

ATHLETE LEADERSHIP



# Understanding Leadership

Participant Workbook



**ATHLETE  
LEADERSHIP**

# lesson 1: leadership basics

## objectives

In this first lesson, you will:

**1** Review the definition of leadership

**2** Discuss the behaviors of great leaders

**3** Discuss basic leadership skills needed as a leader

How do **you** define leadership?



**Here is the definition that the Special Olympics Leadership Academy uses for leadership:**

Leadership is a relationship through which one person influences the behavior or actions of other people to achieve goals.

Leadership is the ability to guide, direct, or influence people.



**After reading the definition, raise your hand if you personally know someone who has shown leadership?**

## EVERYDAY LEADERS ACTIVITY

Let's see if we can further define leadership by thinking about these leaders. We are going to share examples of leaders in our everyday lives.

- 1 Think of someone in your life that you would consider a leader.

- 2 Think about the behaviors or actions that inspire people to follow them.

- 3 Walk around the room and read each of the role titles.
- 4 Stand by the role that represents the person you chose.
- 5 Be ready to share one reason why you think they are a good leader.



**Remember: There are NO wrong answers!**

# BEHAVIORS OF GREAT LEADERS



**MODEL  
THE  
WAY**



**INSPIRE  
A SHARED  
VISION**



**CHALLENGE  
THE  
PROCESS**



**ENABLE  
OTHERS  
TO ACT**



**ENCOURAGE  
THE  
HEART**

The Special Olympics Leadership Academy discusses the five behaviors common to great leaders identified by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner. Their work is described in a book titled, "The Leadership Challenge." These behaviors are:



**MODEL  
THE WAY**

Leaders set and model standards of excellence and the way to treat others.

Then they set an example for others to follow.

They help people find a path to achieve their goals by setting smaller steps towards that goal.

They support people by helping them find direction when they are unsure about next steps and by creating opportunities for success along the way.



**INSPIRE A  
SHARED VISION**

Leaders believe they can make a difference.

They share enthusiasm for "what can be" and get others to be a part of it.

They see new possibilities and share those ideas with others.

## BEHAVIORS OF GREAT LEADERS



### CHALLENGE THE PROCESS

Leaders search for opportunities to change and improve the current state.

They are not afraid to ask questions.

They look for new ways to improve a process or the organization.

They use disappointments, mistakes, and failures when things do not work out as learning moments.

They do not let people use the excuse, "That is the way it has always been done."



### ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT

Leaders build team spirit and promote collaboration.

They get others involved because it makes the whole team better.

They create an atmosphere of trust and respect.

They help others feel empowered.



### ENCOURAGE THE HEART

Leaders recognize individual contributions.

They encourage people when things are difficult.

They create an atmosphere of hope and determination.

They celebrate the accomplishments of everyone on the team.

# BEHAVIORS OF GREAT LEADERS

How does **YOUR** leader demonstrate the behaviors of great leaders?



**MODEL  
THE WAY**

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**INSPIRE A  
SHARED VISION**

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**CHALLENGE  
THE PROCESS**

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**ENABLE  
OTHERS TO ACT**

A large dashed rectangular box for writing notes related to the 'ENABLE OTHERS TO ACT' behavior.



**ENCOURAGE  
THE HEART**

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# BASIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

**Skills are different than characteristics or traits.** Think about jobs you have had as a student, an employee or volunteer or just tasks you need to do around the place you live. There are a set of skills you need to get those jobs done regardless of your personal characteristics or behaviors.

These are the skills that every leader needs to develop to be successful:



# BASIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

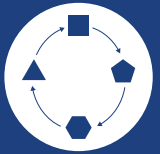
## COMMUNICATION



**An important skill for both leaders and team members is the ability to communicate effectively.**

- ▲ Leaders need to communicate with their team to meet their goals.
- ▲ The leader needs to make sure the team understands the tasks and feels inspired or motivated to participate.
- ▲ Good leaders communicate more than just information to their team, they also make sure the team knows the goals and vision – the big picture of the plan.
- ▲ Effective communication includes listening too. When you listen and ask thoughtful questions to your team you show them that you value their input.
- ▲ Communication can take many forms, person to person, email, texting, or social media.

## ADAPTABILITY



**The ability to observe and adapt is an important skill for a leader.**

- ▲ Things don't always go as planned. As a leader you need to know what is going well and what is not going well. This helps you adapt plans to make sure you meet the goals.
- ▲ No two people are the same. Everyone has a different style of getting things done. A leader needs to adapt and help people use their skills and talents to help the project.
- ▲ Sometimes you need to be flexible and let people do their work in a way that is best for them.

## CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT



**Leaders welcome new ideas, input and feedback to improve future projects.**

- ▲ A project or event might be well-planned but things usually happen that are unexpected and need changes.
- ▲ A leader observes how things went and asks for input and feedback to improve the project or event for the next time. Even when things go as planned, there may be a good idea out there that makes it even better.
- ▲ A good leader welcomes new ideas and listens for improvements.



# BASIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

## GOAL ORIENTED



**Having a clear goal or purpose in mind helps you clearly communicate the plan, make decisions, and adapt to changes.**

- ▲ Staying focused on the goal helps leaders successfully guide teams.
- ▲ Distractions can be one of the biggest obstacles to meeting a goal.
- ▲ Create an environment that helps you and your team focus.

## RELATIONSHIP BUILDING



**An essential component of leadership is the ability to build good relationships with others.**

- ▲ Good relationships help you communicate more effectively and encourage mutual respect with those you work with.
- ▲ Developing healthy relationships creates trust and makes sure the team is working on the same goal.

## DECISION MAKING



**As a leader you will need to make decisions.**

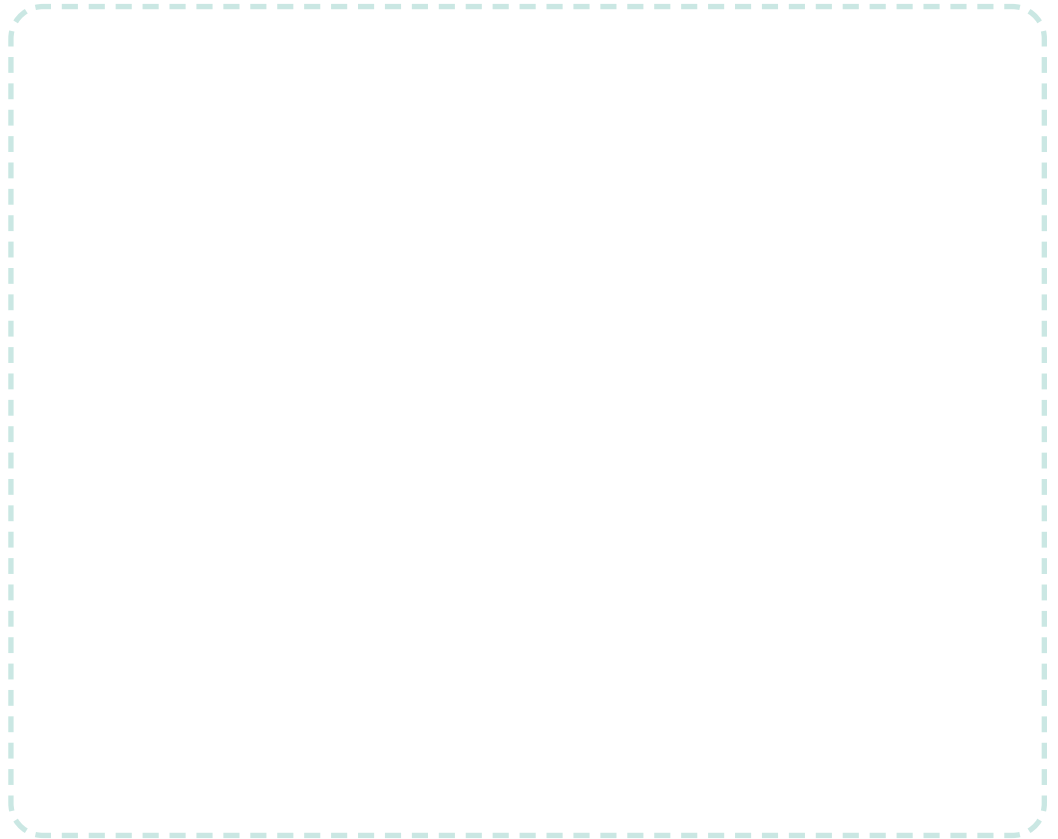
- ▲ Leaders listen to ideas, gather input and make decisions based on information about the project or event. You may make a decision alone or with your team, but it is up to you as the leader to make sure decisions are being made so the project can move forward.
- ▲ Good decision-making comes with time and experience. As you gain more experience and knowledge about the area you are leading, you will be able to make smarter decisions.
- ▲ Sometimes your decisions may not be popular and some people will not agree with them. A good leader is one who makes the decision that is right or makes sense at the time, not the decision that is easy.
- ▲ Remember to communicate the reason you made the decision. This helps people understand why you made the decision. They may not agree, but they will appreciate the explanation.

## *Leadership Characteristics*

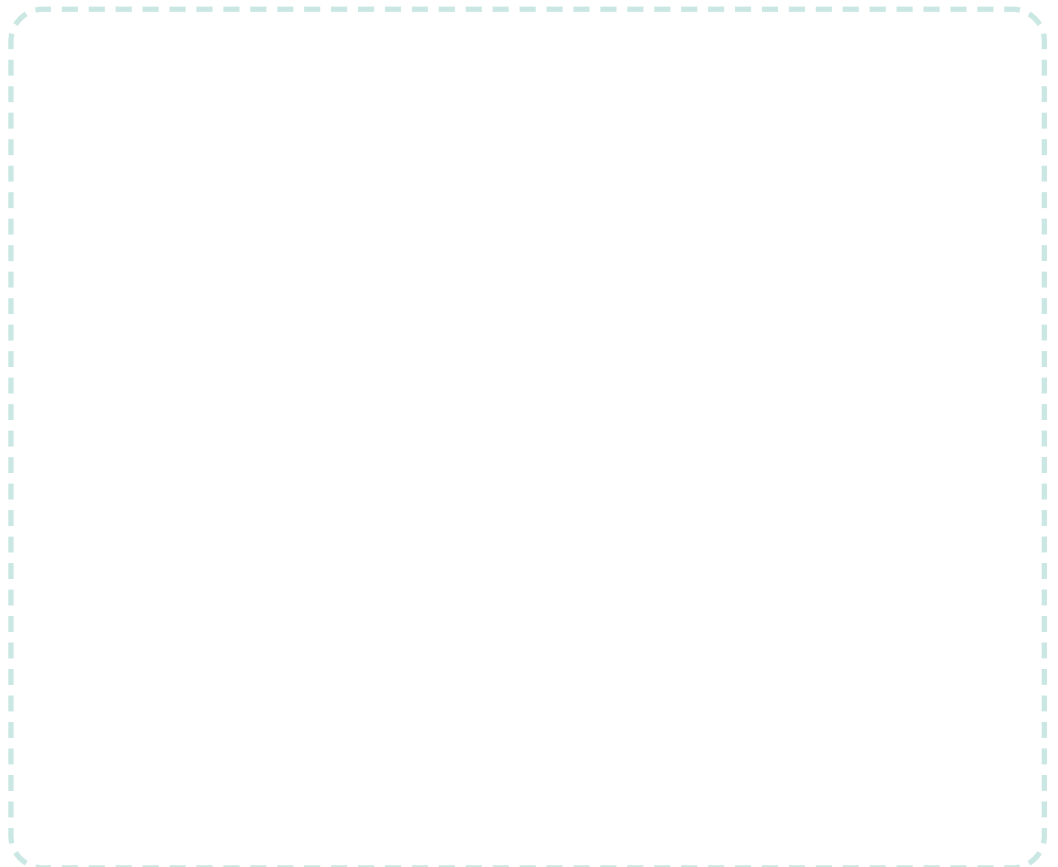
<b>ADAPTABLE</b>	<b>APPROACHABLE</b>	<b>ACTIVE LISTENER</b>
<b>AUTHENTIC</b>	<b>BRAVE</b>	<b>CARING</b>
<b>CHARISMATIC</b>	<b>COMPASSIONATE</b>	<b>CONFIDENT</b>
<b>CONSISTENT</b>	<b>CREDIBLE</b>	<b>CURIOUS</b>
<b>DEDICATED</b>	<b>DETAILED</b>	<b>EMPATHETIC</b>
<b>EMPOWERING</b>	<b>ENGAGED</b>	<b>HONEST</b>
<b>HUMBLE</b>	<b>INCLUSIVE</b>	<b>INSPIRING</b>
<b>INNOVATIVE</b>	<b>LOYAL</b>	<b>MOTIVATING</b>
<b>OPTIMISTIC</b>	<b>ORGANIZED</b>	<b>OUTSPOKEN</b>
<b>PASSIONATE</b>	<b>PRO-ACTIVE</b>	<b>PERSUASIVE</b>
<b>RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>RESPECTFUL</b>	<b>SKILLED</b>
<b>SMART</b>	<b>SUPPORTIVE</b>	<b>TRUSTWORTHY</b>

## ASSESSING YOUR BASIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS

- Why are you interested in becoming a leader?



- What behaviors or leadership skills do you believe you have or use already?











## reflection

- What leadership roles do you have in Special Olympics?

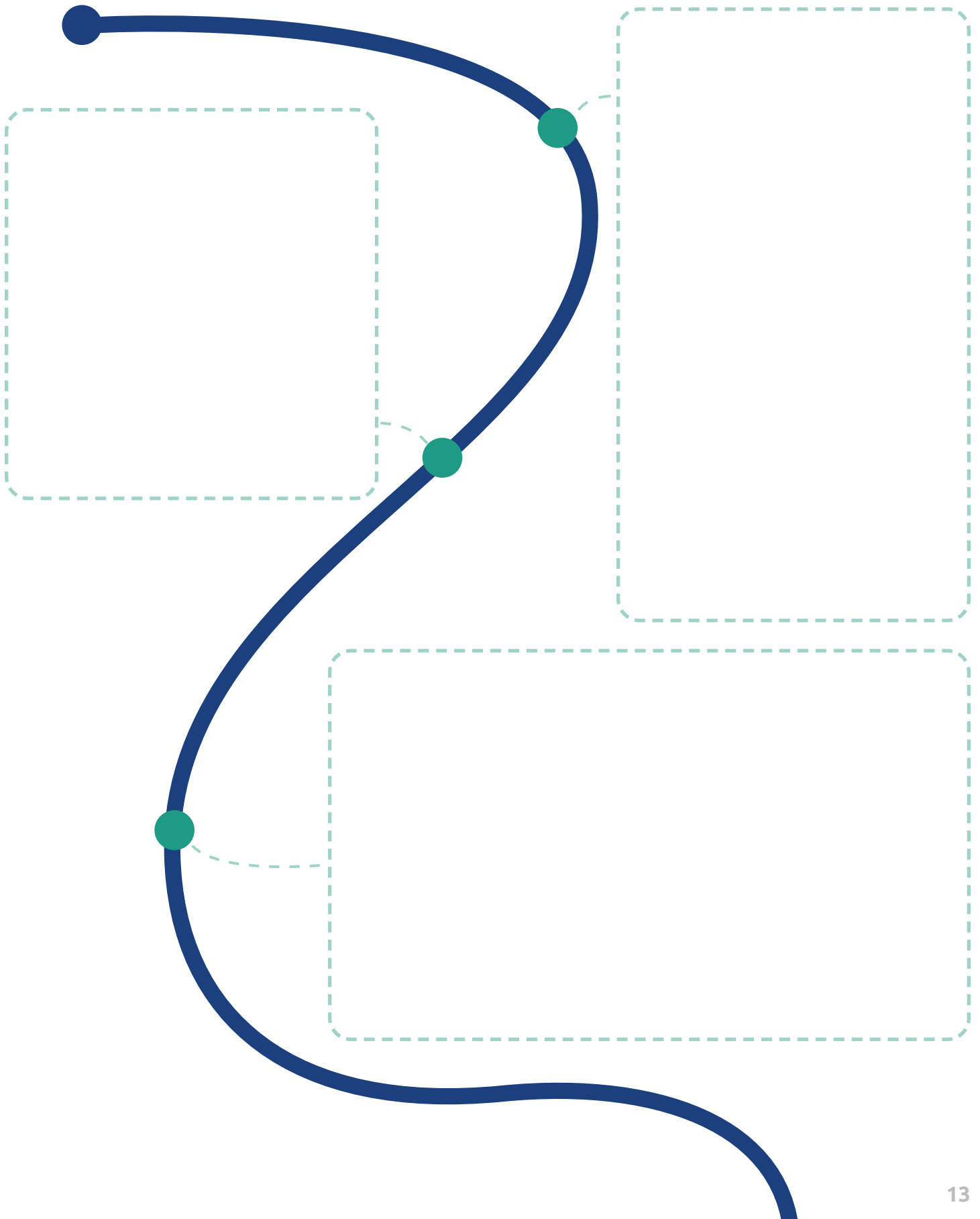
- What leadership roles do you have in your community, at work, or school?

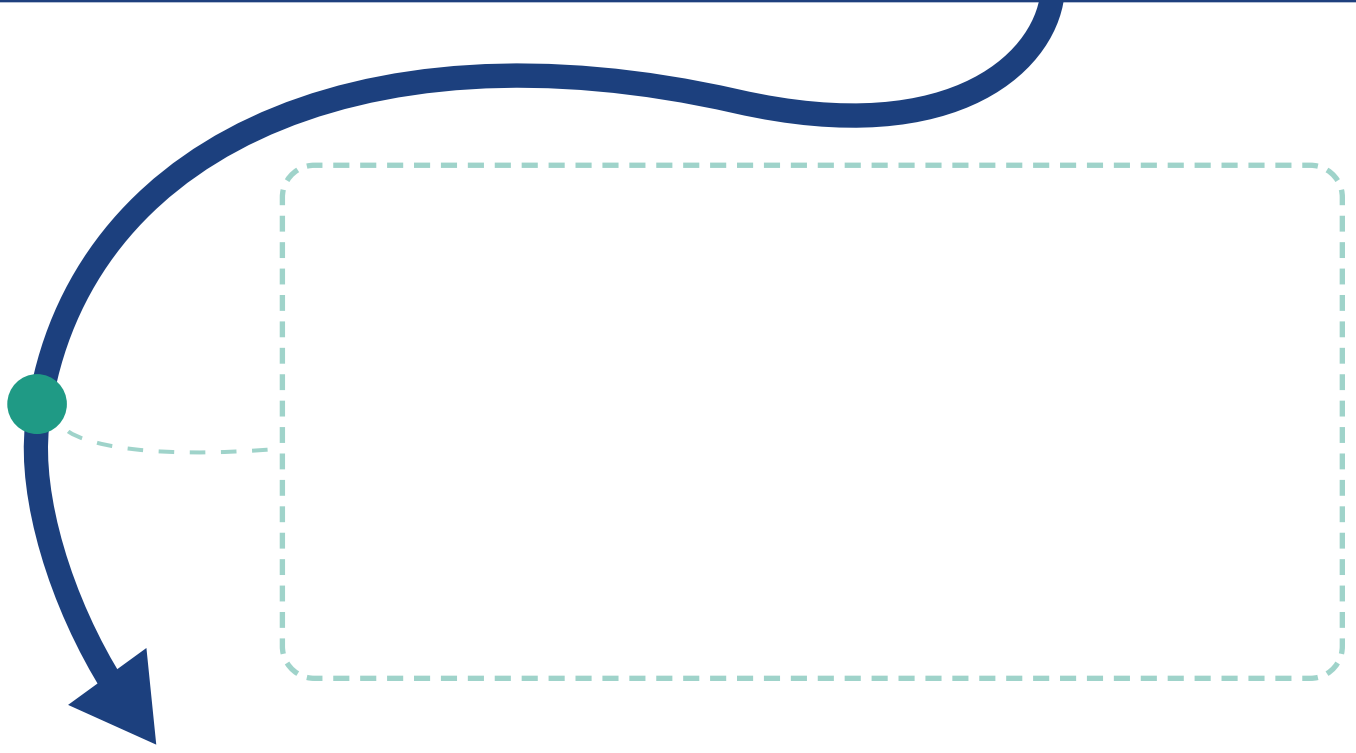
## Rank your 6 leadership skills!

#1 is the skill that you believe is your strongest skill and #6 is the one you need to improve most.

	RANK	REFLECTION
<b>COMMUNICATION</b> 	---	
<b>ADAPTABILITY</b> 	---	
<b>DECISION MAKING</b> 	---	
<b>GOAL ORIENTED</b> 	---	
<b>RELATIONSHIP BUILDING</b> 	---	
<b>CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT</b> 	---	

# ★ YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY





**Where do YOU want to go?**

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**TRAINING  
EVALUATION  
FORM**

