



VAYA GROUP

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE GUIDE

A Sample

ASSERTIVENESS

Individuals who stand out in the area of Assertiveness strive to have a direct impact in the business. They are vocal members of the group who regularly forward their opinions and insights. These individuals communicate in a very direct, candid manner, encouraging an environment where open debate and honest dialogue is valued. As a result, conflicts are managed in a timely and constructive manner.

ASSERTIVENESS AS A STRENGTH

Leaders Who Excel At Assertiveness:

- Have a direct communication style and clearly articulate their opinions in a wide variety of situations, standing up for and defending personal beliefs
- Directly confront, manage, and resolve conflict
- Address difficult or sensitive issues in an open, straightforward manner
- Actively encourage open debate in group settings
- Unafraid to express opinions that are clearly outside the majority view
- Are a vocal supporter of business strategies, expectations, and values

Maximizing Assertiveness:

- In group meetings or training sessions, ask those who are more reserved about their thoughts on topics and support their view to help them voice their opinions.
- Seek to interact or assert yourself with individuals at higher levels of the organization to ensure the voice of the field is heard.
- Offer to be a champion or advocate for a teammate who is having trouble directly confronting a tough issue or uncomfortable situation.
- Actively engage members of the team who demonstrate skepticism toward or seem to oppose the business direction, strategies, expectations, etc. and articulate your views to positively impact their behavior.

Competency: Assertiveness

ASSERTIVENESS AS A LIMITATION

Leaders Developing Assertiveness:

- Hesitate to express opinions or fail to respond, particularly in group settings and when beliefs are challenged by others
- Avoid discussion of difficult, sensitive, or emotionally charged issues
- Do not confront and resolve conflict in a timely manner
- Are unwilling to directly challenge or contradict others
- Discourage debate or contention in group settings
- Become intimidated or overwhelmed in controversial situations

Assertiveness Development Tips:

- Make a commitment to deal with conflict immediately, rather than procrastinating or burying the issue.
- Be open, honest, and direct when communicating with others. If you find yourself in situations where you would otherwise be quiet, make it a point to speak up and share your opinions.
- Foster an environment that encourages open, constructive debate by recognizing individuals who freely express ideas and opinions even if they oppose the majority view.

- Tenaciously confront and overcome obstacles rather than allowing them to derail you or your team.
- Actively share your experiences and successes with others; seek to initiate discussions around your best practices and key learnings.
- When leaving voicemails or emails with others which request action, be aware of your tone and appropriateness. Remain positive but be direct in your call for action.
- Assert yourself with peers/managers to make sure that you express your opinions and see that the needs of you and the team are considered.
- Seek/identify opportunities to sponsor a new idea or initiative and anticipate how to handle obstacles/opposition. Proactively offer opinions & feedback to peers and management on challenging issues.
- Seek opportunities to express your ideas confidently, even when not popular with others rather than submerging them to gain consensus.
- Practice providing direction for discussions and vocalizing your opinions on issues early on.

ON THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Get out of your comfort zone and speak up in meetings. Write down one or two of your key opinions or ideas that you would like to share relevant to the topic and bring them to the next meeting. Instead of waiting to see if others share the same or similar views, challenge yourself to speak up and state your ideas at the earliest appropriate point during the meeting.
- Identify an issue you've been sidestepping or avoiding. Speak with the other party and share your thoughts directly. Speak openly, honestly and candidly to ensure your message is clear.
- Take a leadership role on an identified project or corporate initiative with your peers. Look for ways to make yourself feel equally comfortable leading a team as you would be participating on one.
- Put yourself in scenarios where more of a "take charge" approach is needed to deal with conflict. Be forthright with your thoughts and share them with the individual or group. This vocalization can be more beneficial to the team instead of sitting back and waiting for a response.
- Take opportunities to role-play tough discussions with a colleague who has been identified as highly assertive before meeting with teammates when difficult issues or circumstances need to be confronted.
- Identify which colleagues may need more direction and firmness. With these individuals, do not avoid the 'tough' discussions, rather determine the message you need to send and find a time to communicate this message in a clear and direct manner.
- At your next POA meeting, challenge yourself to get involved more readily. Avoid second-guessing the validity or value of your opinions before sharing and seek to be more vocal during the meeting.
- Identify people who are assertive in and out of the region. If willing to be a resource to you, use their behaviors as a guide or model to help you gain greater comfort in communicating directly.

Competency: Assertiveness

COMMON BEHAVIORAL COMBINATIONS

High Working Collaboratively
High Listening

vs.

Low Assertiveness

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- While you excel at facilitating dialogue with others, you may struggle to move discussions or actions forward and provide direction when necessary.
- Your desire for understanding others limits your ability to exhibit control of situations and drive your agenda.

- So open to others' thoughts and willing to embrace their ideas, your opinions and needs can get lost.
- In your attempts to be a "team player" you may stop short of voicing your opinions or thoughts about an idea, especially when it's counter to consensus.

Combo tip: When you have a comment, suggestion, opinion, thought, etc. that you are hesitant to voice, ask a question related to that topic to open up discussion and help ensure your voice is considered.

High Relationship Building
High Interpersonal Sensitivity

vs.

Low Assertiveness

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- So concerned about the feelings of others, you can struggle to express your viewpoints or opinions in a clear and direct manner.

- Focused on establishing rapport and getting to know others may limit your willingness to express contrary opinions and viewpoints.
- As you strive to foster rapport and compassion with others, you may not specifically ask for what you need or want.
- Not wanting to damage the relationships you have with others, you can shy away from being too blunt, frank or candid in discussions.

Combo tip: As you establish rapport with others, pay attention to what you feel open and candid about discussing so that you can be more comfortable expressing yourself with them.

DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY AS A STRENGTH

DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY

Emphasizing execution and delivering results is key to drive team members' responsibility for outcomes. Leaders who successfully drive accountability within their teams do it through seeking commitments from others, tracking progress and outcomes, and enforcing consequences for sub par performance. This competency is important as leaders must be able to give clear direction and address performance issues in a timely, direct and open fashion.

Leaders Who Excel At Driving Accountability:

- Seek commitments from others for executables
- Hold self and others accountable for actions and deliverables
- Take swift and appropriate action when others are not performing
- Work with the team to establish clear expectations for action
- Regularly follow-up with others to ensure fulfillment of expectations
- Visibly and vocally own up to mistakes; act as a role model for accountability
- Consistently follow through on commitments

Maximizing Driving Accountability:

- When others express their concerns and frustrations with circumstances that hinder their ability to meet challenging goals, encourage them to focus on what they 'can do' to overcome those obstacles versus factors that make it a challenge.
- When a due date for a report or assignment is lingering, proactively reach out to other team members to remind them of the commitments and encourage their timeliness in completing them.
- Share with others the systems and tools you utilize to stay on top of your commitments.
- Offer to be a resource to team members who have difficulty completing tasks on-time. Establish regular follow-up to ensure they are meeting commitments.
- Set up a system to regularly remind team members of expectations and necessary deliverables.

Competency: Driving Accountability

DRIVING ACCOUNTABILITY AS A LIMITATION

Leaders Developing Driving Accountability:

- Resist accountability and often refer to other people or circumstances as excuses for missed commitments; blame external factors for performance deficiencies
- Struggle to establish and communicate clear expectations when working with others
- Display a casual attitude and indifference to deadlines and performance measurements
- View conversations regarding expectations as general guidelines for activities versus hard-and-fast commitments
- Inconsistently use tracking and monitoring mechanisms to ensure projects and goals are on-target

Driving Accountability Development Tips:

- Identify an area in which you and your teammates are struggling. As a team, set agreed upon expectations and accountabilities for dealing with the issue moving forward. Put in place regular check-points to collectively report-out on activities related to those expectations.

- Consistently share commitments you have made with others on the team as well as your manager. In letting others know what you have “signed-up” for, you will be raising your own level of personal responsibility and commitment to follow-through and complete tasks and assignments.
- Look for opportunities to point out to the team those who regularly and consistently deliver on their commitments and take accountability for the actions they take and outcomes they produce.
- When providing suggestions and advice to others, work with the person to identify specific goals and actions to take based on your input. Establish follow-up steps to ensure tasks are completed on time and as planned.
- In setting expectations with others, practice asking them to commit to and take responsibility for meeting their objectives. Create an accountability trail by clearly identifying “who” is responsible for “what” by “when.”
- When the team is feeling challenged, focus on identifying what team members can control versus worrying about what they cannot control. Help them to revisit expectations and create plans on how to meet them.
- Keep your daily planner at hand. Write down the promises made to you. Make sure you review them daily and follow-up with others on their commitments.

ON THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Take a leadership role on a project with peers. Begin each meeting with a specific agenda to accomplish and end each meeting with a review of team member accountabilities. During meetings, practice providing direction for the discussions. After meetings, follow-up with team members to hold them accountable for responsibilities.
- Volunteer to serve as a point person with regard to collecting or tracking a regular deliverable. Implement structure for your team in the form of tracking/reporting mechanisms to effectively monitor these shared commitments (e.g., spreadsheets, databases, calendars, etc.). When others do not fulfill expectations, practice initiating a direct conversation regarding the importance of meeting the commitment.
- Following team meetings/events, serve as a resource for your team by summarizing the expectations that were communicated by leaders and team members. When expectations are unclear, reach out to appropriate stakeholders to clarify. Send an overview of shared expectations to team members so all are on the same page.

- Take ownership for planning an upcoming meeting with the help of other team members. Practice delegating activities to team members. When others do not meet expectations, resist the urge to take over their responsibility and do it yourself. Instead, show the individual what needs to be done differently and set expectations for follow-up.
- Identify a lingering problem that you are facing with your team. Outline the results you would like to achieve associated with that problem and define clear, specific indicators of what success in that area would be. Create a mechanism for measuring progress toward the outcomes and set regular reviews for assessing progress.

Competency: Driving Accountability

COMMON BEHAVIORAL COMBINATIONS

High Commitment to Service

vs.

Low Driving Accountability

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- In your efforts to be helpful to others, you may take on issues or problems yourself rather than ensuring others take ownership for their responsibilities.
- So focused on serving others, you may not notice times when others may take advantage of you by allowing you to own their results.

- As you work with others, your focus on the well being and interests of your business partners limits your ability to drive commitment to meeting the expectations of the business.

Combo tip: Rather than taking the responsibility to resolve issues or achieve goals for others, guide them toward the steps and actions they can take to handle matters without your assistance. Helping others to take responsibility and accountability for their actions, will expand your ability to be of service to others.

High Working Collaboratively
High Listening

vs.

Low Driving Accountability

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- You excel at asking questions and getting input to work together with others; however, you may struggle to drive specific progress within a group.

- In working with others, you allude to team success and responsibility so much that ensuring ownership and commitment on the individual level can get lost.
- You may often engage with others in excellent discussions that unfortunately do not lead to specific next-step actions or accountabilities.

Combo tip: As you work to solicit input and advice from your teammates, use what you learn to craft specific questions about the contributions and commitments they plan to make, and when they'd like you to follow-up or check-in with them on their progress.

Competency: Driving Accountability

COMMON BEHAVIORAL COMBINATIONS (CONT.)

High Relationship Building

vs.

Low Driving Accountability

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- Concern about the connection and even friendships you have with others can lead you to focus more on relationships than the attainment of business goals and objectives.
- Your focus on ensuring a personable atmosphere and close relationships within the team does not lead to specific expectations and personal accountability for producing results.

- As you strive to maintain personal rapport with members of your team, you may overlook underperformance or lack of effort at times.

Combo tip: Make accountability a part of the relationships you have with team members and colleagues. As you initiate interactions with others, use your comfort opening up to people to tell them about your goals and expectations.

High Analytical Thinking
High Tactical Planning

vs.

Low Driving Accountability

How can this combination emerge in your work?

- A strong problem solver and planner, you are more interested in resolving the issue at hand than who owns it.

- You present data, facts, and logic, expecting others to accept or fall in line, as opposed to seeking commitment.
- Your strong interest in the details and technical side of the job (i.e.: product and disease state knowledge) overshadows your attention to ensuring specific performance measures and metrics are met.

Combo tip: Turn your attention and efforts to analyze and determine a course of action to the goals, results, outcomes, performance measures, etc. you expect as a result of the work put in.

TACTICAL PLANNING

A highly planful, structured approach to work is reflected in the area of Tactical Planning. As leaders are expected to manage multiple projects and drive initiatives simultaneously, it is imperative that they utilize effective project management and oversight skills to keep team members focused on making progress and delivering on accountabilities. Through the use of timeline, milestones, checkpoints and assigned responsibilities, strategic business goals are translated into clear, workable action plans.

TACTICAL PLANNING AS A STRENGTH

Leaders Who Excel At Tactical Planning:

- Excel at translating business goals into actionable project plans
- Project plans are consistently well thought out and include comprehensive action steps, timelines, and resource requirements
- Help others on the team see the link between broad company goals and specific, workable action plans for the team
- Effectively employ milestones, check points, and reporting mechanisms to keep projects on track
- Develop and communicate plans with milestones and timelines for projects
- Incorporate tracking and monitoring mechanisms into plans of action
- Establish and communicate clear expectations of team members
- Provide a great deal of structure or guidance to team members when delegating tasks

Maximizing Tactical Planning:

- When working on a project with others, help them develop a clear and actionable working plan from start to finish.
- Volunteer your expertise in this area when it comes to creating mechanisms for tracking progress to goal for the team.
- Do a quick presentation on building a stepwise action plan. Teach coworkers how to start a viable action plan and continue with milestones for gauging progress to goal.
- Make yourself available to others with a less structured approach than you. Many people who are less structured, lack the systems you may take for granted. Help others find the tools they need to add structure to their work efforts.

TACTICAL PLANNING AS A LIMITATION

Leaders Developing Tactical Planning:

- Rush to meet objectives without establishing a clear plan of action
- Have inadequate or non-existent tracking mechanisms in place for progress to goal
- Have difficulty translating goals and objectives into workable action plans
- Provide limited structure or guidance to team members regarding how to achieve goals
- Lack systems or mechanisms for monitoring work flow and progress toward goals
- Conduct limited follow-up with team members resulting in missed deadlines, rework, and/or wasted effort

Tactical Planning Development Tips:

- Chunk down large assignments into smaller, more manageable tasks. Developing individual plans for each of these smaller chunks helps make the planning process less overwhelming.
- Implement structure in your area by implementing tracking/reporting mechanisms to monitor work flow. Work with a colleague who can mentor you in this area related to those expectations.

- As you plan your next project, anticipate possible problems that may occur (due to people, resources, etc.). Provide preventive measures and contingency plans in high-risk or customer-oriented situations.
- Do your planning on paper. This will help make sure you cover all bases and will be a reference to rely on during your project.
- Keep a detailed “resource directory.” Next time you are working on something that needs a specific resource, your list will be at your fingertips.
- When making a specific project plan, list each step on a separate piece of paper. When you think you have each step identified, put the pieces of paper in order to see if they flow well. Rewrite your entire plan out on one piece of paper.
- Ask for help from someone who is a great planner. Shadow them on your next project together and see what a great tactical action plan looks like.
- Think in terms of a roadmap. What turns and stops will it take to get to my destination? What markers can I look for so I know I’m ¼ of the way there? Half way? Translate this concept. Your destination is your project. Your turns and stops are your action items. Your markers are your milestones by which you can gauge your progress to your ‘destination.’
- Keep previous project notes to refer to when planning upcoming projects. These can help you figure out steps, resources and timelines necessary.

ON THE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

- Upon completion of a project, conduct a personal project debrief and ask yourself the following:
 - Were project plans complete and sufficient?
 - Were all available resources utilized effectively?
 - What went well with the project?
 - What could have been done better?
- Review this information and make an effort to remedy problem areas when planning your next project.
- Volunteer for a project. Resist the urge to immediately jump into this project; instead force yourself to step back and establish a clear plan of action. As you develop your plan, make sure it includes the following:
 - A clear statement of the goal, objective or end result
 - Specific and measurable action steps that lead to the end goal
 - Clear identification of who is responsible for completing each step
 - Target completion dates for each step and total project
 - List of resources required to complete the project along with plan for how those resources are to be secured

- Volunteer to help your boss with his/her responsibilities allocating and tracking the team’s resources. Create a system to track how the team’s money is spent and devise a strategy for assessing the ROI for the choices that team members make. Work with your boss to make suggestions for improving the process and setting expectations for how money will be spent.
- Choose an upcoming project you will be involved with. Look at the end goal: what does it look like? Now, how will we get there? Think from the back end first in order to establish the larger action items needed. Now break each large action item down into smaller, more manageable action plans for each individual involved in the project.
- At your next team meeting, volunteer to do a demonstration of an action plan. Partner with a coworker who has this expertise to put your presentation together. Make sure to include action steps, milestones and timelines in your demonstration.

