

LIFE LEADER ACTION CARD GUIDE

Life Leader action cards were developed based on over 20 years of practical research, observation, and experience. While each of the leadership attributes could be applied in most situations, this guide provides suggested cards to reference when you are faced with the given situation.

Adjusting to change

- ❖ Global Perspective
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Resilient
- ❖ Self-Aware

Creating buy-in/momentum

- ❖ Collaborative
- ❖ Ethical Leadership
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Social Awareness



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Making a difficult decision

- ❖ Critical Thinking
- ❖ Ethical Leadership
- ❖ Problem Solver

Making decisions that affect others

- ❖ Collaborative
- ❖ Effective Communicator
- ❖ Problem Solver
- ❖ Self-Aware
- ❖ Social Awareness

Preparing for a difficult conversation

- ❖ Effective Communicator
- ❖ Ethical Leadership
- ❖ Global Perspective
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Social Awareness



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Setting expectations for others

- ❖ Collaborative
- ❖ Effective Communicator
- ❖ Goal-Oriented
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Self-Managed

Setting goals

- ❖ Financial Literacy
- ❖ Goal-Oriented
- ❖ Information Literacy

Understanding team dynamics

- ❖ Citizenship
- ❖ Collaborative
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Self-Aware
- ❖ Self-Managed
- ❖ Social Awareness



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Receiving feedback from others

- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Ethical Leadership
- ❖ Self-Managed
- ❖ Resilient
- ❖ Social Awareness

Providing feedback to others

- ❖ Effective Communicator
- ❖ Ethical Leadership
- ❖ Global Perspective
- ❖ Humility
- ❖ Self-Aware

When providing encouragement for others, look through each of the 15 attributes for words or phrases to use in providing specific feedback.



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LIFE LEADER ATTRIBUTES

Ready to Learn

Critical Thinking
Global Perspective
Information Literacy

Ready to Lead

Collaborative
Effective Communicator
Ethical Leadership
Humility
Problem Solver
Social Awareness

Ready for Life

Citizenship
Financial Literacy
Goal-Oriented
Resilient
Self-Aware
Self-Managed



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LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Each Life Leader attribute represents skills or knowledge necessary to be an effective leader.

The cards are intended as a guide to create, develop, and enhance leadership capabilities.

The attributes are categorized as:

- ❖ Ready to Learn
- ❖ Ready to Lead
- ❖ Ready for Life

Each card includes:

- ❖ Life Leader Attribute
- ❖ Definition of the Attribute
- ❖ Reflective Questions
- ❖ What I Do & Say
- ❖ What I Don't Do & Say



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READY TO LEARN

Effective leaders have the ability to locate, process, and understand information in order to make sound judgments and achieve success.

These attributes represent the critical skills and knowledge needed to be:

Ready to Learn

Critical Thinking

Global Perspective

Information Literacy



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Critical Thinking

The process of making clear, rational judgments informed by evidence

Questions I ask myself:

- What are my reasons for thinking this way?
- What evidence supports my thinking?
- What emotions do I have that might persuade my reasoning?
- Do I have enough information to make a sound judgment?
- What are my options?
- What implications will this decision have?
- Am I being rational?



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Critical Thinking

What I Do & Say:

- Actively research to stay well-informed
- Stay open-minded to different world views
- Be willing to reconsider and revise my views based on new information
- Approach problems in systematic ways
- Weigh pros and cons
- “This is the best option because...”
- “The data suggests...”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Make decisions based on emotions
- Take action before evaluating
- Use data out of context
- “This just feels right.”
- “We need to make a decision quickly.”



Global Perspective

An understanding of the complex social, economic, and political links between various cultures and perspectives

Questions I ask myself:

- How can I show respect for others' opinions and/or cultural values?
- How do my life experiences create potential biases?
- What can I do to make a positive impact on others?
- What is my personal responsibility in defending the rights of others?
- How can I value the customs and traditions that are not like my own?



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Global Perspective

What I Do & Say:

- Gain an understanding of opposing views
- Seek alternative options
- Ask questions
- Listen with intent to understand
- Treat people fairly
- Understand my culture and perspective
- Step back and look at the big picture
- “How can we peacefully resolve this conflict?”
- “What is your perspective?”
- “How would you handle this?”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Assume everyone is the same
- Judge others' intentions
- Fear diversity
- “That's not my problem.”
- “My way is the best way.”
- “This only affects me.”



Information Literacy

The ability to efficiently and accurately locate, evaluate, utilize, and communicate information to achieve a goal

Questions I ask myself:

- Where can I go to find relevant information?
- Is the source of this information credible?
- Does this information make sense?
- Does this information align with other credible sources?
- How can I evaluate the truthfulness of information I receive?
- How current is the information?
- How can I use this information to achieve my goal?



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Information Literacy

What I Do & Say:

- Give ample time for research
- Evaluate information critically
- Know copyright laws and cite information legally
- Account for biases of the information source
- Determine source credibility
- Communicate new information well
- “Give me time to look into that more.”
- “I don’t know, but I can find out.”

What I Don’t Do & Say:

- Believe everything I read
- Use information outside of its proper context
- Rush through the research process
- “I don’t even know where to look.”
- “Who cites their sources anymore?”
- “This is too complicated.”

READY TO LEAD

Effective leaders have the ability to establish trust, connect with diverse groups of people, convey ideas, and overcome challenges.

These attributes represent the critical skills and knowledge needed to be:

Ready to Lead

Collaborative
Effective Communicator
Ethical Leadership
Humility
Problem Solver
Social Awareness



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Collaborative

Work jointly with others on a shared goal by collectively identifying problems and creating solutions

Questions I ask myself:

- Do my words and actions build trust?
- Am I allowing others to share solutions and ideas?
- Are my words and actions supportive of those on my team?
- How can I champion ideas of others?
- How can we celebrate victories as a team?
- Am I making my own contributions to the team?





Collaborative

What I Do & Say:

- Establish team norms
- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Set collective team goals
- Trust and respect others
- Use differences as an advantage
- Hold myself and my teammates accountable to meet collective goals
- “What do you think?”
- “How can we help one another?”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Discredit ideas immediately
- Push my own agenda
- Ask for input but never use it
- Argue or talk over others
- “That’s a terrible idea.”
- “I should just do this myself.”



Effective Communicator

One who communicates with a clear and successful delivery that is well received and understood

Questions I ask myself:

- How should I approach this person?
- How can I connect with my audience?
- What is my body language conveying?
- Am I listening to the other person's views and responses?
- Did I say everything I wanted to say?
- How did the audience receive what I said?



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Effective Communicator

What I Do & Say:

- Listen to others with my eyes and ears
- Be aware of my body language
- Cheerfully and respectfully greet others
- Make healthy eye contact
- Be concise
- Speak up when it matters
- Prepare well before sharing with others
- “What I hear you saying is...”
- “Let me clarify what I mean...”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Distract from my main point with too many details
- Talk over others
- Say one thing but do another
- Speak out of unchecked emotion
- Finish others' sentences for them
- Give bad news via email or text
- “It's complicated; you wouldn't understand.”



Ethical Leadership

The process of influencing people with respect to ethical beliefs and values, while maintaining the dignity and rights of others

Questions I ask myself:

- What laws and organizational procedures govern my decision?
- What conflicts of interest surround my decision?
- How will my decision influence those around me?
- Does my decision align with the culture and values of my organization?
- What rationale supports my decision?
- Are my actions legal and moral?



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Ethical Leadership

What I Do & Say:

- Model desired behavior
- Research laws and procedures
- Tell the truth
- Demonstrate appropriate discretion
- Value ethics over personal interests
- Have difficult conversations
- Gain an understanding of ethical standards
- Expect ethical behavior from others
- “I made a mistake.”
- “What is the right thing to do?”

What I Don't Do & Say

- Make decisions based on personal interest
- Apply loose interpretation of laws and procedures
- Justify poor decisions
- “It's okay to break the rules this one time.”
- “What's in it for me?”



Humility

A willingness to serve the interests of others regardless of one's status or opportunity for personal gain

Questions I ask myself:

- Do I value others' input equal to my own?
- How well do I listen?
- Do I speak kindly to others?
- How do I respond to criticism?
- How can I show my gratitude?
- Who can I celebrate today?
- How can I actively serve and support those around me?



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Humility

What I Do & Say:

- Serve others
- Forgive others
- Admit what I don't know
- Empower others to grow and develop
- Listen with genuine interest
- Exhibit confidence
- Acknowledge my strengths
- Recognize the strengths of others
- "I was wrong."
- "I'm sorry."
- "I appreciate you because..."
- "Please" and "Thank you"

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Boast or brag
- Seek revenge
- Lack confidence
- "I'm the best."
- "I'm the worst."



Problem Solver

A thinker who utilizes available information and resources to achieve a solution to a problem

Questions I ask myself:

- What is the root of the problem?
- How can I help?
- What resources are available to me?
- What resources do I have that I can share with others?
- Who do I know that can help?
- What outcome would be best for all parties involved?



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Problem Solver

What I Do & Say:

- Own the problem
- Ask questions
- Listen to other perspectives
- Seek feedback
- Take action
- Identify the root cause
- Appropriately influence the decision-maker
- “I am a problem solver.”
- “We can figure this out.”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Blame others
- Procrastinate
- Consider only one option or solution
- “I can't...”
- “This is not in my job description.”



Social Awareness

The ability to understand others' emotions and to meet the needs and concerns of others

Questions I ask myself:

- How do my words and actions affect those around me?
- Do I take time to notice others' feelings and perspectives?
- What research can I do to learn the group's cultural norms and values?
- How can I adapt my behavior to meet the needs and concerns of the group?
- How can I change my body language and tone of voice to meet the needs of others?



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Social Awareness

What I Do & Say:

- Watch body language of others
- Seek advice from those within the group
- Know the strengths of others and how they interact with my own
- Think before I speak
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
- “What concerns do you have regarding this situation?”
- “How are you feeling?”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Give immediate responses
- Make assumptions
- Ignore the needs and emotions of others
- “They just don't get it.”
- “I don't care.”

READY FOR *LIFE*

Effective leaders manage time, resources, and talent to make a positive impact in their own life and the lives of others.

These attributes represent the critical skills and knowledge needed to be:

Ready for Life

- Citizenship
- Financial Literacy
- Goal-Oriented
- Resilient
- Self-Aware
- Self-Managed



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Citizenship

**Adhering to laws and rules,
contributing to society, and
participating in public affairs with
wisdom**

Questions I ask myself:

- How can I use my strengths to serve my community?
- Where can I go for accurate information about upcoming elections?
- How can I voice my belief in a respectful manner?
- How can I have a greater impact on my community/state/country/world?
- In what ways can I show respect for laws and rules?
- How can I support those in authority?
- Am I leaving my environment better than I found it?



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Citizenship

What I Do & Say:

- Volunteer/participate in the community
- Follow laws and rules
- Respect the rights of others
- Show compassion
- Protect the environment
- Stay informed of current events and the related needs
- Respectfully defend my beliefs and rights
- Vote
- “I can make a positive impact.”
- “Let me help you with that.”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Disrespect those with different opinions or beliefs
- Use aggression when expressing my beliefs
- Litter or be wasteful
- “I don't owe anyone anything.”
- “I don't want to know.”



Financial Literacy

The ability to understand how one makes, manages, invests, and expends money

Questions I ask myself:

- What are my financial options?
- Is this a responsible way to spend my money?
- What is my plan for current and future financial stability?
- How do I define wealth?
- Do I feel confident in my savings plan?
- What financial experts can I rely on for guidance?



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Financial Literacy

What I Do & Say:

- Know how to earn money
- Plan ahead and follow the plan
- Practice gratitude and contentment
- Take advantage of investment options
- Differentiate between good and bad debt
- Create financial margin
- Allocate funds for charitable giving
- “This is/is not in my budget.”
- “I can wait for that.”
- “Wealth is saving, not spending.”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Make impulsive decisions
- Postpone financial goal-setting
- Overspend my budget
- Measure wealth by possessions
- Take unnecessary risks
- “If they can afford it, so can I.”
- “I have to have that!”



Goal-Oriented

The degree to which one focuses on a particular goal and the tasks necessary to achieve that goal

Questions I ask myself:

- Who do I want to be?
- What do I want to achieve?
- Why is this meaningful to me?
- How can I best use my time and talents?
- What steps do I need to take to get closer to my goal?
- What is a good first step?
- How can I measure my progress?



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Goal-Oriented

What I Do & Say:

- Plan ahead
- Write down specific goals
- Set incremental goals
- Say no to things that distract from my goal
- Set realistic expectations
- Prioritize time and resources
- Follow through
- Make time for intentional reflection
- “I can and I will.”
- “Because of my strength, I will achieve.”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Give up
- Waste time and effort
- Set goals but never write them down
- “I'll get to that eventually.”
- “I don't have the time.”



Resilient

The ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change with optimism

Questions I ask myself:

- What aspects of this adversity can I directly influence?
- What positive emotions can I leverage?
- What new opportunities might arise for me because of this situation?
- Have I been in this situation before? If so, what did I do/could have done to overcome the obstacle?
- What can I learn from this situation?





Resilient

What I Do & Say:

- Stay positive
- Focus on aspects I can control
- Envision a new outcome
- Find humor in tough situations
- Value lessons learned from adversity
- Find a good support system
- Don't take anything personally
- "I can make this situation better."
- "Where there's a will, there's a way."
- "I won't let this obstacle keep me from reaching my goal."

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Give up
- Focus on the negatives
- Avoid adversity
- "Things will never change."
- "This is too hard."



Self-Aware

A clear perception of one's personality, including strengths, weaknesses, thoughts, beliefs, motivations, and emotions and how these are perceived by others

Questions I ask myself:

- What emotion am I feeling and why am I feeling this way?
- What do I do best?
- What am I passionate about?
- What would those around me say my strengths are?
- How often do I take time to reflect on my thoughts and actions?
- What are my emotional triggers?
- Am I being honest with myself?





Self-Aware

What I Do & Say:

- Know my strengths
- Acknowledge my weaknesses
- Seek feedback
- Take time to self-reflect
- Articulate how I feel
- Be aware of my emotions
- Recognize my body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice
- Know my limits
- “I need to improve on...”
- “How did it come across to you when I said/did...?”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Blame others
- Act out of unchecked emotion
- Act like I know more than I do
- Ignore my weaknesses
- “This is just the way I am.”
- “Deal with it.”



Self-Managed

Taking responsibility for one's own behavior and knowing when and how to modify behavior for the well-being of self and others

Questions I ask myself:

- Did my actions reflect my values?
- Am I holding myself accountable to meet my responsibilities?
- How can I best use my gifts, talents, and interests to benefit those around me?
- How can I change my body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice to respectfully convey my thoughts?
- What new skills and knowledge do I need to be successful?
- How can I improve?





Self-Managed

What I Do & Say:

- Create good habits
- Articulate how I feel
- Know when to speak up and when to stay silent
- Manage my emotions
- Lead a disciplined lifestyle
- Learn skills and knowledge to maximize strengths
- Play to my strengths and team up to my weaknesses
- Know my limits
- “I can control my thoughts and actions.”

What I Don't Do & Say:

- Enable bad habits
- Act out of unchecked emotion
- Nurture a victim mentality
- Make excuses for my behavior
- “I can't help it. That's who I am.”