



# A FRAMEWORK OF LEADERSHIP

## for Seven Hills Foundation

(Abridged Version)

### Leadership “Characteristics”

1. Emotional Intelligence
2. Determined Resolve
3. ‘Other’-Interest before Self-Interest
4. A Desire to Nurture/Develop Others
5. A Passion of Ideals
6. Vision
7. Systems Thinker

### WHO LEADERS ARE

### HOW LEADERS ACT

### Leadership “Behaviors & Actions”

1. “Leads by Example”
2. Exhibits Moral/Ethical Behavior
3. Acts with Humility
4. Listens Intently to Others
5. Maintains a Positive Attitude
6. Honest with Self and Others
7. Empowers Others

### Leadership “Skills & Competencies”

1. Coaching and Mentoring
2. Ability to Manage Change
3. Effective Communicator
4. Conceptual Skills
5. Analytical Skills
6. Ability to Motivate Others
7. Self-Reflection

### WHAT LEADERS DO

## Seven Hills Leadership “Characteristics”

- 1) Emotional Intelligence:** emotional intelligence — the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively — consists of four fundamental capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skills. Each capability, in turn, is composed of specific sets of competencies.
- 2) Determined Resolve:** an ability to focus on a goal and harness all energy to achieve it. A demonstration of an unwavering resolve to do whatever must be done to produce the best results intended to contribute to the well-being of others.
- 3) ‘Other’-Interest:** a pronounced orientation to serve the legitimate needs and aspirations of others and broader social causes without requite. This desire to serve transcends self-interest or mutual interest.
- 4) A Desire to Nurture/Develop Others:** a proclivity on the part of a leader to encourage and support followers to grow and pursue future ambitions both within and outside of the organization.
- 5) A Passion of Ideals:** is the driving force(s) which viscerally propels a leader to pursue a purpose. Ideals are inextricably linked to a leader’s personal core values and the mission of the organization.
- 6) Vision:** exceptional leaders possess a prescient ability to envision a desired future and how the organization will achieve its compelling ambitions.
- 7) Systems Thinker:** an ability to see the whole, or “big picture”, of an organization, or work unit, and how its various components interact with its internal and external environments.

## Seven Hills Leadership “Behaviors & Actions”

- 1) Leads by Example:** a leader’s commitment and capacity to exhibit those skills, values, actions, and examples of character which he/she wishes to be emulated by followers.
- 2) Exhibits Moral and Ethical Behavior:** ascribing with certainty a moral imperative to the leadership phenomenon is polemic. That is, what standards define moral or ethical virtues relative to the act of leading. What is more certain is that the moral values which are promoted by the leader have a significant impact on the values exhibited by the organization or work unit (Northouse, 2001, p.255). As regards Seven Hills Foundation, moral/ethical behavior is considered a mutually determined covenant and represents a set of values shared by leadership and followership. In this regard, moral/ethical behavior is defined vis-à-vis mutuality and discourse. There remains, however, an absolute assumption that leading without simultaneously promoting legal means and action or moral intent is tantamount to illegitimate or disingenuous leadership.
- 3) Acts with Humility:** a genuine leader is first a servant. As such, this demands a rejection of personal hubris. This is not to suggest that leaders are — or should be — without a healthy sense of ego or pride in accomplishments. It does require, however, that a leader act in such ways so as to elevate the achievements of others before self.
- 4) Listens Intently to Others:** the leader’s willful intention to genuinely attend to and earnestly consider the opinions of followers in all matters associated with the leader-follower dyadic relationship. This does not imply



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*In this brief examination of leadership, I’ve attempted to explore certain of its key attributes (i.e., characteristics, behaviors, actions, skills, and competencies), and culminate with a suggested*

*Framework of Leadership intended to guide our work throughout Seven Hills Foundation. I will end this review with what I’ve come to believe over the years to be certain fundamental truths, or principles, on the nature of genuine (as opposed to disingenuous or self-serving) leadership. Appropriately so, I will leave you with “seven” and trust that you — the reader — will add a few more of your own. My warmest regards.*

### **1. A leader is first a servant.**

The 6th century B.C. Chinese philosopher Lao-Tzu taught that leadership embodies selflessness and that enlightened leadership is service. The paradox being: by being selfless, the leader enhances self. This, in my opinion, is the greatest truth concerning the act of leading. It is also the most difficult to embrace.

### **2. Deeply held core values are what directs and sustains a leader.**

Values serve as a set of beliefs that help govern our actions and serve as the guideposts from which we define and judge ourselves; not only with respect to our actions, but also with respect to our morality.

### **3. Our character — how we exhibit our values — is our lasting legacy.**

Our character is the manifestation of what we believe in and hold most dear in our lives. If a leader covets power for self-serving ends, that is what his/her life will be known for. If a leader values the respect and friendship of others and pursues a life of benevolence toward others — his/her life will be so remembered. You decide.

#### **4. To envision and pursue with enthusiasm a yet unrealized future is the essence of the “art of leadership”.**

Robert Greenleaf, a noted humanist and leadership theorist, suggested that leaders must see future events before others see them; they need to have a sense of the unknowable and be able to foresee the unforeseeable. He was not suggesting that leaders need to nurture their mystic tendencies or carry a crystal ball. ‘Insight’ implies being outwardly open to and aware of events, trends, and factors which may foreshadow future actions. It is a leader’s ability to gather a great deal of information, analyze it, and project tendencies before they occur. However insight, or prescience, is not enough; a leader must also possess “entheos” – or enthusiasm – to pursue with determined resolve a desired future.

#### **5. Leadership is fundamentally about relationships.**

A leader is not an island or a rock. The essence of leadership embodies one’s desire and ability to establish community with others, which in turn engenders trust, respect, collaboration, and unity of purpose with followers. A genuine leader values and dignifies those who are led.

#### **6. Our actions — be they ethical or self-serving — serve as our life’s signature.**

Lead ethically. The old axiom “actions speak louder than words”, serves as a simple, yet profound, truth. A leader witnesses to others — in deeds, behaviors, and expressed values — the nature of who they are. Be known as an ethical leader in all that you do and others will willingly follow.

#### **7. Self-reflection and awareness are crucible disciplines for a leader. Each invariably leads to humility.**

It is a good practice for every leader, from time to time, to reflect honestly on one’s life and consider: the manner in which we value and honor those who follow, if we’ve served the needs of others ahead of our own desires, the degree to which we’ve lived by example our deeply held values, and how often we’ve examined our own self-perceived importance. Given such self-reflection, I’ve met no one — least of all myself — who does not then benefit from the virtuous path of humility.

that leaders will, or should in all instances, blindly follow the counsel of others. It does assert, however, that the leader will carefully consider and be respectful of the opinions and thoughts of followers. First listen, then — and only then — act.

**5) Maintains a Positive Attitude:** recognizing that the activities broadly associated with leading people and systems is a challenging inter- and intra-personal process, a leader attempts to see solutions where there are problems, opportunities where threats exist, strengths in light of potential weaknesses, and optimism over pessimism. A positive attitude is a powerful and effective attribute which demands that it be nurtured throughout the organization.

**6) Honest with Self and Others:** truthfulness is the basis of all respectful relationships. To that end, leaders at Seven Hills Foundation shall be honest with their followers. In turn, leaders should be wary of self-deception or unjustified rationalization in all matters.

**7) Empowers Others:** closely aligned with the leader, humility is the “lifting up” of followers through both functional means (i.e., enhanced responsibilities, promotion, recognition, etc.) and psychological/emotional means (i.e., encouraging, supporting, valuing, trusting, etc.) The leaders’ mandate is to imbue in their followers a sense of self-confidence — coupled with opportunity — which will transform followers into leaders.

### **Seven Hills Leadership “Skills & Competencies”**

**1) Coaching and Mentoring:** the leader invests time and earnest interest in transferring knowledge and skills to others so as to elevate their performance and self-confidence. This includes activities associated with follower promotion and succession planning.

**2) Ability to Manage Change:** managing change requires a leader to describe what and why change(s) are needed; seek reactions from followers; clarify any misunderstandings and respond to questions concerning the change(s); seek follower input; ask for support; and follow through by monitoring the change and reinforcing progress.

**3) Effective Communicator:** communicating in such ways (verbally, electronically, in written form, etc.) and occasions so as to inform followers regarding organizational/work unit activities while concurrently establishing a dualistic partnership between leader and follower.

**4) Conceptual Skills:** balancing innovation with big-picture thinking to conceive and select innovative strategies and ideas.

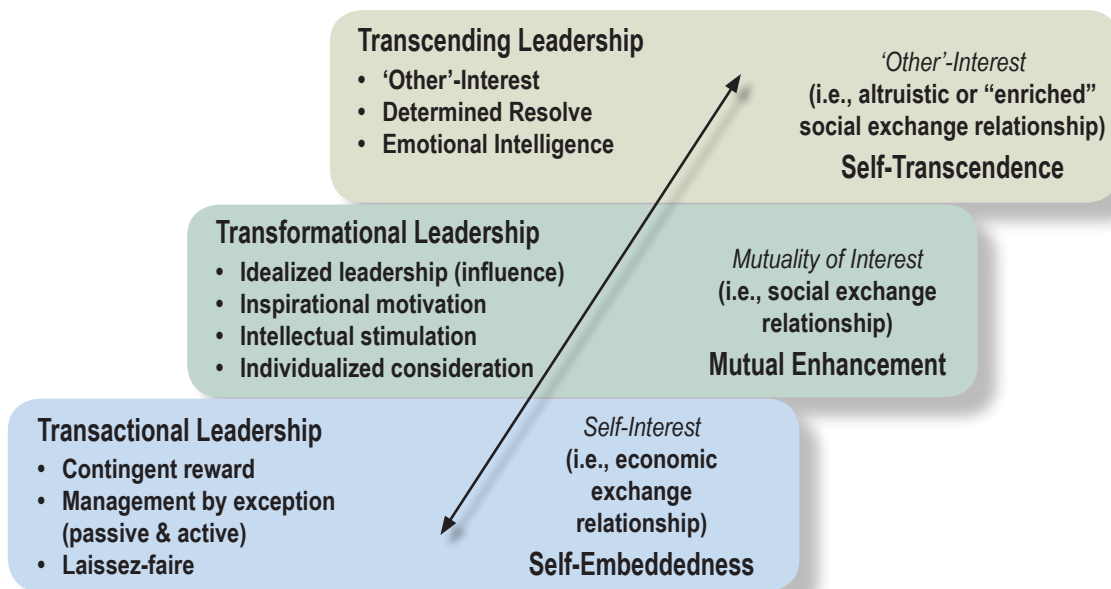
**5) Analytical Skills:** an ability to consider various possibilities for a given situation, evaluate each possibility, decide, and then act. Discernment is a critical competency in thinking analytically.

**6) Ability to Motivate Others:** through the function of personal relationship building, manifest in a mutual commitment to an inspiring purpose, the leader motivates his/her followers. This form of motivation encourages intrinsic over extrinsic benefits.

**7) Self-Reflection:** an ability to self-assess one’s own skills, competencies, actions, interrelationships, objective performance, and consider approaches which may contribute to self-renewal and enrichment.

## SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

1. A leader is first a servant.
2. Deeply held core values are what directs and sustains a leader.
3. Our character — how we exhibit our values — is our lasting legacy.
4. To envision and pursue with enthusiasm a yet unrealized future is the essence of the “art of leadership”.
5. Leadership is fundamentally about relationships.
6. Our actions — be they ethical or self-serving — serve as our life’s signature.
7. Self-reflection and awareness are crucible disciplines for a leader. Each invariably leads to humility.



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