

Leadership Competencies You Will Need in 2017

A Hayes Group International Perspective on your Personal Growth & Development

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The most effective organizations are planning now for tomorrow's leaders – specifically by interviewing for future leader skill sets and coaching/training those who are in the leadership pipeline on the key leadership competencies. Our coaching with leadership from multiple organizations in 2016 showed a great lack of leaders being “present in the moment” – leaders are tremendously pre-occupied with phones, laptops, and ipads in meetings and employees perceive they are not listening and not concerned about their issues. This perception

requires an adjustment in “concentration” in 2017. Here are the top competencies, from our opinion, that leaders should development and grow in 2017.

CONCENTRATION AND IN-DEPTH THINKING – the ability to explore issues below the surface and probe for information. (Today's workforce suffers from attention deficit due to more work than time.¹ The Internet has caused broader rather than deeper thinking.) This includes behaviors such as:

- Asking questions – vs. telling
- Sound judgment – regarding decision-making (based on root cause thinking)
- Removal of distractions through effective time management
- Understanding and using stress as a positive and implementing work/life alignment
- Becoming a thought leader – balancing expertise with broad business understanding

ADAPTIVE CAPACITY – the ability to understand the context and to recognize and seize opportunities.² This includes behaviors such as:

- Ability to offer solutions – quickly and thoughtfully
- Ability to transcend any particular personal/professional limits (perseverance)
- Skill to switch mindsets quickly and nimbly and flexibility to change quickly
- Helping others develop this trait

¹ See Harvard Business Review “Overloaded Circuits: Why Smart People Underperform” by Edward M. Hallowell

² Warren Bennis and Robert Thomas in their leadership study found this trait to be the single most important in determining success of leaders. Source: Geeks & Geezers: How Era, Values, and Defining Moments Shape Leaders. The US Army wants this trait among their young officers – see Dr. Leonard Wong –WarCollege for more information.

LEVEL 5 LEADERSHIP³ – the ability of leaders to be fiercely ambitious and driven, but whose ambition is directed toward their company rather than themselves. This includes behaviors such as:

- Sense of urgency
- Humility as an integrated behavior
- Service-oriented mindset and behaviors (Service leadership)
- Empathy with accountability
- Ability to engage others
- Coaching, not controlling

KEEN SELF-AWARENESS – the ability to understand and honestly evaluate one’s traits, emotional impact on others, and behaviors. Effective leaders build on their strengths and have a continuous improvement mindset.⁴ This includes behaviors such as:

- Emotional intelligence (understanding one’s emotions and how they affect others)
- Knowing and using strengths while improving behaviors that are potential weaknesses
- Knowing the motivations of others and improving morale⁵[5]
- Relationship management
- Social awareness (political astuteness)

STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL VERSATILITY – the ability to think beyond the present, understand a broader business context and create a future compelling vision while also being able to execute plans and implement ideas (and move between strategic thinking and tactical implementation seamlessly)

- Developing intuition and fostering innovative thinking
- Making decisions (without all the data)
- Knowing when to be forceful and when to enable
- Understanding the right level of detail for the position
- Understanding current trends – being market centric
- Using history to effectively move an organization forward

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³ Jim Collins in his best seller “Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don’t,” used extensive research to identify leaders that had a fierce resolve coupled with humility. He called the concept “Level 5” leadership. Merwyn Hayes and Michael Comer took the concept one step further by identifying specific behaviors that leaders can implement in their book “Start with Humility: Lessons from America’s Quiet CEOs on how to Build Trust and Inspire People”

⁴ The ground-breaking research from the Gallup organization (based on interviews with over 3 million managers) found effective leaders put energy and time into strengths (not just trying to improve weaknesses). See Marcus Buckingham/ Coffman research at www.gallup.com

⁵ Current research from MIT and Carnegie Mellon found that today’s employees are motivated beyond money by: (1) autonomy – not being micromanaged; (2) mastery – being developed and coached and (3) a sense of purpose. For more information see the book “Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us” by Daniel Pink