



Leadership Competencies:  
Hiring for Leadership and Management Ability



Increase Your Odds  
of Success with  
Leadership Alignment

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## Leadership Competencies: Hiring for Leadership and Management Ability

Nowhere on a resume can you actually distinguish whether someone is a talented or effective leader or manager. A resume is limited to a person's education level, list of milestone accomplishments, their employment history, their degree of experience, and the positions they have held over time. You cannot determine their dominant behavioral style, personality, degree of focus, level of emotional intelligence, or how they will respond in the face of adversity or challenges. The validation of a candidate's ability is usually limited to third-party feedback and the interview process, making it hard to determine these traits.

### **The 7 Habits of Highly Successful Leaders and Managers:**

A resume can demonstrate technical ability, but leadership ability is best gauged using other measures that are proven to correlate with high leadership ability. Success Profiles has had the opportunity to measure the performance of thousands of leaders at all levels and positions, and has found that successful leaders:

1. **Has an optimistic and forward-looking orientation.**
2. **Has a high emotional intelligence** (demonstrates good communication/people skills).
3. **Has an open minded perspective** (is willing to change, promote change and is seen as a "change agent").
4. **Is respected by others** (leaders, peers, physicians, and staff).
5. **Is focused on results and outcomes** (is achievement oriented, is wired to set goals).
6. **Has a high capacity to perform in a fast-paced work environment** (manages complexity well).
7. **Maintains composure, emotions and behavior** (the ability to handle high levels of stress very well).

With a carefully structured hiring process and good questions, such as those in the Demonstrated Leadership Performance Reference Check Interview, these traits can be explored during interviews and reference checks, providing an important balance to the resume.

As a general rule, all candidates applying for a leadership role should provide Qualified References that can speak open and honestly about their demonstrated ability, their track record of growth and maturity, and their overall performance. If they are reluctant to provide references that will provide more than just "a validation of their employment," it will be difficult to determine their relative odds of success and whether they will be a good fit for your organization and/or culture.

### **Leadership Competencies**

There are thousands of leadership books that take inventory of the Leadership Competencies needed to be effective in various positions of management. One of the most comprehensive lists of Leadership Competencies, attributes, and traits comes from Bradford D. Smart's book

*Topgrading: How Leading Companies Win by Hiring, Coaching and Keeping the Best People.*  
 The 50 competencies are listed below in six major categories. Keep in mind that the majority of these are really skills, not natural - innate talents.

**Intellectual competencies**

- 1 Intelligence
- 2 Analysis skills
- 3 Judgment/decision making
- 4 Conceptual ability
- 5 Creativity
- 6 Strategic skills
- 7 Pragmatism
- 8 Risk taking
- 9 Leading-edge innovation
- 10 Education
- 11 Experience
- 12 Track record

**Personal competencies**

- 13 Integrity
- 14 Resourcefulness
- 15 Organization/planning
- 16 Excellence
- 17 Independence
- 18 Stress management
- 19 Self awareness
- 20 Adaptability

**Interpersonal competencies**

- 21 First impression
- 22 Likability
- 23 Listening
- 24 Customer focus
- 25 Team player
- 26 Assertiveness

- 27 Communication skills - written
- 28 Communication skills - oral
- 29 Political savvy
- 30 Negotiation
- 31 Persuasion

**Management competencies**

- 32 Selecting 'A' players
- 33 Coaching
- 34 Goal setting
- 35 Empowerment
- 36 Accountability
- 37 Redeployment of B/C players
- 38 Team building
- 39 Diversity
- 40 Running meetings

**Additional competencies**

- 41 Vision
- 42 Change leadership
- 43 Inspiration fellowship
- 44 Conflict management

**Motivational competencies**

- 45 Energy
- 46 Passion
- 47 Ambition
- 48 Compatibility of needs
- 49 Balance in life
- 50 Tenacity

Evidence of these competencies, or lack thereof, can be a useful tool in evaluating a candidate for a leadership position.

## Internal Candidates

Because of the dearth of solid information about leadership skills of external candidates, businesses often turn to internal candidates to fill positions. Internal candidates have an advantage because they have had a chance to demonstrate their leadership ability “in place” and direct observations of the individual by multiple people are available. A good internal candidate for a leadership position has:

1. Consistently created a healthy culture of high performance and results.
2. Hired, groomed, and “graduated” other people over time.
3. Led a department or business unit through a challenging situation with positive results (possibly a “turn-around”).

Watching for these traits, rather than focusing only on a resume, can help companies get the right people in the right roles.



For more information, please contact us at: *Right People Right Roles* 877-582-8884,  
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