



Leader Tool

Leadership traits for a bright 2021

2021 will be both a challenging and exciting year for leaders and leadership development. Even with the recent snap lockdown in Victoria, we are reminded that protecting our people's health is the top priority. Many of us are moving from situations that were confronting from the basic perspective of survival to dealing with people and organisational challenges that are yet to go away.

Many organisations implemented changes over the past 12 months that may normally have been deferred or scheduled in for longer project plans. Technology, digital and HR change happened more rapidly. These changes have created opportunities for leaders to prioritise their people and in doing so, enable their organisations to move from struggling towards thriving through change.

What can we take forward with us as leaders in 2021:

Understand and appreciate your people and their efforts as much as the outcomes. Recognise the context in which your people are working in order to more effectively lead your team. This could be increased stress and anxiety around the way members of the public are reacting to COVID health concerns as with our frontline workers or the negative perceptions of workplace risk for our teachers and childcare providers. Seeing and hearing your people in order to understand and appreciate the extra effort, energy, and capacity that is required to achieve results during a time of ongoing disruption.

When you take time to understand the efforts of your people and demonstrate curiosity for what they have had to do to achieve results, it opens up communication and collaboration, which can lead to learning and innovation. Most importantly, it shows that you care and strengthens engagement through trust.

Make every meeting with your team count. Use Appreciative Inquiry¹ to help you draw out details around the experience and effort required for your team members to achieve their objectives. In team meetings, we make sure that different people chair the meetings, and more importantly, different people take minutes. This allows for different styles and voices to express ideas. This means that during this process relationships are strengthened, and clarity around what assistance or additional skills or resources may be required can surface. Decisions can be made, and direct actions can result from the meeting, ensuring that this valuable time is not wasted. Make sure you ask your team to clarify their expectations and preferences for how your meetings will be run and doing this every quarter is a great refresher.



We are stronger together; the effectiveness of your team demonstrates this every day.

Crises give dream teams an opportunity to show what they can do and put their strengths to work. They draw on the trust and respect they have for each other and their leader to get on with what needs to be done. Being clear about goals and objectives ensures cohesion and as a leader going through the process of checking that everyone is still aligned. Take the lead and suggest that at the next meeting you have a brainstorming session (and allocate a scribe to capture all of the ideas) and ask the team to tell each other what they want to achieve in the next quarter.



Purpose means more than ever. There are some key ingredients that can assist you and your team in getting through stressful events effectively. Namely, taking time to think about your values, what is meaningful and important to you, what gives you joy, the impact you wish to have on others and the difference you want to make. This exercise will help you to keep on track and allow you to be authentic, effective and enjoy what you do. Secondly, do this exercise with your team. The PERMAH model can assist in this process.²

We are here to support you so that you can better support your people. If you have any further questions or would like to discuss a specific concern contact our Manager Support Hotline or your Relationship Manager. As always, as your EAP we are here to support your people whatever the nature of their concerns, please contact AccessEAP on **1800 818 728**.

1. <https://positivepsychology.com/appreciative-inquiry-process/>
2. <https://www.michellemcquaid.com/permah-workplace-survey/>

