



BECOME A BETTER
TEAM LEADER IN

30 DAYS

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Introduction

Team leaders have a lot of demands on their time. Between meetings, managing staff, overseeing projects, and juggling deadlines, it can seem impossible to actively improve your leadership skills.

That's why I created my framework of the 7 practices of effective teams. I've broken down the complex elements that make up great team leaders, so you can start growing today.

This ebook is a practical, hands-on guide to implementing the 7 practices. You can use it on its own, diving headfirst into the techniques of high-performing leaders. Or you can work through it as a companion workbook to my online course [How to be a Highly Effective Team Leader](#).

For 30 days, I'll lead you through the 7 practices with daily, bite-sized challenges. Each day in this resource is designed to bring you one step closer to peak effectiveness.

Let's get started!

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The 7 Practices

We can organise these seven practices into three components, which give a holistic view of team leadership.

PEOPLE

Create environment

Practices 1-2

- 1) Acceptance
- 2) Attitude

TASK

Work the plan

Practices 5-7

- 5) Agreements
- 6) Action
- 7) Accountability

VISION

Determine direction

Practices 3-4

- 3) Aspiration
- 4) Actuality

Acceptance

The first practice, acceptance, is about creating an environment where those you are leading feel welcome, safe and accepted. When people feel this way, they are more likely to connect, engage, grow, and achieve.

Attitude

This practice involves encouraging the right attitude in your team—where there is a greater emphasis on strengths and successes than on weaknesses and failures. By beginning with the positive you can create a more engaging, inspiring and ultimately more effective team culture.

Aspiration

Aspiration involves getting clarity about your purpose in the present moment and into the future. When a team has unified and transparent goals, their energy increases and becomes more focused.

Actuality

The practice of actuality requires being clear and honest about your current position. When you face the reality of your situation, and take responsibility for it, you will be in a better place to move forward towards your goals.

Agreements

Clear agreements require you answer this key question: who will do what by when? Once you've established where you want to go and how to get there, you make agreements to get that work done. This moves you away from cheap talk and positions you for effective action.

Action

Action is about completing your side of the agreements you've made. You build integrity as you personally do what you say you'll do, when you say you'll do it.

Accountability

Accountability involves holding people to their word regarding the agreements they have made. It's a rare and uncomfortable skill, but it has huge benefits—your team members will have higher self-regard, which improves their effort and productivity.



DAY 1

Assess your team's current situation

You'll get more out of this 30-day journey if you understand your team's current strengths and weaknesses. Read the overview of the practices above and rate how well you're doing at each of them (on a scale of 1 to 5). You might also want to survey your team to get a wider perspective. You can download a printable assessment tool [here](#).



Acceptance

Greet your team members when you arrive at the office in the morning. Even if you can't reach everyone, make sure you say hello to a couple of people each day. For bonus points: use their name, ask them about their families, and bring up points from previous conversations.



DAY 2



DAY 3

Read Google's findings from Project Aristotle (click [here](#)), where they investigated the ingredients of an effective team. You'll learn why psychological safety (closely related to the practice of acceptance) is so crucial.

Schedule a time this week to take one of your team members out for a coffee. When you spend individual time with your employees, they feel valued and accepted. This is a great opportunity to listen without distraction to any concerns or issues they may be facing at work.



DAY 4

DAY 5

Find out your team members' birthdays and add them to your calendar. Everybody will feel special when you remember their birthday—especially if you mark the occasion in some way.

Attitude

Begin your next meeting by asking each person to share something work-related that they're thankful for. Not only will this get everybody contributing something to the meeting, but you'll also connect as a team in a positive way.

DAY 6

DAY 7

Do a mindfulness exercise—ideally at the start of your day, but also whenever you're feeling overwhelmed. You can try the quick 'Take 5' exercise Mel Robbins describes in [this video](#), or simply pause for a few seconds to concentrate on your breathing. This will enable you to respond more calmly in high-pressure leadership situations.

Write your "failure resume", as suggested [here](#) by Daniel Pink. This is a list of all your biggest failures—personal, professional and academic. Write down how you failed, but also what you learned from it. You'll be able to avoid repeating your mistakes, as well as get more comfortable with failure.

DAY 8

DAY 9

Start a gratitude journal. Every evening, write down 5-10 things you're grateful for. Read them over again in the morning to book-end your day with positivity.

Aspiration

Nobody can be great at everything. If you try, you'll only end up spreading yourself too thin. Instead, give your all to the few things your team can do with excellence. Take some time to identify what those things are. What can your business or team do better than anyone else? How can better focus on this one thing?

DAY 10

DAY 11

Create or revisit your team's vision. This vision statement should capture character (what you hope to be) and actions (what you hope to do). You should incorporate the one thing you identified in yesterday's exercise. Make sure your vision is clear and meaningful, so your team members will be inspired by it.

Turn your vision into SMART goals. Your team members should know exactly what they need to do to make that vision a reality. The SMART framework is: specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, time-bound. It's best to get your team involved in this process, so that they have the motivation and ownership to follow through on the plans.

DAY 12

DAY 13

Set aside a future date in your calendar to review your vision and goals. It's easy to be excited about goals while you're writing them, only for them to be forgotten in the daily grind. Make sure your team is taking action to move in the right direction by regularly reviewing your goals together and adjusting your plans accordingly.

Actuality

Before you can move towards the goals you set on Day 12, you need to understand where you are now. Sit down with one of your employees to have a candid conversation about your current situation compared to one of your goals. Listen to their opinions and concerns carefully, rather than jumping straight into solutions or blame.

DAY 14

DAY 15

Complete a SWOT analysis on the present position of your business or team. This involves evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. By using this tool, you can capitalise on your strengths and opportunities, and find ways to overcome the weaknesses and threats.

Choose some key metrics that will give you an idea of how well your team is performing. These should ideally be based on the goals you set previously. Set up systems for tracking these metrics so you can quantitatively measure your progress. You might track sales calls, product returns, or anything else. Another useful metric is to have all team members track how they use their time for a week or two, using a tool like RescueTime or Toggl.

DAY 16

DAY 17

Consider purchasing the **TKI test** for your team, so you can discover your different conflict-handling styles. This will help you to understand the current team dynamics, and give everyone the tools to manage their emotions and actions when conflict arises in the future.

Agreements

Look over your to-do list, and make sure that each item is an observable and measurable task. We develop resistance towards tasks that are fuzzy and unclear, so they tend to pile up in our overdue list. Instead of "sales figures", write "Email all staff to request last month's sales figures."

DAY 18

DAY 19

Use the "one-minute goal setting" process from *The One Minute Manager* to set an agreement with a team member. This involves setting a clear goal, writing it down, and informing them that they will be held accountable to it. See the process [here](#).

Are any of your team's projects stalled? Often this is because you've failed to identify the 'next action'— which David Allen defines as the very next step you can take towards a goal. Even a relatively easy project can become stalled when there's no clear next step. If you're in charge of the project, define the next action now. If somebody else is responsible, show them how to define it.

DAY 20

DAY 21

When you have a team meeting, does everybody come away crystal clear on what needs to be done? Is this followed up with action? If not, try this method of minute-taking in your next meeting: set up projector and type minutes in real-time; use a 5 column table (topic, discussion points, next actions split into who/what/when); email out immediately after meeting so agreements are clear.

Action

Do a time audit to get a realistic picture of how you're spending your time—it's probably quite different to what you think. Track your day in 15-minute increments starting from today, for at least one week (preferably two). At the end, make plans for how you can improve how you use your time. You can find my time audit worksheet [here](#).

DAY 22

DAY 23

Before leaving the office today, write down your 1-3 Most Important Tasks (MITs) for tomorrow. In the morning, get straight into the first task and keep working until it's done, then tackle the next one. This way you'll be sure that your MITs won't get pushed aside in favour of the urgent.

Craft a morning routine to start your day off right. Whatever you want to get done in the morning, incorporate it into a simple and clear routine. Some great activities to kick off your day include making your bed, meditation, and doing exercise or stretches. By having a set routine every day, you can preserve your mental energy for your most important work.

DAY 24

DAY 25

Incorporate time batching into your schedule. This means grouping similar tasks together, such as handling all your administrative tasks on Wednesday mornings. Batching improves your productivity because you can focus on one type of task, rather than jumping back and forwards.

Accountability

Have a one-minute accountability meeting with the employee you set a goal with back on Day 19. Depending on their performance, give them a one-minute praising or reprimand. This will give you practice in keeping people accountable, as well as creating a culture of accountability among your team. See the specific steps to take [here](#).

DAY 26

DAY 27

Are there any difficult or uncomfortable conversations you've been putting off, either in your business or personal life? Tackle that conversation today, or make a plan and set a date to have it. The more practice you have with facing hard conversations head-on, the easier it will get. This skill is crucial if you want to be able to hold your team members accountable in an effective way.

Who is the person you know that is best at holding people accountable? Schedule an appointment with them and ask them for advice about how they do it. This is a skill that takes plenty of practice, so it'll be helpful to hear from somebody who has walked this path and learned from their mistakes along the way.

DAY 28

DAY 29

Think of ways you can implement feedback structures within your team, outside of a formal once-yearly performance review. When your team members know that they'll be held accountable for their agreements, and are proactive about improving themselves, they'll thrive with regular feedback. Make sure others can give you feedback as well—it's important for you to model the value of accountability for the rest of your team.

Conclusion

Even though our 30 day challenge has come to an end, this should only be the beginning of your journey towards effective leadership. Take some time today to reflect on what you've learned and accomplished over the past month. Ask yourself questions like:

DAY 30

- Which practices did you find the easiest and hardest to implement?
- Which day did you enjoy the most?
- Based on the initial team assessment and your experiences from this challenge, what improvements do you want to make?

Make a plan for how you can keep growing in each of these seven practices. Think about the short-term (what are you going to do this week?) as well as more long-term.

Low price!



A great next step is to enrol in my online course:
How to be a Highly Effective Team Leader

Click on this banner for more information.

About Me



I'm Peter Watson, and my passion is to help leaders regain their joy so they can build successful teams and businesses.

I've been involved in teams for decades, as a manager, board member and pastor. I was the senior leader of non-profit organisations for 18 years, and during that time brought significant growth. My particular focus was on team development, and I want to share with you what I learned over those years.

I train individuals, groups, and organisations in a variety of topics, including team development, negotiation, emotional intelligence, and productivity.

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this resource. Feel free to get in touch with me if you have any feedback or questions.



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