse, P. (2007). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ricketts, K. G. (2009). *Empowering Leaders in Kentucky* (ELK1-101). University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

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# Leadership Characteristics Chart

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**Confidence**

**Consistency between word and action—“walking the talk”**

**Creativity**

**Active listening skills**

**Efficient coaching skills**

**Visioning**

**Ability to inspire**

**Long-term focus**

**Ability to balance individual needs and team needs**

**Awareness of realistic conditions**

**Willingness to share credit or recognition**

**Strong self-esteem**

**Sense of priorities**

**Service mentality**

**Sincerity**

**Technical expertise**

**Trust**

**Willingness to share responsibility**

# Question and Quotes

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## **Kentucky Senator Denise Harper Angel**

“I truly love public service. Being in a capacity to make real and positive change in the lives of the citizens of my district and in all our Commonwealth is an honor beyond explanation.”

Source: Opening Door of Opportunity Empowering and Inspiring Kentucky Women into Public Service <http://www.sos.ky.gov/NR/rdonlyres/1F10EF93-9EE0-4261-A562-C85B2111DD94/0/WomensReport2009.pdf>

## **Tony Robbins**

“I challenge you to make your life a masterpiece. I challenge you to join the ranks of those people who live what they teach, who walk their talk.”

“People are not lazy. They simply have impotent goals —that is, goals that do not inspire them.”

“The only limit to your impact is your imagination and commitment.”

Source: [http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/t/tony\\_robbins.html](http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/t/tony_robbins.html)

## **John Maxwell**

“A great leader’s courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position.”

“A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way.”

“Competence goes beyond words. It’s the leader’s ability to say it, plan it, and do it in such a way that others know that you know how—and know that they want to follow you.”

Source: [http://thinkexist.com/quotes/john\\_c.\\_maxwell/2.html](http://thinkexist.com/quotes/john_c._maxwell/2.html)

# Leadership Definition Factor Scramble Cards

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Directions: Make as many copies of this sheet as you will have groups. Cut each copy into strips at the dotted lines. For each group, put the three bold-faced statements in one envelope and the three sentences in another.

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## **A group occurrence**

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A leader cannot practice leadership without  
at least one person following.

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## **Directed by a goal**

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The leader must be leading the group toward  
a shared goal that followers believe in.

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## **Structured**

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Some type of structure is needed within  
the leader-follower relationship.

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# Task vs. Relationship (Approach) Strengths

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Directions: Make enough copies of this sheet for the number of participants. Laminate each sheet. Cut the sheets on the dotted lines into individual cards. Give each participant a full set of cards.

Democratic

Autocratic

Participative

Directive

Inspiring motivation

Skills at negotiation

Individualized  
attention  
to one's followers

More likely to ask  
for what they want

Reward successful  
follower behaviors

Negotiating Skills