

LEAD SELF

ENGAGE OTHERS

ACHIEVE RESULTS

DEVELOP COALITIONS

SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

# LEAD SELF

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER:

## WHAT EVERY HEALTH LEADER SHOULD KNOW



This report examines and reviews the literature supporting the Lead Self domain of the LEADS in a Caring Environment leadership capability framework. Lead Self consists of four capabilities: A leader (1) is self-aware, (2) manages self, (3) develops self, and (4) demonstrates character. The underlying assumption of this framework is that effective personal leadership is associated with a set of definable skill sets or capabilities that can be learned by conscious and intentional effort.

Emotional intelligence is one of the core concepts that underlie all four of the Lead Self capabilities. The term describes the intra- and inter-personal aspects of intelligence. It underlies most components of self-leadership, including: attitude, motivation, trust, influence, interpersonal communication, self-control, and problem-solving.

### *Self-Aware*

The Self Aware capability refers to the awareness of one's own assumptions, values, principles, strengths & limitations. Self-aware leaders are adept at examining their own emotional triggers, thinking patterns, assumptions, values, principles, and strengths and limitations. Self-Aware can be further divided into awareness of emotions, awareness of assumptions and paradigms, and awareness of values and principles.

**Emotional self-awareness** refers to the ability to recognize one's own emotions and determine their impact on others. It requires the ability to be able to accurately assess one's own emotional triggers and weaknesses, as well as one's emotional strengths. Leaders that are highly emotionally aware tend to have a greater sense of their own self-worth and capabilities. They take the time for quiet reflection rather than act impulsively, they strive to understand their own emotional reactions and trigger points, they are able to continuously monitor their own emotional states, and they are able to leverage positive feelings to drive their motivation and actions.

**Awareness of perceptions and assumptions** is a key aspect of developing self-awareness. It is the ability to understand the impact our perceptions have on our sense of reality. Individuals' perceptions are often distortions of reality because each person has their own unique personalities, experiences, information, perspectives, biases, and discriminations.

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Canadian College of Health Leaders  
LEADS Collaborative  
Ottawa, ON, Canada

Telephone: 613-235-7218 | Fax: 613-235-5451

Email: [leads@cchl-ccls.ca](mailto:leads@cchl-ccls.ca)

[www.leads collaborative.ca](http://www.leads collaborative.ca)  
[www.cchl-ccls.ca](http://www.cchl-ccls.ca)

Our perceptions are the basis of creating frameworks, or paradigms, that often shape the way we select data and perceive events. Effective leaders test and compensate for distorted paradigms by continually challenging their own assumptions through a process of inquiry and advocacy.

**Awareness of values and principles** is critical for personal leadership, since these drive the choices and actions leaders take. Values are what may be personally worthy, relevant and important; while principles are the collective standards, guidelines, or rules that we use to guide our behaviour. Successful leaders align their values to effective leadership principles. Developing a personal vision or mission statement is an effective strategy for leaders to discover their true values.

### *Manages Self*

The Manages Self capability refers to taking responsibility for one's own performance and health. Effective leaders realize that in taking responsibility for their own choices, they empower themselves to have greater freedom to choose their responses. Manage Self can be further divided into *emotional management*, *personal mastery*, and *life balance*.

**Emotional management** refers to the ability to regulate both the expression and experience of emotions. The leadership competencies associated with emotional management include: emotional self-control, transparency, adaptability, achievement, initiative, and optimism. A leader can engage in emotional regulation in two ways: through emotional reappraisal or emotional suppression. Appropriate emotional expression is also important for leaders, since it is effective for rousing and motivating followers.

**Personal mastery** is about creating what one wants in life and in work. It can be developed by creating a personal vision and understanding one's own reflexive reactions. It's about taking control of one's life instead of blaming, not allowing external circumstances or mood to define one's choices, continually growing and learning, exercising discipline, and taking proactive control of one's own choices, decisions, and actions.

**Life balance** is closely linked with emotional intelligence. High resiliency is defined as the ability to successfully change, adapt, overcome, and cope with unexpected setbacks and general life challenges. Resilient leaders have particular mindsets, which include: being curious, optimistic, less sensitive, and being able to resist being reactionary, blaming others, or dwelling on unhappy feelings. One of the key strategies they employ is directly challenging their negative *self-talk* and maintaining control over their personal feelings and behaviours.

### *Develops Self*

The Develops Self capability refers to actively seeking opportunities and challenges for personal learning, character building, and growth. Effective leaders know that Self-development is life-long process, where the right attitude is as important as the right skill sets. Develops Self can be further divided into *developing soft skills* and *life-long learning*.



**Developing soft skills** becomes increasingly important as leaders develop in their careers. Soft skills could include motivation, communication skills, team management, confidence, versatility, reliability, and emotional and social intelligence. Recent research has identified soft skills, such as authentic and honest two-way communication, trust, empathy and genuine compassion for employees, as being most important for effective leadership.

**Life-long learning** refers to a mindset, where every experience, opportunity, change, situation, challenge, and conflict is seen as an opportunity to learn. Adult learners need to be autonomous and self-directed, use their own experiences and knowledge, have goals, learn only what they deem relevant, have practical information, and be shown respect. Self-directed learning works most effectively when a learning plan is made that addresses the gaps between *ideal self* and *real self*. Learning occurs in a cycle, which is associated with four learning styles: accommodating, converging, diverging, and assimilating.

### *Demonstrates Character*

The Demonstrates Character capability refers to the modeling of qualities such as honesty, integrity, resilience & confidence. Character can be defined as the behaviour one portrays to others, to the inward motivation to do what is right, or to abiding by ethical principles and values. Demonstrates Character can be further divided into *personal integrity* and *emotional resiliency*.

**Personal integrity** has four elements: consistent in words and action, consistent in adversity, being true to oneself, and displaying moral and ethical behaviour. The characteristics most often cited as important are a sense of morality and ethics, honesty, trustworthiness, respect, justice, openness, authenticity, empathy, and compassion. Integrity is foundational, followed by respect and responsibility, followed by empathy, emotional mastery, lack of blame, humility, accountability, courage, self-confidence, and focus on the whole. Developmental strategies for personal integrity include The Five E's Of Character Development: example, education, environment, experience, and evaluation.

**Emotional resiliency** refers to the ability to bounce back from setbacks and overcome adversity, to cope well with high levels of ongoing change and constant pressure, and to change and adjust from old ineffectual habits that may be dysfunction or maladaptive. Research suggests that emotional related competencies, such as self-confidence, optimism, social support, and established coping reactions can account for differences in resiliency between people. A new avenue of research suggests that positive emotional experiences may help build resiliency.

