

# LEADERSHIP Excellence

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## Schedule the Big Rocks

*As leaders survey the landscape from the high and sacred place of petroglyphs, they give thanks for their blessings and pray for success.*



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## Gain a Leader's Edge

Develop the six core competencies.



by Randy Goruk

WHEN JOHN WAS PRO-moted into management, he thought that *this was only the first of many promotions*, but he was never promoted again. He worked hard, but his team constantly fell short of expectations.

Under John's leadership, several issues reoccurred: repeated failure to meet financial targets, high turnover, shrinking market-share numbers, and a stressful work environment. John did not produce favorable results, and he seemed to lack the leadership competencies required for career success.

So what was John missing? John and every leader should master *six core leadership competencies*:

**1. Have unwavering character.** Trust and respect are earned. Exceptional leaders demonstrate their true character in their words, actions, and behaviors. They are sincere, truthful, fair, embracing of diversity, respectful of the rules, non-hypocritical, and give credit where credit is due. People want to work for someone they trust and respect. *Loyal followers produce results.*

**2. Genuinely care.** To achieve *maximum results*, you must *get the most* out of all team members. Sincere and genuine interest earns loyalty—critical to the success of your team. *Caring* means that *you care about the people on your team personally and professionally*. You care about their performance, growth, advancement, success, role, health, safety, culture, work-life balance, and the resources they need to do their jobs. You also care about aligning your values with company values, preserving the culture, satisfying customers, improving product quality, and engaging all stakeholders.

**3. Use stellar communication skills.** To engage your team, you must employ effectively several *communication strategies*, use appropriate techniques for each situation, and be a good listener. Be clear, concise, and consistent when delivering speeches; ask great questions; develop and implement appropriate focal points; speak to different groups at their level; be attentive to your body language and the signals you send with your dress, office,

actions, and facial expressions. Leverage technology to share information, improve your presentations, write genuine personal notes of appreciation, and be available and visible.

**4. Be a great thinker.** Learn to think forward about how to achieve desired results and outcomes for stakeholders. By being a great thinker, you become a great *problem solver* and *problem avoider*. You have a *vision* that is clearly articulated in a *vision statement*; you know your *mission*, and create meaningful *objectives* and *strategies* with achievable and realistic *goals*. You know when to change and how to adapt to change. You develop plans and know how to implement them. You anticipate situations in advance, are unbiased in your decision making, know when it's time to change the rules, and honor your values and company values. *Think, plan, and act instead of constantly reacting.*

**5. Possess mental toughness.** Learn to evaluate the situation, ask the right questions, and ultimately make the correct decisions. You are mentally tough when you are not distracted; you can remain clear and objective; and you have discipline of focus. You are personally productive; you strive to eliminate time wasters, stick to your plan, and seek work-life balance. You are confident, consistent in actions and decisions, and deal with conflict. You follow the rules but know when it's time to change the rules. You don't take things personal, and you don't let situations you can't control bother you.

**6. Embrace accountability.** When you hold yourself and others accountable for results, behaviors, and performances, you become a more effective leader. You understand that you are accountable for your performance and hold yourself accountable. You know you are not entitled, and you know you can delegate responsibility but not accountability. You are not afraid to hold others accountable for their performance. You share good and bad examples of accountability with others, and you respect consequences. *Lead with a no-excuses accountability mindset.*

*To gain the leaders edge*, enlist the help of a credible mentor or coach, and learn from the mistakes of others. During the day *reflect on your performance, actions, and behaviors*. Complete a leadership self-assessment or a 360-degree feedback survey—and follow through with a personal action plan. LE

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**ACTION:** Develop these six core competencies.