Leadership Qualities

Table of Contents

Warm-Up

A GOOD LEADER IS...

A. Activity

Take a moment to think of two people who are considered to be good leaders. What makes them good leaders? Now, choose which qualities of a leader are the most important. Rank the qualities below from most important (1) to least important (8).

Quality	Importance
Good listener	
Decisive	
Confident	
Curious	
Knowledgeable	
Good delegator	
Fun and funny	
Adaptable	

B. Discussion

Come together as a class and talk about your rankings.

1. Did everyone agree on the most important two or three leadership qualities?

2. Why do you think there was or was not agreement?

3. What model leaders were you thinking of?

4. Do leadership qualities need to change based on the situation/team?

5. Do some qualities seem easier to learn and practise than others?

Vocabulary Preview

Match as many vocabulary words to their meanings as you can. After reading the paragraphs on page 4, check this exercise again. How many did you get right? Can you finish the exercise?

_____	1.	core	a)	most important
_____	2.	extroverted	b)	knowledge, experience
_____	3.	introverted	c)	to assign tasks to others
_____	4.	seniority	d)	quiet, especially in group situations
_____	5.	prerequisite	e)	to do very well at one thing or in one area
_____	6.	delegate	f)	to acknowledge and praise the person who did the work
_____	7.	excel	g)	requiring something to be done by a deadline
_____	8.	time-sensitive	h)	higher in position, usually earned by longer service
_____	9.	expertise	i)	outgoing, confident in social situations
_____	10.	give credit	j)	a requirement before something else can happen

Reading

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES

1. Can anyone be a leader? Yes! Leadership styles differ depending on a number of factors including culture, personality, and industry. However, anyone can learn to use their **core** strengths to lead a team.

2. Some people seem born for leadership roles, while others shy away from the spotlight. **Extroverted** people are often chosen as leaders because they actively participate in groups and love sharing their ideas. Being fun or funny helps a person stand out from an early age. **Introverted** people, on the other hand, may go unnoticed in a group and even prefer to let others take the lead. This is especially true if a leadership role requires public speaking.

3. People don't always choose to become leaders, however. While natural-born leaders may seek out leadership roles and opportunities, others find themselves in these roles out of necessity or obligation. For example, a long-term employee may fall into a leadership role due to **seniority**. Likewise, a junior can become a senior in the case of a maternity leave or other departmental shift.

4. Strong leaders have a variety of strengths, and being an extrovert is not a **prerequisite**. Some leaders are confident and consistent, while others are careful and adaptable. A leader might have great listening skills or be an excellent notetaker. A strong leader is aware of his or her core strengths and is able to demonstrate these to the team. Similarly, strong leaders are aware of their weaknesses. They recognize strengths in their team members and **delegate** the right people to get the work done.

5. Many people are strongest at a particular stage of a project, and good leaders know how to recognize when individual team members perform at their best. For example, creative people often like to come up with ideas and get projects started. Those with strong organizational skills **excel** at keeping people focused. Bringing in the right people and resources is essential for the middle of the project. At the end of a project, leaders look for people who are good at problem-solving. These people like to correct mistakes and point out areas where goals have changed. **Time-sensitive** individuals also make sure that deadlines are met.

6. **Expertise** is one quality that most strong leaders share. Their knowledge of industry or customers' needs may come from education and experience or a combination of both. In addition to making important contributions based on their own knowledge and experience, leaders gather the expertise from the whole team and even seek help beyond the team when necessary.

7. Having passion and curiosity also helps a person become a leader in their field. Leaders also take the time to discover the interests and passions of their team members to match them with projects they will excel in. Helping another take a lead on a project is a sign of a great leader. Leaders also **give credit** to anyone who makes an important contribution.

Comprehension

1. What is the reading mainly about?

2. How do people become leaders?

3. What does the reading say about weaknesses?

4. What is paragraph 5 mainly about?

5. According to paragraph 7, how can you tell if someone is a great leader?

Vocabulary Review

Read the scenario. Answer the questions using complete sentences.

> **Scenario**
>
> Brianna, a project manager, needs to start a blog for her company. First, she needs to choose a blog platform to integrate with the company's website. This decision must be made by Friday so the development work can begin. However, Brianna doesn't have any expertise in this area. Brianna calls a team meeting. Ariel, a long-term designer at the company, has previous experience working with Bloggly, but she is a bit shy and doesn't speak up about it at the team meeting. Lyle, a new writer on the team, is very outgoing. He suggests using WobblyWords. He doesn't have direct experience with it, but has heard it's a good platform. A day after the meeting, Ariel approaches Brianna privately with Bloggly samples and data. She shows a mock-up of how it would work with their company's website. Brianna decides to move forward with Bloggly.

1. What is the **prerequisite** for this project?

   _____

   _____

2. Which team member is **introverted** and how does this affect the project?

   _____

   _____

$\longrightarrow$

Vocabulary Review cont.

3. Who has the most **expertise** in this scenario?

    _____

    _____

4. Who do you think has the most **seniority** on this team? Why do you think this?

    _____

    _____

5. What are Lyle's **core** strengths?

    _____

    _____

6. Is the decision **time-sensitive**? Why or why not?

    _____

    _____

7. Does Brianna **delegate** any tasks?

    _____

    _____

8. If the blog platform works out well, who should be **given credit** and why?

    _____

    _____

Practice

A. Activity

Think about your own leadership qualities.
Give yourself a score from 1 (not like me) to 5 (very much like me) for each quality. Are there other qualities you possess that you can use to be a good leader? Discuss your answers in groups.

Quality	Score
Good listener	
Decisive	
Confident	
Curious	
Knowledgeable	
Good delegator	
Fun and funny	
Adaptable	

B. Discussion

1. Did you add any qualities to the chart? If so, what were they?

2. If anyone gave themselves only low scores, can you help them identify another quality they have that they can use to be a good leader?

3. Choose a quality that you feel you have. Can you think of a time when that quality helped you be a leader?

4. What do you think you could ask for help with as a leader?

5. Can you think of someone specific to help you overcome your weaknesses?

Group Discussion

1. Do you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert? How has this affected your work life in the past?

2. What are some situations you have experienced when you acted like a leader, or could have acted like a leader?

3. Has a leader ever asked you for help?

4. Have your ideas about what makes a good leader changed?

5. What part of a project do you prefer working on—the beginning, the middle, or the end? Does this realization have any effect on your career goals?

Homework Challenge

Arrange a short interview with two local leaders. Ask them what qualities they feel are essential for a good leader. What leadership qualities do they have? Can they give examples of how they have used their leadership qualities to motivate their teams or fix a problem? Can they identify a weakness that they have worked on or want to work on? Make sure to thank them for their time.