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RECOGNIZING YOUR TRAITS

INTRODUCTION

Why are some people leaders while others are not? What makes people become leaders? Do leaders have certain traits? These questions have been of interest for many years. It seems that all of us want to know what characteristics account for effective leadership. This chapter will address the traits that are important to leadership.

Since the early 20th century, hundreds of research studies have been conducted on the traits of leaders. These studies have produced an extensive list of ideal leadership traits (see Antonakis et al., 2004; Bass, 1990). The list of important leadership traits is long and includes such traits as diligence, trustworthiness, dependability, articulateness, sociability, open-mindedness, intelligence, confidence, self-assurance, and conscientiousness. Because the list is so extensive, it is difficult to identify specifically which traits are essential for leaders. In fact, nearly all of the traits are probably related to effective leadership.

What traits are important when you are asked to be a leader? To answer this question, two areas will be addressed in this chapter. First, a set of selected traits that appear by all accounts to be strongly related to effective leadership in everyday life will be discussed. Second, the lives of several historical and contemporary leaders will be examined with a discussion of the traits that play a role in their leadership. Throughout this discussion, the unique ways that certain traits affect the leadership process in one way or another will be addressed.

LEADERSHIP TRAITS EXPLAINED

From the beginning of the 20th century to the present day, researchers have focused a great deal of attention on the unique characteristics of successful leaders. Thousands of studies have been conducted to identify the traits of effective leaders. The results of these studies have produced an extensive list of important leadership traits; each of these traits contributes to the leadership process.

For example, research studies by several investigators found the following traits to be important: achievement, persistence, insight, initiative, self-confidence, responsibility, cooperativeness, tolerance, influence, sociability, drive, motivation, integrity, confidence, cognitive ability, task knowledge, extroversion, conscientiousness, and openness (Judge et al., 2002; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; Stogdill, 1974). On the international level, Robert J. House and colleagues (2004),

in a study of 17,000 managers in 62 different cultures, identified a list of 22 valued traits that were universally endorsed as characteristics of outstanding leadership in these countries. The list, which was outlined in Table 1.1 in Chapter 1, “Understanding Leadership,” includes such attributes as being trustworthy, just, honest, encouraging, positive, dynamic, dependable, intelligent, decisive, communicative, informed, and a team builder. As these findings indicate, research studies on leadership traits have identified a wide array of important characteristics of leaders.

However, these research findings raise an important question: If there are so many important leadership traits, which *specific traits* do people need to be successful leaders? While the answer to this question is not crystal clear, the research points to *six key traits: intelligence, confidence, charisma, determination, sociability, and integrity*. In the following section, we will discuss each of these traits in turn.

Intelligence

Intelligence is an important trait related to effective leadership. Intelligence includes having good language skills, perceptual skills, and reasoning ability. This combination of assets makes people good thinkers, and makes them better leaders.

While it is hard for a person to alter their IQ, there are certain ways for a person to improve intelligence in general. Intelligent leaders are well informed. They are aware of what is going on around them and understand the job that needs to be done. It is important for leaders to obtain information about what their leadership role entails and learn as much as possible about their work environment. This information will help leaders be more knowledgeable and insightful.

For example, a few years ago, a friend, Chris, was asked to be the coach of his daughter’s middle school soccer team even though he had never played soccer and knew next to nothing about how the game is played. Chris took the job and eventually was a great success, but not without a lot of effort. He spent many hours learning about soccer. He read how-to books, instructor’s manuals, and coaching books. In addition, Chris subscribed to several soccer magazines. He talked to other coaches and learned everything he could about playing the game. By the time he had finished the first season, others considered Chris to be a very competent coach. He was smart and learned how to be a successful coach.

Regarding intelligence, few if any of us can expect to be another Albert Einstein. Most of us have average intelligence and know that there are limits to what we can do. Nevertheless, becoming more knowledgeable about our leadership positions gives us the information we need to become better leaders.

Confidence

Being confident is another important trait of an effective leader. Confident people feel self-assured and believe they can accomplish their goals. Rather than feeling uncertain, they feel strong and secure about their positions. They do not second-guess themselves but, rather, move forward on projects with a clear vision. Confident leaders feel a sense of certainty and believe that they are doing the right thing. Clearly, **confidence** is a trait that has to do with feeling positive about oneself and one’s ability to succeed.

If confidence is a central trait of successful leaders, how can you build your own confidence? First, confidence comes from *understanding* what is required of you. For example, when first learning to drive a car, a student is low in confidence because they do not know *what* to do. If an instructor explains the driving process and demonstrates how to drive, the student can gain confidence because they now have an understanding of how to drive. Awareness and understanding build confidence. Confidence can also come from having a mentor to show the way and provide constructive feedback. This mentor may be a boss, an experienced coworker, or a significant other from outside the organization. Because mentors act as role models and sounding boards, they provide essential help to learn the dynamics of leadership.

Confidence also comes from *practice*. This is important to point out, because practice is something everyone can do. Consider Michael Phelps, one of the most well-known athletes in the world today. Phelps is a very gifted swimmer, with 23 Olympic gold medals and the record for winning the most medals, 28, of any Olympic athlete in history. But Phelps also spent an enormous amount of time practicing. His workout regimen included swimming six hours a day, six days a week. His excellent performance and confidence were a result of his practice, as well as his gifts.

In leadership, practice builds confidence because it provides assurance that an aspiring leader can do what needs to be done. Taking on leadership roles, even minor ones on committees or through volunteer activities, provides practice for being a leader. Building one leadership activity on another can increase confidence for more demanding leadership roles. Those who accept opportunities to practice their leadership will experience increased confidence in their leadership abilities.

Charisma

Of all the traits related to effective leadership, charisma gets the most attention. **Charisma** refers to a leader's special magnetic charm and appeal, and it can have a huge effect on the leadership process. Charisma is a special personality characteristic that gives a leader the capacity to do extraordinary things. In particular, it gives the leader exceptional powers of influence. A good example of a charismatic leader is former president John F. Kennedy, who motivated the American people with his eloquent oratorical style. President Kennedy was a gifted, charismatic leader who had an enormous impact on others.

At the same time, charisma can also be used by leaders in less positive ways. As we discuss in Chapter 12, "Exploring Destructive Leadership," charisma enhances a leader's ability to gain people's devotion. Incorporated with charisma are leaders' strong rhetorical skills, vision, and energy, which destructive leaders use to win others over and to exploit followers for their own ends. World history abounds with examples of leaders, from Adolf Hitler to InfoWars host Alex Jones, who use their charisma in a harmful way.

It is not unusual for many of us to feel challenged with regard to charisma because it is not a common personality trait. A few select people are very charismatic, but most of us are not. Since charisma appears in short supply, a question arises: What do leaders do if they are not naturally charismatic?

Based on the writings of leadership scholars, several behaviors characterize charismatic leadership (Conger, 1999; House, 1976; Shamir et al., 1993). First, charismatic leaders serve as *strong role models* for the values that they desire others to adopt. Mohandas Gandhi advocated nonviolence and was an exemplary role model of civil disobedience; his charisma enabled him to influence others. Second, charismatic leaders *show competence* in every aspect of leadership, so others trust their decisions. Third, charismatic leaders *articulate clear goals and strong values*. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech is an example of this type of charismatic leadership. Fourth, charismatic leaders communicate *high expectations* for followers and *show confidence* in their abilities to meet these expectations. Finally, charismatic leaders are an *inspiration* to others. They can excite and motivate others to become involved in real change, as demonstrated by Kennedy and King.

Determination

Determination is another trait that characterizes effective leaders. Determined leaders are very focused and attentive to tasks. They know *where* they are going and *how* they intend to get there. Determination is the decision to get the job done; it includes characteristics such as initiative, persistence, and drive. People with determination are willing to assert themselves, they are proactive, and they have the capacity to persevere in the face of obstacles. Being determined includes showing dominance at times, especially in situations where others need direction.

We have all heard of determined people who have accomplished spectacular things—the person with cancer who runs a standard 26.2-mile marathon, the blind person who climbs Mount Everest, or the single mom of four kids who graduates from college. A good example of determined leadership is Nelson Mandela, who is featured in the Leadership Snapshot in this chapter. Mandela's goal was to end apartheid in South Africa. Even though he was imprisoned for many years, he steadfastly held to his principles. He was committed to reaching his goal, and he never wavered from his vision. Mandela was focused and disciplined—a determined leader (Asmal et al., 2003).

What distinguishes all of these leaders from other people is their determination to get the job done. Of all the traits discussed in this chapter, determination is probably the one trait that can be acquired by those who lead. All it demands is perseverance. Staying focused on the task, clarifying the goals, articulating the vision, and encouraging others to stay the course are characteristics of determined leaders. Being determined takes discipline and the ability to endure, but having this trait will almost certainly enhance a person's leadership.

Sociability

Another important trait for leaders is **sociability**. Sociability refers to a leader's capacity to establish pleasant social relationships. People want sociable leaders—leaders with whom they can get along. Leaders who show sociability are friendly, outgoing, courteous, tactful, and diplomatic.

They are sensitive to others' needs and show concern for others' well-being. Sociable leaders have good interpersonal skills and help to create cooperative relationships within their work environments.

Being sociable comes easier for some than for others. For example, it is easy for extroverted leaders to talk to others and be outgoing, but it is harder for introverted leaders to do so. Similarly, some individuals are naturally "people persons," while others prefer to be alone. Although people vary in the degree to which they are outgoing, it is possible to increase sociability. A sociable leader gets along with coworkers and other people in the work setting. Being friendly, kind, and thoughtful, as well as talking freely with others and giving them support, goes a long way to establish a leader's sociability. Sociable leaders bring positive energy to a group and make the work environment a more enjoyable place.

To illustrate, consider the following example. This scenario occurred in one of the best leadership classes I have had in 40 years of teaching. In this class, there was a student named Anne Fox who was a very sociable leader. Anne was very caring and was liked by everyone in the class. After the first week of the semester, Anne could name everyone in class; when attendance was taken, she knew instantly who was there and who was not. In class discussions, Anne always contributed good ideas, and her remarks were sensitive of others' points of view. Anne was positive about life, and her attitude was contagious. By her presence, Anne created an atmosphere in which everyone felt unique but also included. She was the glue that held us all together. Anne was not assigned to be the leader in the class, but by the semester's end she emerged as a leader. Her sociable nature enabled her to develop strong relationships and become a leader in the class. By the end of the class, all of us were the beneficiaries of her leadership.

Integrity

Finally, and perhaps most important, effective leaders have **integrity**. Integrity characterizes leaders who possess the qualities of honesty and trustworthiness. People who adhere to a strong set of principles and take responsibility for their actions are exhibiting integrity. Leaders with integrity inspire confidence in others because they can be trusted to do what they say they are going to do. They are loyal, dependable, and transparent. Basically, integrity makes a leader believable and worthy of our trust.

Dishonesty creates mistrust in others, and dishonest leaders are seen as undependable and unreliable. Honesty helps people to have trust and faith in what leaders have to say and what they stand for. Honesty also enhances a leader's ability to influence others because they have confidence in and believe in their leader.

Integrity demands being open with others and representing reality as fully and completely as possible. However, this is not an easy task: There are times when telling the complete truth can be destructive or counterproductive. The challenge for leaders is to strike a balance between being open and candid and monitoring what is appropriate to disclose in a particular situation. While it is important for leaders to be authentic, it is also essential for them to have integrity in their relationships with others.

LEADERSHIP SNAPSHOT

Nelson Mandela, First Black President of South Africa



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In 1990, when Nelson Mandela was released from prison after serving 27 long years, he was determined not to be angry or vindictive, but instead to work to unite his country of South Africa, which had been fractured by generations of apartheid.

The descendant of a tribal king, Mandela was born in 1918 in a small African village and grew up in a country where whites ruled through subjugation and tyranny over Blacks and other racial groups. Mandela attended Methodist missionary schools and put himself through law school, eventually opening the first Black law partnership in 1942. His firm represented the African National Congress, which was engaged in resisting South Africa's apartheid policies, and during the 1950s, he became a leader of the ANC. Influenced by Mohandas Gandhi, Mandela was initially committed to nonviolent resistance but shifted to supporting violent tactics when the government refused to change its apartheid policies. In 1964, Mandela received a life sentence for plotting to overthrow the government by violence.

During the nearly three decades Mandela spent in prison, he became a symbolic figure for the anti-apartheid movement. But during those years, Mandela spent time examining himself, coming to see himself as others did: as an aggressive and militant revolutionary. He learned to control his temper and strong will and used persuasion instead to convince others. He listened to others' life stories, including those of the white guards, seeking to understand their perspectives. He was steadfast in maintaining his dignity, carefully refusing to be subservient while being respectful to the guards and others. As a result, he became a natural leader inside the prison, while outside, his fame framed him as a symbolic martyr

not only to Black Africans but also to people across the globe. Free Mandela campaigns were building around the world, with other countries and international corporations being pressured by stockholders and citizens to “divest” in South Africa.

In 1990, South African president F. W. de Klerk, fearing civil war and economic collapse, released Mandela, at the time 71, from prison. Mandela emerged as a moral leader who stood by the principles of liberty and equal rights for all. He began speaking around the world, raising financial support for the ANC while seeking to bring peace to his fractured country. In 1992, the South African government instituted a new constitution and held a popular election with all parties represented, including the ANC. The result? In 1994, Mandela was elected as the first Black president of South Africa, effectively ending apartheid. For his role in negotiations to abolish apartheid, Mandela received the Nobel Peace Prize, sharing it with de Klerk.

As president of South Africa from 1994 to 1999, Mandela’s mission was to transform a nation from minority rule and apartheid to a multiracial democracy. On the first day of his presidency, he set the tone with the predominantly white staff of the former president, telling them that those who wanted to keep their jobs were welcome to stay, stating “Reconciliation starts here.” He developed a multiracial staff and cabinet, using his friendly smiling style and tactic of listening carefully to all viewpoints before making decisions to keep the staff focused on problems and issues rather than on partisanship.

Mandela served his five-year term as president but, at 76 years old, chose not to seek another term. In retirement, he continued to advocate for social causes, serving as a mediator in disputes outside of South Africa and bringing a message of peace and justice throughout the world. Mandela died in 2013. While it is difficult to summarize all that he accomplished, Mandela’s legacy is best described by former U.S. president Bill Clinton, who in 2003 wrote, “Under a burden of oppression he saw through difference, discrimination and destruction to embrace our common humanity.”

Integrity undergirds all aspects of leadership. It is at the core of being a leader. Integrity is a central aspect of a leader’s ability to influence. If people do not trust a leader, the leader’s influence potential is weakened. In essence, integrity is the bedrock of who a leader is. When a leader’s integrity comes into question, their potential to lead is lost.

Former president Bill Clinton (1993–2001) is a good example of how integrity is related to leadership. In the late 1990s, he was brought before the U.S. Congress for misrepresenting under oath an affair he had engaged in with a White House intern. For his actions, he was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, but then was acquitted by the U.S. Senate. At one point during the long ordeal, the president appeared on national television and, in what is now a famous speech, declared his innocence. Because subsequent hearings provided information suggesting he might have lied during his television speech, many Americans felt Clinton had violated his duty and responsibility as a person, leader, and president. As a result, Clinton’s integrity was clearly challenged and the impact of his leadership substantially weakened.

In conclusion, many traits are related to effective leadership. The six traits discussed here appear to be particularly important in the leadership process. As will be revealed in subsequent chapters, leadership is a very complex process. The traits discussed in this chapter are important but are only one dimension of a multidimensional process.

LEADERSHIP TRAITS IN PRACTICE

Throughout history, there have been many great leaders. Each of them has led with unique talents and in different circumstances. The following section analyzes the accomplishments and the traits of six famous leaders. Although there are hundreds of equally distinguished leaders, these six are highlighted because they represent different kinds of leadership at different points in history. All of these leaders are recognized as being notable leaders: Each has had an impact on many people's lives and accomplished great things.

It's important to know that singling out leaders for their admirable traits can be problematic. Leaders are, after all, human, and humans are not perfect. Given time and the hindsight of history, people who have been identified as having strong leadership traits may be found to have negative qualities as well. For example, George Washington, the first president of the United States, is widely regarded as the founding father of this country. He has been described by historians as having the traits of modesty, evenness, trustworthiness, balance, and integrity. His leadership was instrumental in leading the colonies to victory over Great Britain in the Revolutionary War and in the creation of the U.S. Constitution and establishment of the U.S. democratic government. However, despite his traits and leadership in the founding of the country, there is a dark side to Washington. During his presidency, he and his wife Martha held 317 enslaved people on their Virginia plantation, and it is said that he was a firm disciplinarian who ordered whippings of those enslaved people who were rebellious.

It is important to keep the imperfect nature of people in mind as you read about the leaders discussed here—Harriet Tubman, Winston Churchill, Mother Teresa, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Oprah Winfrey, and LeBron James. While each of these individuals has accomplished much and impacted many, they may also have made missteps along the way or will in the future. As you read about each of them, focus on the *traits* that make their leadership effective and think about how those traits contribute to their success as leaders.

Harriet Tubman (c. 1820–1913)

Harriet Tubman was an American activist who played a major role in the abolitionist movement in the years leading up to the Civil War (1861–1865). She was born enslaved in Dorchester County, Maryland. At the age of 12, she suffered a severe blow to the head while trying to assist a fellow



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enslaved person who was being attacked. The wound she received caused intermittent blackouts for the rest of her life. In 1849, Tubman escaped by way of the Underground Railroad from Maryland to Philadelphia in the free state of Pennsylvania by traveling at night, using the North Star as her guide. After she gained her own freedom, Tubman became a “conductor” for the Underground Railroad. She subsequently made 13 return trips to the South and rescued as many as 300 other enslaved people. Tubman was known as “Moses” because she helped her people escape to freedom. During the Civil War, she became a spy and soldier for the North (for the Union Army) and was the first woman in the armed services to carry out a military operation: In 1863, she led the successful Combahee River Raid that freed more than 750 enslaved people. In her later years, she settled in Auburn, New York, where she established a home dedicated to the care of older African Americans. When she died in 1913, Tubman was 93 years old.

Traits and Characteristics

Harriet Tubman was a tenacious leader (C. Clinton, 2004; Wills, 1994). She had a far-reaching impact despite horrific treatment, a lack of formal education, and the seizures she experienced as a result of her head injury. She fought courageously to end slavery with persistent resolve. Devoted to her cause, she repeatedly risked her own life to bring freedom to others. She was determined, focused, strong, and unpretentious. Her leadership combined the spiritual and the practical; she believed in divine guidance but was pragmatic and methodical in her approach to tasks. Tubman was a remarkable leader and her accomplishments extraordinary.

Winston Churchill (1874–1965)

Winston Churchill was one of the greatest statesmen and orators of the 20th century. In addition, he was a talented painter and prolific writer; he received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1953. Churchill served in the military during World War I, became prime minister of Great Britain in May 1940, and remained in that office through World War II, until 1945. It was at this time that his masterful leadership was most visible. When the Germans threatened to invade Britain, Churchill stood strong. He made many famous speeches that had far-reaching effects on the morale of the people of Great Britain and the Allied forces. On the home front, he was a social reformer. He served a second term as prime minister from 1951 to 1955. He died at the age of 90 in 1965.



Walter Stoneman/Stringer/Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Traits and Characteristics

Winston Churchill's leadership was remarkable because it emerged from a man who was average in many respects and who faced challenges in his personal life. In his education, he did not stand out as superior to others. On a societal level, he was a loner who had few friends. On a personal level, he suffered from bouts of depression throughout his life. Despite these characteristics, Churchill emerged as a leader because of his other unique gifts and how he used them (Hayward, 1997; Keegan, 2002; Sandys & Littman, 2003). A voracious reader, Churchill was plain speaking, decisive, detail oriented, and informed (Hayward, 1997). Furthermore, he was very ambitious, for himself, but also for his nation. He evoked strong reactions among his followers. His political opponents characterized him as pugnacious, egotistical, and dangerous while his supporters thought him charismatic, courageous, and a genius (Addison, 2005). His most significant talent was his masterful use of language. In his oratory, the normally plainspoken Churchill used words and imagery in powerful ways that touched the hearts of many and set the moral climate of the war (Keegan, 2002). He had the ability to build hope and inspire others to rise to the challenge. His stoicism and optimism were an inspiration to his people and all of the Allied forces (Sandys & Littman, 2003).

Mother Teresa (1910–1997)

A Roman Catholic nun considered a saint by many, Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 for her work with people living in poverty in Kolkata, India, and throughout the world. Born in Macedonia, Mother Teresa came from a comfortable background. At the age of 18, she joined the Catholic Sisters of Loreto order and worked for 17 years as a high school teacher in Kolkata. Her awareness of poverty in Kolkata caused her to leave the convent in 1948 to devote herself to working full-time with people experiencing poverty in the city. In 1950, Mother Teresa founded a new religious order, the Missionaries of Charity, to care for people who did not have adequate access to housing, health care, and other basic necessities.

Today, more than 1 million workers are affiliated with the Missionaries of Charity in more than 40 countries. The charity provides help to people who have been hurt by floods, epidemics, famines, and war. The Missionaries of Charity also operate hospitals, schools, orphanages, youth centers, shelters, and hospices. For her humanitarian work and efforts for peace, Mother Teresa



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has been recognized with many awards, including the Pope John XXIII Peace Prize (1971), the Nehru Award (1972), the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom (1985), and the Congressional Gold Medal (1994). Although she struggled with deteriorating health in her later years, Mother Teresa remained actively involved in her work to the very end. She died at the age of 87 in 1997. In September 2016, Pope Francis declared Mother Teresa a saint, with the official name of Saint Teresa of Kolkata. In a statement announcing the canonization, the Vatican called her a “metaphor for selfless devotion and holiness” (Lyman, 2016).

Traits and Characteristics

Mother Teresa was a simple woman of small stature who dressed in a plain blue and white sari, and who never owned more than the people she served. Mirroring her appearance, her mission was simple—to care for the poor. From her first year on the streets of Kolkata where she tended to one dying person to her last years when thousands of people were cared for by the Missionaries of Charity, Mother Teresa stayed focused on her goal. She was a true civil servant who was simultaneously determined and fearless, and humble and spiritual. She often listened to the will of God. When criticized for her stand on abortion and women's role in the family, or her approaches to eliminating poverty, Mother Teresa responded with a strong will; she never wavered in her deep-seated human values. Teaching by example with few words, she was a role model for others. Clearly, Mother Teresa was a leader who practiced what she preached (Gonzalez-Balado, 1997; Sebba, 1997; Spink, 1997; Vardey, 1995).

Dr. Anthony Fauci (1940–)

Dr. Anthony Fauci was the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases from 1984 to 2022, a time during which he advised seven U.S. presidents but most Americans had never heard his name. During his 38 years as director, he oversaw efforts to prevent, diagnose, and treat established infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS, respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, tuberculosis, and malaria as well as emerging diseases such as Ebola, Zika, West Nile virus, and SARS. He became known for his groundbreaking work in HIV/AIDS research, persuading the presidential administration to take the crisis seriously, getting increased funding for AIDS research, and forging alliances with activists by allowing access to experimental drugs even as they were being tested in clinical trials. Most crucially, he developed an understanding of how HIV attacks the human defense system, sparking the creation of effective medications that cut down the mortality rate of the disease. But it was Fauci's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic from 2020 to 2022 that led to him becoming a household name.

In January 2020, as reports of the novel coronavirus emerged from China, Fauci quickly assembled a research team to work on a vaccine. Within weeks, as deaths and illness from COVID-19 began to mount in other countries across the globe, he worked with colleagues at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prepare the American public for what was to become a major global pandemic. Fauci became a fixture at news briefings alongside President Donald Trump, where sometimes he felt the need to rebut false or misleading statements that the president made about the virus or treatments for it. Fauci's calm demeanor and commitment to communicating only the hard facts about the virus propelled him to celebrity as the country, and the globe, endured an unprecedented shutdown. But as the public health crisis became politicized and divisive, some people began to challenge his decision making, scientific competence, and ethics. In fact, Fauci and his family members became subjects of harassment and death threats. Nevertheless, through governmental support and funding, several COVID-19 vaccines were developed during the pandemic, which were able to dramatically decrease the virus's transmission and effects. Ultimately, COVID-19 was responsible for more than 6.7 million deaths worldwide, including over 1.1 million in the United States. Mutations of the virus continue to affect people worldwide today, but the mortality rate of the virus has



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been greatly lessened through the use of the vaccines and treatments developed through and facilitated by Fauci's leadership. Fauci stepped down from his NIAID post and as chief medical advisor to the U.S. president in December 2022.

Traits and Characteristics

Dr. Anthony Fauci's remarkable and long career fighting infectious diseases and steering the United States' response to the COVID-19 pandemic is evidence of his strengths as a leader. Fauci's trait of determination was evident in his work to combat HIV/AIDS through his success in getting the U.S. government to fund research for the disease, which ultimately resulted in effective drug treatments. His sociability was a key factor in his ability to develop alliances with AIDS activists, who were angry about the government's slow reaction to the deadly disease, and gain their trust and support.

Fauci's intelligence was a significant factor in his distinguished and accomplished career and made him credible when discussing the complexities of HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he approached the public with confidence and integrity, providing information that was factually proven about the virus and treatments, and openly rebutting and disagreeing with false claims and information by the president and other elected officials. Despite distractions, which included threats to his family's well-being and heated exchanges during congressional hearings, he stayed on message, explaining the logic behind recommendations for COVID-19 restrictions. Fauci was focused and determined in his efforts to minimize the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the United States and facilitating the quick development of a vaccine and treatments for the disease. He held on to his resolve and commitment to deliver and communicate public health guidance based on the available data. While knowing the economic pain that resulted from business

closures and shutdowns, he believed saving lives mattered more in the long term than saving jobs (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, 2023; Ott, 2020; Segal, 2022).

Oprah Winfrey (1954–)

An award-winning television talk show host, Oprah Winfrey is one of the most powerful and influential people in the world. Born in rural Mississippi into a dysfunctional family, she was raised by her grandmother until she was 6. Winfrey learned to read at a very early age and skipped two grades in school. Her adolescent years were difficult: While living in Milwaukee with her mother, who worked two jobs, Winfrey was molested by a family member. Despite these experiences, she was an honors student in high school and received national accolades for her oratory ability. She received a full scholarship to Tennessee State University, where she studied communication and worked at a local radio station. Winfrey's work in the media eventually led her to Chicago where she became host of the highly acclaimed *Oprah Winfrey Show*. In 2007, Winfrey was the highest-paid entertainer in television, earning an annual salary estimated at \$260 million. She also is an actor, a producer, a book critic, and a magazine publisher and, in 2011, left her successful television show to concentrate on her television network, OWN. In 2013, Winfrey received the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. In 2018, Winfrey won the Golden Globe Cecil B. DeMille Award for her contributions to the entertainment industry. Winfrey was the first Black woman to win this award.



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Her total wealth is estimated at more than \$3.1 billion. Winfrey is also a highly regarded philanthropist: Her giving has focused on making a difference in the lives of people experiencing poverty, natural disasters, and other hardships. Winfrey has paid special attention to the needs of people in Africa, raising millions of dollars to help AIDS-affected children there and creating a leadership academy for girls in a small town near Johannesburg, South Africa.

Traits and Characteristics

Oprah Winfrey's remarkable journey from rural poverty to influential world leader can be explained by several of her strengths (Harris & Watson, 2007; Illouz, 2003; McDonald, 2007). Foremost, Winfrey is an excellent communicator. Since she was a little girl reciting Bible passages

in church, she has been comfortable in front of an audience. On television, she is able to talk to millions of people and have each person feel as if she is talking directly to them. Winfrey is also intelligent and well read, with a strong business sense. She is sincere, determined, and inspirational. Winfrey has a charismatic style of leadership that enables her to connect with people. She is spontaneous and expressive, and has a fearless ability to self-disclose. Because she has “been in the struggle” and survived, she is seen as a role model. Winfrey has overcome many obstacles in her life and encourages others to overcome their struggles as well. Her message is a message of hope.

LeBron James (1984–)

LeBron James is a professional basketball player for the Los Angeles Lakers, whose extraordinary athletic skills and accomplishments are recognized worldwide (Coombs & Cassilo, 2017; ESPN, 2019; Green, 2017). When James was in high school, his exceptional talent had already been recognized by National Basketball Association scouts, and he was selected as the Cleveland Cavaliers’ first overall draft pick in 2003. James has been with three different teams during his professional career (Cleveland Cavaliers, Miami Heat, and L.A. Lakers), setting numerous scoring records and winning several Most Valuable Player awards. He has won two Olympic gold medals and four NBA championships—two with Miami, one with Cleveland, and one with Los Angeles.

Because of his skill and subsequent fame, James has considerable influence among his fans, his teammates, other professional athletes, and the wider public. In 2017, *Time* magazine identified him as one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World. James has used his stature to speak out about NBA rules he thinks should be changed, mistakes made by the Cavaliers’ front office, and racist comments by NBA owners.



Everett Collection Inc/Alamy Stock Photo

James has used his platform to champion racial equality and social justice. In 2020, James helped establish More Than A Vote, a nonprofit organization led by prominent Black athletes that is devoted to combating systemic, racist voter suppression through voter outreach and education.

Despite his superstar status, James is still true to his humble roots. He grew up in Akron, Ohio, under challenging circumstances that motivated him to give back to underresourced communities. He has supported numerous causes and community outreach programs, including Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the Children’s Defense Fund, and a whole-house renovation for a needy family, where he contributed his own labor, fitting it in around his training schedule with the Cavaliers (Curtis, 2016). In 2004, in just his second year as a pro basketball player, James established the LeBron James Family Foundation to improve the lives of children and teens in Akron

through educational and cocurricular programs. In 2018, the LJFF opened the *I PROMISE School*, of which James said, “This school is so important to me because our vision is to create a place for the kids in Akron who need it most—those that could fall through the cracks if we don’t do something. We’ve learned over the years what works and what motivates them, and now we can bring all of that together in one place, along with the right resources and experts” (Evans, 2017).

Traits and Characteristics

LeBron James has many qualities that contribute to his effectiveness as a leader. He has physical power and the ability to dominate other players on the basketball court. He has great confidence in his basketball skills, which inspires teammates to perform at high levels as well. He is a consistent performer, being selected to play in 16 NBA All-Star Games. He is ambitious and determined to win championships. He has the endurance to play for many years to come, but even now is thinking about the next phase of his life, and the legacy he will leave behind. He operates out of a strong set of principles, such as giving back to his community. He has the emotional maturity and resilience to handle criticism and learn from it. His charisma has earned him spots on many magazine covers, and numerous invitations to host or be a guest on TV talk shows.

All of these individuals have exhibited exceptional leadership. While each of these leaders is unique, together they share many common characteristics. All are visionary, strong willed, diligent, and inspirational. As purpose-driven leaders, they are role models and symbols of hope. Reflecting on the characteristics of these extraordinary leaders will provide you with a better understanding of the traits that are important for effective leadership. Although you may not aspire to be another Dr. Fauci or Mother Teresa, you can learn a great deal from these leaders in understanding how your own traits affect your leadership.

SUMMARY

This chapter describes the traits required of a leader. Social science research has provided insight into leadership traits. Thousands of leadership studies have been performed to identify the traits of effective leaders; the results of these studies point to a very long list of important leadership traits. From this list, the traits that appear to be especially important for effective leadership are *intelligence, confidence, charisma, determination, sociability, and integrity*.

From an examination of a select group of well-known historical and contemporary leaders including Harriet Tubman, Winston Churchill, Mother Teresa, Dr. Anthony Fauci, Oprah Winfrey, and LeBron James, it is clear that exemplary leaders exhibit many similar traits. In the main, these leaders were or are visionary, strong willed, diligent, inspirational, purpose driven, and hopeful. These leadership figures provide useful models for understanding the traits that are important and desirable for achieving effective leadership.

Because leadership is a complex process, there are no simple paths or guarantees to becoming a successful leader. Each individual is unique, and each of us has our own distinct talents for leadership. Those who are naturally strong in the six traits discussed in this chapter will be well

equipped for leadership. If you are not strong on all of these traits but are willing to work on them, you can still become an effective leader.

Remember that many traits are related to effective leadership. By becoming aware of your own traits and how to nourish them, you will be well on your way to becoming a successful leader.

KEY TERMS

charisma
confidence
determination

integrity
intelligence
sociability

Application

2.1 Case Study—NorthTown Doulas

Kamiah N. didn't like what she was seeing. The infant mortality rate of African American babies in her community was nearly four times that of babies who were white and of other racial groups. She had experienced this personally: When she was 19, her first child died four days after birth from conditions that, had she known, could have been prevented during pregnancy.

Kamiah grew up in an impoverished, mostly African American neighborhood in a mid-sized city, known as NorthTown. When she became pregnant, she relied on friends or others in her neighborhood to tell her what she needed to know. She didn't consider going to a doctor; regular health care was not readily accessible or affordable for the families in her neighborhood, most of whom were uninsured. In addition, Kamiah had heard rumors that the pregnant women from their neighborhood who did visit doctors were at risk of having their child taken away by Child Protective Services after birth because "they always run a drug screen on you to see if you used drugs during pregnancy" or because you neglected your and the baby's health during pregnancy.

But when Kamiah became pregnant again, she was determined to find out what could be done to make sure her second baby survived. She began researching infant mortality and discovered the leading causes of infant mortality in her community were low birth weight and shortened gestation periods. Most low-weight babies were born prematurely, and many that were full term were small because of the youngness of the mother or because the mother did not gain enough weight during pregnancy. She also discovered that many African American mothers are wary of hospitals and doctors. A 2018 National Vital Statistics Report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that African American mothers are 2.3 times more likely than white mothers to wait to begin prenatal care until their third trimester of pregnancy or to not receive prenatal care at all (Osterman & Martin, 2018).

Despite her apprehensions, Kamiah went to a free clinic during her pregnancy and learned firsthand why young women like her would not want to visit a doctor. She felt judged by the clinic's white medical professionals, and when she said she wanted to have her baby at home because she couldn't afford a hospital, the doctors said that wasn't possible and that CPS could become involved if she did.

When Kamiah attended a Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) conference on prenatal care, she learned about something she had never heard about before—*doulas*. Doulas are trained professionals who offer physical, emotional, and informational support to moms-to-be before, during, and after birth. But the price tag for doula care was anywhere from \$250 to \$2,000, which meant a doula was not an option for Kamiah or any of the low-income women in her neighborhood.

When she gave birth to her second child in the hospital, she says she remembers feeling "completely alone" and wished she'd had someone there to advocate for her while she was doing the hard work of giving birth. It was then that Kamiah decided not only to become a doula, but to become certified to train others in her community to be doulas as well.

Kamiah applied for and was awarded an educational grant offered by her neighborhood's community association to pay for her training as a doula. When she completed the training, she immediately began the certification process to become a doula trainer. At the same time, she met with the executive director of the local YWCA for advice on how to pursue her dream of providing doula services for the women in her neighborhood. The executive listened to Kamiah's plan and, without hesitation, offered to mentor her on how to set up a nonprofit organization and apply for grant funding, and how to identify and talk with potential donors, elected officials, and others who could support her efforts.

A year later, Kamiah established NorthTown Doulas, a nonprofit that funds and supports doula training for doulas of color. NorthTown Doulas trains doulas not only in the birth experience, but also to serve as advocates for women. Because so many of their clients were likely to be young Black mothers, the doulas were taught to "meet young Black mothers exactly where they are and not to dismiss them."

"When you go into a hospital and you don't feel supported because of your race, but you have an advocate there who is culturally the same as you and can speak for you so you can do the work of having a baby, it just makes all the difference," Kamiah says.

After forming NorthTown Doulas, Kamiah faced two challenges. The first was getting the word out to pregnant women that doula services were available. This required the women in her neighborhood first to understand what a doula was and then to trust one to help them with their pregnancies and births. From her own experience, Kamiah knew that the informal leaders in the neighborhood were the grandmothers, and she reached out to these women, many of whom she'd known since she was young. She knew if the older women in the neighborhood trusted her, it would help smooth the way with younger generations who needed her services.

Kamiah's second challenge was funding. Kamiah began talking to large groups, such as service clubs, women's organizations, and church groups, where the audiences were mostly white. Kamiah found that public speaking came naturally to her. She was able to talk openly about her own pregnancy and birth experiences and those of other low-income women of color, explaining their perceptions and their reality. Kamiah found that audiences responded to her transparency with empathy and appreciation, perhaps because many of them were mothers.

Within two years of its founding, NorthTown Doulas was on solid financial footing, and Kamiah had trained 14 doulas who provide their free services to clients who are low-income and of color. The doulas meet weekly with their pregnant clients, teaching them about nutrition and prenatal care and listening to their concerns and fears. The doulas are well informed on the social services available in the community and how to access these services for their clients, especially when it comes to securing adequate nutrition. In cases where the mothers-to-be need medical treatment, the doulas help the clients find doctors and midwives they will trust, often transporting their clients to appointments and staying with them through their visits. After the women have given birth, the doulas continue to provide them with assistance, teaching them how to care for their infants and manage being a new parent, and monitoring them and the babies for any health concerns.

Since she became a doula, Kamiah has helped more than 50 young women give birth to healthy babies. As the organization's leader, she has less time now to be a doula, which she admits she misses, but knows that through her organization and the doulas she's trained, she still has a hand in the healthy births of many children.

Questions

1. How would you describe Kamiah's leadership traits?
2. Of the six major traits described in the chapter (i.e., intelligence, confidence, charisma, determination, sociability, and integrity), which traits are Kamiah's strongest?
3. Of these traits, which do you think is naturally strong for Kamiah, and which did she learn?
4. What different traits did Kamiah exhibit in her ability to get others to support her, such as the executive director of the YWCA? The grandmothers in the neighborhood? The groups where the audiences were mostly white?

Application**2.2 Case Study—The Three Bs**

The three *Bs* are three recent college graduates at the precipice of their careers. Having each completed their education from prestigious American universities, all three are destined to become important and influential leaders. Following is a snapshot of the lives of each of these future leaders at the time of their college graduation. As you read through each person's biography, pay particular attention to the traits and characteristics of these graduates, noticing which will serve them as they mature into the leaders they become.

B1

B1 grew up in a rural, southern state and, at a young age, knew his path lay in politics. Influenced by John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr., B1 would later admit, "Sometime in my sixteenth year, I decided I wanted to be in public life as an elected official. I loved music and thought I could be very good, but I knew I would never be John Coltrane or Stan Getz. I was interested in medicine and thought I could be a fine doctor, but I knew I would never be Michael DeBakey. But I knew I could be great in public service. I thought I could make it without family wealth, or connections, or establishment southern positions on race and other issues."¹

B1 was born to a widowed mother and never knew his father. His early years were influenced greatly by the two strong women in his life: his mother and his grandmother. His mother was fun loving and vivacious, leaving her young son in his grandparents' care while she studied nursing in a neighboring state. His grandmother, by contrast, was a strong-willed disciplinarian, instilling in B1 a lifelong love of reading. When B1 was 4, his mother married the man who would become his stepfather, a local car dealer and an abusive alcoholic. B1 often intervened in the violent arguments that broke out in his home and protected the secrets of his home life as the children of alcoholics often do. He was 15 when his mother ended the marriage.

B1 attended Catholic schools and, later, a local public high school. The high school was segregated, a dogma B1 had difficulty accepting. Charming, handsome, and intelligent, he was an active student leader and musician, playing the saxophone and winning first chair in the state band. Highly interested in politics, he participated in both Boys State and Boys Nation, which provided him the opportunity to meet his idol, President Kennedy.

B1 was mentored by his high school principal, a woman known for her commitment to "produce leaders who thought of personal success in terms of public service"² and who recognized B1 as a "young man of rare talent and ambition."³ It was in the halls of his high school that B1 found his passion for law, informing his Latin teacher of his intent to study law after a mock trial exercise for her class.

Following high school, B1 attended Georgetown University, which he financed through scholarships and part-time jobs. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa (the prestigious academic honor society), an honorary band fraternity, and a service fraternity. B1 was elected class president twice and interned and clerked for the senator from his home state.

Following his graduation with a degree in foreign service, B1 won a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to University College, Oxford, England, but left Oxford after a year to study law at Yale University.

B2

B2 was the eldest child of a prestigious and wealthy family. His father and grandfather were prominent U.S. political leaders, and his mother the daughter of a successful publisher. B2's ancestry traced directly to the American colonists.

The death of his 3-year-old sister when B2 was 7 devastated his family. Left an only child for a time, he brought consolation to his mother through his humor, playfulness, and good cheer, a role he often relied upon as he matured into adulthood.⁴

After attending a prestigious prep school from seventh through ninth grade, B2 was accepted to Phillips Academy, a highly selective boarding school in Andover, Massachusetts. It was the same school both his father and grandfather had attended, but unlike his father, B2 was not an academic or athletic standout. He was very active and social, however, playing baseball and serving as head cheerleader, standing out among his classmates for his humor and antics.

B2 went on to Yale University, where he was admitted under the university's "legacy" policies that gave preferential treatment to children of alumni. Both B2's father and grandfather were Yale graduates.

While at Yale, B2 was an active fraternity member (serving as president his senior year), cheerleader, and member of the rugby team. He was also a member of Skull and Bones, an undergraduate secret society of which his father had also been a member. The secretive Skull and Bones is known for its prominent alumni and has often been the subject of conspiracy theories.

A self-proclaimed "average" student, B2 received a bachelor's degree in history with a C grade point average. Nevertheless, he was accepted by Harvard University's prestigious MBA program after serving a two-year commission in the Air National Guard. In the Air Guard, B2 was selected to serve as a pilot, despite low pilot aptitude tests and irregular attendance to air training. He was honorably discharged prior to attending Harvard.

Harvard classmates and professors remember B2 as having "a relaxed attitude and an unusual confidence that stood out even in a class of some of America's most confident."⁵ Though an average student, B2 was described as a "quick study—not a very deep thinker, but an efficient one . . . more of a listener than a participant."⁶ With a ready sense of humor, B2 stood out in team-based activities and was often chosen to lead. B2 completed his MBA, calling it "a turning point" that taught him "the principles of capital, how it is accumulated, risked, spent, managed."⁷

B3

B3's parents met and married while attending college. B3 was born six months later to his Kenyan father and white American mother. When B3 was 2 years old, his father (after receiving his graduate degree at Harvard University) abandoned the family and returned to his home. B3 would see his father only once more before his father's sudden death when B3 was 21.⁸

His mother subsequently remarried and moved B3 to Indonesia when he was 6. Though not religious, his family sent B3 to a Catholic school as well as a public school in a predominantly Muslim country, contributing to what the young biracial boy would later recall as “the multiplicity of cultures which fed me.”⁹ B3 became fluent in Indonesian and was known as a schoolyard peacemaker, acting as a mediator for his classmates’ conflicts. His third-grade teacher remembered him as a boy who liked to be in charge and who wanted to be the best, though she admitted he would cede his place willingly if asked to do so.

When he was 10, his mother, concerned for his education, sent him back to the United States to live with his grandparents and attend Hawaii’s elite, private Punahou School.¹⁰ B3 was a good but not outstanding student. Popular and athletic, he was a member of the varsity basketball team.

Despite the racial diversity of Hawaii, B3 struggled with his racial identity. Though he had loving role models in his grandfather and stepfather and a multicultural upbringing, the young man had to resolve his own identity as a biracial man in America. In the absence of a father who could have provided much-needed guidance, B3 was left mostly on his own to figure things out for himself. “At some level I had to raise myself . . . if I think about how I have been able to navigate some pretty tricky situations in my life, it has to do with the fact that I had to learn to trust my own judgment; I had to learn to fight for what I wanted.”¹¹

Perhaps sensing his teenage grandson’s struggle, B3’s grandfather connected him with Frank Marshall Davis, a leading Black activist and writer. Davis introduced the young man, who was already an avid reader, to the world of Black literature and activism.

After graduating from high school, B3 moved to Los Angeles to attend Occidental College, transferring in his junior year to Columbia University in New York City. His college classmates described him as endearing and likable with a proclivity toward multiracial social circles and an ability to move easily between different groups. Deeply interested in political and international affairs, he graduated from Columbia with a bachelor’s degree in political science.

Desiring to work as a community organizer, he applied unsuccessfully to several organizations. Frustrated and laden with student debt, he accepted a position with a global business consulting company. Appreciated for his intelligence and self-assurance, B3 was well liked by his supervisors and colleagues. He was described as a bit reserved, as if he was simply biding his time until he could pursue his true passions. The opportunity came when he was offered a job as an organizer for the New York Public Interest Research Group, where he worked to mobilize college students on a variety of city issues from rebuilding public transportation to increasing recycling efforts.

After two years, B3 was ready to leave New York and pursue causes that were important to him, and he accepted a job as a community organizer in Chicago’s largely poor and Black South Side. His first assignment was to organize the community’s low-income residents and pressure the city government to improve conditions in the crumbling housing projects. His efforts met with some success, but he soon came to the conclusion that to be truly effective he would need a law degree.

B3 attended Harvard Law School, excelling as a student and graduating magna cum laude. Reflecting on his choice to go to Harvard, B3 explained, “One of the luxuries of going to

Harvard Law School is it means you can take risks in your life. You can try to do things to improve society and still land on your feet. That's what a Harvard education should buy—enough confidence and security to pursue your dreams and give something back.”¹²

He was elected president of the prestigious *Harvard Law Review*, the first African American ever to do so. A liberal, B3 won the election by persuading the journal's primarily conservative staffers that he would treat their views fairly, a promise he kept. Shortly after, when one of his professors approached B3 with an opportunity to clerk for a Supreme Court justice, B3 politely declined, explaining his desire to go back to Chicago to complete the work he had been doing and run for elected office.

His election to the *Law Review* garnered widespread media attention and resulted in a contract from a major publisher to write a book on race relations for which he was able to use the proceeds to help pay off his student loans.

Questions

Before the identities of these future leaders are revealed, complete Question 1.

1. Rank the strength of each person (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 as high) for each leadership trait listed. Use the “explanation” column to support your ranking.

	B1	
	RANK	EXPLANATION
INTELLIGENCE		
CONFIDENCE		
CHARISMA		
DETERMINATION		
SOCIABILITY		
INTEGRITY		
	B2	
	RANK	EXPLANATION
INTELLIGENCE		
CONFIDENCE		
CHARISMA		
DETERMINATION		
SOCIABILITY		
INTEGRITY		

	B3	
	RANK	EXPLANATION
INTELLIGENCE		
CONFIDENCE		
CHARISMA		
DETERMINATION		
SOCIABILITY		
INTEGRITY		

B1, B2, and B3 all became influential world leaders, serving as consecutive U.S. presidents. You may recognize them as President **B**ill Clinton (B1), President George W. **B**ush (B2), and President **B**arack Obama (B3).

- The chapter strongly implies that leadership is about traits—people become leaders because of their traits. In light of what you know about these men and their presidencies, do you feel the trait approach adequately captures the essence of their leadership? Does nurturance play an equal or more important role? Why or why not?
- Of all the traits exhibited by these three leaders, what one trait would you like to have for yourself? Explain why.

Notes

- W. Clinton (2004).
- Riley (n.d.).
- Ibid.
- Bruni (2002).
- Solomon (2000).
- Ibid.
- Ibid.
- Life Books (2008).
- Nelson (n.d.).
- Remnick (2010).
- Meacham (2008).
- Editors of *Life* magazine (2008).

Application

2.3 Leadership Traits Questionnaire

Purpose

1. To gain an understanding of how traits are used in leadership assessment
2. To obtain an assessment of your own leadership traits

Directions

1. Make five copies of this questionnaire. It should be completed by you and five people you know (e.g., roommates, coworkers, relatives, friends).
2. Using the following scale, have each individual indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with each of the 14 statements regarding your leadership traits. Do not forget to complete this exercise for yourself.

_____ (your name) is

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1. Articulate: Communicates effectively with others	1	2	3	4	5
2. Perceptive: Is discerning and insightful	1	2	3	4	5
3. Self-confident: Believes in oneself and one's ability	1	2	3	4	5
4. Self-assured: Is secure with self, free of doubts	1	2	3	4	5
5. Persistent: Stays fixed on the goals, despite interference	1	2	3	4	5
6. Determined: Takes a firm stand, acts with certainty	1	2	3	4	5
7. Trustworthy: Is authentic, inspires confidence	1	2	3	4	5
8. Dependable: Is consistent and reliable	1	2	3	4	5

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
9. Friendly: Shows kindness and warmth	1	2	3	4	5
10. Outgoing: Talks freely, gets along well with others	1	2	3	4	5
11. Conscientious: Is thorough, organized, and careful	1	2	3	4	5
12. Diligent: Is industrious, hardworking	1	2	3	4	5
13. Sensitive: Shows tolerance, is tactful and sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5
14. Empathic: Understands others, identifies with others	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

1. Enter the responses for Raters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 in the appropriate columns on the scoring sheet on this page. An example of a completed chart appears a little farther down.
2. For each of the 14 items, compute the average for the five raters and place that number in the “average rating” column.
3. Place your own scores in the “self-rating” column.

Leadership Traits Questionnaire Chart

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Rater 4	Rater 5	Average rating	Self-rating
1. Articulate							
2. Perceptive							
3. Self-confident							
4. Self-assured							
5. Persistent							
6. Determined							

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Rater 4	Rater 5	Average rating	Self-rating
7. Trustworthy							
8. Dependable							
9. Friendly							
10. Outgoing							
11. Conscientious							
12. Diligent							
13. Sensitive							
14. Empathic							

Scoring Interpretation

The scores you received on this questionnaire provide information about how you see yourself and how others see you as a leader. The chart allows you to see where your perceptions are the same as those of others and where they differ. There are no “perfect” scores for this questionnaire. The purpose of the instrument is to provide a way to assess your strengths and weaknesses and to evaluate areas where your perceptions are similar to or different from those of others. While it is confirming when others see you in the same way as you see yourself, it is also beneficial to know when they see you differently. This assessment can help you understand your assets as well as areas in which you may seek to improve.

Example Leadership Traits Questionnaire Ratings

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Rater 4	Rater 5	Average rating	Self-rating
1. Articulate	4	4	3	2	4	3.4	4
2. Perceptive	2	5	3	4	4	3.6	5
3. Self-confident	4	4	5	5	4	4.4	4
4. Self-assured	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
5. Persistent	4	4	3	3	3	3.4	3
6. Determined	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
7. Trustworthy	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

	Rater 1	Rater 2	Rater 3	Rater 4	Rater 5	Average rating	Self-rating
8. Dependable	4	5	4	5	4	4.4	4
9. Friendly	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
10. Outgoing	5	4	5	4	5	4.6	4
11. Conscientious	2	3	2	3	3	2.6	4
12. Diligent	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
13. Sensitive	4	4	5	5	5	4.6	3
14. Empathic	5	5	4	5	4	4.6	3

Summary and interpretation: The scorer's self-ratings are higher than the average ratings of others on articulate, perceptive, conscientious, and diligent. The scorer's self-ratings are lower than the average ratings of others on self-confident, persistent, dependable, outgoing, sensitive, and empathic. The scorer's self-ratings on self-assured, determined, trustworthy, and friendly are the same as the average ratings of others.

Application

2.4 Observational Exercise

Leadership Traits

Purpose

1. To gain an understanding of the role of traits in the leadership process
2. To examine the traits of selected historical and everyday leaders

Directions

1. Based on the descriptions of the historical leaders provided in the chapter, identify the three major leadership traits for each of the leaders listed as follows.
2. Select and briefly describe two leaders in your own life (e.g., work supervisor, teacher, coach, music director, business owner, community leader). Identify the three major leadership traits of each of these leaders.

Historical leaders	The leader's three major traits		
Harriet Tubman	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
Winston Churchill	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
Mother Teresa	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
Dr. Anthony Fauci	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
Oprah Winfrey	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
LeBron James	1. _____	2. _____	3. _____

Everyday leaders

Leader 1 _____

Brief description

Traits 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Application**2.5 Reflection and Action Worksheet****Leadership Traits*****Reflection***

1. Based on the scores you received on the Leadership Traits Questionnaire, what are your strongest leadership traits? What are your weakest traits? Discuss.
2. In this chapter, we discussed six leadership figures. As you read about these leaders, which leaders did you find most appealing? What was it about their leadership that you found remarkable? Discuss.
3. As you reflect on your own leadership traits, do you think some of them are more “you” and authentic than others? Have you always been the kind of leader you are today, or have your traits changed over time? Are you a stronger leader today than you were five years ago? Discuss.

Action

1. If you could model yourself after one or more of the historical leaders we discussed in this chapter, whom would you model yourself after? Identify two of this leader’s traits that you could and should incorporate into your own style of leadership.
2. Although changing leadership traits is not easy, which of your leadership traits would you like to change? Specifically, what actions do you need to take to change your traits?
3. All of us have problematic traits that inhibit our leadership but are difficult to change. Which single trait distracts from your leadership? Since you cannot easily change this trait, what actions can you take to “work around” this trait? Discuss.

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