

DEVELOPING LEADERS ON THEIR LUNCH BREAK



Introduction



Leadership training is like raising children. Each child learns and develops in his or her own way. But, even though your approach for teaching, disciplining, and bonding with each child varies to a degree, your overall approach to parenting does not. The same is true for leadership development. Each employee may develop a little differently, but the overall approach should tie back to the same set of core competencies.

It's important to realize that cultivating leadership is a long-term process. It takes time to develop an employee into a true, dependable leader. This eBook isn't suggesting you can develop leaders in just a few hours over lunch. Instead, this approach represents the first few steps in a very important journey.

But does that mean an employee can't perform in leadership roles until they're fully developed as a leader?

Of course not. It simply means the process of building leadership doesn't end with a couple training courses. The greatest leaders—people who've led teams, companies and armies—strive to constantly grow as individuals and as leaders.

If leadership is a long-term process, how can it be developed over a few lunch breaks?

It may take a person years to realize their full potential as a leader, but getting started with leadership development doesn't have to be a daunting task. It can be easy to point someone down the path of becoming a great leader. The key is simply to get started. And that's exactly what this "Lunch Break" Leadership Training aims to do.

How To Get The Most From "Lunch Break" Leadership Training

Before you start your leadership training, establish exactly what you want to get from your employees (leaders). What are *your* goals? Do you want them to lead a team of people...do you want them to eventually lead a department?

Having goals and plans for your future leader will help guide the direction of your training and help you gauge whether or not they're on the right path.

To get the most from this training, it's important to follow the training guidelines. But, it's also important to approach it as a fluid process—allowing your employee to develop in his or her own way. With that in mind, here's how to start developing leaders on their lunch break...

Session One

Leadership Assessment (Personal Goals)

To get where you're going, you need to know where you stand. Start your leadership training with an assessment of your employee's past experiences and future goals—both personal and professional.

Take 30 minutes to find out more about your employee on a personal level. Stay away from work-related experiences and goals at this point. The mission here is to find out what your employee cares about in his or her own personal life. What do they want to become? What do they want to be known for?

Create a list of questions that will provide a better understanding of who your employee is as a person and what they want to become.

NOTE: Give your employee the option to pass on any of the questions. If he or she doesn't feel comfortable sharing the requested information, move on to Session Two. The goal is to learn, not interrogate, your employees.

Ask questions like:

- Who is someone you know that represents "personal success" to you?
- What about that person makes them successful?
- To what extent will your current path take you there?
- How confident are you that you can get there yourself?
- What are you specifically doing to get there?

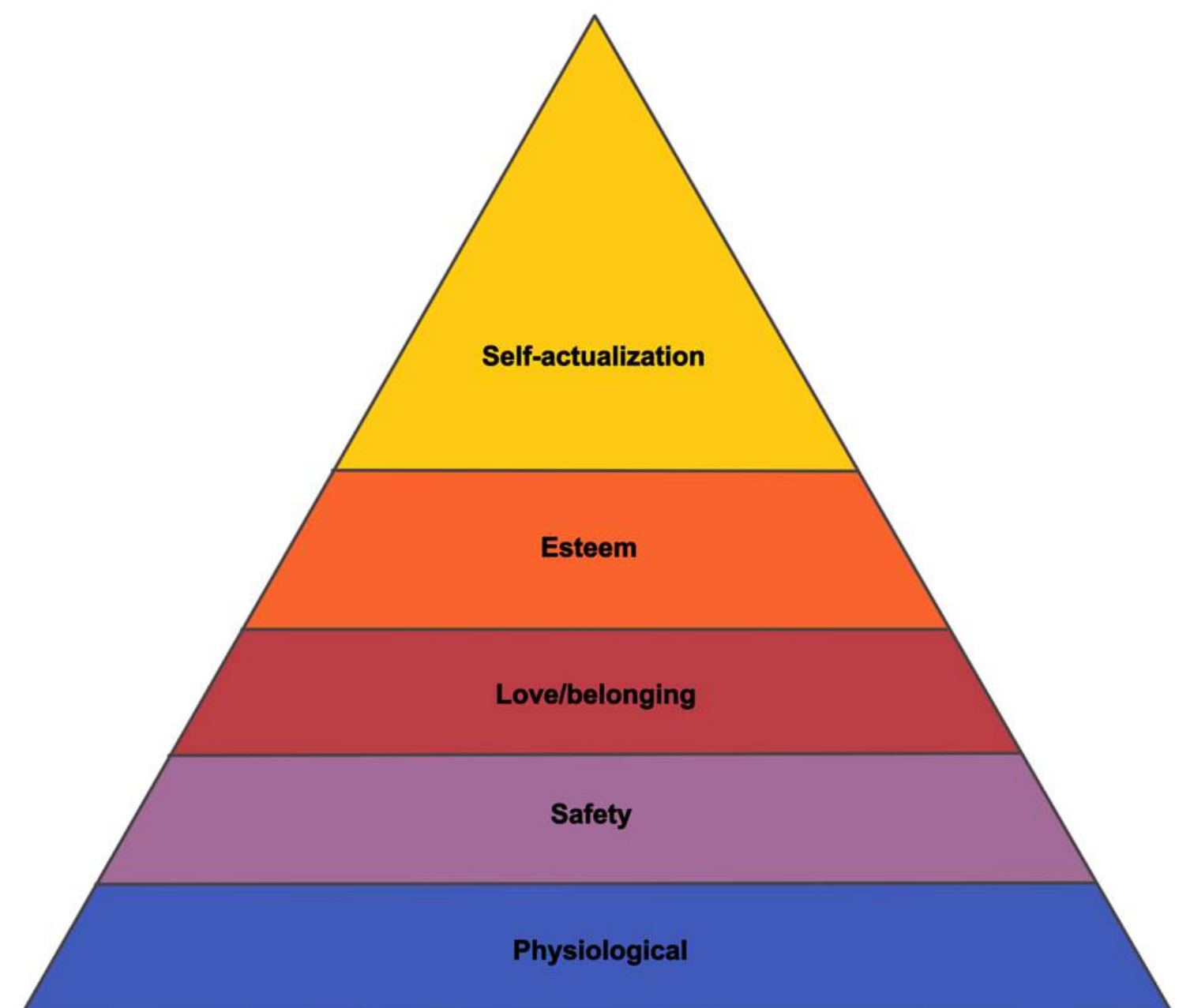
Once you have an understanding of where your employee sees his or herself, and what success means to them as an individual, if you feel you have the ability to aid them in this endeavor, or if you have resources that can help them, you can work with them to set future personal goals. This exercise will help the employee think more about what he or she really wants from life. This is a particularly helpful exercise for younger employees.

Example

I read that Bill Gates is always reading to educate himself. He believes strongly in self-improvement, especially as it relates to leading. I want to read four of his "most recommended" books within the next year.

Helping them come up with 1 or 2 personal goals will accomplish two things: 1) it will allow you to better understand your employee on a personal level and 2) because most employees won't have established personal goals, it will provide visualization for personal growth. Revisit these goals periodically to review progress.

Why is this important? One of the most effective leadership methods is to understand someone's "promised land," then help them get there. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Maslow refers to this as "self-actualization." Maslow believed an individual's motivation was driven by fulfillment and personal growth. Those who are "self-actualized" are both fulfilled and have reached their fullest potential.



A leader earns loyalty when his or her followers feel they're being supported on a path to self-actualization. This is not only important for you to impart on those you lead, but those you want to develop as leaders.

Session Two

Leadership Assessment (Professional Goals)

Part I: Discuss past professional goals and set future professional goals

A great leader is someone who can lead from within, meaning there's a drive inside the leader that's bigger than one person or even one company.

Maslow's principles of self-actualization and motivation can be used to identify those qualities in your employee. Use the following questions to gain a better understanding of what professional fulfillment looks like to them:

- How's your current work situation align with where you want to be?
- Who represents "professional success" to you?
- What's different between the two of you?
- To what extent will your current path take you there?
- What are you specifically doing to get there?

Let those questions guide a discussion surrounding their career drivers. Now use the same exercise as Session One and come up with 1-2 professional goals for the next 12 months. You can also refer back to your goals for that individual to make sure the goals are aligned with the company's objectives.

Part II: Take-home leadership exercise

Now that you've assessed your employee, it's time to dig a little deeper. Send them home with the following self-reflective exercise. This will help them further understand their personal and professional goals and it will act as a kick-starter for the next session, which covers strengths and weaknesses.

Exercise: Looking In The Mirror This is an exercise from the [University of Oregon](#), which takes a unique look at perceptions of other people and connects them to the feelings you have about yourself. Have your employee jot down notes as they go through it:

Do you get frustrated or upset with the actions of others? When you think things like "I wish that person would just make a decision already", those thoughts are actually frustrations with yourself. What you see when evaluating others is often a projection of what's inside you. To recognize a quality in others means that you have it within you as well. Think about it...What's something that makes you angry or upset? Now ask yourself why. Try to identify the source of that feeling and take notes.

The good news is that the positive things you see in people are also a projection of what's inside you. Anytime you notice a quality like genius, beauty or leadership, it's because it exists in you as well. Write down some of the positive qualities you've noticed in others recently.



Session Three

Strengths & Weaknesses Over Sandwiches



Review your employee's notes from the take-home exercise. Discuss what they wrote and what it means. This should be an open discussion that acts as a warmup for the remainder of the session. Try to keep it at around 5 minutes.

Part I: Identifying your employees' strengths

PREP: *Come up with a list of strengths you've recognized in your employee and list the times you noticed those strengths in action.*

Take 10 minutes to discuss your employee's strengths. Start by asking what they think their strengths are and why. For every strength mentioned, have them provide a specific example of that particular strength and ask how it impacted a given situation. After they've named their strengths, share the strengths you came up with. Overlapping observations are OK, so share all you have.

Part II: Identifying your employees' areas of improvement

PREP: *Come up with a list of improvement areas you've recognized in your employee and list specific scenarios when you noticed that room for improvement.*

Spend 10 minutes doing the same exercise for the employee's areas of improvement as you did with his or her strengths. What do they think their areas of improvement are and why? Ask for examples. Then, share your list.

Here's a tip:

It's good to be constructive but don't get overly critical. The goal is to train the employee to realize their strengths & weaknesses—something they'll learn over time.

Part III: Identifying leadership growth opportunities

Take 5 minutes and use those strengths and weaknesses to highlight areas for improvement. Even areas of strength should be improved—in fact, those areas may require more attention than the weaknesses. Challenge the employee to continue thinking about ways to constantly improve. Here are a couple resources to help the process along:

Three Ways To Improve The Development Of Your Strengths: Whether you can't harness your strengths or you overplay them to a fault, this article will identify those tendencies and help to improve how you leverage your strengths.

[Read more](#)

Actions For Improving Weaknesses: Everyone has weaknesses in certain areas. Learning to turn weaknesses into strengths can make a tremendous difference in the way you perform—especially as a leader.

[Read more](#)

Maximizing Strengths vs Fixing Weaknesses...Why Choose?: This resource takes a holistic look at strengths and weaknesses by focusing on improving both rather than just one or the other.

[Read more](#)

Session Four

A Chat And A Cheeseburger

Communication is a key component of leadership. Your employee's potential will be severely limited without the ability to effectively communicate. It's important to figure out their communication IQ and identify ways to improve.

Part I: Written communication assessment

PREP: *If you don't have something written from your employee (by hand or online), ask them to bring in a recent letter, report, etc. for review.*

It's important for your employee to effectively communicate with different people through different mediums. Understanding the recipient's EQ (emotional intelligence) is vital to being able to write effectively. According to **RNtoBSN**, your EQ is made up of the following qualities:

Self-awareness: People with high EQ are cognizant of the emotions they're conveying, and recognize that thoughts and behavior trigger self-confidence.

Self-management: High EQ is linked to the ability to suppress unhealthy urges and rein in compulsive feelings; effective self-management allows us to "take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances."

Social awareness: In addition to recognizing their own emotions, high-EQ individuals can also perceive the feelings and attitudes of other people, and modify their own style and behavior to accommodate them.

Relationship management: Healthy interaction with spouses, children, parents, friends, and close coworkers is a hallmark of high EQ.

Knowing your recipient's EQ will dictate how you write to them. For example, if your recipient is highly emotional, you should avoid being too succinct and add more punctuation or even emoticons instead. Doing so will set a better tone in the email and will help to make the recipient feel more comfortable reading and responding.

Part II: Oral communication assessment

PREP: *You've had plenty of time to talk with your employee and you've seen their communications with others. Jot down some notes that you think would help improve their ability to communicate verbally.*

When evaluating oral communication, pay attention to the following behaviors:

- How often do they interrupt others?
- Do they seek to understand first before speaking, or assume they already know the situation entirely?
- How often do they "um" or "uh" - does it distract from their message or make them sound less confident?

Exposing and coaching someone through these communication "detractors" can immediately improve their effectiveness as a communicator and leader.

Everyone has their own way of speaking and communicating verbally. Some people are loud, some are quiet. Some people are quick to talk, while others are reserved. These different qualities make up unique styles, which have an incredible impact on how effective someone is at communicating.

Have your employee read the article and take the quiz to identify what type of communicator he or she is. Encourage them to occasionally reflect on this article to continue improving his or her ability to communicate with others.

Article + Quiz: Oral Communication Skills And Emotional Intelligence. This article explores the way people interact with each other, including the different modes of communicating and how they affect interactions.

[Go to the Article + Quiz](#)

Part III: Interpersonal communication training

Writing and speaking are important parts of interpersonal communication. But, non-verbal communication is also a major component. In group situations, you're always communicating something, whether you're trying to or not. It's important to understand everything that goes into interpersonal communication and how to manage different scenarios appropriately.

For a comprehensive introduction to interpersonal communication, share [Pearson's Foundations of Interpersonal Communication](#) with your employee. Then talk through the answers to this short test from the book:

TEST YOURSELF

What Do You Believe About Interpersonal Communication?

Respond to each of the following statements with T (true) if you believe the statement is usually true or F (false) if you believe the statement is usually false.

- ___ 1. Good communicators are born, not made.
- ___ 2. The more you communicate, the better at communicating you will be.
- ___ 3. In your interpersonal communications, a good guide to follow is to be as open, empathic, and supportive as you can be.
- ___ 4. In intercultural communication, it's best to ignore differences and communicate just as you would with members of your own culture.
- ___ 5. When there is conflict, your relationship is in trouble.

How Did You Do? As you probably figured out, all five statements are generally false. As you read this text, you'll discover not only why these beliefs are false but also the trouble you can get into when you assume they're true. For now and in brief, here are some of the reasons why each statement is (generally) false: (1) Effective

communication is learned; all of us can improve our abilities and become more effective communicators. (2) It isn't the amount of communication that matters, it's the quality. If you practice bad habits, you're more likely to grow less effective than more effective. (3) Because each interpersonal situation is unique, the type of communication appropriate in one situation may not be appropriate in another. (4) Ignoring differences will often create problems; people from different cultures may, for example, follow different rules for what is and what is not appropriate in interpersonal communication. (5) All meaningful relationships experience conflict; the trick is to manage it effectively.

What Will You Do? This is a good place to start practicing the critical-thinking skill of questioning commonly held assumptions—about communication and about yourself as a communicator. Do you hold beliefs that may limit your thinking about communication? For example, do you believe that certain kinds of communication are beyond your capabilities? Do you impose limits on how you see yourself as a communicator?

Session Five

The Weekday Workout

As a leader, your employee should be able to work through challenging situations on their own. The following exercises will examine their current critical thinking abilities and provide a way to begin strengthening them.

Part I: Personal development exercises

Leaders always look for ways to continue growing as a person. Their personal strength will act as a foundation for their critical thinking and decision-making as they grow over time. There are a number of great ways to grow as a person. Here are a few ideas:

Read. Knowledge is power and there's no better way to learn than to read. Whether it's reading fiction, nonfiction or current events—reading will help your employee learn more and grow as a person.

Take a class. Taking classes is a great way to improve in specific areas. The class can be work-specific, like management or a leadership course, but it can also be something more casual, like pottery, painting, etc.

Do something that's scary. Have your employee identify something that is scary or intimidating and then challenge them to do it. Choose something that's scary yet safe, like public speaking or playing a new sport.

Start playing brain games. The brain is a muscle and the more you use it the stronger it gets. Your employee can start engaging their brain more by playing games like crossword puzzles, sudoku and more.

Meditation. Meditating is a practice supported by millions of businesspeople, entrepreneurs, and others across the globe. Meditating regularly helps people improve in a number ways, including stress-relief, increasing focus, and many more areas.

If none of these exercises fit for your employee, try searching more ideas online—there are plenty of ways to get started with personal development.

Part II: Problem solving exercises

Solving complex problems takes practice. The more your employee works through difficult scenarios, the better he or she will become. Having your employee work through critical thinking exercises will help them prepare for tough decisions in real life situations. The link below contains 8 sample situations for your employee to work through.



8 Critical Thinking Situations

Act out situation #2, #6, and #7. Each of these situations is an opportunity to exhibit leadership and correct bad behavior. How do they respond in these situations? Are they simply disagreeing with the behavior exhibited? Are they dictating or influencing? Are they asking deep questions to understand the other's motivations? Are they doing or saying anything that could change the final outcome?

[Access the Critical Thinking Situations](#)

Part III: Learning to influence people

Most are not born with the ability to effectively influence people. It usually takes education - whether it's in a classroom or by observing people, practice, and dedication. There are a number of ways to improve your employee's ability to influence people. Here are a few tips to get started:

Give people power. One of the best ways to impact people is to invite them to make decisions with you. The more people feel you're counting on them and trusting of them, the more they'll care and the more they'll listen to what you have to say.

Increasing awareness. Your employee should practice being more aware of their surroundings. Try to understand the perspective of people communicating with you. Think about how their view has been developed. Are there other messages in their communications besides the obvious? Use this line of thinking to develop connections between their perspective and your own.



Learn to negotiate. It's important that your employee's coworkers or subordinates don't ever feel cheated. The ability to negotiate but maintain control and respect is a skill and it can take years to truly master it.

Get factual. If people don't trust a leader's reasons for making decisions, that leader will have a tough time getting their support. When possible, they should use data or even examples to support their ideas and recommendations.

Session Six

Creating Your Leadership Action Plan

Congrats! You've guided your employee through the threshold of leadership—from identifying their strengths & weaknesses to putting their critical thinking skills to the test. Now it's time to advance to the next stage.



ASSESS

Validate knowledge through critical core competencies, skills & behaviors.

INTERPRET

Determine individual & group strengths and developmental needs.

PLAN

Create a performance action plan & identify learning opportunities.

BLENDED LEARNING

Access personalized learning tracks & participate in coaching & mentoring sessions.

APPLY

Close knowledge gaps & align knowledge and training with business strategies.

LEAD & SUSTAIN

Measure improvement through post-assessment & monitor success.

To get the most from your leader, it's important to continue through the **Leadership Development Cycle**. This proven approach will guide your employee through a curated leadership development process; one that can be used to spark quick growth early on and continued growth over time.

Are you ready to take your employee to the next level? Contact Edge Training Systems to get started today at [800-305-2025](tel:800-305-2025).

Resources In Order Of Appearance

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