PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

All great leaders are committed to self-development. They set goals and create plans to achieve those goals. The steps on the pages that follow will walk you through a process of creating and executing your own personal development plan.

Your goal today is to get started on your plan! You may not currently have all of the information needed to complete some of the steps. That's okay. But don't forget to fill in missing pieces of your plan as quickly as possible.

Remember that great leaders become great leaders because they continuously plan, seek feedback from others, make adjustments based on feedback, study new research and ideas about leadership, improve their strengths, and correct their fatal flaws. In other words, becoming extraordinary is a process of development.

Step 1: Start with Why

In order for you to experience long term success, it is always more important to know why you are doing something rather than how to do it. The how of personal development is often tedious, hard work and can be frustrating at times. Progress may be slow. If you do not have a compelling reason why, you may have a difficult time persevering through the how. Great leaders start with why. Why do you want to become a great leader? Is the goal important enough to you to be worthy of your continued effort? How will you benefit? How will your organization benefit? Take some time and record your responses to these questions.

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How much time, energy, and commitment do you estimate it will take to become a great leader? Are you willing to put forth the required effort? Record your thoughts below.

_____

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There are two common strategies of high achievers and great leaders:

1. A commitment to continual learning
2. Clearly written goals with specific plans to achieve them

If you have a compelling reason why you want to become a great leader, you are willing to devote the time and energy necessary, you are committed to continual learning, and you are ready to write out your goals and create a plan to achieve them, then signify your commitment to yourself by your signature and date below:

_____ _____

Signature Date

Step 2: Assess Your Current Situation

After you have a compelling reason why and have committed to becoming a great leader, it is important to know where you are today on your leadership journey. Now, we will pull information from your Strengths & Weaknesses Assessment along with your self-determination of any fatal flaws to help you identify your starting point.

Identify Fatal Flaws to Fix

Based on your honest self-evaluation, do you have any Fatal Flaws which are listed in the Five Fatal Flaws that Must Be Fixed section of this workbook? If so, list them below.

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_____

If you are unsure whether you have any fatal flaws, how will you find out? Will you get 360-degree feedback through a formal evaluation process? Will you informally ask those who know you to identify any fatal flaws you have? Who is a trusted coworker, supervisor or mentor who will give you honest feedback? Record your answers below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Identify Strengths to Improve

Based on your results from the Strengths & Weaknesses Assessment, what are your Significant Strengths? What are your Moderate Strengths? List them below.

Significant Strengths	Moderate Strengths

Identify Weaknesses to Manage

Based on your results from the Strengths & Weaknesses Assessment, what are your Significant and Moderate Weaknesses that must be managed? List them below.

Moderate Weaknesses	Significant Weaknesses

Step 3: Focus on Character

Your journey toward becoming a great leader will be enhanced exponentially if you are a person of high moral character. Conversely, if you struggle with character, your efforts will be hindered.

To this point we have defined character as displaying a high degree of integrity and honesty. Expanding on this basic definition, your character is the sum of what you think, say and do. Your thoughts, words and actions interact with and influence one another. Together they combine to determine who you are and how others perceive you.

Because character is more a way of being and less a skill to be mastered, we will focus on it separately from the other strengths. Answer the questions below by circling your choice between **Always**, **Sometimes** and **Never**. In the space provided, make a note of any changes you need to make and actions you need to take.

Do you avoid saying one thing and doing another? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

_____

_____

_____

Do you follow through on promises and commitments? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

_____

_____

_____

Do you model your core values? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

_____

_____

_____

Do you lead by example? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

_____

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Do you have the trust and respect of coworkers? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

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_____

_____

Are you trusted by others to do the right thing? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

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_____

Are you honest and ethical when dealing with others? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

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_____

_____

Do you demonstrate ethical resolve in adverse circumstances? **Always** **Sometimes** **Never**

_____

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_____

Step 4: Plan Your Work

In this step you will establish your leadership development goals and develop a plan to achieve them. While you will be following the SMART goal format, it is worth noting that goal achieving is not so much about what you do as it is about who you become. In addition to working toward specific, measureable, attainable, relevant, and time bound goals, you should focus on who you need to become in order to be a great leader.

In this step we will discover who you need to become in order to fix any fatal flaws and improve your strengths. We will go through the characteristics, behaviors and disciplines you should adopt or expand, as well as any you should eliminate. Below is an example you can follow.

Example #1 – Fixing Your Fatal Flaws
For this example, we will assume you have identified **Lack of Interpersonal Skill**s as your fatal flaw. Your trusted coworker tells you that you are not harsh and abrasive, but that you are not friendly or approachable either. You don't seem to care about the people on your team. You realize the necessity of fixing your fatal flaws. You want to be an effective leader so you create a plan that looks like the one below. Remember, to fix a fatal flaw, you can usually just do the opposite.

Fatal Flaw to Fix: Lack of Interpersonal Skills

Goal: To become a noticeably friendlier person who genuinely cares about others by the end of next month so that my trusted coworker or one of my team members will make mention of the change without my asking for feedback.

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

- I don't criticize, condemn or complain
- I give honest and sincere appreciation
- I am genuinely interested in other people
- I smile when I talk to others
- I learn and use other's names when I talk to them
- I am a good listener and I encourage others to talk about themselves
- I sincerely make others feel important

New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

- I will read the list of characteristics each morning and night to commit to memory
- I will start acting like the characteristics listed above
- Specifically, I will stop criticizing my team all the time

Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

- I will continue to use my team's names and will learn the names of others in our organization

Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

- I will stop talking about myself all of the time and dominating conversations

Use the space on the following page to record your plan to fix any fatal flaws.

Fatal Flaw to Fix: _____

Goal: _____

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

_____

_____

_____

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_____

New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

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_____

Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

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Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

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Example #2 – Improving Your Strengths

For this example, we will assume you have identified **Interpersonal Skills** as one of your strengths to build upon. You decide that you want to improve the competency of **Developing Others** (competency #12). Here is what your plan might look like.

Strength to Improve: Interpersonal Skills

Competency: Developing Others

Goal: Begin developing my staff by starting monthly coaching by the end of next quarter.

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

- I am a trusted and effective coach and mentor
- I am genuinely concerned about the development my staff
- I give an appropriate balance of positive and corrective performance feedback
- I am a person who gives honest feedback
- I am interested in the work of others
- I support others' growth and success
- I place a high priority on the development of others
- I seek opportunities to showcase the talents of the team
- I identify and sponsor developmental opportunities for others that help them gain wide exposure and experience
- I foster an organizational learning and development environment that is tolerant of mistakes

New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

- I will read one chapter per day from Coaching Questions to learn the coaching process
- I will read one chapter per day from Crucial Conversations and Crucial Accountability and practice giving honest feedback in a positive instead of negative way
- I will spend at least 30 minutes per month coaching each member of my team one on one

Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

- I will spend one hour per week in focused thought about how to support my team's growth

Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

- I will stop highlighting only the mistakes of my team

Use the space on the following pages to record your top 3 goals related to your leadership development.

Strength/Goal #1

Strength to Improve: _____

Competency: _____

Goal: _____

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

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New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

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Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

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Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

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Strength/Goal #2

Strength to Improve: _____

Competency: _____

Goal: _____

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

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New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

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Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

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Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

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Strength/Goal #3

Strength to Improve: _____

Competency: _____

Goal: _____

Characteristics of who I need to become (stated in the present tense – as if already attained)

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_____

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_____

_____

New habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to START

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Existing habits, disciplines or behaviors I need to EXPAND

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Existing habits or behaviors I need to STOP

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Create an Action Plan

The difference between a dream and a goal is determined by planning and execution. Now it's time to write down your specific action plan to achieve your goal. Complete the charts on the following pages with specific steps for each of your objectives to fix your fatal flaws and improve on your strengths. Below are two examples you can follow.

Sample Fatal Flaw Action Plan

Fatal Flaw to Fix – Lack of Interpersonal Skills	
Target Completion Date – March 30	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Daily read Characteristics of who I need to become	February 12
Stop criticizing, condemning and complaining	February 26
Show sincere appreciation 1 time/day	March 11
Smile and use others' names when talking to them	March 18
Consciously/sincerely make others feel important	May 25
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Me	Better relationships with my employees
My staff	Improved morale
My organization	Employee engagement and retention
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
My manager	Have meeting with Ed by February 5
HR manager	Have meeting with Evelyn by February 12
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
N/A	N/A
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Make a habit of smiling and using people's names	How to Win Friends and Influence People
Make a habit of showing sincere appreciation	How to Win Friends and Influence People
Make a habit of making others feel important	How to Win Friends and Influence People

Sample Goal Action Plan

Goal – Begin developing my staff by starting monthly coaching by the end of next quarter.	
Target Completion Date – June 30	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Read Coaching Questions	February 28
Read Crucial Conversations	March 30
Read Crucial Accountability	April 31
Develop coaching schedule with staff	May 30
Create coaching forms and staff files	May 30
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Me	Motivated and empowered staff
My staff	More input and feedback
My organization	Employee engagement and retention
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
My manager	Have meeting with Ed by March 30
HR manager	Have meeting with Evelyn by April 31
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
What am I allowed/not allowed to do?	Employee manual & HR manager
How often should I coach?	Internet, book, HR manager
How to protect me, employee and organization	HR manager, legal counsel (if available)
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Learn a proven coaching model to follow	Attend Advanced Management Institute
Learn to ask better questions	Coaching Questions
Learn to give honest/positive feedback	Crucial Conversations
Learn to hold my staff accountable	Crucial Accountability

Fatal Flaw to Fix	
Target Completion Date:	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**

Goal #1	
Target Completion Date:	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**

Goal #2	
Target Completion Date:	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**

Goal #3	
Target Completion Date:	
Intermediate Targets	**When? (Deadline)**
Who is impacted?	**What is the benefit/detriment?**
Mentor, experts, staff, assistance needed	**Who/When**
Research needed	**Where/How to acquire**
Training/Self-development needed	**Where/How to acquire**

Step 5: Work Your Plan

Take Action

The difference between good leaders and great leaders is dedication and execution. It's not enough to think and talk about self-improvement and development. To be great, you have to take action.

So far you have committed to becoming a great leader, assessed where you are, and created a plan to fix any fatal flaws and build upon your strengths. Now it is time to take action. Below is space for you to record what actions you will take in the next twenty-four hours, two weeks and thirty days. Takes some time and write down actions you will take towards achieving your goals.

Actions to Take in the Next Month

	24 Hours	2 Weeks	30 Days
Fatal Flaw			
Goal #1			
Goal #2			
Goal #3			

Monitor Your Progress
Personal development is best achieved if you follow a cycle of "plan, do, review, and improve." Next we will look at each step of the cycle.

Plan
In step 4 we outlined a method for developing an Action Plan to accomplish your goals and fix any fatal flaws. The process of planning is important because it helps you identify what needs to change and how you will go about making those changes. It engrains in your mind the path ahead leading to a final destination. However, you need to be flexible and ready to adapt when things don't go according to plan. The path may change once you start the "Doing" part of accomplishing your goals.

Do
In the chart above you listed actions you will take in the next twenty-four hours, two weeks and thirty days. Equally as important as starting to work on your goals immediately is the need to finish what you've started. The way to do this is through consistent, focused effort. Perseverance and persistent until you have achieved your goal will ensure you finish strong.

A helpful process you can use to stay focused and on track is to follow a process of creating a weekly plan and then reviewing it the next week. We have included a Weekly Planning and Weekly Review sheet for you to complete on the next page.

Start by listing your top three long-term, monthly and weekly goals. Then, list your most important weekly activities, any personal development material you are working through, and the skills you are developing. This worksheet will be useful for the "Review" stage of the cycle.

Review
The review process should take place daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually. Frequent review allows you to see if you are on course and allows you to make any needed adjustments. Daily, check off any behaviors you performed related to your plan in the Weekly Behavior Tracker (page 44). Weekly, record your results and see if you are on plan, behind plan or ahead of plan. Your weekly results will determine what action you take in the "Improve" stage of the cycle (see instructions for using the Weekly Behavior Tracker on page 44). Record any wins (successes), losses (failures), fixes (things to correct) and lessons learned on the Weekly Review sheet (next page).

Improve
A commitment to growth and a continuous improvement process will move you forward toward achieving your goals. What can you improve upon next week? Where do you need to spend some extra time? Adjust your plan as needed.

"If we did all the things we are capable of,
we would literally astound ourselves."

-Thomas Edison

Weekly Planning

Top Three Long-term Goals

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three Most Important Weekly Activities

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Top Three Monthly Goals

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Personal Development Material

_____
_____
_____

Top Three Weekly Goals

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Skills I'm Developing and Practicing

_____
_____
_____

Weekly Review

Wins

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Losses

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Adjustments Needed

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Lessons Learned

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

"Whatever you are, be a good one."

—Abraham Lincoln

Instructions

At the beginning of the week:

1. In the Behavior/Action column, list the behaviors and actions you want to track in order to become the person you need to be to achieve your goals.
2. In the Goal column, record the number of days you will work on the behaviors and actions for the week.

During the week:

1. Each day, review the behaviors and actions you are working on.
2. Put a check mark in the box corresponding to those behaviors and actions for which you made progress.

At the end of the week:

1. Add up the number of check marks for each behavior or action and record the number in the Achieved column.
2. Subtract the Goal from the Achieved and record the number in the Net column.
3. Add the Achieved, Goal and Net columns down and record the totals in the TOTAL row.

Your goal is to get your Net number as close to zero (0) as possible.

Weekly Behavior Tracker

Behavior/Action	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Achieved	Goal	Net
							TOTAL			