

advancing
women in business

every
woman
NETWORK



STEPPING INTO LEADERSHIP

WORKBOOK

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About this Workbook

Everywoman is an organisation that works to advance women in business. Typically, there are a number of inherent benefits women bring to a leadership role. They have a tendency to employ relational and collaborative skills in their working styles and can easily relate to peers on a rational and emotional level.

Through our work with individuals and organisations, we know there are also areas of leadership that some women struggle with. Fortunately, these are areas that can be worked on and we will address many of these areas in this guide.

Although the external, practical tools for managing your team are important, your development, self-reflection and awareness of how you are meeting challenges are paramount. You cannot lead others until you can lead yourself. By working through this workbook, you will first focus on yourself and then move on to your team.

This workbook will show you quick wins that will position you as the leader and give your team the boundaries to operate within. We will give you tips on finding a mentor and working on your confidence levels, regardless of the level you are starting at. We will also look at the subject of emotions and how to use self-reflection as a tool to identify and work on areas of development.

Good luck! We look forward to seeing you on the everywomanNetwork.

The everywoman Team

Stepping into Leadership

Being promoted to a position of leadership or having your business grow to the point where you need to hire new staff is an exciting time. It is recognition of what a fantastic job you have been doing and what a fantastic job you will do in the future by having the resources to carry out more activities and tasks through your team. A leadership role can be daunting at first; it is a big step whether you work in a corporate environment or run your own business.

If you have worked with the team you are now leading, the change in relationships can be a difficult one to master. While you may have been on the same level and part of the team you are now going to have to elevate yourself and this can be quite a difficult transition. If you are new to an organisation, take time to understand the senior team and their values, styles and expectations.

“If I could change just one thing to make a significant difference to business, what would it be? There is no contest.
Leadership.”

Ros Taylor, MD, Ros Taylor Group

Remember that you are not solely responsible for delivering everything yourself; your job is to achieve your goals through your team. This feeling of loss of control makes many new leaders fall into the trap of trying to do it all themselves, or micro-managing their teams.

Another skill to develop is managing upwards. This involves understanding the way your senior peers or stakeholders work and what they expect of you. This is definitely time well spent in terms of your career development.

Learning some key skills in leadership will help you manage your time, team and projects, and present you as an effective leader to your organisation and team.

The self-diagnostic tool, ‘Strengths and Weaknesses in Leadership’, on page 5 will take you through some questions that will highlight areas of leadership you may need to work on.

Strengths and Weaknesses in Leadership Self Diagnostic

Whether this is your first leadership role or you are running your own business and are about to start building a team, it is useful to think about how you will need to adapt and skills you will need to develop. Answer the following questions and calculate your score, then read the guidance notes on page 6.

1. **How do you feel about your new role?**
 - a) Nervous!
 - b) Excited - I can't wait to get started!
 - c) Very confident - I'm ready for this!

2. **Have you had any thoughts about what sort of manager you will be?**
 - a) I'll be the same as I've always been. I won't change my style.
 - b) I'll be approachable, friendly and supportive.
 - c) I'll need to treat colleagues very differently once I'm leading the team and they report to me.

3. **How do you view delegation?**
 - a) It's a cop out. Everyone should be responsible for their own work. You don't pass it on to others.
 - b) It plays an important part in everyone's development. It helps both the leader and staff to grow.
 - c) A perk of leadership - passing on the stuff you don't want to deal with yourself.

“A leader takes people where they want to go.
A great leader takes people where they don't
necessarily want to go, but ought to be.”

Rosalynn Carter

4. **How do you view your colleagues?**
 - a) I worry what they think, I want them to like me.
 - b) I respect them, their experience and opinion, and what they bring to the team.
 - c) I don't think about it. We're not friends, I'm there to do a job.
5. **How do you deal with conflict?**
 - a) I don't, I avoid it.
 - b) Quickly and gracefully.
 - c) I just deal with it. It's not a problem for me.
6. **How often do you show appreciation for colleagues' contribution and take time thank them?**
 - a) All the time.
 - b) Regularly.
 - c) Occasionally.
7. **Are you a good listener? Rate your listening skills out of 10**
 - a) 4-6.
 - b) 7-10.
 - c) 1-3.
8. **How would you describe your style?**
 - a) Passive.
 - b) Assertive.
 - c) Aggressive.


Now add up how many a's, b's and c's you scored;

Mostly a's: It is normal to experience some apprehension when entering a new role. Remember, though, that you will be leading your team through good times and bad, and the bad times may see you entering areas of conflict and directive leadership. Therefore, building relationships that are productive and supportive but with professional distance should be your goal now. Developmental areas to consider are delegation, active listening and giving and receiving feedback.

Mostly b's: You appear to be taking a balanced view, but don't underestimate the gap between how we perceive ourselves and our actions, and how others perceive us. Ask for constructive feedback from your team. You don't have to necessarily agree with someone else's view of you, but it helps to be aware of others' viewpoints so you can manage them effectively.

Mostly c's: It is great that you feel so confident about your new role as leader. However, being overconfident can cause you to irreparably alienate your team in the early days. This means your team members may be less likely to share their insight and operate from a risk-averse and protective standpoint, meaning you will get less from them. Your goal should be to actively encourage your team to give you feedback on how you are doing. Some of your team may thrive under this style of leadership, but it may stifle others.

① You the Leader



Before leading a team, you must first lead and get to know yourself.

You the Leader

Your Mentor



One of the best ways to get to know yourself is by having a mentor. Mentoring is a continual process of enabling people to reach even higher levels of performance and achievement; if you don't already have a mentor now is the time.

Your mentor will be an impartial sounding board and will also be a great support should you encounter any challenges, whether from inside or outside of your organisation. When choosing one, bear in mind that a mentor is:

Supportive

Encourages you to take risks that are reasonable under the circumstances and that will result in your professional and personal development.

Nurturing

Creates a 'risk free' environment where you can share the issues that are most critical to you, knowing that it will help your development.

Protective

Ensures that you have all the information you need to make informed decisions and provides you with the critical understanding of various situations so that you get the 'complete picture' before taking any action.

A good mentor:

Provides feedback

Gives feedback that allows you to know what you are doing well and what areas can be further developed.

Understands boundaries

Able to set limits with you and understands that their job is not to create a clone but to share knowledge and information.

Your mentor will devote necessary time to the relationship, will be available based on what is negotiated and will be credible - someone you can trust.

Ideally as a mentee you will:

- Listen and take advice
- Be open to other viewpoints
- Be courageous and share vulnerabilities
- Take responsibility for learning
- Be motivated to stay engaged and work towards achieving results
- Commit and honour the time that your mentor is spending with you

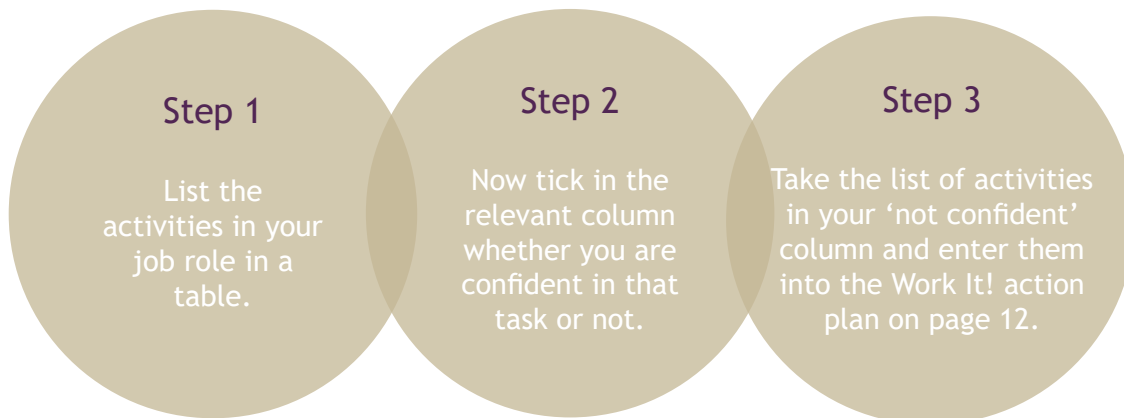
You the Leader

Build Your Confidence

Being confident is one of the traits that will be key to your success as a leader. Confidence is like a muscle - it has to be exercised to remain strong and steady. We all have moments when our confidence blossoms, such as when we feel good about ourselves, have the knowledge we need to overcome any doubts, and are able to achieve any goal, however large or small. Equally, we know when we lack confidence. The very act of noticing its absence could diminish the possibility of bringing it back to the surface.

Fear is the main feeling that undermines confidence. 'What if?' scenarios can create irrational fears that need to be dealt with so you have the confidence to assert yourself fully.

If you feel your confidence is lacking and affecting your performance at work, try identifying which aspects you are struggling with and pick them off like enemies using well-thought-through strategies.



Activity	Confident	Not Confident
Managing projects		
Dealing with clients		
Presenting		
Dealing with difficult people		
Delegating		

Once you have a list of activities that you don't feel confident carrying out, you can work out why and put in place strategies that will ultimately extend your comfort zone. Here's an example:

Problem area: Delegation. You fear that the person you are delegating to will not do as good a job as you would or will not get the job done in time.

Solution: When delegating the task, work through what needs doing by when and how, and what the consequences are if it's not completed. Once you have worked on the what, how, who, when and where, check the understanding of the person you are delegating to and schedule milestone meetings with them. That way, you can satisfy yourself that they are on track and work through any challenges they are facing.

Once you have delegated to this individual and they have performed, you will trust them to do it more often and your comfort zone will incrementally increase. As mentioned before, it is important to keep working your confidence muscle in areas where you feel you lack confidence. The more you push yourself outside your comfort zone, the easier it will become. You will quickly work out what your fears are about a particular situation and what you can do to alleviate them.

Activity - example

I don't feel confident	Why don't I feel confident?	What can I do to make myself more confident?
Example: Presenting	I will look stupid or say something silly and no one will respect me.	Plan my presentation so that it is relevant to my audience; invest time in researching the facts so I have them to hand during the presentation.
Example: Dealing with difficult people	If they start berating me, I may react emotionally, which they will see as a sign of weakness.	I will plan my interactions with the person. What is it that is making them difficult to work with or communicate with? How can I help them? I will choose to remain gracious and calm during my interactions with them.
Example: Delegating	Someone won't do the job as well as me, or won't get it done in time, and I'm not sure that I should be burdening my staff with my work.	Plan the delegation conversation. Have the conversation with my report and book regular milestone meetings to check progress.

Work It! Action Plan

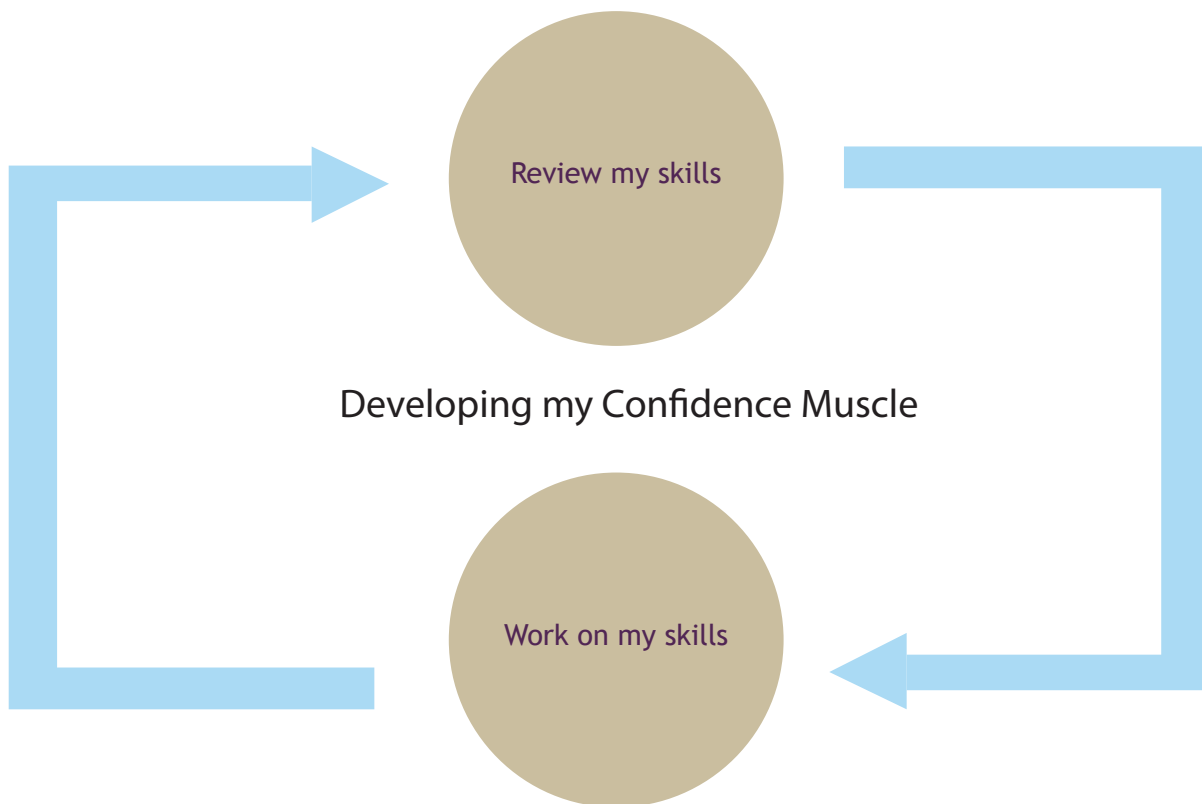
List the activities which you don't feel confident doing, and review how you can try to address these.

I don't feel confident	Why don't I feel confident?	What can I do to make myself more confident?

Continual Review and Improvement

As we have mentioned, your confidence is like a muscle that needs continuous exercise to remain strong. Currently, you are working on those skills pertinent to your job role. Once you have mastered these, you should turn your attention to those skills that you are likely to use in your future roles.

Your process for review should be cyclical:



Share your Work It! Action Plan with your mentor.
Enlist their help in achieving continual professional development.

You the Leader

Your Emotions

Name that Emotion

In business, emotions are generally viewed as negative. We strive to be taken seriously and to be seen as objective and logical. 'Emotional responses' can be viewed as a weakness and are not welcome in the business environment.

However, just as everyone has a nose on their face plain for all to see, we all experience emotions. Being able to name and analyse your emotional responses in the workplace is the first step to managing them and using them to your advantage. That is not to say you will want to put a voice to all of your emotions, but recognising that a person, a situation or a task is evoking an emotional response means you can have an objective internal conversation as to why and what can be done to resolve the issue.

Analysing your emotional responses has been proven to create a more stable emotional state. This will allow you to consider your reactions and talk eloquently about your concerns to others in the business who can help.

It is not easy. Many people spend much of their lives either pretending that they do not feel what they are feeling or feeling guilty for feeling what they feel! Parents or even friends often say: "There's no need to feel that way." Often, what they mean is: "I'd rather you didn't feel that way." As a result, people are often unclear about what it is that they do feel and so label emotions wrongly. When feeling angry, they will say "you hurt my feelings" or will deny that they feel anything at all.

Manage that Emotion

Emotional intelligence is linked to success and confidence. The first stage of emotional literacy is to understand, recognise and label your own feelings accurately. Only then can you manage them in a confident manner.

Step 1

Take a breath and do nothing.

If you are in the moment and you don't feel in control of your emotions or reactions, take a breath, relax your facial muscles on the breath out and manage the situation as best you can without reacting.

Step 2

Now that you are away from the situation, reflect on the circumstances and the emotion you felt.

Many of our emotions can be masked by anger, but anger can be a by-product of another emotion, such as fear. For example, if a team member goes above your head for a decision, you may feel angry about it, but maybe also fearful of what your senior manager may see as a weakness in your management style.

Step 3

Why did the situation make you feel this way?

Now consider if your emotional reaction was reasonable. It may have been, but equally it may not. Turn the situation around. In the above example, why did your report go to your senior manager? It is possible that they did it for an entirely innocent reason, such as knowing your workload was immense and needing an answer quickly for the benefit of a client?

Step 4

Now that you know what you are feeling, what made you feel that way and why? What will you do about it?

You have now stepped away from the situation and considered the possibilities. Your initial reaction to the situation has likely subsided and you can rationally consider your options. Sometimes it will be to do nothing. On other occasions, you may go on to plan a constructive meeting with a colleague. Whatever the outcome, you will have given yourself the opportunity and time to think of everything and handle the situation appropriately.

Self Reflections

When you first become a leader, it can be useful to get into the habit of reflecting on your day, the decisions you made and the outcomes you achieved. The process of self-reflection does not have to take long, but will be worthwhile. The key to self-reflection is that everything must have a positive outcome. Regardless of the current impact of a situation, you must plan a positive outcome.

Use the following template to take you through the process of self-reflection. Once you have done it a few times you will be able to do it without the template.

What happened today?	What did you think and feel about it?	What is the positive outcome?

If self-reflection is not something you have done much of, it can take some time to put into words what you thought and felt about the scenarios in your day. Finding a positive outcome can also take a while, but over time, you will get into the habit of analysing your thoughts, feelings and reactions, and will be able to find a positive outcome in circumstances that are initially difficult.

Self-reflection will soon become a habit that you carry out almost without realising. If you find you are having difficulties, refer back to the section on managing emotions. If you find you are having difficulties with members in your team, refer back to the sections on delegation and managing your team to help you work out where the breakdown is.

“People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.”

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Five Tips

1

If your staff and peers feel your appreciation is authentic, they will be inclined to work harder for you.

2

When you listen to someone, switch off your internal dialogue. This has a habit of filling in gaps and making assumptions.

5

Self-reflection should become a daily ritual. Analyse the motivations behind your actions.

Leadership

3

It can be difficult to admit concern about your performance. You need to recognise it, admit it to yourself and take steps to rectify it.

4

It is important to switch back and view yourself as part of the achievement, rather than the sole origin of achievement.

② Leading Your Team



Providing momentum,
guidance and
direction.

Leading Your Team

Stages of Team Development

Definition of Team

“People working together in a committed way to achieve a common goal or mission. The work is interdependent and team members share responsibility and hold themselves accountable for attaining the results.”

(MIT Information Services & Technology)

We can see how important it is that a team acts and behaves cohesively towards attainment of its goals. Later, we will look at the proven habits of highly successful teams, but here we will examine the stages a team goes through, from formation to a cohesive structure. By understanding and being able to identify the stages of team development - Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing (first proposed by Bruce Tuckman) - you can implement strategies to lessen their impact on the team and help you make the most of each stage to encourage team effectiveness.

Stage one

Forming: This is the point at which the team forms.

Team members will tend to act independently of one another until trust has developed. At this point, the team is highly dependent on the leader for guidance and team members will begin to test boundaries.

Action: Meet with your team (see page 22). Within this meeting, you will want to position yourself as leader, clearly outlining team boundaries and your expectations. Following your meeting, you will want to start to get to know your team (see page 23).

Stage two

Storming: A pinnacle stage in team development and therefore probably the most challenging.

Relationships will be made or broken in this stage. If this stage is handled incorrectly, the team can remain in a storming state. Handled with finesse and facilitative leadership, the team will flourish and become highly successful. A robust decision-making tool can work wonders in this stage and an understanding of one another's differences can offer an open way of discussing differing opinions. Equally, a team that actively avoids conflict can be less effective at completing the task for the sake of team harmony.

Action: Page 24 talks you through the process of assessing the inherent personality types within your team. If all things are equal, each member of your team will fall naturally into these roles. Discussing these roles positively and openly within the team can engender engagement and build a foundation on which the team can learn to build trust. Of equal importance is researching and introducing a decision-making model that the team will naturally adopt to assess contentious decisions and manage conflict effectively.

Stage three

Norming: This is when the team enters a more agreeable phase, with team members appreciating others' contribution to the team goal, and individual roles clearly defined.

Members will tend to work more collaboratively, decisions will be made more quickly and the leader can take a step back, allowing team members to take on greater responsibility. However, complacency can rear its head in this stage. If they do not feel the need to prove themselves, team members may lose their edge.

Action: Think of ways to keep up the pressure. Introduce them to what you are learning about developing self-esteem and self-reflection. Small, fun competitions and rewards for hitting targets can also keep their drive alive. Also, see our challenge on motivation to understand how you can use key motivators in this stage.

Stage four

Performing: This is the highly successful stage that a team enters into when differences and diversity of opinion are accepted and encouraged. There is very little input from the leader, with just delegation and light-touch guidance required. The team is able to work towards its goal, but also takes care of relationship, style and process issues.

Note that not all teams reach this stage of performance excellence. It relies heavily on the successful management of previous stages.

Action: Celebrate success.

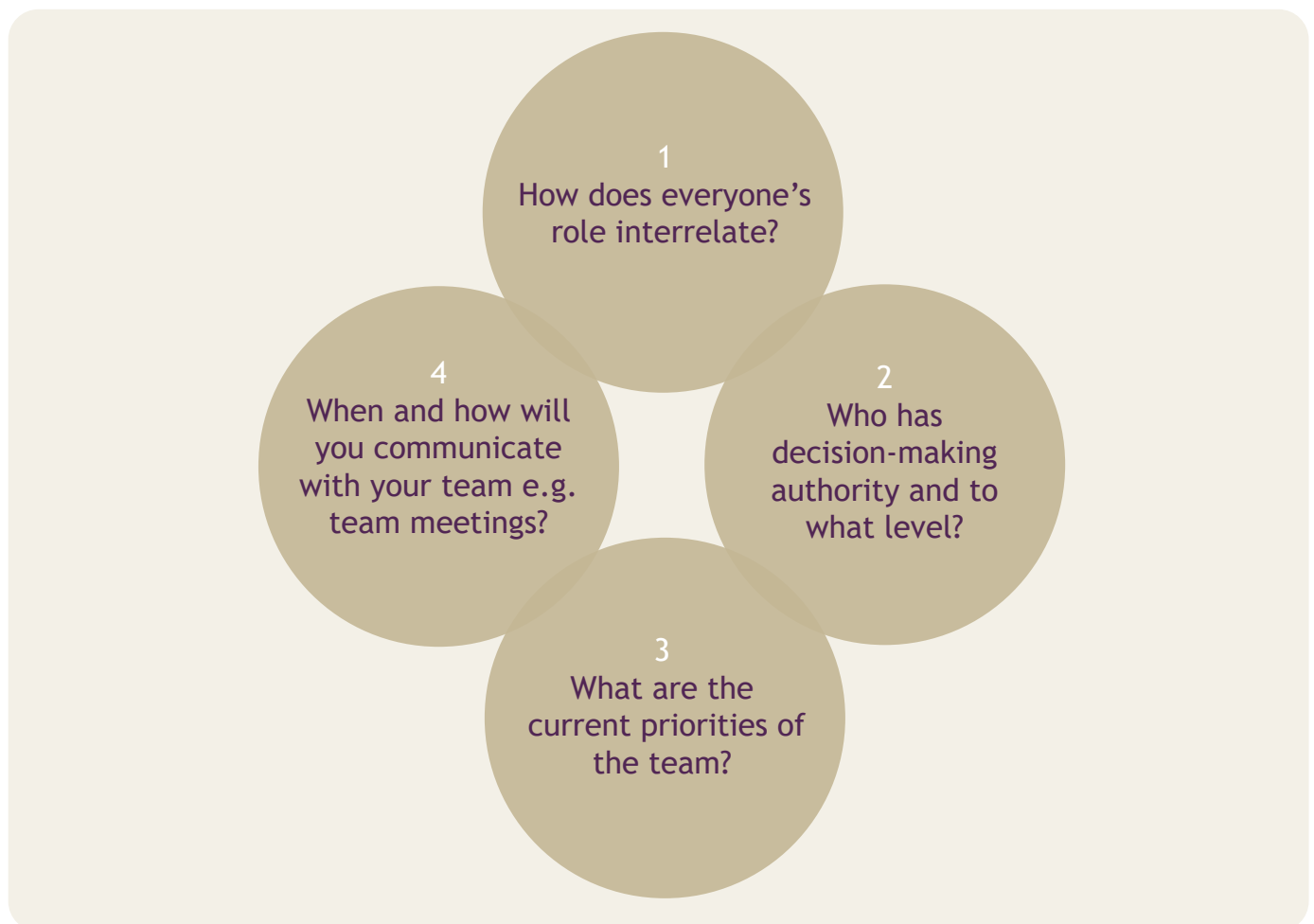
Be aware that introducing new team members can take you back a stage, but only for a short time, while the new team member is embraced by the group.

Now that we understand the differing stages of how a team develops, you should be able to instantly recognise the stages and actively manage them or manage your reaction to them. If you understand how the stage that the team is in can affect how team members relate to each other, you can support your team through the challenges and, more importantly, celebrate their successes.

Leading Your Team

Ground Rules and Foundations

As soon as you take the position as leader of the team, get the team together to set the ground rules and foundations. Each person has a different style of leadership and what works for one leader will not work for the other, so you need to be clear and communicate this from the outset. Before meeting the team, consider the following elements of team leadership and then deliver your message with clarity and confidence.



Before one-to-one meetings with your team members, it may be useful to ask them to complete the following questions. Even if you have worked with someone for many years, you may find skills in your team that you didn't know you had that can be put to good use!

Skills Analysis

You used to be only as good as your last piece of work. Now that you are leading a team, you are only as good as your team, so it is worthwhile spending time getting to know them. Ask each member of your team to complete the following questions. We will use their answers to assess their inherent skills on the next page.

What would you say are your biggest achievements in your current job role?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What do you find most exciting about your job role?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What skills do you have that the organisation could make more use of?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What new skills could you develop to enhance your performance?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

How could you do this?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Leading Your Team

Team Roles

Ideally, each of your team members will contribute differing and complementary skills to your team goals. Check the statements below and identify who in your team fits into which roles.

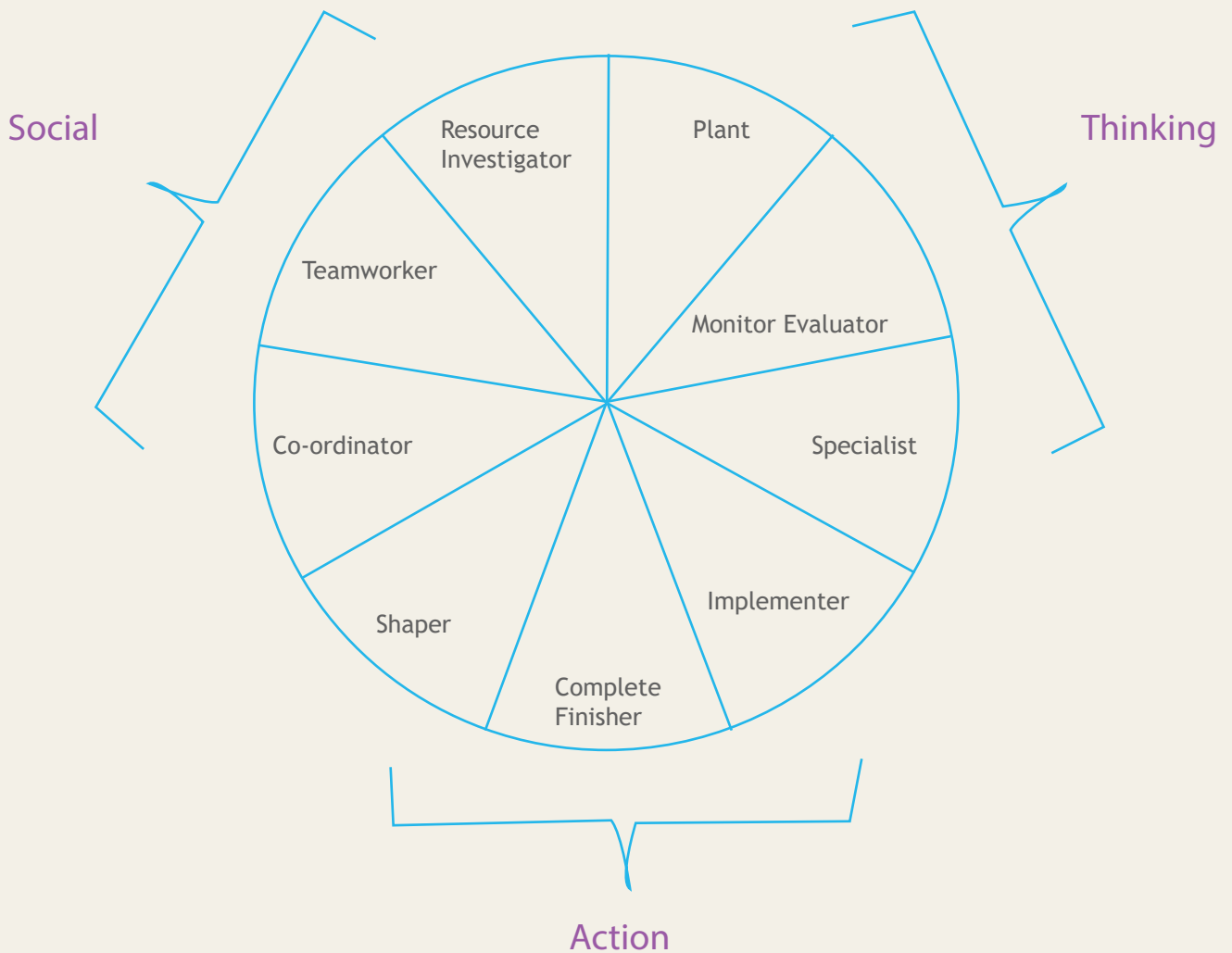
Team Role	Contribution	Allowable Weaknesses
Plant	Creative, imaginative, free-thinking. Generates ideas and solves difficult problems.	Ignores incidentals. Too preoccupied to communicate effectively.
Resource Investigator	Outgoing, enthusiastic, communicative. Explores opportunities and develops contacts.	Over-optimistic. Loses interest once initial enthusiasm has passed.
Co-ordinator	Mature, confident, identifies talent. Clarifies goals. Delegates effectively.	Can be seen as manipulative. Offloads own share of the work.
Shaper	Challenging, dynamic, thrives on pressure. Has the drive and courage to overcome obstacles.	Prone to provocation. Offends people's feelings.
Monitor Evaluator	Sober, strategic and discerning. Sees all options and judges accurately.	Lacks drive and ability to inspire others. Can be overly critical.
Teamworker	Co-operative, perceptive and diplomatic. Listens and averts friction.	Indecisive in crunch situations. Avoids confrontation.

Team Role	Contribution	Allowable Weaknesses
Implementer	Practical, reliable, efficient. Turns ideas into actions and organises work that needs to be done.	Somewhat inflexible. Slow to respond to new possibilities
Completer Finisher	Painstaking, conscientious, anxious. Searches out errors. Polishes and perfects.	Inclined to worry unduly. Reluctant to delegate.
Specialist	Single-minded, self-starting, dedicated. Provides knowledge and skills in rare supply.	Contributes only on a narrow front. Dwells on technicalities

It is worth noting that a person will likely display a number of the above roles, depending on the situation and the team dynamic. You may find a team member displaying characteristics of Completer Finisher in certain circumstances and not in others, depending on who they are working with in the team. What you are aiming to identify is that all of the above traits are represented in some way within the team, providing a wonderfully diverse set of skills to use in the achievement of team goals.

Now that you have identified your team's inherent strengths, plot them on the graph on page 26 and note the top three team strengths and the top three team weaknesses.

Team Roles: Areas of Strengths and Weaknesses



Team Strengths

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Team Weaknesses

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What Roles Do and Should Avoid

The following table highlights activities and areas to be aware of. This can be a handy worksheet to pass out to each of your team to help in giving team members constructive feedback.

Team Role	To Do...	Not To Do...
Plant	Come up with ideas and suggestions for solving problems and working out solutions. Invent a new way of tackling the issues in hand. Create an original piece of work. Look at things from a different angle.	Evaluate your own ideas. Have strong ownership of your own ideas when co-operation with others would yield better results.
Resource Investigator	Go outside the group to initiate new contacts. Develop the ideas of the Plant. Use your enthusiasm to build up other people's enthusiasm. Search out new markets. Negotiate with others.	Let people down by neglecting to follow up arrangements. Talk too much so others cannot get enough air time.
Co-ordinator	Establish an air of authority over the team with your mature approach. Bring others into discussion when they have things to contribute. Hold the group together. Praise and encourage others.	Take credit for the effort of the team. Overplay your status. Neglect to do your fair share of the work.
Shaper	Get things moving. Stop complacency and laziness. Be honest, straightforward and open with others. Make sure the team is achieving goals. Push things forward.	Hold grudges, become overbearing. Lose your sense of humour when the going gets tough.

Team Role	To Do...	Not To Do...
Monitor Evaluator	Provide a balanced opinion on all ideas and options. Be ready to explain what actions you prefer and why. Stop ill-thought-out courses of action. Take your time over your decisions.	Be seen by the team as a cynic. Give a negative reaction to everything you hear. Dampen the positive approach of the team.
Teamworker	Promote good team atmosphere by reacting to the needs of others. Support members of the group when necessary. Become a broker in times of argument, and defuse any hostility.	Avoid situations that may entail pressure. Side with the most dominant in a desire to please.
Implementer	Organise systems. Ensure you and others follow the laid-out procedures. Get down to the practical issues. Try and turn ideas into action. Be loyal to your organisation and people within it.	Obstruct change. Be resistant to new ideas of the team. Be seen as a 'stick in the mud'.
Completer Finisher	Try to raise standards in all you do. Concern yourself with detail. Use your ability to help other members of the team who may not be so strong on accuracy. Promote excellence.	Allow perfectionism to turn into obsessive behaviour. Penny pinch or split hairs on trivial issues.
Specialist	Show your enthusiasm for a particular subject. Cultivate a sense of professionalism and encourage your fellow team members to trust your knowledge. Keep your expertise and skills up to date.	Discount the importance of factors outside your own area of competence. Become overprotective of the boundaries of your job area.

Leading Your Team

Skills Audit

Now that you have got to know your team, it is time to put some investment into them and their skills. Depending on the responses to the questions you gave them, you can write a development plan for each one. This need not involve expensive training courses, as your team should be learning as much from you and one another during their day-to-day activities as they would on a professionally run training programme. Use the assets of the people you already have within the team to train and develop junior members, and use other departments such as finance to develop more senior members of the team.

You may find it useful to do a skills analysis on your team to easily visualise any skill gaps. By identifying skill gaps, you can develop team members to alleviate a weakness that could buckle under the pressure of increased workload.

Skills Required in the Team			
Name	Project management	Account management	Negotiation
Sarah	X	X	X
Tony		X	
John		X	
Katie		X	
Julie		X	
Debbie		X	

Here we can see that there is only one member of the team who can carry out all of the functions required. This could leave a very large skills gap were the member of the team to leave or be unable to work for a period of time. This table clearly shows you where there may be gaps and you can then make a plan to fill them. Create your own version of this table to review the skills of your team.

Leading Your Team

Monitoring Performance

Now that you are aware of the areas where your team needs stretching and developing, it is important to monitor changes in their performance and general demeanour. This will allow you to spot trouble zones early and, if correctly dealt with, keep your team on the path to excellent performance.

On a monthly basis, rate the members of your team according to the relevant areas:-

Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Achievement of objectives						
Achievement of financial targets						
Development of competence						
Productivity						
Development of skills						
Improved customer care						
Changes in behaviour						
Improved quality						
Motivation						
Feedback on clarity of purpose						
Analysis of problems						
Changes in attitude						

Leading Your Team

Successful Teams

When you see a successful, smoothly running, competent team, it is often hard to pinpoint what exactly they are doing right. Hold up a magnifying glass and you will see that lots of hard work and emphasis on specific areas got them where they are! Conversely, think of a team that fails and fails hard, and you will be able to quickly identify a few key areas that are vastly deficient.

Goal and unity of purpose

Begin with the end in mind! What do you, as a team, want to achieve and has this been articulated so that everyone not only understands it, but is in agreement? From the outside, we assumed the England rugby team wanted to win the 2011 Rugby World Cup; apparently there was a huge range of purpose, from making more money, to status, to partying the Australian way. Those teammates who were focused on winning for England were shocked to find out afterwards that this was not first and foremost in everyone's mind! Successful teams know that the sense of purpose needs to be aligned and agreed, and probably reiterated several times along the team journey.

Communicate, communicate, communicate

The fine art of communication is essential to building and growing a team. This does not mean every member agrees with everyone all the time and gets along fine. It means you listen, understand, reflect and explore, not judge and negatively question. It means you question to clarify, support and understand, not point fingers or belittle. Useful debate and conflict is essential. Tiptoeing around an issue, or manipulative discussions in smaller groups, ends up affecting the whole team. Successful teams encourage lively debate and frank discussions, and know the point at which a decision needs to be made.

Keep attitudes in check

In simple terms, great talent and focused, positive attitudes are what make a team tick. Negative attitudes can quickly negate the amazing talent a team has. It is shocking how quickly one 'bad apple' can truly spoil the whole group. Know who your bad apples are and rectify the problem. Give them a chance to truly engage their talent by giving them accurate and useful feedback on how their attitude affects not only their own behaviour, but the attitude and behaviour of other team members. Successful teams deal with bad attitudes as a team!

For the team as a whole, keep perspective of what you are there to achieve. If the attitude of the entire team is about being the best to the detriment of others, or by stepping on the 'little teams', rethink your sense of purpose! Successful teams stick to their core values and understand that their team is not the only team.

Get to know one another and build trust

Understand that everyone is not you, which is a good thing! Identify what everyone brings to the table in terms of talent and strengths and realise that everyone will have weaknesses that should be tolerated within the team. Spend time talking about things other than the project, to help build relationships and understand one another's experience. The goal is to get trust to develop across the board. As we know with the current economic climate, this does not happen by simply saying 'trust me'! Successful teams have one another's back and do this because they want to, not because they have to.

Know what you have achieved and celebrate successes

Whether your goal is long-term or short-term, find reasons to acknowledge what you have accomplished by determining various milestones throughout the journey. A scoreboard gives you a snapshot of where the team is in terms of goals and actions. Think of a scoreboard in a tennis match, a project dashboard or the countdown to getting the Chilean miners out of the crushed mine! At any given point, you should know where you are and what you have achieved so far.

Celebrate the small steps along the way to your goal. The miners had a sense of identity - they quickly called themselves 'Los 33' and remained fairly positive by celebrating significant achievements during their confinement. They cheered and danced when they had been found (even though it was immediately acknowledged it would be at least three months before they got out), they sent smiling pictures of themselves eating their first real meal and they cried with happiness when the drill shaft was complete.

If the only milestone to celebrate had been getting out of the mine, it would have been a much slower and harder journey, being trapped for 66 long, dark days. Successful teams know that to only focus on what you have not achieved will ultimately reflect negatively on the self-worth and attitude of the team. When was the last time you patted your teammates on the back just for making it through a tough week? A little bit of praise and a sense of achievement goes a long way to reaching team unity.

Leading Your Team

Delegation

Two little known facts about delegation:

1) You cannot delegate a task WITHOUT delegating authority

What would be the point of delegating a task when the person you delegate to has to refer back to you on every decision? Instead, what you should clearly communicate to your report is your expectations and their limits of authority.

2) You cannot delegate a task AND delegate responsibility

The responsibility for the outcome of the task is yours as leader of the team that is producing the outcome. The buck stops with you. Therefore, invest time delegating the task to ensure a successful outcome the first time.

Delegation is the only path to growth: growth of the business through more people carrying out more tasks; growth of you as a leader by removing yourself from the 'doing' activities, thereby allowing you to focus on creating strategy and vision; and growth of your reports by stretching their comfort zones and abilities. Delegation is a key skill in leadership and, handled well, can see you and your team soaring. Handled badly, it can just leave both parties sore!

When considering delegating a task, you have four factors:

What	What task are you delegating? What are your ideal outcomes? What are your report's limits of authority?
Who	Who will you delegate the task to? Who will support them?
When	When will you delegate the task to them? When will you have milestone meetings to check progression and manage challenges? When is the deadline for completion?
How	How will they carry out the task? How will you measure success/achievement?

"The great leaders are like the best conductors - they reach beyond the notes to reach the magic in the players."

Blaine Lee

Five Tips

Excel as a New Leader

2
Self reflection on a daily basis will encourage you to analyse things you have done well and areas where you can improve.

1
Keep abreast of your areas of specialism by reading, trade magazines, books and websites.

3
Learn effective delegation practices, these will develop your team and free up your time to operate strategically.

Leadership

5
Find yourself a mentor, someone with a higher level of experience who can help you on your path to business success.

4
Now you are leading a team, dedicate a proportion of your time to helping your team perform effectively.

Further Reading and Thanks

We hope you enjoyed this workbook which has been produced by Everywoman Ltd. You can find more workbooks, tools and articles on a variety of personal development topics at www.everywoman.com/development

Further reading

Fast Track to the Top, Ros Taylor

Confidence at Work, Ros Taylor

Time to Think: Listening to Ignite the Human Mind, Nancy Kline

Leadership: Plain and Simple, Steve Radcliffe

The Three Levels of Leadership, James Scouller



Our thanks to leadership expert Ros Taylor, Managing Director of the Ros Taylor Group. She is a leading UK Chartered Psychologist and Professor of Leadership at Strathclyde Business School, with more than 25 years' experience of leadership, coaching and training.

To view Ros' video of her Ten Commandments of Great Leadership, visit www.everywoman.com/rostaylor

This workbook was created by the everywoman Team led by Kate Farrow, Leadership Development Manager at everywoman. She has been in the field of leadership and management training for 13 years and has worked with a wide range of organisations, trade associations and industry sectors.

