



# Building Leadership for Social Impact

*Our people are the most precious resource in the fight for social change.  
The growth and development of our social change leaders has to be  
an essential strategy to grow and strengthen our movements.*

## CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
What Exactly Is “Leadership”?	3
Why Is Leadership Development Important?	3
<b>Five Essential Principles of Leadership</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Principle 1</b>	<b>5</b>
How Can You Boost Your Emotional Intelligence?	6
<b>Principle 2</b>	<b>7</b>
Organizational Learning Assessment	7
<b>Principle 3</b>	<b>9</b>
Building Leadership Throughout the Organization	9
Invest in Developing Your Senior Leadership Team	9
Building High Performing Teams	9
The Stages of Team Development	10
Identify a Talent Champion	11
<b>Principle 4</b>	<b>12</b>
Unsustainable Work Cycles: The Sub-Basement Effect	12
Renewal & Resiliency Work Habits	12
Building New Habits	13
<b>Principle 5</b>	<b>14</b>
How Will You Grow Your Leadership Skills?	14
How Will You Build Your Own Reflective Leadership Practice?	14
How to Use 360° Feedback	15
Standing in Your FULL POWER!	16
Preparing to Develop Your Leadership Plan	17
Drafting Your Leadership Plan	18
My Leadership Plan	19
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>20</b>



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Leadership for Social Impact is the first in a series of toolkits developed by Elsa A. Ríos, Principal of Strategies for Social Change, LLC. This effort has been generously supported by the National Institute for Reproductive Health, as part of the State Infrastructure Project, a multi-state, multi-year effort to shift the cultural and policy climate to improve abortion access.

Strategies for Social Change (SSC) helps nonprofits transform the world! Please visit our website to learn more about our mission, our services and our team:

[www.strategiesforsocialchange.com](http://www.strategiesforsocialchange.com)

Toolkit design by Tracy Leigh Graphic Design, LLC  
Copyright © 2015 Strategies for Social Change, LLC



## INTRODUCTION

For the last 14 years, Strategies for Social Change (SSC) has had the privilege of coaching some of the most extraordinary leaders in the nonprofit sector. These leaders work in different environments, have distinct personalities and diverse leadership styles, yet however varied, these leaders share the same key qualities. They are courageous, visionary, focused, open to learning, and inspiring. But for all their strengths, they are not immune to the foibles of leadership; they sometimes find

themselves beleaguered, self-doubting, impatient and unaware of major blind spots. At times, they even succumb to negative and distorted thinking.

So why do we call them extraordinary leaders? They are self-reflective, seek to be authentic and are constantly growing. They have rejected the myth of the charismatic, natural born leader and superhero. **Instead, they understand that leadership requires deep honesty, constant reflection, the courage to experiment and fail, and**

**the ability to continuously integrate new learning in order to grow as individuals and as leaders.**

These abilities help them transform their mistakes and shortcomings into significant leadership development opportunities. Moreover, they inspire and encourage the same behaviors in others around them, creating a multiplier effect, and this synergy creates high impact, innovative organizations at the forefront of our social movements.

## What exactly is “leadership”?

Leadership is like jazz: it’s dynamic, complex and nuanced. We have yet to find a definition that fully captures the many dimensions of leadership. Our respected colleagues at Rockwood Leadership Institute define leadership as “the ability to inspire and align others to successfully achieve common goals.”<sup>1</sup> Kouzes and Posner define leadership as **“creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen.”**<sup>2</sup>

The most authentic leaders have a clear sense of purpose and a well-developed set of core values that guide their decision-making and help them stay grounded during difficult times.

Unlike “command central” or hierarchal leaders of the past, effective twenty-first century leaders tap into our collective intelligence; they channel the wisdom, creativity and power they find in the people they work with to create alignment and build new pathways for achieving social change goals.

## Why is leadership development important?

Leadership success is often highly contextual. The same leader can be wildly successful in one situation and fail spectacularly in another. This is why leadership development is so essential; the more you know yourself as a leader, the more likely you are to act from a place of integrity and authenticity and create a solid foundation for success even in challenging times.

Overall the social sector is lagging in making leadership development investments. Although US nonprofits accounted for \$837 billion in products and services in 2014,<sup>3</sup> a recent report by the National Council on Responsible Philanthropy noted **only 1% of foundation dollars are allotted to leadership development.**<sup>4</sup> Moreover, it is estimated that nonprofits spend an average of only \$29 on leadership development per employee each year.<sup>5</sup>

In the following section, we will explore five essential leadership principles and provide you with quick, easy tools that you can use to build your own leadership skills and leadership throughout your organization.

## FIVE ESSENTIAL PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

After working with hundreds of leaders, there are five essential principles about leadership we've learned and would like to share with you:

1

It's not enough for leaders to be smart; you need to be emotionally intelligent.

2

Fostering a continuous learning organization is one of the best investments you can make.

3

If you are not developing a robust leadership bench you are likely to fail.

4

Practicing self-care strengthens our movements.

5

Every leader needs a leadership plan.



***“Transformation — profound, fundamental, irreversible and sustainable change — depends on and is made possible by the internal shifts in people and groups as well as external shifts in culture, systems and lived reality. In transformative moments, these two forms of change — internal and external — fuel each other an interdependent catalytic dance.”***

— Kristen Zimmerman and Julie Quiroz  
*Love with Power: Practicing Transformation for Social Justice Movement Strategy Center*



## PRINCIPLE

## 1

## It's Not Enough to Be Smart; You Need to Be Emotionally Intelligent

Research indicates that leaders with a high degree of emotional intelligence outperform their counterparts by as much as 15%–20%.<sup>6</sup> Imagine what we could accomplish if we were all more emotionally intelligent?

In the fast paced, ever-changing and under-resourced world of nonprofits, building emotional intelligence can mean the difference between an organization imploding and an organization thriving. *Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize your own emotions and those of others, and to use this information to navigate the emotional terrain that is part of every human interaction.* Emotionally intelligent leaders are self-aware and empathic. They can “read” a room and figure out what is called for and can also effectively manage moments of anger and frustration. Because they are emotionally attuned, these leaders are especially good at building positive interpersonal relationships to inspire and motivate others to action and foster a climate of creativity and effective problem solving.

Emotional Intelligence encompasses a number of skills including self-awareness, self- management, empathy, motivation and the management of interpersonal dynamics.<sup>7</sup>

*“It turns out that such seemingly ‘soft’ attributes as knowing yourself, self management, the ability to navigate emotions, and empathy for other have a dramatic impact on our ability to get results.”*

— Robert Gass  
*What is Transformation?*

## SELF-AWARENESS

Our experiences shape who we are; we all have behaviors and traits that are positive and some “default or maladaptive practices” that are unproductive and no longer serve us well. Past hurts and perceived failures trigger emotional responses within us that can cause us to react defensively. These defensive reactions can create unintended ripple effects throughout the organization. The process of becoming more self-aware opens up the possibility for change and growth and enables leaders to act more authentically, with confidence and integrity.

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

Effective leaders are keenly aware of their emotions and their impact on others. They understand that organizational members often look to the leader to set the emotional tone. They are able to regulate their emotions and attitudes like anger, frustration, impatience and disappointment that over time may lower morale and trust within the organization. They are able to remain optimistic during turbulent times and move past emotional triggers to find common ground and productive solutions.

## EMPATHY

Leadership is a highly social endeavor. Effective leaders possess a high degree of empathy, the ability to understand the emotional makeup and responses of other people. They are curious about

people, listen actively to better understand the perspectives, values, motivations and learning styles of the people around them. Leaders utilize this data to motivate, work more effectively with others and foster broad-based alignment among stakeholders.

## MOTIVATION

Motivation is what fuels passion, drive and intense focus. Motivated leaders are intrinsically driven to excel at their goals, believe in continuous improvement and are not easily deterred. They believe in our human potential, our ability to be innovative and create breakthroughs. They have the capacity to remain optimistic even in the face of failure. They show perseverance, demonstrate grit and resilience. They also help create a culture of experimentation, promoting new learning, excitement and innovation, across the organization.

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS AND ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS

Emotional intelligent leaders have the capacity to build positive relationships with diverse individuals and groups and read the emotional climate throughout the organization. They understand the importance of attending to staff morale, celebrating wins and bringing fun and joy into the work place. They excel at developing teams, managing conflict productively and actively work to build wide networks, effectively tapping into the collective or group intelligence in many spaces and different levels..

## How can you boost your emotional intelligence?

To build your own emotional intelligence, lead with open-ended questions that can help you more fully understand the aspirations, perspectives and needs of others. Utilize this data to build rapport, inspire and create common ground for action and tap into the creativity of people to solve problems and overcome challenges.



### TRY IT ON ►

You can get started on building your emotional intelligence skills right away. Try out these simple self-awareness and self-management activities:



## ACTION STEPS



### REFLECT ON YOUR LEADERSHIP JOURNEY

Create a timeline of your leadership journey including pivotal moments and milestones. What have been your leadership high points and low points? What external and internal factors contributed to those high and low points?



### MAKE AN INVENTORY

Drawing on your reflections, make an inventory of your strengths, weaknesses, emotional triggers, fears and learning edges (i.e., top of your comfort zone). Use this self-assessment data to better understand what motivates you to act in certain ways. For example, are there specific situations that make you feel inspired and courageous or defensive and fearful?



### DEVELOP A NEW AND BENEFICIAL BEHAVIOR

Identify one unproductive behavior you want to change and then decide on a new habit you will substitute that will increase your emotional intelligence. Begin to consistently practice the new habit for the next 8 weeks. Keep a leadership journal to track your progress, making adjustments as needed to achieve your change goal.

## PRINCIPLE

## 2

## Fostering a Continuous Learning Culture is One of the Best Investments You Can Make

One of the most important roles leaders can play is to build a learning culture within their organizations. There are more than 1.44 million registered nonprofits operating in the United States many of which are competing with each other for funding.<sup>8</sup>

To increase chances of reaching organizational sustainability, nonprofits need to be nimble, strategic and highly adaptive to changes in their environment. Nonprofits must regularly employ techniques such as trends analysis,

forecasting,<sup>9</sup> strategic disruption<sup>10</sup> and scenario planning<sup>11</sup> in order to find innovative ways to produce even greater impact. This is a process that requires continuous learning at all levels of the organization.

Organizations that operate as learning laboratories create systems for regularly communicating trends, new theories and promising practices. Staff across the organization can pool this new knowledge to advance creativity and innovation, thus amplifying organizational impact.

***“Organizations are living systems, possessing the same capacity to adapt and grow that is common to all life.”***

— Margaret J. Wheatley  
*Leadership and the New Science*



## ACTION STEP: Organizational Learning Assessment

What steps are you taking to build a learning organization? Complete this brief assessment to help you identify ways you can continue to build a learning organization.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	N/A
1. Every year we develop an organization-wide learning agenda and design activities to systematically advance our learning objectives throughout the year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Every individual and team within the organization has a learning plan in place.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. We gather feedback from diverse stakeholders of the organization and regularly use the data to make improvements or changes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Our organization is constantly seeking ways to improve our performance and impact.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Experimentation and risk taking are supported as part of the organizational learning and innovation process.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## ACTION STEP: Organizational Learning Assessment (continued)

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	N/A
6. Team leaders and managers work consistently to provide learning opportunities for their staff and team members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. We incorporate techniques such as appreciative inquiry <sup>12</sup> and strategic disruption to celebrate what's working well and to encourage out of the box thinking that leads to innovation and breakthrough moments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. We conduct trends analysis, forecasting exercises and scenario planning at least twice a year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Our organization promotes courageous conversations <sup>13</sup> or dialogues to address ways of dealing with competing priorities and beliefs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Our organization takes a leadership role in creating shared learning opportunities with our allies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. We have a designated team that is responsible for advancing our organization's learning agenda.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. We actively seek out people who are creative thinkers forging new ideas and new approaches to the work and sponsor activities such as dialogues, panels, friendly debates and webinars to share new knowledge and ideas with our staff and other stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. We utilize technology effectively to introduce and reinforce new knowledge.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Each staff member is provided a stipend each year for staff development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. We make learning fun and highly interactive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## PRINCIPLE

## 3

## Without a Strong Leadership Bench You are Likely to Fail

## Building Leadership Throughout the Organization

High performing, high impact organizations make it a priority to develop leadership at all levels of the organization. When leadership is concentrated only in the Executive Director — decision-making bottlenecks occur that create inertia and over time staff members may lose motivation, creativity and initiative. The best insurance policy against organizational malaise is to invest in developing your home-grown talent, a robust bench or pool of leaders who can step up in multiple ways.

## Invest in Developing Your Senior Leadership Team

As groups move through the organizational life cycle and begin to grow in size, budget and reach — it's important to build out the organization's leadership infrastructure so that the organization does not become dependent on the executive director. By building a strong senior leadership team, organizations create an internal hub or think tank for more robust planning, creative problem-solving and innovation.

Aligning senior leaders within the organization creates a level of synergy that can reverberate throughout the organization. The quality of decisions and solutions to difficult challenges and strategic opportunities faced by the organization can improve dramatically because more brain

power is being employed and different perspectives and approaches are being considered. Having a strong leadership team also provides a more solid foundation for leadership succession planning, enabling the organization to manage a leadership transition more smoothly.

## Building High Performing Teams

Most of the work performed in organizations is done in teams but few organizations invest in teaching staff, volunteers and members how to become effective team members and team leaders.

As your organization grows, consider investing in training and coaching on teamwork. Every team can benefit from a job description, a goals statement and an accompanying work plan. They should also have a basic understanding of the stages of team building: forming, norming, storming and performing, and the different roles team members can play.

Leaders must also understand how to best form diverse teams and successfully launch teams to maximize their potential for success. Embedded in this practice is the ability to understand team member styles and match team roles to the strengths of each person selected for the team. For example, a team member who tends to play the role of “challenger” can be especially useful in helping the team anticipate roadblocks to a project or question group think, while a “communicator” might be helpful in building consensus and designing effective processes for getting the work done.



***“The mark of an effective leadership is not an individual who does it all — it’s the full leadership team that fuels high performance over the long haul.”***

— Sylvia Yee  
Haas Jr. Fund



## The Stages of Team Development

### 1. FORMING STAGE

- Clarifying purpose
- Getting oriented
- Setting a direction

### 2. NORMING STAGE

- Clarifying expectations
- Developing team norms/culture
- Defining team roles
- Developing team working agreements

### 3. STORMING STAGE

- Differentiation of team roles to maximize strengths
- Practicing “strategic disruption” of ideas
- Learning to productively manage conflicts

### 4. PERFORMING STAGE

- Becoming an effective, high performing unit
- Continuous improvement and ability to self manage
- Cultivating higher levels of innovation and efficient execution



## TEAM MEMBER STYLES: THE FOUR C'S

### THE CONTRIBUTOR

- Dependable, task oriented
- Enjoys providing good technical data
- Promotes high standards

### THE COMMUNICATOR

- Process oriented
- Good active listening and facilitative skills
- Able to resolve conflict

### THE COLLABORATOR

- Takes a big picture view
- The mission, vision and team goals are paramount
- Flexible and welcomes new ideas

### THE CHALLENGER

- Openly questions team goals and methods
- Willing to disagree with leader
- Encourages risk taking



## Identify a Talent Champion

Replacing talent is expensive! The Society for Human Resources Management estimates that the cost to replace an employee can typically exceed 40% of that employee's annual salary.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, it's estimated that a new employee may take upwards of two years to gain all the knowledge needed to fully exercise the job.<sup>15</sup>

Make cultivating talent and building and retaining leaders throughout your organization a key organizational norm. Consider identifying a "Talent Champion" within your ranks to nurture and build out your leadership development program.

A **Talent Champion** is an organizational leader that:

- Recognizes the vital importance of developing a cadre of up-and-coming leaders;
- Demonstrates a keen ability to train and effectively coach new leaders; and
- Takes responsibility for overseeing your organization's leadership development efforts.

Commit to working with your senior staff and Talent Champion on implementing a leadership development program that prepares individuals to take on demanding leadership roles. Research on leadership development training suggests a 70-20-10 formula is most effective: 70% on the job training, 20% coaching and mentoring and 10% instructional training.<sup>16</sup>

The implications are huge for the social sector; we all need to be more deliberate about training our staff to become leaders. Each organization should anticipate their leadership needs in 3–5 years and begin to groom high potentials to succeed existing leaders.

Each staff member should have a leadership development plan that includes specific, stretch goals for developing specific leadership competencies such as: decision-making skills, strategic communications skills, team building skills, project management skills, etc. Work assignments can be developed with leadership development goals in mind. Supervisors can be a great resource in creating well-designed opportunities for high potentials to stretch their leadership skills within a supportive environment that includes coaching and mentoring.

## ACTION STEP:

### Leadership Development Diagnostic

To assess your current leadership development strengths and challenges, complete this diagnostic.

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	N/A
1. Leadership development is one of our organization's core values.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Our Executive Director is committed to building a leadership pipeline.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. There is an organization-wide leadership development program in place.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. We have designated a "Talent Champion" for our organization and the person has the resources and time to carry out this function.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. The skills and competencies required to become a leader at different levels of the organization are clear and widely understood.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. We have incorporated staff leadership development into our strategic plan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. We have clear target goals for developing leadership positions in the next 3–5 years.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Each staff member has individual leadership development plan in place that is reviewed at least twice a year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. We have identified potential successors for critical positions and are developing them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Our organization has a clear leadership development program that incorporates on the job training, coaching and formal training components on key leadership skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## PRINCIPLE

# 4

## Practicing Self-Care Strengthens Our Movement

Far too many leaders confuse self-care with selfishness. Our social movements need leaders at the top of their game rather than stressed out, sleep deprived and exhausted leaders. Chronic stress and exhaustion reduce a leader's attention span, increases emotional volatility and fosters poor decision-making.

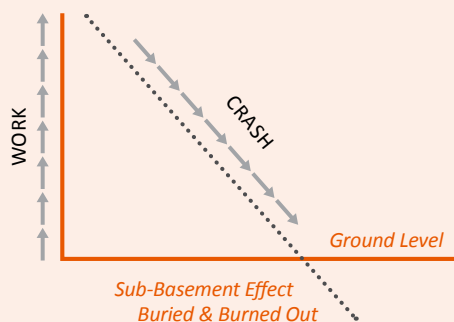
Exhausted leaders are a perfect example of the law of diminishing returns. They work harder but have fewer positive results because their ability to reason, think creatively and finish tasks in a timely fashion is impaired.

Sleep deprivation is a major culprit. Over 50 studies conclusively show that mental performance — reaction time, memory, analytical reasoning, and executive judgment all decline in proportion to lack of sleep.<sup>17</sup>

Senior leaders often influence organizational norms and when they model poor self care practices, those behaviors tend to be replicated by staff throughout the organization. So we find that many of our organizations are staffed with exhausted, chronically stressed individuals on the road to burnout. Where's the wisdom in that?

For organizations conducting advocacy work, and are engaged in time sensitive campaigns the work pace is especially grueling and becomes unsustainable over time.

### THE UNSUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONAL WORK CYCLE



### Unsustainable Work Cycles: The Sub-Basement Effect

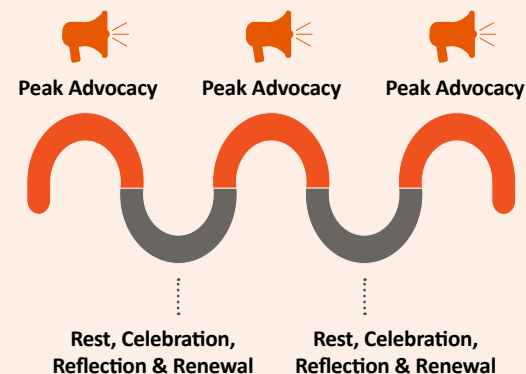
The diagram above shows a workflow model where the pace of the work escalates unrelentingly; more and more is demanded of staff and volunteers as the campaign or project unfolds. Staff and volunteers then crash in exhaustion after the campaign or project has finished until the next cycle begins with a new campaign or project. For a while the organization seems to be at the vanguard but the pace is not sustainable. Over time, energy reserves are depleted, people begin to burn out and it becomes increasingly difficult to reach even a baseline level of people power and energy upon which to build a campaign. In the end, these organizations on the road to burnout risk becoming ineffectual.

### Renewal & Resiliency Work Habits

Leaders who model a more sustainable work pace have a longer view perspective. They understand that retaining staff means our movement benefits from their expertise and knowledge over the long term. Moreover, they understand that social transformation work begins with one self. As Mahatma Gandhi noted, we must “be the change we seek in the world.”<sup>18</sup>

The diagram below illustrates a more sustainable model for social action that intentionally builds space for renewal, reflection and celebration. This model builds resiliency and keeps our people — our most precious resource — inspired, energized and thinking at their best.

### RESILIENCY & RENEWAL MODEL



## Building New Habits

Over time we have all developed unproductive habits that interfere with our self-care. Habits are unconscious repetitive acts that are hardwired in our brains. Recent research on the neuroplasticity of the brain indicates that rather than spending energy on trying to undo old behaviors, it's best to focus on developing new habits.<sup>19</sup>

The process of repeating a new behavior creates new neural pathways in our brain and over time the new behavior becomes a habit.<sup>20</sup> Researchers estimate that a relatively simple new behavior can take anywhere from 21–66 days to become a habit and that the first days of practicing the new behavior are crucial to reinforcing the new behavior critical to long-term success.<sup>21</sup>



***“Self care is foundational to our power, our resilience, our creativity, our health and our collective impact.”***

— Norma Wong  
*Move to End Violence  
Self Care for Sustainability and Impact*



## TRY IT ON: START WITH SELF-CARE

1. Always begin with reflection. Consider the following question:  
How has the quality of your leadership been affected by lack of self-care, chronic stress and exhaustion?
2. Identify and describe the specific habit that most adversely impacts your self-care right now?
3. Moving forward, what single new behavior can you substitute to practice better self-care?
4. Develop a specific action plan to adopt the new behavior. Be as specific as possible about the new behavior you want to adopt. How often will you practice this new behavior? How will you remind yourself and track progress? Who will you ask to support you in this endeavor?
5. Remember that the key to building new habits is consistency of practice especially during the early phase — so set a daily intention and create spaciousness in your day to practice the new self-care behavior.

## PRINCIPLE

5

## Every Leader Needs a Leadership Plan

### How Will You Grow Your Leadership Skills?

#### THE ART OF LEADERSHIP BEGINS WITH SELF-REFLECTION

Authentic, transformational leaders share some very essential habits. They strive to understand themselves better and actively build a reflective leadership practice. It is this essential practice that fosters an extraordinary level of integrity, self- knowledge and principled action.



### How will you build your own reflective leadership practice?

#### MAKE SPACE FOR SELF REFLECTION

Understand that the practice of selfreflection is not a luxury or privilege but a responsibility. Without it, leaders can become frustrated, stagnate or burn out and your organization and the movement you care about will suffer. Understand that leader self reflection is part of your job and can yield extraordinary results for you, your organization and the movement.

#### FOSTER A CONTINUOUS LEARNING MINDSET

Be as passionate about learning to become a better leader as you are about the cause you are working on because they are intertwined. Courses and books can be great but daily practice is paramount. Consider asking questions like: What could I have done better or differently today? Did I act with integrity and authenticity today? What did others teach me today?

#### ACTIVELY SEEK OUT FEEDBACK

Learning to be a better leader is not an isolated process; create ongoing opportunities to secure feedback from staff, board, allies, etc. Build a strong and lasting network of mentors, and peers coaches that can share their own experiences, strategies and help you see your blind spots.

#### DECIDE WHAT'S IMPORTANT AND MAKE A PLAN

Just as organizations should have staff development plans, strategic plans, fund raising plans — you need a leadership plan to help you prioritize and measure progress.

## FUNDAMENTALS

### QUESTION

Grow your self-reflection practice. Ask yourself the hard questions.

### REFLECT

Articulate the values and motivations that drive your leadership.

### DISCERN

Be clear on what your leadership development priorities.

### ACT

Be specific about your plan of action and hold yourself accountable.

### LEARN

Seek feedback and reflect further. What are your new insights and how will you apply the lessons learned moving forward?



## How to Use 360° Feedback

Using a 360° assessment tool is one of several strategies for assessing your leadership skills and identifying those skills and attributes you want to develop further. Start with your own self-assessment and invite board members, senior staff (direct reports) and allies to participate in the feedback process.

Most 360° assessment tools designed with social justice organizations in mind cover a wide range of leadership skill sets and attributes including: 1) vision and values; 2) strategic thinking; 3) management skills; 4) communication skills; 5) relationship building and collaboration; 6) decision-making; 7) change management; 8) fundraising; 9) developing others; and 10) team building, among many others. You can access a free 360° Assessment template [here](#), or create your own and use an online survey program such as Survey Gizmo or Survey Monkey to disseminate the survey and collect the data.

As you approach the assessment process consider the following:

### **UTILIZE AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH**

Leaders can be highly self-critical which can zap the energy needed for positive growth. Start with celebrating your gifts, talents and hard work. Acknowledge your growth as a leader, it will motivate you to further develop your skills.

**BE MINDFUL OF INTERNALIZED OPPRESSION AND OTHER GREMLINS** Recognize that internalized oppression and other negative self-talk is a common experience among many leaders — seek to understand how these specifically operate to undermine your leadership and take active steps to develop your emotional intelligence and manage your triggers.



## STANDING IN YOUR POWER

To fully stand in your power, you need to have a clear leadership vision.

- What's your leadership role in the context of your constituency/ community, your organization and the broader movement?
- What are you uniquely positioned to accomplish?
- What core values and beliefs guide the way you lead?
- How will you develop others? What do you want to model as a leader at this stage of the work?
- What's the legacy you want to leave?

## Standing in your FULL POWER!

Now that you have done some reflection, it is time to commence drafting your leadership plan.

Use the worksheets on the following pages to dive deeper and begin to develop the specific, key elements of your leadership vision for this year and beyond.

### WHAT DOES STANDING IN YOUR FULL POWER LOOK LIKE ...

- **For You As a Person:**

- **For You As the Leader of Your Organization:**

- **For You as a Movement Leader:**



## ACTION STEP:

### What is the movement moment calling for?

As you develop your leadership vision consider the following:

- Where are we in the trajectory of this movement?
- What does this movement moment call for?
- What's really needed to continue to win over the hearts and minds of people?
- What specific and sustainable role should your organization play in the larger movement?
- What specific roles will you need to play to be a positive force in the movement?
- Who will be your strategic partners moving forward?
- How will you build deeper trust and unity?
- What steps can you take to hold yourself and others accountable for agreements?



## Preparing to Develop Your Leadership Plan

What is your own definition of leadership now?

What core values will guide you as a leader?

What are the most important insights you have gained from the 360° feedback or other forms of feedback?

## Drafting Your Leadership Plan

What are the key elements of your leadership vision?

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

What are your goals for personal transformation and leadership development?

- 
- 
- 
- 

What are your goals for collaboration and movement building work?

- 
- 
- 

How will you know if you have been successful?

- 
- 
- 



Now you are ready to draft your Leadership Plan (see next page).

## My Leadership Plan

Goals	Action Steps	Complete By	Resources/Supports	Progress/Notes
<div><b>DAILY PRACTICES</b> What daily practice will help you embody your best self and help you develop your insight, your skills and the energy and courage to advance your vision?</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•</li><li>•</li><li>•</li></ul></div>				



## ENDNOTES

- 1 Robert Gass. "What Is Transformation? And How It Advances Social Change, Exploration 2.0." *The Social Transformation Project*, 2012. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 2 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. *The Leadership Challenge*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint, 2010).
- 3 Brice S. McKeever and Sarah L. Pettijohn, "The Nonprofit Sector In Brief: Public Charities, Giving and Volunteering," *The Urban Institute*, Oct. 2014. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 4 Niki Jagpal and Ryan Schlegel. "Cultivating Nonprofit Leadership: A (Missed?) Philanthropic Opportunity." *National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy*, Mar. 2015. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 5 Kirk Kramer and Preeta Nayak. "Nonprofit Leadership Development: What's Your "Plan A" for Growing Future Leaders?" *The Bridgespan Group*, 2013. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 6 Daniel Goleman, "Leadership That Gets Results," *Harvard Business Review*, March-April 2000 Issue. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 7 Daniel Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*. (New York: Bantam Dell, 2006). Print.
- 8 Brice S. McKeever and Sarah L. Pettijohn, "The Nonprofit Sector In Brief: Public Charities, Giving and Volunteering," *The Urban Institute*, Oct. 2014. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 9 Forecasting: The ability to identify emerging trends and make informed projections about how those trends might evolve and impact your community/constituency, organization and movement.
- 11 Scenario Planning: A strategic planning technique to help evaluate alternative strategies or courses of action in order to make strategic decisions. By raising "what-if" scenarios, your team can brainstorm together, test assumptions, consider diverse perspectives and better evaluate alternatives.
- 10 Strategic Disruption: This technique is intended to combat complacency and stagnation of ideas within organizations by questioning strategies and operating assumptions in order to generate new ideas, breakthroughs in thinking and designing better strategies for social impact.
- 12 Appreciative Inquiry: A strengths-based approach that seeks to examine what is working well in a given situation or within a team or organization in order to build upon those strengths and amplify positive outcomes.
- 13 Courageous Conversations: High stakes, thoughtful conversations requiring deep levels of honesty, transparency and authenticity. Courageous conversations often involve the need to address a major concern or hurt, differences of opinion or accountability for actions (or lack of action). Courageous conversations require the creation of a safe space, where trust building, empathy and respect are in ample supply.
- 14 David G. Allen. "Retaining Talent: A Guide to Analyzing and Managing Employee Turnover." *Society for Human Resource Management*, 2008. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Kirk Kramer and Preeta Nayak. "Nonprofit Leadership Development: What's Your "Plan A" for Growing Future Leaders?" *The Bridgespan Group*, 2013. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 17 Robert Gass. "Boundaries for Work: A Contract With Yourself." *The Social Transformation Project*, 4 Feb. 2015. Web. 21 Apr. 2015.
- 18 Carmella B'Hahn, "Be the change you wish to see: An interview with Arun Gandhi," *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, vol10, n1 (2001): 6-9. Web. [Paraphrased from VOL 13, Ch 153, *General Knowledge About Health*, Page 241, Printed in the *Indian Opinion* on 9/8/1913 from *The Collected Works of M. K. Gandhi*, published by The Publications Division, New Delhi, India.].
- 19 David Rock. *Quiet Leadership: Six Steps to Transforming Performance at Work*. (New York: Harper Collins, 2007). Print.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 James Clear. "How Long Does It Actually Take to Form a New Habit? (Backed by Science)." *The Huffington Post*, 10 Apr. 2014. Web. 21 Apr. 2015