



## Short Descriptions of Each of the “If” Sixteen Leadership Attributes

### The *Who Am I?* Attributes

- **Character**, at its most basic, involves cataloguing and understanding the traits and features that define us. Character means knowing who we are and what we believe and value. It means acting in ways that demonstrate these beliefs and values. Leading with character means willingly sharing our values, beliefs, and traits with those around us.
- **Authenticity** means recognizing and embracing the fact that leaders must remain themselves regardless of the situations they confront. We play many roles, and each role demands a different combination of the traits that define our character. By living and acting according to our beliefs, values, and principles, we can lead from positions of strength and power.
- **Integrity** is about having the wisdom to learn the truth and then choosing to defend it. Speaking and defending the truth reveals who we are. But integrity goes far beyond truth. Integrity also involves remaining whole. Leading with integrity means that we remain true to ourselves in our many roles. It means leading with an awareness of the potential for conflict or contention among our various roles.
- **Self-efficacy** teaches that we must have the humility and confidence to learn from both triumphs and disasters. Self-awareness and self-knowledge give us the confidence and wisdom to learn and grow from every experience.

### The *What Do I Want?* Attributes

- **Ambition** is our desire for achievement and accomplishment. We should distinguish between societal and personal ambitions, recognizing that the two can be complementary. Our own ambitions (or our organizations’ ambitions) form the foundation for understanding what we want to achieve.
- **Vision** is the external manifestation of character and ambition. Vision starts with telling the world what we believe and then what we want to accomplish. We do this by describing a world that reflects our ambitions and aspirations. Publicizing and repeating our vision is essential to leadership.
- **Boldness** is our ability to see opportunities that others don’t—and it promotes the willingness to seize those opportunities, even when others say we should not. Effective risk taking and strategic boldness are essential to effective leadership.
- **Resilience** is the ability to bounce back from setbacks. Leading by knowing what we want means anticipating challenges, and recognizing and overcoming the obstacles we encounter.

### The Attributes That Help Attract Others

- **Inspiration** is the ability to connect with and motivate others—both friends and foes. Our actions and words can inspire others to achieve extraordinary accomplishments. Inspiration is the catalyzing force that instigates change.
- **Courage** is how leaders respond when the risks they anticipate become reality. These difficult situations can be make-or-break moments for leaders. Courage requires leaders to “force their heart and nerve” and to put themselves in harm’s way.
- **Selflessness** means putting our people and our causes ahead of our own interests. This requires a deep awareness, and it often requires difficult choices.
- **Stamina** is what enables us to survive and thrive despite the exhausting nature of leadership. Leading can be draining, physically, psychologically, emotionally, and spiritually. Our focus on maintaining our energy and persevering will inspire those we lead and facilitate their doing the same.



### The Attributes That Enable Leaders to Retain and Earn Trust

- Through **composure** a leader is able to transform the energy of a crisis into positive action. Leaders do this by keeping their heads. Composure requires us to be fully aware of the situations we face. At the same time, composure is about making choices and taking action to restore calm.
- Patience is the ability to know when we should act and when we must wait. Patience often means choosing to wait when others are pushing us to move.
- **Enthusiasm** is the positive energy and passion that are at the heart of innovation, creativity, and exceptional performance. Leaders who produce great ideas often possess extraordinary enthusiasm.
- **Accountability** means choosing to take ownership, regardless of how things turn out. Our decision to be accountable helps define us as leaders. A leader's trustworthiness is often determined by his or her willingness to be held to account.