



WHAT WORKS - A PKAL ESSAY

LEADERSHIP GROWTH PLAN

The Leadership Growth Plan (LGP) is an ongoing action plan for helping you develop as a leader. In the plan, you lay out your personal and professional leadership growth goals (including time frames) and steps to achieve these goals. Throughout your life/career, you should continually update and refine your LGP.

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Personal vision or mission

To thine own self be true....

Before you can lead others, you must be able to lead yourself. Spend some time reflecting on the question “Who am I?” and determining the things that are central to your being. Consider such things as:

- ♦ your gifts
- ♦ your character and temperament
- ♦ your world view
- ♦ your personal goals.

Described below is a process similar to the one outlined in *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* by Peter Senge. The exercises help you assess who you are and envision what you want to become. After you assess and identify the overarching values and goals of your life, you should capture these in some form to guide both life and daily decisions.

Many find it useful to write a personal mission statement to capture succinctly what is central to their being. If you wish to write such a statement, we offer the following suggestions from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey:

- ♦ A personal mission statement focuses on what you want to be (character) and to do (contributions and achievements) and on the values or principles upon which being and doing are based.
- ♦ A personal mission statement...becomes a personal constitution, the basis for making major, life-directing decisions, the basis for making daily decisions in the midst of the circumstances and emotions that affect our lives.
- ♦ Once you have that sense of mission, you have the essence of your own proactivity. You have the vision and the values which direct your life. You have the basic direction from which you set your long- and short-term goals. You have the power of a written constitution...against which every decision concerning the most effective use of your time, your talents and your energies can be effectively measured.
- ♦ The mission statement may be written in a variety of forms— from lists to paragraphs to poems. “Because each individual is unique, a personal mission statement [should] reflect that uniqueness, both in content and form.” ▶

KEY ISSUES

- ♦ How to develop a Leadership Growth Plan that reflects your individual uniqueness:
- ♦ Ask “Who am I?”
- ♦ Prepare a personal mission statement.
- ♦ Evaluate your vision.
- ♦ Develop personal and professional leadership growth goals.
- ♦ Create an action plan.
- ♦ Implement this action plan in your daily life.
- ♦ Review and evaluate your mission statement and the progress of your action plan continually.

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After you have written a draft of your personal mission statement, evaluate it by asking yourself:

- ◆ Do I feel this mission statement represents the best that is within me?
- ◆ During my best moments, do I feel good about what this mission statement represents?
- ◆ Are direction, purpose, challenge, and motivation signaled in this mission statement?
- ◆ Am I aware of the strategies and skills that will help me accomplish what I have written?
- ◆ What do I need to do now to be where I want to be tomorrow?
- ◆ **The final test:** Does this mission statement inspire me?

Based on the answers, revise the statement as needed.

Specific goals

A goal is a dream with a deadline.

— Margie Blanchard

With your vision or mission in mind, lay out your personal and professional leadership growth goals. Identify such things as:

- ◆ qualities or competencies you plan to develop or improve
- ◆ leadership roles you plan to assume
- ◆ contributions you plan to make
- ◆ achievements you plan to attain.

State these as specific goals: “I plan to do X.”

Establish a specific time frame: “I plan to do X by Y.” (or) “Within X years, I plan to do Y.”

Action plan

To create an action plan, follow these steps:

determine the action steps you need to take in order to move from your current reality to the achievement of each goal

consider your resources and skills

identify individuals, opportunities, and strategies to help you reach your goals

after considering your options, specifically identify a proposed action(s) to achieve each goal.

Evaluation

Remember that the development of a personal vision, specific goals, and action plan is an ongoing process.

Review and evaluate your mission statement periodically to be sure it is in harmony with your personal vision and your continuing development.

Evaluate your progress towards your goals and assess the effectiveness of your action plan.

You may then need to adjust your goals and/or your action plan. The “growth” process should be a continuous cycle. ■