

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

SKILL GUIDE

It's important that those adopting a Servant Leader mind-set work develop a skill-set to match. We want leaders to grow & thrive so have created a set of five short development guides to help.

Whether you are new to leadership or an old hand each guide is intended to help you learn & develop skills in order to ensure the success and happiness of yourself and the team you lead.

The guides are supplemented by a range of materials including an animated film, self-assessments and a condensed guide to Servant Leadership.

Put simply good leaders are good learners - learning is perhaps only second to listening as a priority focus for Servant Leaders.

Learning aides performance, those that see learning as an important part of their daily lives are much more likely to coach others, value experimentation and reflection and are less likely to see feedback as a threat. To become the best at anything people and organizations need to put systems in place to enforce processes that support learning. Good learners conduct after-action reviews to gather useful insights, candid reflection and constructive feedback are systematically practiced.

We're operating within a knowledge economy, fed by the need for speedy information - we simply cannot know it all and must collaborate to put learning into practice with humility.

Learning and humility feed off each other, learning allows one to see from different perspectives and empathize with others points-of-view.

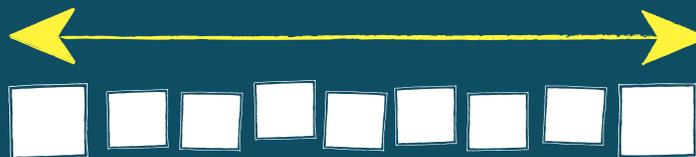


SELF-ASSESS

Why not use this simple self-assessment scale to consider your strength in this area. Share your self - assessment with someone whose opinion you value, do they agree with your view? How do they see you demonstrate this skill? What might you do to maintain or improve?

Fails to make time (and for others to protect time) for reflection. May be overly biased to one learning style and struggle to appreciate others. Acts on instinct rather than applying critical thinking. Fails to put into practice lessons learned or surface useful feedback.

This scale extends left to right across a range of competence. Read the descriptors at either end of the scale and mark the box closest to your current state



Promotes experimentation, sees the positive and is patient with failure. Understand the limits of their own knowledge (they know they need to learn). Makes time for reflection and aides others to gather insights and act on lessons learned.

IDEAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **LEARN CROSS DISCIPLINE**, TAKE AN INTEREST IN A WIDE RANGE OF DISCIPLINES AND IDEAS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF WORK. DIFFERENT INTERESTS AND ACTIVITIES WILL USE AND EXERCISE DIFFERENT PARTS OF YOUR BRAIN GROW LEARNING CAPACITY, INCREASE FOCUS AND PATIENCE. PLATFORMS LIKE FUTURE LEARN HAVE LITERALLY HUNDREDS OF FREE SHORT COURSES.
- **MAKE LEARNING STRENGTH AND LEARN TO SEE WHAT OTHERS DON'T**, IN HIS BOOK 'SEEING WHAT OTHERS DON'T' GARY KLEIN TALKS ABOUT THE WAY PEOPLE GAIN INSIGHTS -LEARN- AND THE BARRIERS THAT INTERFERE WITH LEARNING. CHECK OUT HIS STRATEGIES THAT INCLUDE TILTING, SWIRLING AND PAUSING!
- **TOOLS & TECHNIQUES**, THERE ARE A MASSIVE RANGE OF CRITICAL THINKING TECHNIQUES TO SUPPORT A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO ENQUIRY. TO BE A GOOD LEARNER, BEING PROCESS-ORIENTED IS ESSENTIAL.
- **4. GOOD LEARNERS NEVER RUN OUT OF QUESTION**, IMPROVING YOUR QUESTIONING SKILLS WILL HELP YOU LEARN. TRY SPENDING A DAY MOSTLY ASKING QUESTIONS, WHY, WHEN, WHAT, WHAT IF, HOW WOULD YOU? REFLECT ON WHAT YOU LEARN BY ASKING AND LISTENING

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

SKILL GUIDE

Communication needs care and attention to get it right. Those skilled at communicating aren't the most extrovert or expressive but folks who are motivated by creating clarity and purpose for others. Leaders skilled at communication state clearly what is wanted and expected from others and maintain a precise and steady flow of information.

1. Develop Active Listening

Listening is a key aspect of communication; you'll serve people better when you listen intentionally. Listening is more than 'hearing', it means understanding the emotions and words the speaker is using to express view or share information.

Tailoring your question style to the conversation (open for info, closed for clarification and summarize back what you hear) listen for info not to respond.

Don't interrupt and don't impose a solution too quickly, be a patient listener! Don't finish others sentences for them. Interrupting can be interpreted as "I'm more important than you" or "I'm impatient and can't manage my impulse to talk".

Watch out for unintended bias, a strong accent, pace, tone or nervous speakers should be judged on what they say not how they say it.

Finally summarizing what you heard i.e. 'so, what I think you have told me is/the most pressing point is / ok, so you need me to make a decision on XYZ, is that correct?'

3. Make is Visual – draw

Science backs up that icons, illustrations and pictures help with recall and can make communication much more participatory. Expressing your idea or goal visually is easier than you might think.

Avoid dull and predictable imagery and large PowerPoint decks – instead try the lightning talk style (all image and no words). Mix up your approach, there are literally dozens of free online photo libraries and communication platforms (i.e. canva) to help.

Use collaboration tools like Ideazboard to get others to add in ideas, OneNote also allows sketching and sharing.

Simple techniques like silent mind mapping or dot voting makes communication collaborative and removes the emphasis from you needing all the answers

4. Be brief and specific

Keeping your message concise will ensure it's more memorable

- Prepare for key conversations in advance and try to distil your message down
- Par down the jargon
- When composing or delivering a message (written or spoken) use this simple KFD mnemonic:
- KNOW – what do I need you to know, the key message
- FEEL – how should you feel about what I've shared? How should I expect you to react (i.e. excited, reassured, impatient for progress, feel like you want to contribute)
- DO – the often overlooked call to action - the 'so

2. Practice

Makes perfect and shows that you care enough about what you are saying, your audience and getting it right.

Rehearsing even the simplest message can help you test out your words, tone, and message and get early feedback. Essential for large-scale colleague sessions or presentations.

People process information in different ways, adjusting your communication style to that of your audience allows you to direct the conversation towards your desired outcomes. There are four preferred communication styles to consider:

Visual – use of pictures, videos, infographics and words that describe looking or seeing are powerful

Auditory – literal listeners so choose your words with care, these folk will be distracted by disorderly conference calls

Kinesthetic – interested in how a message feels, they will focus on how you message makes them feel and might like more creative/tangible methods of communication

Auditory Digital Visual – this is about sensing, possibly moving towards analytical

When communicating to large groups try and appeal to all – when it's a 121 conversation listen for clues in the language folks use to discover any obvious communication preferences.

It's amazing once you start to practice talking through a presentation or paper out loud how much you find yourself editing content.

For written materials less is definitely more. Take the time to proof read and strip out every non-essential word.

Slow down & Pause! We listen at rate of 125 – 250 words per minute, but think at 100 – 3000 words per minute

5. Navigating barriers

Dispersed teams and new communication channels mean more effort needs to go into managing messages

- Address remote participants of conference calls/ WebEx etc. by name involve everyone (and keep checking in using folks names) . do not multi task on calls, close email, turn off alerts and limit distractions
- Use Stand Ups & Retros to draw in views from the less vocal and visible team members
- Pass the chair to an unexpected person, maybe even a member of a co-dependent team. Use drawings icons, online collaboration tools to break up the mundane
- Use faces to break down barrier of anonymity - conference call, Skype or create a lo-fi, offline map or team structure with pictures, photos and location can help personalize interactions

