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Define Your Own Metric For Leadership Success: Here's How To Lead From Within

By Joelle K. Jay



Every year presents itself with a new set of challenges for business leaders, whether it's the talent gap, generational shifts, an up-and-down economy, or the usual 21st-century challenges, like technological modernization, digital transformation and globalization. In order for leaders to successfully rise to the challenge, it's not enough to leverage their skills for leading their organizations -- they must learn to lead *themselves*.

As a seasoned executive coach with more than a decade in the field, I've seen a noticeable increase in leaders seeking advisory on how to better practice personal leadership.

Personal leadership is the leadership of the self. When practicing personal leadership, leaders put themselves first, not out of arrogance or selfishness, but out of a commitment to becoming centered, strategic, reflective and clear. Personal leadership can be understood as the ability to define a direction for your life and leadership and to move in that direction with consistency over time. That kind of clarity not only helps leaders achieve what they want to achieve, but it instills confidence among others in their leadership so they can attain their common goals.

For leaders who need digestible, practical ways to lead from within outside of the noise created by the digital era and data deluge, these five practices for leading from within provide a place to start.

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Get clarity. Getting clarity on what you want means connecting clearly and instantly to your ideas about success, both short-term and long-term. Just as business leaders set a vision for their company, so too must they create a vision for themselves. Your vision can change as you change, but it's steady enough to provide direction. Getting clarity ensures that, despite the changes happening in today's business and economic landscape, the busy-ness of life and business won't lead you in a direction you don't want to go.

Find focus. Finding focus means keeping your priorities in mind even when the world around you is pulling you away. One way to find your focus is to keep a short list of areas that matter most to you as a leader, and then ask yourself if these areas reflected in the way you're spending your time. For many people, they aren't. Their day-to-day to-do list bears little resemblance on what they want long-term for their life. Instead, keep your focus areas handy and use them to organize your time. You may even develop something of a "personal strategic plan." In a business setting, a strategic plan makes it possible for everyone within the organization to see, and align themselves with, a common vision, mission, goals, and action plan — usually all in a single document. Just so, your personal strategic plan can make it possible for you to see and align yourself with your personal vision, and goals, perhaps even on a single page.



[Joelle K. Jay, Ph. D.](#), is a Director with the [Leadership Research Institute](#) and an executive coach specializing in leadership development. She strategizes with business leaders to enhance their performance and maximize business results. Her clients include presidents, vice presidents, and C-level executives in Fortune 500 companies such as Microsoft, Google, and Adobe. She is the author of [The Inner Edge: The 10 Practices of Personal Leadership](#) and [The New Advantage: How Women in Leadership can Create Win/Wins for Their Companies and Themselves](#). To connect with Joelle, go to www.JoelleKJay.com or email Info@JoelleKJay.com.