

## **DIRECTORS/DEPUTY DIRECTORS**

- Communication
- Vision
- Organizational Savvy
- Strategic Mindset
- Decision Quality

### **COMMUNICATION**

Clearly conveys and receives information and ideas to individuals or groups. Invites and constructively responds to feedback. Keeps others informed as appropriate. Demonstrates effective written, oral and listening skills. Maintains a positive attitude consistently, despite difficult or challenging circumstances, and communicates positively when working with others.

Organizations thrive when the flow of information and ideas is timely and accurate. When quality of communication is a consistent high priority. Good communication results in mutual understanding, harmony, and action. Poor communication wastes time and resources, hinders goal accomplishment, and sours relationships. Leaders communicate to inform, persuade, coach, and inspire. People at all levels share ideas, learn from each other, and keep each other informed about problems, opportunities, progress, and solutions. Effective communicators provide a clear message that is understood by everyone in the audience. They are attentive listeners who are open to others' ideas. They deliver a message that is consistent but fine-tuned for a particular audience. It has just the right tone. The perfect pacing. The best possible wording. The audience finds the message to be crisp. Relevant. Impactful. Effective communication, whether written or verbal, enables you to convey your vision, to point the way forward, and to energize others to work together and pull in the same direction.

#### ➤ **Exceptional**

Delivers messages in a clear, compelling, and concise manner.

Actively listens and checks for understanding.

Articulates messages in a way that is broadly understandable.

Adjusts communication content and style to meet the needs of diverse stakeholders.

Models and encourages the expression of diverse ideas and opinions.

#### ➤ **Consistent**

Is effective in a variety of communication settings: one-on-one, small and large groups, or among diverse styles and position levels

Attentively listens to others.

Adjusts to fit the audience and the message.

Provides timely and helpful information to others across the organization.

Encourages the open expression of diverse ideas and opinions.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Has difficulty communicating clear written and verbal messages.

Tends to always communicate the same way without adjusting to diverse audiences.

Doesn't take the time to listen or understand others' viewpoints.

Doesn't consistently share information others need to do their jobs.

*Resources:*

*Adams, S. (2013, November 19). How to communicate effectively at work. Forbes.*

*Charan, R. (2012, June 21). The discipline of listening. Harvard Business Review Blog Network.*

*Cherry, K. (n.d.). Types of nonverbal communication: 8 Major nonverbal behaviors. About.com Psychology*

*Cohan, P. (2012, December 4). 5 Ways to communicate more clearly. Inc.*

*Nierenberg, A. (2005, February 17). Adapting to different communication styles. Small Business Advocate.*

*Bailey, E. P., Jr. (2007). Writing and speaking at work (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.*

*Bough, B., & Condrill, J. (2005). 101 Ways to improve your communication skills instantly (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). San Antonio, TX: GoalMinds, Inc.*

*Garcia, H. F. (2012). The power of communication: Skills to build trust, inspire loyalty, and lead effectively, Upper Saddle River, NJ: FT Press*

*Hamilton, C. (2013). Communicating for results: A guide for business and the professions. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.*

*Weeks H. (2008). Failure to communicate: How conversations go wrong and what you can do to right them. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.*

## VISIONARY

Takes a long-term view and acts as a catalyst for organizational changes. Builds a shared vision with others. Influences others to translate vision into action. Capably translates high-level strategies into practice implementation strategies.

When faced with ongoing uncertainty and change, people look for something they can hold on to. Believe in. Aspire toward. They want to know that what they do matters. That they're contributing to something worthwhile. Larger than themselves. A sound purpose and inspiring vision – whether for an organization, team, project, or initiative – fuel commitment and unify efforts. People are more engaged when they understand how what they do connects to the big picture. They make better decisions when they know where they're headed. They're more resilient when setbacks occur, knowing they're on the right path. To influence others to pursue a meaningful direction, create a vision of the future you want to achieve together. A future that captivates the group's imagination. If that vision isn't inspiring to you on a personal level, it won't light any fires in others either. If you are passionate about the purpose, about closing the gap between current reality and the future you desire, you still need to find a way to ignite that passion in others. Shape and deliver a message that appeals to the core interests and values of your audience. But words alone aren't enough. You need to demonstrate your commitment to the purpose and vision you espouse. This will inspire others to show their commitment as well.

### ➤ **Exceptional**

Articulates a compelling, inspired, and relatable vision.

Communicates the vision with a sense of purpose about the future.

Makes the vision sharable by everyone

Instills and sustains organization-wide energy for what is possible

### ➤ **Consistent**

Talks about future possibilities in a positive way.

Creates milestones and symbols to rally support behind the vision.

Articulates the vision in a way everyone can relate to.

Creates organization-wide energy and optimism for the future.

Shows personal commitment to the vision.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Fails to personally connect with organization's vision.

Has difficulty describing the vision in a compelling way.

Can't simplify enough to help people understand complex strategy.

Struggles to energize and build excitement in others.

*Resources:*

*Baskin, e. (2014, January 6). To align employees, keep the vision simple – and unique to your culture. Good Company.*

*Frost, S. (n.d.). How to align employees with company goals. Chron.*

*Tabaka, M. (2010, August 24). 3 Steps to make your vision work for you. Inc.*

*Chappelow, C. (2012, September 5). 5 Rules for making your vision stick. Fast Company.*

 **Ways to Excel!**

Be a change agent for a new process, product, or service. Create a symbol for the change and champion it through to implementation.

Assist a floundering team in developing a clear sense of propose and a compelling vision for the future.

Take a strategic assignment that involves charting new ground and communicating the vision to a critical audience.

Prepare and present a strategic proposal to senior leaders that involves a change in direction and a request for sponsorship and resources.

Lead or be a team member on a start-up that requires creating a team charter to unify, focus, and inspire the team.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SAVVY

Has knowledge of and works well within a political setting. Exhibits appropriate diplomacy when dealing with official or bureaucratic networks. Understands the climate and culture of the organization, its formal and informal power structures. Identifies, builds, influences and strengthens internal support bases. Able to maneuver and achieve goals within politically charged environments. Views organizational politics as a necessary part of work life and adjusts to that reality.

Organizations are made up of formal structure, policies, buildings, inventory, intellectual property, and so forth. They may be logically planned and brilliantly orchestrated, but while human beings are still at the core, things can get messy. It's the human element that interjects politics, emotion, uncertainty, intrigue, and conflict. Often, we end up dealing with the confusing blend of the rational and irrational, the controlled and the random, the spoken and the unsaid. It's easy to get lost in the fog. Organizational savvy is the compass that guides you swiftly and without mishap to your destination. People who do this well understand the difference between what the organization intends to be versus the reality. They read the unwritten signs to navigate the organizational maze. They know who has power and influence. They appreciate who has respect. And they are aware of who only has a title. They know which messages work and which ones don't. They use their understanding to move things forward for the greater good. In short, they're masters at getting work done in an organizational setting. So accept the complexity of your organization. Don't fight it. Learn how to work with it to your advantage.

### ➤ **Exceptional**

- Navigates the political complexities of the organization easily.
- Has a clear understanding of other groups' business priorities.
- Avoids provoking tension between groups.
- Uses knowledge of organizational culture to achieve objectives.

### ➤ **Consistent**

- Is sensitive to how people and organizations function.
- Anticipates land mines and plans approach accordingly.
- Deals comfortably with organizational politics.
- Knows who has power, respect, and influence.
- Steers through the organizational maze to get things done.

➤ **Inconsistent**

Overlooks or disregards the political complexities of the organization.

Pursues own area's goals without considering the impact on other groups.

Says and does things that strain organizational relationships.

Tends to be impatient with organizational processes and makes political errors.

*Resources:*

*Warrell, M. (2013, August 20). Are you too agreeable? 7 Strategies to push back without coming off pushy. Forbes.*

*Brim, B. (2006, February 9). The best way to influence others. Gallup Business Journal.*

*Marcus, B. (2012, September 5). Hate politics? You still need to be political to advance your career. Forbes.*

*Musselwhite, C. (2007, October 1). Self-awareness and the effective leader, Inc.*

*Brandon, R., & Sheldman, M. (2004). Survival of the savvy: High-integrity political tactics for career and company success. New York, NY: Free Press.*

*George, B., & Sims, P. (2007). True north: Discover your authentic leadership. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.*

*Katzenbach, J. R., & Khan, Z. (2010). Leading outside the lines: How to mobilize the (in)formal organization, energize your team, and get better results. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.*

## STRATEGIC MINDSET

Able to devise, define and outline constructive strategies. Sees future path clearly and is able to translate high level strategies into practical implementation strategy. Determines objectives and sets priorities; anticipates potential threats or opportunities.

Being strategic involves looking, planning, and moving into the future with clear intentions and purposeful actions. Some think being strategic is an either-or proposition – that a person is either tactical or strategic. Focused on the short-term or long-term. Interested in details or the big picture. While many people gravitate toward one side, a strategic mindset requires readiness for both. It's about doing things today with an eye toward tomorrow. Making decisions now that will lead the organization toward its future objectives. Like deciding where to invest to capitalize on emerging trends in your market. Like building internal capabilities that will help bring a new strategy to life. To develop a strategic mindset, you need to thoroughly understand the territory in which you operate. You need to understand what unique capabilities your unit or organization has to offer. You need to consistently ask where you are going and how you will get there.

### ➤ **Exceptional**

Sees the big picture, constantly imagines future scenarios, and creates strategies to sustain competitive advantage.

Is a visionary and able to articulately paint credible pictures and visions of possibilities and likelihoods.

Formulates a clear strategy and maps the aggressive steps that will clearly accelerate the organization toward its strategic goals.

### ➤ **Consistent**

Anticipates future trends and implications accurately.

Readily poses future scenarios.

Articulates credible pictures and visions of possibilities that will create sustainable value.

Creates competitive and breakthrough strategies that show a clear connection between vision and action.

### ➤ **Inconsistent**

Is more comfortable in the tactical here and now.

Spends little time or effort thinking about or working on strategic issues.

Contributes little to strategic discussions.

Lacks the disciplined thought processes to pull together varying elements into a coherent view.

*Resources:*

*Birshan, M., & Kar, J. (2012, July). Becoming more strategic: Three tips for any executive. McKinsey Quarterly.*

*Clark, D. (2013, October 8). What's keeping you from being strategic? Forbes.*

*Green, H. (2012, September 11). Strategy ain't what it used to be. Forbes.*

*Hatch, J., & Sweig, J. (2001, March/April). Strategic flexibility – The key to growth. Ivey Business Journal.*

*Sirkin, H. L. (2013, September 23). The key to corporate fitness: Agility and flexibility. Bloomberg Businessweek.*

*Morgan, M., Levitt, R. E., & Malek, W. A. (2008). Executing your strategy: How to break it down and get it done. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing.*

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**Did you know?**

A strategic approach to leadership is, on average, 10 times more significant to your perceived effectiveness than other behaviors. At least that's what a global survey of 60,000 managers conducted by the Management Research Group in 2013 found. Strategic-minded leaders tend to look much more broadly when they solve problems and make decisions. They think in multiple time frames, balancing achieving things now with planning for potential future outcomes. They think systemically, making connections and understanding the impact their decisions have on other parts of the organization. The study also revealed that those with the highest ratings on these skills associated with strategic mindset were four times more likely than their lower-scoring counterparts to be viewed as high potential within their organization.



## DECISION QUALITY

Capably makes decisions in a timely manner. Weighs options carefully and thoroughly. Can take action without total picture when required. Collaborates in decision-making when appropriate. Bases decisions on facts versus personal interest or bias. Communicates decisions clearly and directly.

Making good decisions can be challenging: Short time frames. Limited information. Impatient people waiting for answers in the face of difficult trade-offs. Good decisions are based upon a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment. Trouble is, people are not all that good at making decision. They tend to overestimate their ability to make good judgments and are overconfident in forecasting outcomes. Making quality decisions in organizations today means working in an environment where ambiguity and uncertainty are the norm. Where considering whom to engage, what information to gather, and when to apply helpful tools are all considerations to take into account. Sound decisions come from a balance between speed and quality. Being totally correct all the time isn't a realistic goal. Instead, it's about being correct *enough* on decisions to move ahead and allow adequate time for effective execution.

### ➤ Exceptional

Decisively makes high-quality decisions, even when based on incomplete information or in the face of uncertainty.

Actively seeks input from pertinent sources to make timely and well-informed decisions.

Skillfully separates opinions from facts.

Is respected by others for displaying superior judgment.

### ➤ Consistent

Makes sound decisions, even in the absence of complete information.

Relies on a mixture of analysis, wisdom, experience, and judgment when making decisions.

Considers all relevant factors and uses appropriate decision-making criteria and principles.

Recognizes when a quick 80% solution will suffice.

### ➤ Inconsistent

Approaches decisions haphazardly or delays decision making.

Makes decisions based on incomplete data or inaccurate assumptions.

Ignores different points of view or makes decisions that impact short-term results at the expense of longer-term goals.

*Resources:*

*Wolf, R. F. (2012, September 24). How to minimize your biases when making decisions. Harvard Business Review.*

*Harvard Business Review. (2013). The management tip: Tips on decision making. Harvard Business Review.*

*Shaughnessy, H. (2013, December 9). 15 Ways to make much better decisions. Forbes.*

*Batista, E. (2013, November 8). Stop worrying about making the right decision. Harvard Business Review.*

*Denning, S. (2012, April 24). How are really great decisions actually made? Forbes.*

*The Staff of the Corporate Executive Board. (2011, December 12). Preventing 'Analysis Paralysis.' Bloomberg Businessweek.*

*Harvard Business Essentials. (2006). Decision making: 5 Steps to better results. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.*

*Kourdi, J. (2007). Think on your feet: 10 Steps to better decision making and problem solving at work. London, England: Cyan Communications.*