

7 Tasks Every Leader Must Master



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If you're seeking to [be a better leader](#) and create a high-performing organization, there are certain tasks you cannot ignore. As a leader, you're not only responsible for guiding your team members to success, you're also responsible for team morale, development, conflict resolution, office culture, along with many other duties.

So, it's clear that becoming a great, effective leader takes a great deal of time, discipline and practice — but by mastering the seven tasks below, you'll be setting yourself and your team up for maximum success:

****1. Assess and monitor team climate****

Climate is about shared beliefs and perceptions of groups regarding the attitudes that characterize the group. Inside an organization, the climate is a bottom-up concept and the responsibility of front-line leaders. Climate can change quickly, depending on the actions of front-line leaders.

Climate is different than culture. [An organization's culture](#) is defined by the shared assumptions, values and beliefs that govern how people behave in the organization. Culture is a top-down concept and the responsibility of senior leaders. An organization's culture can only change slowly over time.

Morale is critical in both climate and culture. The [team's morale](#) determines their confidence, willingness and discipline to succeed, especially while facing challenges and adversity.

If front-line leaders are not doing their jobs, it is possible to have a lousy team climate inside a great organizational culture. Of course, the opposite can also be true. It is certainly possible to have a positive team climate in a not-so-good culture.

Related: [Benefits of a Positive Work Environment](#)

2. Earn and give trust

When [leaders earn the trust](#) of their people, it contributes to a favorable climate. People are naturally skeptical of their leaders. It takes time for leaders to earn trust.

When people trust their leaders, they are more willing to accept the influence of those leaders. Leaders who extend trust are more likely to be trusted.

Leaders earn trust when they are willing to be authentic and vulnerable. [Authenticity](#) is about being transparent and not pretending to be somebody you are not. Authenticity means showing up as your true self and being willing to connect with others as you are. Authentic leaders value their people's diverse ideas and experiences, and they can have an open and honest dialogue with them. [Vulnerability](#) is susceptibility to new experiences, thoughts, changes and uncertainty. Leaders must accept risk in expressing their imperfections, admitting fault and discussing the unknowns with their team. Being authentic makes a person vulnerable. Being vulnerable is a strength that takes courage.

3. Treat people with respect and ensure a respectful workplace

Respect is the admiration between people for their ideas and what they feel is important. People who feel respected at work are more engaged and productive. Respect is in the eye of the beholder.

Leaders treat people with respect by encouraging them to "open up" and valuing their opinions. Leaders who effectively use [active listening](#) in their communication appreciate respect as a critical component of collaboration. Active listening is listening attentively to

somebody without preemptively judging and asking intelligent questions to gain the best understanding possible.

Leaders treat people with respect by embracing diversity and being inclusive. Diversity is recognizing and respecting individual differences and similarities and the unique contribution every employee can make. [Being inclusive](#) ensures that people have equal opportunities for involvement and empowerment. Inclusivity highlights the unique perspectives and ideas to incorporate into the workplace to build the organization's culture.

Treating people with respect means treating them fairly and consistently. Leaders show respect by recognizing people for their hard work.

Related: [5 Ways to Be a Leader Your Employees Will Respect](#)

4. Enforce accountability and fairness

A workplace without accountability is undisciplined and chaotic. When [enforcing accountability](#), leaders must be firm, fair and consistent.

Leaders should be clear about their acceptable workplace conduct, performance and learning standards. Leaders owe it to those doing things right to hold non-performers accountable. Of course, leaders must hold themselves responsible for established standards as well. Leaders set the example for accountability by showing their people "what right looks like."

Holding people accountable doesn't always mean punishment. In most cases, enforcing accountability means correcting behaviors. It means ensuring that people learn from their mistakes and meet established standards.

5. Encourage people to have fun at work

We spend more time at work than we do with our families. Jobs should not be miserable, and the fun doesn't always have to be about celebration.

Having fun helps people relax and take a mental break from their challenges. People often use humor as a personal coping mechanism against stress, and laughter can help to relieve anxiety and fear. Having fun opens dialogue and builds [cohesion among the team](#).

Having a sense of humor about shared challenges provides a way to bond with others facing the same challenges. Humor, especially from leaders, is a powerful tool.

Related: [5 Strategies to Build a Fun Work Culture That's Also Productive](#)

****6. Display great character****

A [leader's character](#) will make or break their reputation. People will not give 100% of their efforts to leaders who lack character. The leader's character is built by earning the trust and respect of their team. When leaders demonstrate the following character traits to their teams, it makes people more resilient:

- **Moral courage:** Taking action for moral reasons, despite the risk
- **Honesty:** Showing genuine principles, intentions and actions
- **Humility:** Having a modest opinion or assessment of one's own importance
- **Empathy:** The vicarious experience of feelings, thoughts or attitudes of another

Demonstrating moral courage and honesty inspires trust. [Demonstrating humility](#) and empathy is a show of respect.

7. Manage and share expectations

Expectations are assumptions, beliefs and ideas of actions and the results. Managing expectations mentally prepares people for obstacles and challenges to cope with stress. Plans rarely go as expected, so leaders must understand the associated risks and be with the team as they face the challenges.

Leaders should ask themselves and their teams the following types of questions:

- What is the worst-case scenario that we can expect?
- How do we prepare and adapt for that?
- What else might go wrong?
- What is our plan B?

[Managing expectations](#) of what the team may face keeps them informed, focuses them on their purpose and creates a more cohesive and resilient organization.

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