

## Personal Development Plan Template

### Your Definition of Leadership

Before you begin your journey as a leader through this program, we want you to take some time to reflect on what leadership means to you.

Step 1: Respond to the following questions (100-200 words) – How do you personally define leadership? Which of your core values influence the way you practice leadership?

I would define leadership as the ability to keep a group of people focused and working towards a common goal. In order to be a leader you must have a strong sense of self and purpose while also keeping your team's best interest in mind. This takes responsibility and accountability, especially when adversity strikes. Empathy is also a key trait that a leader must possess. After all, the people you are working with are human too. You must also be decisive and learn when to make appropriate sacrifices. This means weighing pros and cons and being confident every step of the way. Your team is dependent on your morale, which is why it is so important to be positive and full of hope no matter the circumstances. You must be a role model and embody what you want every one of your team members to look like. These are a few of the core values that I practice every day: responsibility, positivity, empathy, and selflessness. All of these are essential character traits for when you are leading a team.

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### Your Leadership Competencies

Step 2: Complete the Personal/Self and Interpersonal/Team modules of the Illinois Leadership Inventory (ILI) here: <http://leadership.illinois.edu/ili/>. The ILI is a tool designed by the Illinois Leadership Center to help students better understand themselves and their leadership competencies. It will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete each module.

When you complete the ILI, you will receive a PDF of your responses as well as resources you can use to develop skills. You must upload the PDF of the ILI results for the Personal/Self and Interpersonal/Team modules to the Certificate Dashboard so we can verify you have completed both.

After completing the ILI, choose one competency from the Personal/Self level of practice and one competency from the Interpersonal/Team level of practice. You will also choose two more competencies from any of the four levels of practice. Ultimately, you will choose a total of four leadership competencies listed below:

- **Personal/Self:** Self-Knowledge, Self-Management, Reflection, Empathy, Openness, Integrity
- **Interpersonal/Team:** Common Purpose, Communication, Relationship Management, Group Dynamics, Followership, Cultural Competency
- **Organization:** Change Management, Diversity Advocacy, Systems Thinking, Innovation
- **Community/Society:** Human Dignity, Social Justice, Global Competence, Service-Minded, Sustainability

On the next page of this document, fill in the four competencies you have selected and address the following three questions for each competency.

Questions:

- Why did you choose this competency?
- How will you work on developing this competency? Please be specific.
- What practical skills or knowledge do you hope to gain by further developing in this competency?

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**1.**

\_\_\_\_ Empathy \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Why did you choose this competency?*

I chose empathy because I believe empathy is a quality that all humans should possess. In today's world, we are extremely interconnected and are sensitive to one other. This is why it is important to put yourself in other peoples' shoes when connecting with them to form genuine connections.

*How will you work on developing this competency?*

I will work on developing this competency by applying empathy into every aspect of my life. When talking to my parents, I will see myself through their eyes and with their perspective as a parent. With my friends, I will continue to be empathetic to show that I care about them.

*What practical skills or knowledge do you hope to gain by further developing this competency?*

I hope to gain patience by applying empathy. Seeing things from other people's point of view can help me become more patient and understand where other people are coming from.

**2.**

\_\_\_\_ Reflection \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Why did you choose this competency?*

I chose this competency because in today's world, people do not do enough reflecting. This is because of the constant distractions that exist in our modern world. You get no time to yourself and to sit with your thoughts.

*How will you work on developing this competency?*

I will work on developing this competency by setting aside time to myself. Whether that means going to the gym/sauna or going out of my way to be alone sometimes.

*What practical skills or knowledge do you hope to gain by further developing this competency?*

I hope to gain self awareness by doing this. Self awareness, in my opinion, is the key to success. How are you supposed to understand the world if you don't understand yourself?

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3. \_\_\_\_\_ Cultural  
Competency \_\_\_\_\_

*Why did you choose this competency?*

I chose this competency because I am frequently surrounded by people from different cultural backgrounds. I have many friends from other countries and I meet a lot of foreign people due to my engineering background.

*How will you work on developing this competency?*

I will develop this competency by being more open minded around people from different cultural backgrounds. I will also ask questions and show that I am eager to learn about these backgrounds to gain a better understanding of them as a person.

*What practical skills or knowledge do you hope to gain by further developing this competency?*

I hope to gain a multicultural lens through this. I do a lot of traveling and this summer I will be interning in Argentina. Expanding my scope and putting myself outside of my comfort zone is essential for me to prosper.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Communication \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Why did you choose this competency?*

I chose communication because verbal communication is an important skill that many people lack especially after quarantine.

*How will you work on developing this competency?*

I will work on developing this competency by putting myself in environments that encourage conversation. I will meet new people and put myself out there.

*What practical skills or knowledge do you hope to gain by further developing this competency?*

I want to work on my networking skills and connect with industry professionals. This takes a level of formality and practice in communicating with others.