

HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR LEADERSHIP CAPACITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT

BY BILL HOGG

This is the fifth in a series of six articles that looks at leadership capacity and its impact on organizational growth. The full series will be available for download as a white paper once it is completed.

In our last article, we discussed some of the [steps to create a culture of leadership](#). Now we want to discuss the assessment of leadership behaviour at all levels in the organization.

Building a culture of leadership requires the organization to define the skills and behaviours that are required by organizational leaders from the top down. But highly effective leaders need to regularly conduct self-assessments of their own behaviour as leaders.

With so much occurring on a daily basis, it is easy for leaders -- from CEO's to department managers -- to get busy with the tactical details and lose sight of the bigger leadership issues. Every decision that is made has an impact on the behaviour of other leaders within the organization and how people react to the decisions that are made.

Strong leaders need to constantly be in tune with their own performance as a leader and how their actions impact the growth and development of their colleagues in their team and company-wide. Therefore, leaders need to be conscious of their behaviour at all times and it is their ability to self-assess and separate ego from the equation that will further a culture of leadership and growth within the company.

Developing leadership capacity through personal assessment

Leadership capacity is not static. It is a dynamic concept that evolves over time and is shaped by those who are in leadership positions. Therefore, leadership capacity will change depending who holds a specific management position and who is on the board of directors in your company. To ensure an ongoing culture of leadership exists and is healthy, leaders at all levels must take it upon them to assess leadership behaviour through these steps:

- **Assess your internal belief system:** Leaders need be in tune with their internal belief system and how that impacts their perspective and decision making process. In this sense, effective leaders minimize the impact personal opinions or bias have on their decisions by being aware of what is in the best interests of the organization and how decisions align with the values of the organization.
- **Examine your leadership skills:** No leader has it all. Every leader has specific shortcomings that need to be addressed and accepted so they do not get in the way of their role as a decision maker, regardless of their title. Therefore, leaders need to be aware of both their strengths and weaknesses and how these impact their behaviour and the behaviour of other leaders in the company.

Here are some ways that leaders can examine their leadership skills:

- Make a list of what you believe to be your strong and weak leadership skills
- Ask other colleagues -- and even some direct reports -- what they think your strong points are as a leader, and areas that you need to address.
- Compare your skills to the companies standard for leadership capacity

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- **Develop an action plan for professional growth:** Create a personal action plan to address weaknesses and develop new skills to be mastered. This will not only help you expand your leadership capabilities, it will also put you in a position to provide more value to other company leaders and employees by sharing insights and best practices.

Actions that you can take include additional training, mentoring, coaching, reading industry related materials, and taking online courses or attending webinars.

- **Review criticisms constructively:** Collect observations from others and examine their view of your leadership capabilities. Leaders are often blind to some of their shortcomings and areas where they can improve their leadership. It's good practice to examine your leadership from multiple perspectives and levels within the organization to refine your leadership capacity as a whole.

Create trusted relationships with colleagues both internally and externally who you can discuss thoughts with. They could be a coach or simply a respected mentor or colleague. High performance athletes have coaching on a regular basis -- so should high performing leaders. This will help put things into perspective.

Leadership has a direct impact on the performance of employees, other leaders, and the company as a whole. Therefore, leaders that are in tune with their behaviour and its impact and assess it on a regular basis will be in a better position to make the best decision possible.

The next article in our leadership capacity series will build on the steps to develop leadership capacity through leadership behaviour and examine how to continue the development of leadership capacity in your company.

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*Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. He is recognized as the **Performance Excelerator™** because of his uncanny ability to create profound change and deliver extraordinary results with the most demanding organizations.*

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