**Leadership Skills: Definitions and Examples**

Leadership skills can help you in all aspects of your career, from applying for jobs to seeking career advancement. One of many soft skills that employers value, leadership skills often incorporate several different personality traits and communication abilities that are useful for anyone to learn and practice over time.

Knowing the definitions of leadership skills and seeing relevant examples can be especially helpful when you’re writing your resume. If you’re applying for jobs that require you to take initiative and be a leader—whether as a manager or among your peers—you should list leadership skills on your resume.

**What are leadership skills?**

Leadership skills are skills you use when organizing other people to reach a shared goal. Whether you’re in a management position or leading a project, leadership skills require you to motivate others to complete a series of tasks, often according to a schedule. Leadership is not just one skill but rather a combination of several different skills working together.

Some examples of skills that make a strong leader include:

* Patience
* Empathy
* Active listening
* Reliability
* Dependability
* Creativity
* Positivity
* Effective feedback
* Timely communication
* Team building
* Flexibility
* Risk-taking
* Ability to teach and mentor

**Why are leadership skills important?**

Effective leaders are essential to any organization. They can help build strong teams within a business and ensure projects, initiatives or other work functions are performed successfully. Because the skills of a leader involve multiple interpersonal and communication skills, anyone can exercise and hone their leadership abilities.

Most people have seen the results of both effective and ineffective leaders on the job. Good leaders increase employee engagement, support a positive environment and help remove obstacles for their team. Good leadership is also contagious, inspiring colleagues to apply positive leadership traits in their own work.

Almost any positive soft skill might be considered a leadership skill. For example, active listening helps leaders bring projects to completion by hearing the ideas and concerns of the team. Empathy, for example, helps leaders understand how their team feels about their workload, environment and workplace relationships.

Here is a list of must-have leadership skills that may prove valuable to anyone applying for work or looking to advance in a career:

**1. Decisiveness**

Effective leaders are those who can make decisions quickly with the information they have. Effective decision-making comes with time and experience. As you become more familiar with your specific industry, you’ll be able to make decisions faster, even when you don’t have all of the necessary information. Decisiveness is seen as a valuable leadership skill because it can help move projects along faster and improve efficiency.

**2. Integrity**

Integrity is often seen as just truthfulness or honesty but in many cases, it also means having and standing by a set of strong values. Integrity in the workplace often means being able to make ethical choices and helping the company maintain a positive image. All businesses seek to hire workers who have a strong sense of integrity.

**3. Relationship building (or team building)**

Leadership requires the ability to build and maintain a strong and collaborative team of individuals working toward the same goal. Team building requires other leadership strengths, like effective communication skills and conflict resolution.

**4. Problem-solving**

Good leaders are skilled at problem-solving issues that arise on the job. Effective problem solving often requires staying calm and identifying a step-by-step solution. Problem-solving skills can help leaders make quick decisions, resolve obstacles with their team and external teams alike, and ensure projects are completed on time, according to the specifications.

**5. Dependability**

Being a dependable leader means that people can trust and rely on you. A dependable person follows through on plans and keeps promises. The strong relationships built by a dependable leader create a resilient team that is able to work through difficulties that may arise.

**6. Ability to teach and mentor**

One of the skills that differentiates leadership from many other competencies is the ability to teach and mentor. Effectively teaching colleagues or direct reports how to grow in their careers helps organizations scale. Often, this skill requires that leaders think less about themselves and more about how to make their team as a whole successful.

**How to improve your leadership skills**

You can practice good leadership skills in any role, at any level. For example, showing up on time to meetings and turning in work on schedule shows dependability. Offering support and coaching to less experienced colleagues is also an example of leadership. If it seems like a good fit for you, you might consider seeking out leadership roles to develop and practice your leadership skills.