

# HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

## A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO IMPROVING AS A LEADER



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# DEVELOPING YOUR LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

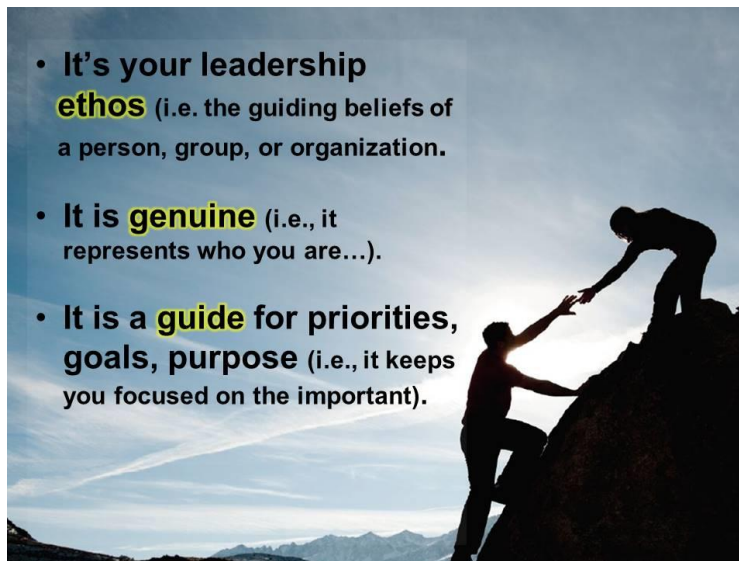
*“Leadership is establishing direction and influencing others to follow that direction, bring their best efforts and work together to achieve results.” –Sonia Layne-Gartside*

## Value of a Leadership Philosophy

Creating or refining your leadership philosophy calls for you to explore and reflect upon your purpose, personal values, attributes and beliefs about leadership. There are three compelling reasons why this is such a valuable exercise to spend time on:

- When you know who you are, you project authenticity and credibility, which builds trust from the people you interact with (employees, family, community). This will help you cultivate loyalty.
- You will face ethical dilemmas or crises or challenges, a guide is often helpful to help you manage yourself. Instead of submitting when pressure is applied, a philosophy helps you respond with honesty and empathy.
- A philosophy tells people what to expect, what you value, and how you'll act, making work and life less stressful and making you more productive.

## What is a Leadership Philosophy?



## How to Develop Your Philosophy

You start by answering the overarching question - what kind of leader do you want to be? Look back on your experiences (the good and bad leaders you've had), examine other leaders' stories, and reflect on the following:

**Your Purpose:** your mission as a leader - what's the contribution you want to make? How do you create value?

**Your Values:** As a leader, what are your highest values? What are the qualities or characteristics that you value?

**Your Beliefs:** What beliefs guide your actions as a leader?

### EXAMPLES

PURPOSE As I leader I want to.....	VALUES/ATTRIBUTES I want to be known for being...	BELIEFS I believe that...
"To use my gifts of intelligence, charisma, and serial optimism to cultivate the self-worth and net-worth of women around the world." Amanda Steinberg	Strategic Collaborative Deliberate Independent Nurturing	I believe leadership is serving others.  I believe that your title makes you a manager; your people will decide if you are a leader.
"To be a teacher. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be." –Oprah Winfrey	Flexible Knowledgeable Service-Oriented Calm Focused Organized	The best workplace leadership behavior I have witnessed is to praise loudly and publicly and blame privately whenever possible.
"To have fun in (my) journey through life and learn from (my) mistakes." – Richard Branson	Developmental Thoughtful	I believe that to transform a business, you have to transform the leader.
I want to empower people to achieve the goals we've set, solve problems, earn respect and stay active and focused.	Empathy Good Listener Innovative Responsive	I believe in rewarding performance, not effort.
"I try to create a vision or a sense of opportunity for others." - Edith Kelly-Green	Trustworthy Competent Humility	I believe in hard work, preparation and focus

**Now, complete the following Statements:**

**Purpose**

*As I leader I want to...*

**Values**

*I want to be known for being...*

**Beliefs**

*I believe that...*

Now that you've unearthed your leadership purpose, identified your leadership values, and understand what beliefs guide your leadership thinking, you are now ready to write statements reflecting your leadership philosophy. It can be as long or as short as you want it to be.

### EXAMPLES

As a leader I want to be working with others to achieve a meaningful mission that affects issues I care deeply about.

I want to be known for being results oriented, authentic, trustworthy and collaborative so that I can achieve powerful goals.

I believe in leading by example.

I believe in clear and straight-forward communication, and as a general rule, more communication is better than less, and sooner is better than later.

I believe in recognizing effort and rewarding performance.

I believe in giving constructive feedback immediately, instead of criticizing.

As a leader I want to always help people to find the best in themselves.

I want to be known for listening with respect and gratitude to others.

I value integrity in personal and professional development.

I believe that leadership is a journey that consists of followers and leaders.

I balance my work and personal success.

I spend time reflecting on my leadership and its implications on others.

"My leadership philosophy is this: whether you are leading yourself or leading others, a little bit of 'why' goes a long way! This means good leaders are clear on the vision, mission, purpose, values for themselves and their business. They are able to inspire others with this why and compel them to join forces with them and be passionate about going on this road together to accomplish that why. It also means the leader is able to connect the why in any situation to any person or employee, when providing corrective feedback they are able to share the impact of why that situation is important and why a different outcome is important in the future. From the janitor to the CFO, the leader can provide a compelling why for how their role fits into the larger picture and contribute in an important way to the overall mission." -Anna Olson, the CEO of [AMO Consulting](#)

**My leadership philosophy is:**

**TESTING YOUR PHILOSOPHY**

**Does this represent the best that you can do?**

**Can you live this philosophy?**

**Is your leadership philosophy something that is valued or needed in your organization?**

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