

# Individual leadership reflection and action plan essay examples

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



## **Abstract**

As the memorialization of goals has been shown to be useful in the ultimate achievement of them, this individual leadership reflection and action plan puts into writing future plans for my personal leadership philosophy.

Governed by a general style of participative leadership with some directive tendencies, I will strive to keep values important to me such as honesty, respect for family, recognition of fallibility, teamwork, and excellence. I also plan to work on tempering my tendency for perfectionism and recognizing the significant downsides of allowing this to govern my leadership approach. Finally, I will use the strengths already present in my personality including forward-looking vision, strategic thinking abilities and good communication skills to bring about profits, progress, and achievement for myself and the organizations where I work.

Research by Gail Matthews, a professor at Dominican University in California, has shown the value of writing down goals to increase the chances of achieving them (2011). The current essay is approached in the spirit of this finding with the aim of increasing my chances of achieving the philosophy, values, and actions I describe here. In particular, this essay will include a review of my personal leadership philosophy and how that philosophy has remained relatively consistent thus far over my life. I will also discuss my theories and personal philosophies about some very basic components of how life and interactions with others are best conducted. After a survey of my strengths and weakness, I will conclude this essay with an action plan built upon my strengths in order to maximize my personal leadership potential. By committing these thoughts and plans to writing, I plan to take

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advantage of the effect documented by Dr. Matthews' research and increase my chance of achieving these recorded goals.

Here are the elements of my personal leadership philosophy that I hold important to me and generally adhere to in my interactions with others.

Firstly, I am truthful and honest and believe the same of others unless given reason otherwise. This aspect of my philosophy allows the building of trust, which is a very important aspect of all personal interactions, including those in business. If people are dishonest with one another, for example, promising something that they do not deliver, it can undermine the ability of those within the organization to be able to delegate comfortably. The extra emotional energy needed to be constantly judging someone for their truthfulness is something that can severely impact business relationships, I do not want to jeopardize this within my business relationships, so honesty is of central importance within my leadership approach.

Next, family is extremely important and so I strive to help every individual achieve their necessary tasks within both their work and their life. I actually do not believe in the idea of work/life balance, as balance implies an ability to juggle work concerns and life concerns at the same time. Instead, it is better termed work/life concentrations. I strive to allow appropriate concentration upon work tasks and appropriate concentration upon life tasks to guide where focus is placed. This implies that it is not always work nor is it always life where my focus, or the focus of my team members, should fall. Thus, I make it a part of my leadership philosophy that when focus on work is needed, I will expect that, but I will also accommodate a focus on life when it is necessary as well. Of course, this requires finding the right ratio between

the two, but again, I believe that this is not a constant and can vary with the circumstances. Basically, a central tenet of my personal philosophy is that it is not always work that requires the focus.

A further aspect of my personal leadership philosophy is that we are all human and will make mistakes, myself included. I do tend to categorize mistakes into two types. The first are those that are honest mistakes, and thus are understandable, are supportable, and can be seen as good long-term lessons. The second type of mistakes is the ones that compromise core values of the business. This type require particular attention and are less easily supported. I also believe that the core values should be a short list: integrity, accountability, diligence, perseverance, and discipline. Mistakes that reflect poor judgment in these areas are those that are more serious in my mind. Reflecting one of the core values, mistakes in these areas are also those that need full accountability.

Teamwork is another important aspect of my personal leadership philosophy and is paramount to business success. Teams routinely achieve more than the additive accomplishments of the individuals and I recognize the significant value of this synergy. To achieve this combination, I believe that each individual must support one another and there should be no tolerance for dissension. As the leader, I plan to set the example for others to follow and I will support my team members in their efforts and do whatever I can within my power to make the team more successful. Teamwork also implies the sharing of credit and I am extremely careful to allocate the results of any team to all individuals. This is part of what I believe is necessary to build the proper support within the company for a true team effort.

A final component of my leadership philosophy is that I want teams to strive for excellence. However, I understand that excellence is not perfection and this is an important distinction. There is always more that can be done, further details attended to, additional tweaks that can be made. It is important that there be an evaluation of the cost and benefit of work once the standard of excellence has been met. Not only is perfection not achievable in many cases, asking this unrealistic level of accomplishment from teams can be detrimental in the long run. Thus, I will make it a goal for my teams to be excellent without falling for the dangers of insisting for perfection. In this way the true value to the business of working in the team format can be achieved.

My leadership approach can be summarized within the general description of participative leadership with some directive style tendencies. I believe that the five aspects of the philosophy discussed above --honesty, respect for family, recognition of fallibility, teamwork, and excellence -- will be significant contributors to that general approach. This assertion derives from the experience I have had thus far, where I have acquired these values and have determined the usefulness of them to the goals that I have set for myself. I have confidence that they will continue to work well for me and those working for me after I complete my studies. Nevertheless, I am also aware that as experience is acquired changes may have to be made to accommodate the situation and thus other aspects of my philosophy made need to be emphasized to do the job I am asked to do. But I will be certain that the core values of the business are not among the parts of my philosophy that are adapted to meet future challenges.

I do believe that I possess many personality strengths that are useful in leadership positions. For example, I see myself as visionary, ethical, possessing decent abilities from my knowledge and experience, and strategic. I have the ability to delegate effectively and plan to utilize this skill over the course of my career. I have good communication skills and strive to have a clear and directed approach in communicating with others. Finally, I possess strong confidence in my abilities and will be able to use these personal strengths to their best advantage. I do acknowledge there are leadership skills that I need to improve upon as I gain more experience. In particular, I am uncertain of my ability to inspire others and I will be working to increase my skills in this area. I am sometimes too demanding and need to learn when it is appropriate to ask more and when I am engaging in a request for changes that, although bringing incremental quality improvements, do not add proportional value to the delivered product. Along these lines, I do have a tendency to be a perfectionist and I will need to work to temper this to avoid issues with those working with me.

Thus, I see three steps in an action plan for me to put this philosophy into place and shore up my weakness. First, I will keep the leadership philosophies or values of honesty, respect for family, recognition of fallibility, teamwork, and excellence foremost as I take on the challenges that will follow after my studies. While working to maximize these approaches, I will be aware of the significant downsides of being too demanding and perfectionist within a leadership position. Lastly, I will focus on appropriate use and growth of my personality strengths such as my forward-looking vision, strategic abilities, and communication skills to try to anticipate and

communicate actions and approaches that can be taken to lead my team and myself to success.

## **References**

Matthews, G. (2011). Study backs up strategies for achieving goals.

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<http://www.dominican.edu/dominicannews/study-backs-up-strategies-for-achieving-goals>