

The Leader's Checklist:

10 Mission Critical Principles for Leadership Success

Checklists are an essential tool for leaders to manage increasing complexity in their work environments. Surgeons and airline pilots were among the first to adopt checklists as part of their standard operating procedures which allowed them to improve their performance-based outcomes and reduce their error rates. Leaders in all industries can now learn from these best practices by implementing the following 10 Mission Critical Principles to achieve new levels of success.

1. Understand Your Purpose – Write down your **“why”**. Your voice as a leader is highly dependent on your understanding of this. If you are clear on your purpose, then your ability to motivate and lead others will increase exponentially.

2. Develop a Clear Vision – Formulate a clear vision and communicate it to all team members. Be open to feedback and respond to any questions in order to avoid confusion or ambiguity.

3. Think Strategically – Set forth a pragmatic short and long-term strategy for achieving your overall vision. Think in a manner that displays discipline and focus in achieving this vision.

4. Act Decisively – Make decisions that are timely and well-executed. Teams will look to their leaders to make decisions under pressure. Self-confidence and clarity of purpose are essential in these moments.

5. Communicate Clearly – Communicate in a manner that is clear, concise, and persuasive. Be open, authentic, and remember to encourage feedback to promote greater inclusivity and dialogue.

6. Build Diverse Teams – Embrace holistic hiring practices. There are unique skills that teams with diverse backgrounds (e.g. education, gender, ethnicity, nationality, etc.) are able to apply to unique business challenges. A diverse team can ensure greater organizational longevity.

7. Motivate and Delegate – Energize your team to act thoughtfully and independently to achieve the company vision. Show them you trust them by delegating responsibility where possible.

8. Lead by Example – Show your team what you expect of them based on the way you treat them and manage your own workload. This provides them with insight into your character and values.

9. Track Progress & Lessons Learned – Keep track of key milestones, the actions which led to the greatest success, and what lessons were learned from any setbacks. Set up systems in place to track progress and share lessons with the team at regular intervals.

10. Celebrate the Wins – Increase team morale by showing gratitude and celebrating wins regularly. Take time to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of key players who have supported the overall success of the team.