



# Leadership: Skill Development Framework

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# Introduction

Considerable evidence supports the need for learners to develop key personal and social capabilities, also known as ‘soft skills’, ‘future skills’ or ‘21st century skills’. Research shows that employers value these skills, and this will continue to be true, as these skills are the most resistant to automation as technology advances. Incorporating development of these skills into coursework and classroom instruction is often a challenge for instructors due to a lack of support on how to teach and assess these skills. There is also a perception that these skills must be taught separately when in fact they can be integrated into the existing curriculum. To support our content developers and the instructors who use our products, we have built Skill Development Frameworks around several key personal and social capabilities (including **Leadership**).

The Leadership: Skill Development Framework includes a research-based definition of the skill along with relevant sub-skills which are then broken down into detailed sets of ordered indicators that describe how Leadership skills develop from basic to complex levels. We further validated the framework by running panels with external experts in the skill and Pearson content development experts.

In many cases, the indicators in the framework are flexible, in that they can be learned at a range of different ages with supports, scaffolds, and opportunities to learn and experience these skills. At the same time, there are normative developmental trajectories in the social, cognitive, and executive functioning capacities of children (particularly younger children). It is important to keep these developmental milestones in mind when determining which set of indicators is most appropriate for a given learner segment. The indicators can be adapted to support a variety of instructional activities. For example, they can serve as “look-fors” in a behavioral checklist or be used to populate a grading or observation rubric. Additionally, many indicators represent strategies that can be directly taught to learners.

When supporting the development of leadership skills, it is important to consider and address the various facets of these skills. In the framework, we intentionally highlight behavioral indicators of leadership skills. As well as behavior, we can also consider **knowledge** around leadership skills, and leadership **efficacy**.

**Knowledge** refers to understanding what contributes to good leadership as well as the strategies one could use to implement leadership skills. Knowledge can be taught even in instances where learners do not have the opportunity to apply or demonstrate a leadership behavior.

**Efficacy** refers to how confident learners are in their ability to demonstrate a leadership skill.

Most of the behavioral indicators in the framework could be translated to focus more on knowledge or efficacy.



## Glossary and Notes

### **Leadership**

For the purposes of this framework, we define leadership as the application of personal and social capabilities in increasingly interdependent contexts in order to promote progress, develop others, and drive change.

### **Mastery**

Represents performance that would be typical of a highly effective adult, typically in a workplace setting.

## Sub-Skill

# Initiative

Taking charge in situations where action is needed; adapting to changes in plans or unforeseen circumstances.



### Emerging

Initiates routines in familiar settings without being directed.

Engages in independent activities without prompting.

Makes choices for the group and communicates decisions to others.



### Basic

Takes action/responsibility to address a situation without prompting.



### Intermediate

Regularly takes responsibility for completing tasks in a variety of settings.

Proactively identifies potential future problems that could interrupt plans or progress towards plans.



### Advanced

Maintains ownership and responsibility for tasks through difficulty or failure.

Responds effectively to change by adapting plans or strategies based on new information.

Identifies the positive, even through change, difficulty, or failure (e.g., frames problems to focus on solutions; learns from mistakes).



### Mastery

Reviews setbacks, difficulty, or failure, and identifies what one can learn from them and use in the future.

## Sub-Skill

# Emotional Intelligence

Identifying, managing, and expressing emotions; using emotional understanding and perspective-taking to facilitate productive interpersonal interactions.



### Emerging

Identifies others' emotions through verbal cues, facial expressions, language, etc.

Identifies/labels own emotions.

Recognizes that others have different emotions and feelings from oneself.



### Basic

Identifies events or situations that could cause different emotions (for oneself and others).

Implements strategies to manage emotions.



### Intermediate

Empathizes with others' emotions and experiences.

Considers choices and actions informed by others' perspectives.

Anticipates the emotional response one is likely to experience in different situations in order to manage them more effectively.



### Advanced

Describes how different emotional responses might be more or less appropriate in different social contexts.

Demonstrates an understanding of others' emotions to interact more effectively with others.

De-escalates negative emotional responses from others in social situations.



### Mastery

Strategically manages emotions across a variety of situations in order to apply responses or strategies that are most appropriate for a given situation.

Flexibly adapts emotional responses and emotional management strategies in complex or changing situations.

Manages the emotional responses of others in complex, multifaceted social situations.

# Working Collaboratively

Leveraging communication and collaboration skills to work effectively with others.



## Emerging

Takes turns during activities with others.

Communicates feelings and needs to others.

Uses strategies such as sharing and turn-taking to resolve conflict.

Uses language and nonverbal cues to participate in and maintain conversations.



## Basic

Effectively communicates ideas to others.

Encourages turn-taking and participation.

Shows good listening skills.

Recognizes when there are differences in opinions or ideas within a group.



## Intermediate

Makes attempts to encourage productive communication and collaboration within a group.

Acknowledges the value of ideas shared by others.

Seeks different perspectives in conversations.

Facilitates discussions to include different ideas.



## Advanced

Communicates in a way that fosters collaboration and enables progress.

Intentionally organizes a group's work processes to encourage and enable opportunities for collaboration.

Intentionally builds working relationships.

Identifies when there is conflict or difficulty in working relationships.

Suggests potential areas of compromise or other strategies for resolving differences in opinions.



## Mastery

Makes connections between individuals and within groups that will best enable progress.

Helps others develop their communication and collaboration skills.

Facilitates the development of productive and mutually beneficial working relationships between others.

Directs the flow of conversation to support progress and collaborative problem-solving.

Recognizes whether to intervene to address conflict or difficulty in working relationships.

# Influence

Fostering trust and authenticity in order to collaboratively develop solutions and inspire or motivate change.



## Emerging

Contributes ideas during conversations with others.

Invites peers to participate in collaborative actions or decisions.



## Basic

Advocates for their own point of view.

Encourages open and equitable sharing of ideas during conversations with others.

Identifies characteristics of trustworthy people.

Identifies characteristics of authentic people.



## Intermediate

Leads discussions eliciting different opinions or points of view, and identifying areas of agreement or disagreement.

Identifies specific actions one can take to promote trust.

Identifies specific actions one can take to promote authenticity.

Demonstrates vulnerability by opening up to others.



## Advanced

Widens or deepens their point of view based on an evolving knowledge of other people's perspectives.

Takes intentional steps to build trusting and authentic relationships with others.

Recognizes when and where one has influence.

Identifies responsibilities that come with having influence.

Recognizes instances where one should be influenced by others or promote others as the influencer.



## Mastery

Finds points of connection with others to influence and encourage mutually beneficial and collaborative solutions.

Understands power dynamics within groups or in relationships.

Identifies the ethical responsibilities that come with having influence or being in a position with influence.

Intentionally influences processes to elevate the voices and influence of a diverse group of people.

## Sub-Skill

# Developing Shared Vision

Encouraging the development of shared visions and values; facilitating progress by setting goals that motivate follow-through by being deeply aligned with personal values.



### Emerging

Helps a group identify activities that everyone would want to participate in.

Identifies their own values.

Sets basic goals for future activities.



### Basic

Identifies the pros and cons of their own goals or ideas.

Facilitates the sharing of goals within a group.

Facilitates the sharing of values within a group.

Intentionally sets goals that are consistent with their values.



### Intermediate

Facilitates shared goal-setting.

Facilitates the identification of shared values.

Facilitates discussion about whether existing goals or vision promote follow-through.

Identifies the timeline, checkpoints, and benchmarks needed to successfully achieve a goal.



### Advanced

Identifies trends or events that should be considered when planning for the future.

Engages with the ideas of others to compose a shared long-term vision.

Celebrates progress (including “small wins”) to promote motivation.

Encourages regular check-ins to examine whether progress is being made toward goals.



### Mastery

Helps others identify and use their strengths to achieve the group’s vision.

Promotes a group’s confidence that they can achieve a vision.

Facilitates exploration of the pros and cons of the group’s vision (e.g., is it still working? is it still helping us succeed?)

Collaboratively adapts vision or goals when needed.

## Sub-Skill

# Integrity

Taking personal responsibility to maintain high and ethical standards for behavior, and modeling this for others; promoting integrity and social responsibility within groups or organizations.



### Emerging

Understands there are expectations for behavior.

Follows rules.

Identifies when situations are fair or not fair.

Identifies when situations require moral choices.

Takes action in line with personal values.



### Basic

Identifies the range of factors, or aspects of context, that can be considered when discussing the most ethical (fair, just, etc.) choice in a given situation.

Describes how personal values, principles, and ethics shape one’s behaviors.

Describes their own personal values.



### Intermediate

Takes ownership for their own performance and personal behavior, including mistakes (i.e., apologizing, admitting mistakes, taking corrective actions).



### Advanced

Helps the group reach a consensus around shared standards for behavior.

Identifies unethical behavior, including those of people in power.



### Mastery

Collaboratively shapes an organization’s perspective on ethical and appropriate behavior.

Understands the risk of calling out unethical behavior, particularly of people in power.

# Inclusion

Seeking to understand others and their experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives; using this understanding, along with knowledge about issues of power, privilege, and belonging, to actively promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.



## Emerging

Shows an awareness of others, particularly around differences or diversity (the relevance of this activity to the development of Inclusion depends on adult responses that promote diversity as a positive).

Shows a basic awareness of others' belonging or social participation (e.g., noticing who is or is not participating in an activity).

Recognizes that one's own behavior, background, experiences, and beliefs may be different from others'.



## Basic

Actively listens when others share their experiences, ensuring that they feel heard.

Recognizes and respects the differences of culture and background among different classmates, friends, and family members.

Recognizes that people's perspectives and values are influenced by their personal and cultural experiences.



## Intermediate

Takes action to foster belonging in group activities.

Describes how societal structures and biases create differences in the power and privileges of groups of people.

Inquires about and seeks to understand perspectives different from their own.

Recognizes actions or attitudes that could undermine belonging or inclusion for different groups of people.



## Advanced

Monitors feelings of belonging and inclusivity within groups and intervenes when necessary in order to promote belonging.

Recognizes that issues of power and privilege are always present in relationships.



## Mastery

Takes actions that challenge discrimination, injustice, and/or unequal distribution of social power.

Collaboratively works to identify solutions that address discrimination, injustice, and unequal distribution of social power.

When making decisions, considers issues of power and privilege as well as how societal structures disproportionately impact certain groups of people.



# Innovation

Pushing boundaries and challenging assumptions to foster creativity and new ways of thinking; effectively solving problems.



## Emerging

Uses imagination to generate new ideas.

Uses materials creatively.

Uses language creatively.

Asks questions to promote new ideas or creative thinking.



## Basic

Fosters sharing of new ideas or perspectives.

Describes the importance of having diverse points of view during the problem-solving process.

Experiments with new ways of doing things.



## Intermediate

Considers problems from different points of view.

Facilitates specific strategies (e.g., design thinking; 6 thinking hats) to help foster creative or divergent thinking within a group.

Synthesizes others' ideas or points of view to generate new ideas for consideration.



## Advanced

Models appropriate risk-taking.

Intentionally challenges established ways of thinking.

Iterates and adapts ideas as more information is gathered.

Recognizes the importance of "failure" as a learning opportunity.



## Mastery

Establishes a safe space where others feel comfortable taking risks.

Encourages others to take risks and stretch themselves.

Promotes a "fail fast" mindset that prioritizes rapid cycles of testing and learning to inform and promote innovation.