

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE® WORKSHOP

Pre-Work

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Please bring these pre-work responses with you to the workshop.

1. My Personal Best Leadership Experience
2. Current Leadership Challenge
3. What I Hope to Accomplish





My Personal Best Leadership Experience

Recall a time when, in your opinion, you did your very best as a leader. Your Personal Best leadership experience might have taken place recently or long ago; while you were the "official" leader or manager of a team or group, or when you emerged as an informal leader; when you were working for pay or as a volunteer. The experience might have taken place in the workplace, when you were part of a community group or professional organization, or when you were a student.

1. Set the stage. Provide the context by briefly describing the situation: the organization, the people involved, the nature of the project or undertaking, and the challenges you faced. Also describe how you felt at the beginning of the experience.

Over the course of eighteen months, I worked as the leader of Corporation Inc.'s project to create a leadership department; the previous "department" consisted of one person and was considered more of a function than a separate entity. Our ideas educated 2,000+ employees and impacted 60% of the workforce within a six month time frame. We faced the challenges of developing our leadership department and then getting all of our employees on board with our leadership program once the department was in place. At the beginning of this project, I felt excited, enthusiastic, and curious, but I was also afraid of being undermined, creating passive-aggressive responses, and moving too quickly.

2. Describe what happened. Be specific. What did you do? What actions did you take to address the challenge? To engage others? To keep others motivated, especially when things did not go as planned? What were the results?

When we first met as a team, I asked my team members for their definition of service. They were inarticulate and could only explain, "It's just the way we do it. It's the Corp, Inc. way. It's our culture." We wrote these words on a blank flipchart. "But what is it? What does it look like? What does it feel like? What do people say and do when they deliver it?" I prompted. We began to define what culture looks like and what it takes to deliver it, manifest it, transfer it, inculcate others into it. To define the scope, we first wrote a project charter.

3. Describe how you felt at the end of the experience that you just described.

I felt like I had made a difference and provided a lasting transformation for the company, its people, its customers, and myself. I felt like I had proved myself within the company, and that I had contributed and made a difference.

What were the two or three major lessons about leadership that you learned?

LESSON #1

Trust your intuition and follow the combination of your heart, your wisdom, and your knowledge.

LESSON #2

Recognize and believe the best in everyone—everyone has something to offer and will give you more than you imagine.

LESSON #3

Leadership is not just a gift or only a gift; it is a studied science as well as an art.





My Current Leadership Challenge

During *The Leadership Challenge® Workshop*, you will have opportunities to apply what you are learning to a real, current leadership challenge of your own. The questions below will help you select a challenge to work on. This might be a new challenge or one that has been around for a while.

Think about the challenges that you are currently facing in your team and your organization. Select one that meets the criteria below:

IMPORTANT

The situation is unlikely to change on its own, and the results of doing nothing are unacceptable.

LINKED TO SPECIFIC GOALS

The challenge must be addressed for you, your team, and/or the organization to achieve specific goals.

CHALLENGING

You do not currently know how best to improve the situation.

Describe the challenge. Be specific. Who is involved? What is the current situation? What are the goals? Why is it important to address this challenge? What, if anything, have you already tried?

I am struggling to come to consensus and agreements in principle with the other five directors of my team. People are not helping or letting others be heard. I feel like my assessment of my leadership skills is not matching up with how these five other directors perceive them. We are also facing an executive leader who is skeptical of the work that we are doing.





What I Hope to Accomplish

Research on leadership development shows conclusively that people who set goals before an educational experience are more likely to make changes as a result of the program than those who don't.

Think about what you hope to accomplish during the workshop.

GOAL #1

Assess my leadership strengths and weaknesses by understanding the gaps between how I view my leadership qualities and how others in my work world view me.

GOAL #2

Take a first step toward accreditation as a Leadership Challenge Trainer.

GOAL #3

Develop a strategic plan for leadership development by integrating The Leadership Challenge learning and concepts within our organization.

GOAL #4

Meet and network with professionals who are striving toward similar goals and struggling with similar challenges.

GOAL #5

Come away relaxed, refreshed, and inspired to lead.

