

The Emerging Leader

A handbook for
modern leadership

Your Name Here

A **Facet5** publication

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First published by Facet5 Ltd

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Introduction

Hello [Your name here]

Welcome to your Emerging Leader Handbook – a handbook that combines personality and modern leadership.

As a leader you know that there are plenty of books, of varying quality and usefulness, offering ‘brand new’ models and theories of leadership. Do you really need another one?

I suppose only if it offers a different approach and that’s what we are trying to do with this book. What makes this book different is that it has been written for you. Your leadership is as unique as your personality. Your unique approach will also influence how you coach. This book focuses on the art of coaching, combined with the science of personality to support you to grow your leadership aspirations.

Interestingly, over the last 38 years of working with leaders like yourself, we can see no evidence of one, universally applicable leadership model which works in every industry, organisation and culture. But, working with leaders around the world we have led us to a number of conclusions.

First, we believe personality is at the heart of leadership. It shapes different styles, recognises individual leaders have different strengths, blindspots and delegation needs. When you think of great leaders you have known or admire, you’ll realise that they are a diverse set of characters, engaging, encouraging (and sometimes controlling), all leading in many different ways. They had and have very different personalities. They might range from people who founded charities to football managers to innovative, successful CEOs to teachers and tutors who opened the door to your later life and career. The key to this diversity is personality.

Great leaders are often described as authentic: their style expresses their true personality rather than an artificial performance. Their personality often helps define their leadership identity and when combined with their knowledge, experience and wisdom they are able to understand how far they can and should, flex their style and how to meet others where they are, ultimately helping others become successful. A leader’s personality is like the software which manages how their preferred

approach, knowledge and soft skills are displayed and received by others.

Second the old universal models of leadership (leader as hero, as sage, as guru etc) no longer works. Given the revolution in technology, social attitudes, economy and the focus of organisations – and the sheer complexity of the leadership role – this won't be a surprise to you. One person cannot do everything, so leaders increasingly have to take on the role of development champions, connecting individuals and creating environments in which colleagues and followers thrive.

Third, to achieve all this, successful leaders learn and use many of the attitudes and techniques of coaching. And that's what this book provides: those tools, techniques and approaches that you can use to sharpen and deepen your personal style to meet the challenges of modern leadership.

Why us?

Why should you trust us to provide ideas about how to lead in this 'brave new world'?

Facet5 knows about personality. You could say it's our long-term obsession. And we are passionate about development.

As you'll see from Section 1, Facet5 has been involved in personality measurement and research for over 38 years. Our core measure is based on the best researched personality model in the world and we've used it to develop individuals, teams and organisations and to inform coaches and coaching approaches. Our focus is on helping people, especially leaders, use their personalities to realise their true potential and in turn help others do the same.

Facet5, is based on a model of personality that allows comparison between different people. This helps you to understand how your leadership style compares with others': what are your strengths and areas to look out for when you overlay your strengths; how far you can flex your style while remaining a values-driven individual and where, by contrast, you need colleagues to play to their strengths to support the work of the team. This approach helps with sense making about why we are the way we are and encourages individuals to see difference as a place of learning and opportunity.

Our other obsession is data. Our aim has always been to take trusted, reliable data and make it meaningful. To honour this commitment we have purposely kept this book simple and action-oriented. It's not weighed down by references, long abstract arguments and numbers. But this doesn't mean we've worked out our

position in a ten minute conversation on the back of a napkin. It draws on the ideas of many authors, developers, users and test subjects as well as our own data-driven research into personality and organisation. Some of those great thinkers have provided their stories throughout this book.

Ultimately we want you to use it, not just read it.

Book structure

You can use the book in a way that best fits in with your own schedule, preferred ways of learning and what opportunities there are to try ideas out. You can read this book in short sections, starting where it speaks to you, taking what fit , leaving what doesn't. You can share it with colleagues. The material in the final section can be adapted to fit your role, your personality, your context.

Section 1 outlines how we see leadership, coaching and personality come together; how they interact and some of the ways you can use information about them. It directly addresses your situation and capabilities, not those of a generalised leader in an abstract world.

You will also find ways of investigating your own personality and style and what your leadership strengths are. We call these Key Qualities. They are unique to you and will give you a language and easy way of understanding your core personality traits and how they influence your leader as coach approach.

Within Sections 2 to 4, chapters outline a challenge you might face or a way you might develop your style. They suggest questions you can use and practical techniques with which you can experiment. We've covered 18 important topics, but that list is unlikely to be exhaustive and we plan to add to them.

At the end of each chapter we have provided information that is specific to you and your personality. Here you will find the strengths of your approach, what may happen if you overplay those strengths and strategies to adopt that support the topic being discussed. Think of this as the 'so-what!' bit, where we give you direct advice and tactics based on your unique personality.

Section 5 offers a more general toolkit of actions and approaches from which you can pick and chose, depending on your personality, your particular industry and the sort of organisation or team you lead.

Throughout we've aimed at keeping things short and practical as well as introducing ways of customising how you approach this material.

Some techniques and tools appear in more than one section because they can be used to address a variety of different issues. Over time you'll find you develop your own selection of approaches that work for you and help energise your particular team.

If you're being coached, this book can help you practice techniques between your formal sessions with your coach or you can share the book with them as an extra information they might find useful.

Ultimately we believe that understanding your personality can help improve your leadership not just as a job title or formal process, but as a mindset.

It's a way of helping people feel seen, heard and capable. It shapes a leadership style that invites clarity, builds trust and moves things forward even when the path ahead isn't clear.

Section 1

Understanding your leadership style

Leadership starts from self-awareness. Understanding yourself, how you view yourself and how others might view you, leads directly to understanding other people. In turn, this will help you develop strategies, a culture and a leadership style that gets the best out of different people. Equally importantly, it will build on your own strengths to get the best out of yourself. It will help you cope with your demanding role.

Possessing self-awareness is both a leadership essential and a starting point for growth.

As we stress throughout, leadership is driven by personality as much as competencies, knowledge and actions. Your personality influences how you listen, respond, give feedback, handle discomfort and even how much space you leave for others to grow.

Your own growth matters as much as that of your team members. The more consciously you lead, the more powerfully you coach.

Self-knowledge empowers; it does not limit.

In this section we use Facet5, our trait-based personality model to create a practical lens for understanding your style.

Chapter 1

Leadership truths

As we mentioned, we see no evidence that there is one universal model or theory of leadership which will be successful wherever it is applied. However, Across every programme, sector, or stage of career, there are certain truths about leadership that hold steady. They are not tied to a single model or theory, but rather to the lived experience of leaders everywhere. These truths are the foundations on which trust, clarity and impact are built. We trust you will recognise many of them.

1 Self-awareness: the foundation of growth

At the heart of great leadership is self-awareness. Leaders who understand their personality, strengths and blind spots can better recognise how others see them and interpret their actions. This awareness creates choice: the ability to flex their style without losing authenticity, to meet others where they are and to grow continuously. Self-awareness is not a one-time achievement but an ongoing discipline that underpins every other truth of leadership. Knowing yourself is the foundation of knowing others.

2 Presence – and being present

Effective leaders bring presence and with it a sense of steadiness and authenticity. Presence is not about status or physical proximity; it is about how leaders show up in conversations and moments that matter. Being present means listening fully, paying attention and holding space for others to contribute. People quickly recognise when leaders are distracted or performing rather than engaging authentically. Presence also rests on clarity of values: leaders who are clear on what matters to them and are willing to defend those values when challenged, create consistency that others can trust.

3 Awareness of bias and emotion

All leaders carry biases and emotional triggers. What sets great leaders apart is their ability to recognise these patterns, pause and regulate their responses. Emotional regulation does not mean suppressing feelings but understanding

them well enough to act with intention rather than impulse. This awareness equips leaders to make better decisions, respond constructively under pressure and create psychological safety for others.

4 The art of asking and the courage to voice

Great leaders know how to ask questions that cut to the heart of meaning – uncovering what is really being said and what is left unsaid. This skill brings clarity, surfaces motivation and deepens understanding. Alongside questioning is the courage to voice opinions with respect and candour. It is not about complicity or avoidance, but about constructive challenge that broadens perspective. When paired with empathy, this balance of asking and voicing creates the conditions for growth and innovation.

5 Realistic humility

Finally, successful leaders carry a sense of realistic humility. They know their strengths and influence, yet they do not need the spotlight. They celebrate the excellence of others, create space for teams to thrive and recognise that the best measure of leadership is when people outperform their leader. Realistic humility also means being comfortable with ambiguity and insecurity – recognising that not everything can be controlled or predicted and that overconfidence often leads to poor decisions. This steadiness in uncertainty builds resilience and fosters trust.

6 You are allowed to be in development

Finally, and perhaps the most important truth of all. Leadership is not something you arrive at. It is something you grow into. Remember you are allowed to learn in public, change your mind or adjust your approach and to ask for support. Being in development does not weaken your authority. It strengthens it, when handled with honesty and care

As one leader told us: 'I'm in back-to-back meetings all day, but I don't feel like I'm having real conversations.' Another admitted: 'I want to lead with more impact – but I don't always know how.' These voices remind us that leadership is not about perfection. It is about showing up with awareness, presence, curiosity and humility – and choosing to lead with a coaching mindset, even when the path is uncertain.

Chapter 2

Self-awareness in leadership

It's easy to lead from habit: to give feedback in ways that you would find helpful but which would disengage the team member you're talking to. The pace that suits you will not suit everyone. To overcome this tendency, you first have to see yourself clearly. This involves being conscious of your patterns and preferences: how you show up, how you listen, how you react and what you unconsciously encourage or shut down. Leaders often underestimate just how much their presence shapes the dynamic of any work situation. You're not a neutral observer; you're an active part of the system.

Why it matters

Intent isn't always impact. You might believe you're being supportive, but your team may experience you as controlling. You might think you're giving people space when they feel like you've gone missing. Leadership style isn't one-size-fits-all. What works for one team member may land poorly with another. Our personalities differ, often profoundly. Great leadership presence is rooted in awareness. If you're unaware of your default habits, preferences and patterns of behaviour, they'll drive your behaviour, especially under pressure.

What is Facet5 and why use it

Facet5 is built on the internationally-accepted Big 5 trait-based framework of personality, one which has been researched internationally, used by organisations for decades and which has proved most robust in both development and recruitment. It helps you understand your personality across five core dimensions each with detailed subfactors.

It increases leadership effectiveness by:

- Offering a language for self-awareness without judgement or typecasting.
- Helping you see how your personality shows up in relationships, decisions, and team dynamics.
- Encouraging insight into how others may experience you.

- Because of how it was created, it allows you to compare yourself with others, to see where your strengths and development areas are; to identify where you might clash or cooperate with someone else.
- Enabling you to stretch your style more consciously; not by becoming someone else but by adapting when it matters.

You don't need to change who you are to be a better leader. But you do need to know who you are and how that shapes the space you create for others.

Reflection prompts

Use these to begin building greater awareness of your coaching presence as a leader:

- When people come to me for support, what's my first instinct: to offer a solution; create space; push for action?
- What do I believe makes a good leader? Where did that belief come from?
- Under pressure, what parts of my personality become more visible or more extreme?
- How do I respond to people who lead or think differently from me?
- What feedback have I received, explicit or implicit, about how I show up in conversation?

Practice: pause, check, reflect

Build this self-awareness habit into your leadership rhythm:

- **Pause** – before a conversation, ask yourself what state of mind, emotion and commitment you are bringing to the situation.
- **Check** – during the conversation, stay attuned to your behavioural patterns. Am I dominating, distracted, withdrawing?
- **Reflect** – afterwards, ask: Did I show up the way I intended? Did I make space for the other person's growth, or fill it with my own style?

When leaders understand their own personality, they create the conditions for others to thrive. And when you lead with awareness, not assumption, you don't just lead better. You unlock the full potential of the people around you.

Chapter 3

Leadership style

This chapter brings together the ideas we have already discussed by exploring coaching style. To summarise these ideas:

- Leadership is personal. You are not neutral, and presence, judgement and self-awareness shape what happens in the room.
- Self-awareness is a professional responsibility. Leaders work through themselves, whether they choose to or not.
- Personality offers a practical development lens for understanding how you reliably show up, without labelling or limiting growth.

What do we mean by leadership style?

Leadership style is the consistent way you tend to engage across conversations and activities, not a method, model, or technique. It's visible in patterns such as how:

- quickly direction is established;
- silence is used;
- challenge is delivered;
- much structure is introduced;
- emotions are engaged or contained;
- responsibility is framed.

Experienced leaders recognise their style instinctively. Team members often recognise it even more clearly.

What is less obvious is why that style is consistent and how it can be worked with consciously.

Leadership style emerges from interaction between personality, experience, values and context. Of these, personality provides the most stable foundation. It explains why certain behaviours feel natural and others require effort, even as skills and experience grow.

Style is preference and pattern

It is tempting to describe your style in terms of preference only, for example, I prefer a collaborative approach or I like to challenge team members directly. Preferences matter, but they do not tell the full story. Style is better understood as a pattern of default responses. When time is limited, stakes are high, or uncertainty is present, leaders tend to revert to what feels most familiar and reliable. This is where style becomes most visible. For example, different leaders react differently when things seem unclear.

They may: emphasise structure or exploration; increase challenge or reassurance.

None of these responses are inherently right or wrong. They simply reflect different starting points. Understanding your style therefore requires looking not only at what you intend to do, but how you reliably act first.

Style and impact

Leadership style has a direct impact on how you are experienced. Team members may experience you as:

- grounding or unsettling;
- energising or overwhelming;
- spacious or elusive;
- challenging or intimidating;
- supportive or permissive.

Often, these experiences are not the result of a person's conscious choice. They arise from how a person naturally engages.

This is why the same leader can be highly effective in one context and less effective in another. It is also why experienced leaders sometimes notice recurring patterns in their work, similar themes in feedback, resistance, or team progress.

Style creates value but it imposes limits.

Style under pressure

Style intensifies under pressure. When relaxed and resourced, leaders tend to show a wider range of behaviour. They are more curious, more flexible and more open to alternatives. Under pressure, behaviour narrows. Examples include:

- moving too quickly to solutions;
- avoiding difficult emotions;
- over-challenging to regain momentum;
- becoming overly accommodating to maintain harmony;
- relying heavily on structure or process.

These are not failures of skill. They are predictable responses shaped by personality.

Understanding how your style behaves under pressure allows you to anticipate risk and build in conscious counterbalances.

Authenticity and adaptation

A common concern for leaders is whether adapting style compromises authenticity.

It does not, provided your adaptation is grounded in accurate self-awareness.

Authenticity does not mean acting on every instinct but rather understanding where your instincts come from and choosing how to express them. A leader can remain authentic while slowing down, softening, sharpening, or expanding their approach.

The alternative, insisting on one way of leading regardless of context, is rigidity, not authenticity.

Leadership maturity involves holding both a strong sense of self, as well as a willingness to adapt in service of the individuals you are working with. Personality-informed awareness makes this balance possible.

Why style matters for development

Most leadership development focuses on adding skills, tools and models. These are important, but they do not address how those skills are used. Style influences

- which skills are used most often;
- which are avoided;
- how they are combined;
- when they are deployed.

By understanding your leadership style, development becomes more precise. Instead of generic improvement goals, you can focus on stretching specific tendencies, moderating overused strengths and building capability where effort is required.

This moves development from doing more to doing differentl .

Setting up the next sections

In the following chapters we aim to make styles visible, workable and adaptable, rather than to evaluate or compare them. If leadership is a craft, then leadership style is the grain of the wood. Ignoring it, limits what can be made. Working with it consciously, opens up far greater possibilities.

Chapter 4

Leadership styles framework

Up to this point, the focus of the book has been on why self-awareness matters and how personality can be used as a development lens. This chapter introduces the framework that systematically brings together personality tendencies, leadership behaviour and professional capability in a practical, workable way. It seeks to offer structure without prescription, as well as a shared language for reflecting on practice, recognising patterns and making conscious choices.

The Leadership Styles framework helps individuals understand how they approach leadership, rather than telling them how.

What the framework is, and what it is not

Before exploring the framework itself, it is important to be clear about its intent.

The framework is:

- trait-based, not type-based (see Appendix C for more information on our approach to personality);
- strengths-focused, not deficit-driven;
- developmental, not evaluative;
- comparative in insight, not judgement.

The framework is not:

- a measure of leadership competence;
 - a ranking or benchmark;
 - a predictor of leadership success;
-

Leadership as a pattern

Your leadership style is a pattern, not a single behaviour. It emerges when multiple tendencies combine and show up consistently across conversations. It becomes most visible under pressure; when choices must be made quickly or when you are relying on instinct rather than deliberation. This framework aims to capture these patterns by looking at leadership through five domains, each representing an area where style reliably shapes behaviour.

The five domains

The five domains describe where coaching style shows up most clearly. Together, they provide a comprehensive view of how a coach tends to operate.

1 Decision making and goal setting

This domain explores how leaders create direction. It looks at:

- decision-making pace;
- comfort with ambiguity;
- preference for clarity versus exploration;
- how goals are framed and owned.

Some leaders move quickly to purpose and outcomes. Others prefer to let direction emerge. Both approaches can be effective, depending on context and client need.

2 Engaging and consulting with others

This domain focuses on interaction and dialogue. It considers:

- how leaders invite thinking;
- use of energy and involvement;
- preference for independence versus collaboration;
- how influence is exercised.

Style differences here often shape how inclusive, energising or focused a coaching conversation feels.

3 Focus on people and tasks

This domain looks at where attention naturally focuses.

It explores:

- balance between empathy and pragmatism;
- attention to relationships versus results;
- how emotional content is acknowledged and dealt with;
- what is prioritised when tensions arise.

This domain often explains differences in how leaders balance care and challenge.

4 Managing work and commitments

This domain examines how leaders work with structure and follow-through. It includes:

- comfort with planning and process;
- flexibility versus consistency;
- assumptions about responsibility;
- approach to accountability.

Style differences here influence how momentum is created and sustained.

5 Responding to stress and identifying risk

This domain focuses on behaviour under pressure. It looks at:

- emotional regulation;
- anticipation of risk;
- response to uncertainty;
- resilience and recovery.

This is often where overuse of strengths becomes most visible.

The thirteen key qualities

Within these five domains sit thirteen key qualities. Each quality represents a dimension of coaching behaviour that:

- varies meaningfully between individuals;
- remains relatively stable over time;
- adds value when applied with awareness;
- creates risk when overplayed.

The key qualities are not competencies to be mastered, rather they are tendencies to be understood. Each quality exists on a continuum. Leaders sit at different points, not as a matter of right or wrong, but as a reflection of natural preference and habit.

Later chapters explore each quality in depth, focusing on what it brings to leadership; how others experience it; where it can be overused and how it can be stretched consciously.

Strengths, overuse and stretch

A defining feature of the Emerging Leader handbook is its focus on strengths and overuse, rather than strengths and weaknesses. In leadership, many of the behaviours that create value can also limit effectiveness when applied without sensitivity to context.

For example, independence can become distance and structure can become rigidity.

The framework treats development as the ability to recognise when a strength is working; notice when it is becoming excessive and adjust deliberately rather than reactively.

Stretch, in this sense, means expanding your range while staying grounded in who you are.

Families of leadership style

When patterns across the key qualities are considered together, they form recognisable families of leadership style.

These families are clusters of tendency that help leaders see the bigger picture of how their style operates as a whole. They are not limiting boxes.

Family descriptions provide:

- a narrative overview of leadership approach;
- insight into typical strengths and risks;
- a starting point for reflective enquiry.

In later sections of the book, these families are used to tailor the discussion of leadership capability, showing how different styles attend to the same professional expectations in different ways.

Using the framework

The value of the Emerging Leaders handbook lies not in its labels or descriptions, but in how it is used. Used poorly, any framework risks becoming static or explanatory rather than exploratory. For this reason, our framework is always paired with reflection, enquiry and conscious choice. We invite you to treat the framework as a mirror, not a map, showing patterns, not destinations.

The next section of the book explores leadership style in action across the three domains. From there, we move into the detailed exploration of key qualities and, later, into how leadership capabilities are expressed differently across styles.

Chapter 5

The five domains

Decision making and goal setting

Creating direction and ownership

This section explores how personality influences the way leaders create direction and support ownership. It looks at how different leaders naturally help individuals and teams move toward clarity, commitment and action.

Creating direction and ownership involves more than goal-setting. It is about helping clients:

- make sense of complexity;
- clarify what they want to move toward;
- decide what they are willing to commit to;
- take responsibility for choices and consequences.

Every conversation contains implicit decisions, what to explore, what to prioritise, when to act and when to wait. How a leader navigates these moments is shaped strongly by personality. Leaders have a variety of approaches. Some:

- are naturally decisive and momentum-focused;
- are naturally exploratory and reflective;
- are comfortable challenging what they hear;
- prioritise alignment and safety.

Each tendency brings value. Each also carries risk if applied without awareness.

How personality shapes direction

Personality influences how leaders relate to uncertainty, choice and difference of view. For some leaders, ambiguity is energising, they are comfortable holding multiple possibilities open, trusting that insight will emerge through exploration. For others, ambiguity creates discomfort, prompting a desire to narrow focus and move toward decision.

These tendencies affect

- how quickly focus is established or allowed to emerge;
- how readily a leader moves from exploration to decision;
- whether options are opened up, narrowed down, or actively challenged;
- how firmly direction is held, or left open for revision;
- how responsibility is framed and owned;
- how assumptions are surfaced, tested, or left unspoken.

Together, these patterns shape whether leadership feels decisive or spacious, challenging or containing, directive or permissive.

Direction versus ownership

An important distinction in this domain is between creating direction and creating ownership. Direction is about clarity, purpose and focus. Ownership is about agency, choice and responsibility. Leaders can sometimes blur the two.

A conversation can feel highly directional while subtly steering the individual(s) toward the leader's view. Equally, a conversation can emphasise autonomy while avoiding the moment where a decision needs to be named and accountability taken.

Personality influences where leaders naturally sit. Some are comfortable holding a strong view and inviting others to respond to it. Others stay closely aligned with the team's narrative and are reluctant to introduce difference.

Effective leadership requires enough direction to support progress and enough ownership to ensure that progress genuinely belongs to the client.

Style in action

Leadership style in this domain shows up in small but consistent ways.

A leader who values alignment and openness may:

- spend longer exploring context and meaning
- resist naming goals too soon
- prioritise shared understanding before challenge
- allow decisions to remain implicit

A leader who values clarity and momentum may:

- ask early questions about outcomes and success
- name decisions explicitly as they arise
- challenge inconsistencies or avoidance
- encourage commitment even when certainty is incomplete

Individuals may experience these differences immediately. One style may feel energising and focused. Another may feel safe and thoughtful. Both can be effective, depending on the person, the moment and the task at hand.

When strengths become overused

Under pressure, personality patterns intensify.

A leader who values alignment and openness may:

- avoid naming difficult issues
- collude with familiar narratives
- leave decisions unspoken or repeatedly revisited

A leader who values clarity and momentum may:

- push too quickly toward decisions
- challenge before sufficient trust is established
- assume readiness that is not yet present

These patterns usually arise from positive intent. Leaders want to help individuals move forward or feel supported. Without awareness, however, strengths can slip into debate on one side, or complicity on the other.

Stretching this domain consciously

Stretch in this domain does not mean abandoning your natural style. It means expanding your range.

For leaders who naturally prioritise alignment and flexibility, stretch may involve:

- naming decisions more explicitly
- introducing challenge where patterns repeat
- being willing to hold a different view from the client

For leaders who naturally create strong direction, stretch may involve:

- tolerating ambiguity a little longer
- inviting broader exploration before narrowing
- checking that challenge supports ownership rather than compliance

In both cases, the aim is the same: to support clarity and ownership without serving the leader's own comfort.

Working with different styles

Team members vary widely in how they relate to decision-making. Some need focus and momentum. Others need space to think. Leadership becomes less effective when the leader unconsciously imposes their own preference, either by driving too hard or holding back too much. Misalignment in this domain often shows up as:

- individuals feeling rushed or pressured;
- individuals feeling stuck or indulged;
- conversations circling without commitment;
- repeated revisiting of the same decisions.

Awareness of style allows the leader to adapt deliberately, rather than attributing difficulty solely to the individual..

Reflective practice

Use the questions below to reflect on your own leadership in this domain.

- How do I typically respond when an individual avoids making a decision?
- When do I tend to challenge assumptions, and when do I hold back?
- How comfortable am I holding a different view from my team?
- Where might my desire for clarity or harmony shape the conversation?
- What would conscious stretch look like for me here?

The next section explores how personality influences Engaging and Consulting with Others, shifting the focus from direction to dialogue, from decisions to participation.

Engaging and consulting with others

Inviting thinking and involvement

This chapter explores how personality influences the way leaders engage others and invite involvement, shaping the tone, energy and collaborative nature of the relationship.

A critical component of leadership is about how thinking is invited, shared and developed as well as insight and decision. Some conversations feel energising and expansive; others feel calm, deliberate and contained. Some invite ideas through dialogue and exchange; others encourage thinking through space and independence.

Inviting thinking and involvement is about how leaders:

- stimulate exploration and insight;
- create psychological engagement;
- encourage contribution and participation;
- balance dialogue with independent reflection

Every leader invites thinking, but not in the same way.

Some do it through visible enthusiasm and active exchange. Others do it through space, listening and careful enquiry. Personality strongly shapes how this invitation is made.

How personality shapes engagement

Personality influences how comfortable a leader is with energy, interaction and shared thinking. Some leaders naturally bring vitality into conversations; their enthusiasm for ideas is visible so they think out loud, respond quickly and build momentum through interaction. Others express their energy more quietly. Their thinking is more deliberate, leaving time for reflection before response.

These tendencies affect

- how ideas are introduced and developed;
- how explicitly enthusiasm is expressed;
- how much energy the leader brings into the room;
- whether thinking is stimulated through exchange or space.

Neither approach is inherently better. What matters is whether the leader recognises their impact on the individuals thinking process.

Connection and involvement

Leaders also differ in how easily they create connection and social ease. Some form rapport quickly; they are comfortable engaging personally, building warmth and creating a sense of partnership early on. This can help individuals feel seen and supported, particularly at the start of a relationship. Others create connection more gradually; they may prioritise depth over ease, allowing trust to build through consistency and thoughtful presence rather than immediate familiarity.

These differences shape how quickly people feel comfortable sharing; how conversational or contained sessions feel and the amount of relational energy present

When used well, both approaches support engagement. When overused, one can tip into over-familiarity, the other into distance.

Exploring ideas together or independently

Another important distinction in this domain is between different ways in which thinking is developed.

Some leaders naturally explore ideas collaboratively. They build on what is said, offer reflections and co-create meaning through dialogue. Others are more inclined to step back, allowing individuals to generate and refine ideas independently, intervening selectively.

Personality influences

- how much the leader contributes to the thinking process;
- whether ideas are explored through exchange or solitude;
- how readily alternative perspectives are introduced.

This difference is subtle but significant. Collaborative exploration can stimulate creativity and momentum. Independent exploration can deepen ownership and insight. Effective leadership involves knowing when to do which.

Style in action

Leadership style in this domain shows up clearly in how sessions feel.

Leaders who favours reflection

- create space for careful thinking
- allow silence to do more of the work
- encourage clients to articulate ideas fully before responding
- hold their own ideas lightly or privately

Leaders who bring energy:

- engage actively with ideas as they emerge
- respond with visible interest and enthusiasm
- invite dialogue and shared exploration
- adapt quickly as new perspectives arise

Individuals may experience these styles differently. One may feel energising and dynamic. Another may feel grounding and thoughtful. Both can support deep thinking when applied consciously.

When strengths become overused

Under pressure, engagement patterns can intensify.

Leaders who favour reflection and independent thinking:

- may appear disengaged
- can miss opportunities to build momentum
- could leave individuals feeling unsupported or alone in their thinking
- appear to hold back too much
- may miss opportunities to stimulate new thinking

Leaders who bring energy and shared exploration:

- can overwhelm quieter individuals
- fill space that would benefit from silence
- steer thinking too actively
- over-contribute ideas, reducing ownership
- blur the line between leading and co-creation

These risks are not about intent, they arise when personality operates without awareness.

Stretching this domain consciously

Stretch in this domain involves adjusting how thinking is invited.

Leaders who favour reflection and independent-thinking :

- are more explicit in encouragement
- show interest and enthusiasm more visibly
- engage more actively with emerging ideas
- offer reflections more quickly that open new perspectives

For leaders who naturally bring energy, engagement and collaborative exploration, stretch may involve:

- allowing more silence
- slowing the pace of exchange
- trusting the persons thinking without adding to it
- stepping back to protect ownership

In all cases, stretch is about responsiveness, not changing who you are.

Working with different styles

Individuals vary in how they engage with ideas.

Some think best aloud. Others need time and quiet. Some are energised by dialogue. Others by space. Misalignment in this domain can lead to people feeling overwhelmed or disconnected. It can also stall creativity and unbalance engagement.

Awareness of leadership style allows you to notice when the invitation to think is not landing and to adapt deliberately rather than persisting by habit.

Reflect vs practice

Use the questions below to reflect on your own leadership:

Q How visibly enthusiastic am I when individuals share ideas?

Q When do I energise thinking, and when do I hold space?

Q How easily do I build connection in early sessions?

Q Do I tend to explore ideas collaboratively or independently?

Q What would conscious stretch look like for me here?

The next section explores how personality shapes focus on people and tasks, moving from engagement to attention, from dialogue to priorities.

Chapter 7

Your Key Qualities

Leaders coach in many ways. You may naturally take charge or listen quietly before speaking. You might be structured, free-flowing, emotionally attuned, or laser-focused. These patterns are shaped by your personality traits. Understanding those traits helps you coach not by default, but by design.

Facet5 offers a powerful framework for making that understanding practical. It helps you explore how your personality shows up in those leadership moments; what you emphasise, what you overlook and where you might stretch to be more effective.

When you see your style clearly, you can:

- Play to your strengths.
- Recognise your blind spots.
- Understand how others might experience you.
- Adjust with intention, not guesswork.

Your Key Qualities are those unique strengths that help you bring your leadership to life. There are 13 Key Qualities that are derived from the completion of your Facet5 Personality Questionnaire. They all measure a different aspect of your personality and we have grouped them together into five broader domains to help with understanding.

These five domains relate to the five factors that we measure and have described in previous chapters.

Each of these five broad domains are broken into 13 subfactors. These provide a richer nuance to your personality and are what the Key Qualities describe.

The five Facet5 factors

- **Will:** Measuring your approach to decision making and goal setting
- **Energy:** Your approach to engaging and collaborating with others
- **Affection** Your approach to both task and people
- **Control:** How you approach your work and commitments
- **Emotionality:** How you identify risk and manage stress

In the following section we have provided you with an overview of your Key Qualities and how they map to the five domains and a detailed section for each Key Quality.

In each you will find information about:

- What the Key Quality measures and why it is important
- What is the brilliant thing about your style as a leader
- What this means for you as a leader
- How you can support others with this style
- What to look out for when that strength is overplayed
- Strategies to moderate your approach to be most effective

Taken together, these Key Qualities form a unique map of how you show up as a leader. They bring nuance to your personality profile and highlight the specific ways your natural style translates into action. But the real power lies not just in knowing them – it's in how you use them.

An important note

As with all personality information this is not the whole of you. It is a lens through which you can view yourself and should be considered in the context of your experience, knowledge and environment. It is aimed at providing you with a language and way of describing yourself that others understand and that is helpful in framing your leadership and coaching approach.

The question isn't just what are my Key Qualities? but how do I use them to lead more effectively? The following section provides a way to do exactly that.

Using this information

Your Key Qualities give you a practical lens for understanding how your personality shows up in leadership. They are not instructions to follow, nor fixed rules to confine you. Instead, they provide a structured way of noticing the patterns that feel natural to you, the impact they may have on others and the opportunities they create for growth.

By mapping your Key Qualities to the five Facet5 domains – Will, Energy, Affection Control and Emotionality – you can begin to see the deeper drivers behind your style. This isn't about changing who you are; it's about leading with greater intention and awareness. When you understand what each quality measures, what makes it powerful and what risks emerge when it's overplayed, you gain choice. Choice in how you lead, how you coach and how you respond in the moments that matter most.

Here's how to approach the material in the following pages:




- **See the whole map first.** Step back and look at how your Key Qualities are distributed across the five domains. Where is your natural emphasis? Where is there less energy? This broad pattern shapes how others experience your leadership.
- **Dive into each quality.** Use the detail provided to explore the specific strengths and risks of your style. Notice what resonates immediately and what prompts you to reflect more deeply.
- **Connect to your leadership reality.** As you read, think about your current role and challenges. Where do these qualities support you? Where might they create friction? Where is there an opportunity to stretch?
- **Use the language.** The descriptions are designed to give you words you can use with your team, colleagues and coach. They create a common language that helps others understand you – and helps you understand them.
- **Treat it as a practice.** Self-awareness is not a one-time insight. It's an ongoing habit. Revisit these qualities regularly as your role evolves, as your team changes and as new challenges emerge.

Ultimately, this section is not just about knowing your personality, but about applying that knowledge to become a more intentional, authentic and effective leader. Your Key Qualities are the starting point for a leadership approach that is both true to you and responsive to the people and context around you.




Your Key Qualities

Summary




Decision Making and Goal Setting

 Goal Focused	You bring pace, conviction and drive to what you do. You quickly make decisions and set direction, committing to your personal goals with purpose and determination.	Page 22
 Forthright	You give your opinion unambiguously and strongly defend your position. You are not afraid to disagree, confronting issues in the moment and bringing honest challenge and debate.	Page 24
 Independent	You form your own point of view and are guided by inner principles. You can persist in the face of opposition and are willing to go your own way to make progress.	Page 26



Engaging and Consulting

 Enthusiastic	You bring animated energy and dynamism that helps to kick-start new activities. You are excited about what is new and different, seeking out variety and welcoming change.	Page 28
 Outgoing	You are strongly sociable, making the most of every opportunity to engage with and involve people from a wide network. You like to keep things fun, and contribute to creating a warm, friendly, and inclusive atmosphere.	Page 30
 Collaborative	You actively bring others into your thinking, enjoying how ideas flow and develop through discussion. This helps to explore a breadth of ideas and blend together different points of view.	Page 32



Task and People Focus

	People oriented	You take a broad view that considers the needs of others, bringing a people-centred approach to your work. You believe in doing good and work that is of value to others.	Page 34
	Critical	You bring a healthy scepticism and don't take on the struggles of others quickly. You provide support when genuinely required, pushing people to bring their full efforts and capabilities for themselves.	Page 36
	Trusting	You believe in giving people a chance and value relationships based on mutual trust. This encourages openness and sincere collaboration in the interest of a common good.	Page 38

Managing Work and Commitments

	Creative	You bring originality and imagination, often having a fresh perspective and enjoying change. You give others around you freedom to be individual and adapt to the situation.	Page 40
	Open minded	You bring a mature and responsible attitude to your work, interpreting expectations pragmatically while respecting tradition and authority. This allows for healthy flexibility without being disruptive.	Page 42

Identifying Risk and Managing Stress

	Composed	You are aware of what is going on around you and respond to setbacks and difficult situations as they arise. Your level-headed perspective means you can respect others concerns without being drawn into them.	Page 44
	Perceptive	You are well-prepared, being thorough and not leaving things to chance. You bring your past experiences and feelings with you and give careful thought before committing to new ventures.	Page 46

Goal Focused

This key quality measures how you put forward and defend your point of view. It will help you understand how quickly you react to issues, your preferred approach to resolving them and your willingness to hold your ground on issues important to you.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in your ability to make decisions quickly and confidently, then show an unwavering commitment to them. You develop your opinions and set goals for yourself and others without the need for direction. You are strong-minded, highly goal focussed and will act purposefully much of the time.

Your style supports

- You can support individuals in setting ambitious goals, ensuring they align their efforts with long-term objectives.
- Your decisive nature can streamline discussions, helping team members avoid overthinking and stay focused.
- You have the potential to challenge others to commit to their decisions and take purposeful action.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Need help defining and committing to clear goals.
 - Struggle with over-analysis or indecisiveness and benefit from structured decision-making.
 - Require a leader who will drive accountability and maintain momentum.
 - Work in fast-paced, outcome-driven environments where speed and execution are essential.
-

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your clarity and decisiveness help drive action, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some people may require more space for exploration, reflection, and shared decision-making before they commit to a path forward.

Things to consider

You may push for results too quickly, making individuals potentially feel rushed or unheard.

Build in deliberate listening checkpoints: after stating a goal or suggestion, pause and ask, “What’s your perspective before we move on?”

Actively reflect back what you hear so individuals feel ownership of the outcome.

Use silence as a tool—resist filling the space so others can process and speak up.

Your strong goal focus may lead you to prioritise efficiency over deeper discussion, missing out on alternative perspectives and conclusions drawn by the individual.

Reframe exploration as part of efficiency, not separate from it: “Taking a few minutes to consider alternatives now could save time later.”

Use open prompts: “What possibilities are we not considering yet?”

Encourage brainstorming before narrowing down to ensure the individuals shape the direction.

Some team members may feel they haven’t fully processed their thoughts before being encouraged to take action or decide.

Adapt your tone and questioning style: soften directives into invitations.

Ask: “What feels like a natural first step for you?” instead of “What’s your next action?”

Offer options: “Would you like to map possibilities together, or define a concrete action straight away?”

Forthright

This key quality measures how you put forward and defend your point of view. It will help you understand how quickly you react to issues, your preferred approach to resolving them and your willingness to hold your ground on issues important to you.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in your willingness to have frank discussions, even on controversial issues. You welcome open debate and are able to state your case clearly. You enjoy being challenged and will defend your position. You do not always need to 'win' but do need to be heard. You prefer to confront issues as they arise and see this as a normal and necessary part of getting to the best outcome.

Your style supports

- You can help individuals address difficult topics directly, ensuring that concerns are resolved rather than avoided.
- Your willingness to challenge ideas and encourage debate can help others clarify their own beliefs and test their resolve.
- You have the potential to build trust through openness, helping team members feel confident in speaking up and voicing their perspectives.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Need help in forming their own opinions and standing firm on their values.
- Struggle with either being overly assertive or too hesitant in decision-making.
- Environments where negotiation, persuasion, and collaboration are essential.
- Prefer a coaching approach that encourages confidence, fairness, and structured thinking.

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your forthright and direct style creates clarity and decisiveness, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some people may need a more measured, supportive, or reflective coaching style, rather than one that is highly direct and challenge-driven.

Things to consider

Your comfort for debate and challenge may come across as argumentative or combative, particularly with those who prefer a gentler approach.

Shift from “debate” to “dialogue”: signal curiosity rather than contest. Use phrases like “I’d like to explore this with you” instead of “I need to challenge that or I disagree!”

Introduce choice: “Would you prefer me to be more of a challenger or a sounding board in this moment?”

You may overwhelm more reserved individuals, making them hesitant to share their thoughts or opinions.

Soften intensity by framing your directness as partnership, not pressure.

Acknowledge openly: “I know I can be quite direct—I want you to know this is to support your growth, not to criticise.”

Use “invitational challenge”: “How would you feel about me pushing on this idea a little?”

Your tendency to push for clarity and resolution quickly may cause some people to feel rushed or pressured into conclusions.

Use a tiered timing approach: separate “first thoughts” from “final thoughts.” For example, “What’s your initial reaction now, and what might shift if you think on it overnight?”

Offer reflective space: make it clear that insights don’t need to be immediate. “Let’s park this and revisit next time.”

Independent

This key quality measures your willingness to act on your beliefs, independently of people around you. It can help you understand how much support and direction you need in order to commit to a course of action.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in your strong sense of individual identity and your self-directed nature. You firmly believe in having the freedom to make up your own mind. You have a strong focus on personal achievement and will act autonomously to deliver what you have promised. While you are happy to let others know your intentions, if you can't gain their buy-in easily, you will not waste too much time trying and will go your own way if necessary. You can commit to a course of action without other people's input or approval.

Your style supports

- You can help individuals develop their critical thinking and self-sufficiency, encouraging them to rely on their own reasoning rather than external validation.
- Your ability to analyse issues deeply and independently allows team members to benefit from well-formed, structured insights and guidance.
- You have the potential to bring clarity to complex situations, helping others cut through distractions and focus on what truly matters.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Need support in becoming more decisive and self-sufficient
 - Struggle with over-reliance on external opinions and could benefit from greater autonomy.
 - Work in environments where strong individual conviction and goal-setting are essential.
 - Prefer a coaching approach that is structured, action-oriented, and focused on results rather than consensus-building.
-

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your independence and deep-thinking helps team members develop their own reasoning skills, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some individuals may require more collaboration, external validation, or interactive problem-solving to thrive.

Things to consider

You may struggle to engage in deeper collaboration, making some team members feel isolated or disconnected.

Frame independence as choice, not default: openly state when you're choosing to go solo and when collaboration could strengthen the outcome.

Invite others in by saying: "Here's what I see, what perspectives might I be missing?"

Use "co-created independence": establish the plan together, then monitor ownership for execution.

Your preference for self-reliance may lead team members to feel unsupported or left to navigate challenges alone.

Provide scaffolded independence: start with structured guidance, then gradually reduce input as the person gains confidence.

Reinforce availability: "I'll give you space to try this, but I'm here if you need to check in."

Acknowledge their progress explicitly so independence feels like growth, not abandonment.

Some individuals may find your style too focused on independence, preferring a more relational or team-oriented approach.

Balance independence with connection rituals: brief check-ins, shared reflection, or joint reviews to maintain relational trust.

Encourage intentional collaboration: "Where could input from others sharpen this idea?"

Position independence as interdependence: highlight that even self-driven success often relies on networks, resources, and feedback loops.

Enthusiastic

This key quality measures your response to new ideas and events, and how you prefer to demonstrate enthusiasm for these. It will help you understand how you consider ideas before committing yourself and others.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in the vigour with which you take the initiative and can inspire others to do so. You are visibly enthusiastic and keen to do things with other people. You seek variety and get excited about things that are new and different. You get involved, get things started and encourage others to participate. Others will see you as lively, engaging and animated. ers to have their say but will still want to make sure you've got your point across.

Your style supports

- You can spark energy in your team, helping them feel inspired and confident in their ability to take action.
- You have the potential to create a dynamic coaching space where individuals feel encouraged to contribute, explore ideas, and challenge themselves.
- Your enthusiasm can help others break through limiting beliefs, encouraging them to embrace change and consider new opportunities.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Feel stuck or uninspired and may need motivation to take action.
- Are open to creative approaches and thrive in high-energy discussions.
- Need encouragement to embrace change and innovation in their thinking or career.
- Respond well to more fast-paced thinking style.

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your enthusiasm can be a powerful asset, overusing it may present challenges in your coaching approach. Individuals may not always match your energy level or processing speed, and some may require more space for reflection and deeper exploration.

Things to consider

Your desire to keep work moving can lead to shifting topics too quickly, potentially missing deeper insights that need further exploration.

Introduce a “pause and probe” step: after initial excitement and conversation, ask, “What’s underneath this idea?” or “What assumptions are we making here?”

Encourage journaling or note-taking between sessions so deeper thoughts can emerge outside your natural fast tempo.

Check in with the individual on when to move to a new topic or conversation

Not all team members process at the same pace; some may need more time for reflection emotional processing, or steady encouragement before moving forward.

Build structured reflection moments into discussions, such as silent thinking time or round-robin sharing.

Ask reflective prompts like: “What’s one angle we haven’t explored yet?” or “What feels important to sit with before deciding?”

Ask: “Before we move on, what else comes up for you?”

Your natural energy may overshadow quieter, more reflective individuals, making it harder for them to contribute at their own pace.

Match the team’s pace and intensity, especially if they seem overwhelmed or hesitant.

Use “voice equaliser” techniques, explicitly invite input from quieter participants before offering your perspective.

Try framing: “I’d love to hear your view before I share mine” or “Let’s hear from those who haven’t spoken yet.”

Outgoing

This key quality measures your interest in being with other people. It will help you understand your preference for working with and need for other people to feel productive and included.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in the ease with which you connect with others and build a positive working climate. You are outgoing and sociable and enjoy the company of others. You welcome the opportunity to collaborate and to socialise with colleagues. You are at ease making new contacts but also value existing relationships as well.

Your style supports

- You can help team members feel comfortable quickly, making it easier for them to open up and share.
- Your ability to promote collaboration and connection helps individuals strengthen their professional relationships.
- You have the potential to foster a positive coaching environment, where others feel valued, heard, and supported.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Benefit from an engaging, conversational coaching approach.
- Prefer a collaborative, interactive more coaching relationship.
- Need support in building confidence in social or professional interactions.
- Thrive in a lively, people-focused environment where connection and engagement drive their motivation.

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your sociability and enthusiasm help create a welcoming and collaborative space, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some people may require more space for quiet reflection, deeper individual focus, or structured, less social interactions.

Things to consider

Your desire to engage may lead you to dominate conversations, leaving less room for individual reflection

Practice active restraint: consciously leave pauses and signal comfort with silence.

Use prompts like: "I'd love to hear more of your thoughts before I add mine."

Frame space as intentional: "I'll step back here to give you time to reflect."

You may gravitate toward sociable team members, unintentionally overlooking those who are more reserved or introverted.

Balance attention: deliberately engage quieter participants first.

Ask: "I notice you've been reflecting quietly, what's on your mind?"

Track in your notes who speaks often and who doesn't, and consciously re-balance.

Your preference for frequent social contact may be overwhelming for individuals who process information best in silence or solitude.

Offer different styles of engagement: allow for both interactive dialogue and reflective space (journaling, written responses, or follow-up).

Say: "Would you prefer to talk this through now, or take some time to think and come back to it?"

Normalise different processing styles by naming them as equally valid.

Collabrative

This key quality measures your approach to involving other people in your thinking. It will help you understand how you seek out information and ideas and your preference for problem solving.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in your natural desire to think out loud with others, engaging them in debate and exploring ideas. You instinctively involve others as a natural part of your thought process, seeking out a wide range of inputs and assimilating different views to shape your own. As such, you have no problem changing your mind in the light of new information.

Your style supports

- You can help others explore different perspectives, ensuring they make balanced, well-rounded decisions.
- Your ability to facilitate discussion and co-create solutions ensures that individuals feel a sense of ownership over their growth.
- You have the potential to enhance engagement, helping team members tap into collective insights and develop a more informed way forward.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Prefer to discuss and process decisions collaboratively rather than making choices independently.
 - Thrive in inclusive spaces, where they can share and refine ideas through dialogue.
 - May need support in broadening their perspective and avoiding blind spots in their thinking.
 - Work in team-based or relational environments, where collaboration is critical to success.
-

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your collaborative nature helps create engaging, dynamic conversations, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some may require a more decisive, structured, or independent approach to progress effectively.

Things to consider

Your desire for broad discussion may place too much focus on discussion and exploration, making it difficult for individuals to take action.	<p>Introduce decision boundaries: define how long exploration will last and when commitment to action begins.</p> <p>Use prompts like: “We’ve heard a range of perspectives, what’s one action we can take today?”</p> <p>Anchor discussions in outcomes rather than continued input.</p>
Your approach may appear too adaptable, changing direction too often based on new input or ideas.	<p>Practice anchored flexibility: stay open to new ideas, but regularly restate your core perspective to keep direction.</p> <p>Say: “That’s an interesting point—here’s how it fits with where we were heading.”</p> <p>Pause before agreeing to a shift by asking, “What’s the evidence that this change will improve the outcome?”</p>
Individuals who prefer more direct, independent thinking may feel that discussions take too long or lack clear conclusions.	<p>Offer choice of pace: ask, “Would you prefer to think this through together, or make some notes and regroup?”</p> <p>Summarise progress regularly: “Here’s what we’ve covered so far and what remains to decide.”</p> <p>Alternate between collaborative brainstorming and individual reflection time.</p>

People Oriented

This key quality measures how likely you are to put others people's interest first. It will help you understand how you balance your needs versus those of others and what you expect in return for your efforts.

As a leader

The brilliance of your style lies in your focus on the people dimensions of your work. You are open and transparent in your dealings with others, believing that that most people have good intentions. You take account of how colleagues and stakeholders will be affected by an issue and like to keep others on-side when making decisions.

Your style supports

- You can help individuals feel supported and understood, reinforcing their confidence and emotional well-being.
- Your ability to consider the impact of decisions on people ensures that your leadership remains compassionate and human-centred.
- You have the potential to boost morale and engagement, helping team members feel that their voices and concerns are heard.

Your style is beneficial to those who

- Thrive in a nurturing, relational coaching environment.
- Need support in managing workplace relationships and interpersonal challenges.
- Value a coach who will consider their emotions and personal circumstances alongside their goals.
- Respond well to a coaching approach that emphasises encouragement and support.

Strengths overplayed – what to watch out for

While your people-first approach creates a supportive and trusting coaching relationship, overusing this strength may present challenges. Some individuals may need more objectivity, boundaries, or a focus on independent problem-solving and reward.

Things to consider

Your desire to help may lead to taking on too much responsibility for the individual’s challenges, reducing their independence and learning.

Practise empowered empathy: show care by asking questions that help individuals think for themselves.

Try: “What support would help you take the next step?” instead of offering to fix or intervene.

Shift from rescuing to resourcing, help people build capability, not dependency.

You may struggle to hold firm boundaries, prioritising empathy over accountability.

Set transparent limits early: clarify your role and what’s within your remit to support.

Use framing language such as: “I’ll help you explore this, but the decision and action are yours.”

Model healthy boundaries by demonstrating balance between compassion and accountability

Individuals who are more direct or task-focused may find a strong relational focus less relevant to their needs.

Introduce dual focus: pair relational questions with outcome questions.

For example: “How do you feel about this?” followed by “And what needs to happen next to move it forward?”

Reinforce that care and clarity can coexist, supporting people while holding standards.

Section 2

Leading Self

Leadership begins with the way you understand, manage and direct yourself. Before others look to you for clarity, energy or confidence, they notice how you show up, how you respond under pressure and how consistently you act in line with what matters. For emerging leaders, this is often the first real shift, recognising that your impact is not only shaped by what you do, but by the state, intention and awareness you bring to the work.

Leading self is not about becoming perfect, controlled or endlessly resilient. It is about developing the personal capabilities that help you pause, choose and respond more consciously. It means understanding your patterns, managing your energy, building trust through your behaviour and staying grounded when the pace increases.

As you build the capabilities in this section, you strengthen the foundation for everything that follows. You become more intentional, more reliable and more able to work with your natural style, rather than be driven by it. This is where leadership becomes less reactive and more purposeful.

Chapter 8

Self Control

One of the most important shifts in early leadership is learning that self-control is not about holding yourself back. It is about directing your energy so it has the right impact.

As an emerging leader, you may bring enthusiasm, confidence and a strong desire to get involved. You may enjoy challenge, respond quickly to what is happening and readily summon the effort needed when a goal feels meaningful. These are valuable strengths. They help you create momentum, build positive relationships and show others that you are willing to step in when work matters.

But as leadership responsibility increases, the way you manage yourself becomes more visible. Your pace, emotional tone, focus and boundaries can affect how others respond. Acting quickly can help things move, but it can also lead to assumptions, overcommitment or blurred boundaries. Bringing energy can motivate others, but it can also overwhelm people if it is not matched to the situation.

Self-control is not about becoming cautious, rigid or restrained. It is about managing your time, energy and emotions so you stay focused on what matters most.

When self-control is underdeveloped, leaders can become reactive. They may move towards what is most interesting, urgent or emotionally engaging, rather than what is most important. Work can become scattered, commitments can stretch too far and others may be unsure where the boundaries are.

When self-control is used well, energy becomes purposeful. People experience you as focused, constructive and reliable. You still bring enthusiasm, but it is balanced by judgement. You still act with confidence, but you pause long enough to choose your response.

The strategies that follow focus on channeling energy, managing reactions and protecting focus without losing your natural warmth, pace or commitment.

Strategy 1: Pause Before You Respond

Self-control matters most in the moments when your first response is not necessarily your best response. This can happen when you feel excited by an idea, frustrated by a delay, pulled into someone else's issue or keen to move quickly towards action.

As a leader, this matters because your reactions carry weight. A quick response can set the tone for others. It may create urgency, reassurance or momentum. But it may also create pressure, confusion or a sense that the direction has changed before things have been fully considered.

This strategy is about building a short pause between impulse and action. The pause does not need to be long. It simply gives you enough space to choose your response rather than be carried by the moment.

In practice, this can mean asking yourself:

- “What is needed from me right now?”
- “Am I responding to the issue or to my own urgency?”
- “What impact might my reaction have on others?”
- “Do I need to act now, or do I need to think first?”

This helps you stay constructive, especially when the situation is moving quickly.

For emerging leaders, this is especially useful because confidence and enthusiasm can sometimes be mistaken for certainty. If you react quickly, others may assume the matter is settled or that they need to match your pace.

Pausing before you respond helps you keep your energy, but direct it more deliberately. You still bring movement and commitment, but your response becomes more considered, proportionate and helpful to the situation.

Strategy 2: Protect Focus from Distraction

Self-control is not only about managing emotions. It is also about managing attention. Many leaders lose focus not because they lack commitment, but because too many things are competing for their energy.

As a leader, this matters because your focus influences the focus of others. If you keep shifting towards the newest issue, most interesting conversation or loudest demand, people may struggle to know what matters most. Work can become busy without becoming more effective.

This strategy is about protecting attention for the priorities that matter. It does not mean ignoring new ideas or refusing to respond when things change. It means being deliberate about where your effort goes.

In practice, start by identifying the few things that most need your attention. Then check whether your time and energy are matching those priorities.

Useful questions include:

- “What is the most important thing for me to move forward today?”
- “What am I being pulled towards that may not matter as much?”
- “What commitment needs follow-through before I take on something new?”
- “What routine work still needs attention, even if it is less exciting?”

This helps you stay with work long enough for it to create value.

For emerging leaders, this is important because leadership brings more choice, more interruption and more opportunities to get involved. Without focus, enthusiasm can become scattered.

Protecting focus helps you turn effort into progress. It allows you to remain responsive without becoming distracted, and it helps others see that your priorities are steady enough to trust.

Strategy 3: Hold Boundaries Kindly

Self-control also involves knowing where your responsibility starts and ends. As a supportive and energetic leader, you may naturally step in, offer help, get involved or take the lead when something feels important.

As a leader, this matters because helpfulness can sometimes blur boundaries. You may take on more than is realistic, move into work that belongs to someone else or become too involved in solving problems for others. Although the intention is positive, the impact can be different. Others may become dependent, unclear about ownership or less confident to act for themselves.

This strategy is about holding boundaries kindly. It means staying supportive while being clear about responsibility, time and expectations.

In practice, this can sound like:

- “I can help you think this through, but you still own the next step.”
- “I can support this, but I cannot take it on.”
- “Let’s be clear about what I will do and what you will do.”
- “I want to help, and I also need to protect time for other priorities.”

This allows care and clarity to sit together.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because stepping in can feel like leadership. Sometimes it is. But leadership also means creating the conditions for others to build capability, take ownership and follow through.

Holding boundaries kindly helps you avoid overextending yourself. It also gives others clearer responsibility. You remain supportive and approachable, but you do not carry more than is useful, realistic or sustainable.

Self Control

Your approach

You thrive on curiosity

You are likely to bring energy, warmth and confidence to the way you manage yourself and your work. When something feels meaningful, you can readily summon the effort needed to get started and create momentum. You may enjoy challenge, respond well to activity and project a sense of authority that helps others feel things are under control.

This brings real strengths to leadership.

You are unlikely to sit back when something needs attention. You may step in quickly, offer support and help others feel that progress is possible. Your enthusiasm can be motivating, and your concern for people means you are likely to think about your impact and try to maintain positive relationships.

At its best, your approach creates energy, friendliness and visible commitment. People can experience you as engaged, willing and encouraging. You may help lift the mood, reduce hesitation and bring a sense that work can move forward.

The stretch is to make sure your energy remains focused and proportionate.

Because you may like variety and action, you might sometimes be pulled towards what is new, interesting or urgent, rather than what needs sustained attention. Routine or detailed work may feel less engaging, making it harder to stay focused when the initial energy has passed.

Your desire to act quickly can also lead to impulsive decisions or assumptions. You may step in before you have fully understood what is needed, or take the lead when others would benefit from owning the work themselves. Your flexible approach to boundaries can be helpful in the moment, but may cause confusion if people are unclear about responsibility, autonomy or expectations.

The opportunity is not to reduce your enthusiasm. It is to direct it. When your energy is matched with focus, proportion and clear boundaries, you become easier to trust and follow.

What you naturally do well

- You are likely to bring passion and enthusiasm to work that matters.
- You can summon effort quickly when there is a meaningful goal.
- You may create momentum when others are hesitant or uncertain.
- You are likely to show concern for your impact on people.
- You can maintain friendly relationships while moving work forward.
- You may project confidence and a sense of being in control.
- You are likely to step in when support or leadership feels needed.

‘Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality.’

Warren Bennis

What to watch out for

You might...

And it may...

Act quickly when something feels important

Lead to impulsive responses or assumptions that have not been fully tested

Step in to help or take the lead

Blur ownership or reduce the space for others to build confidence

Follow the energy of new or interesting work

Make it harder to stay focused on routine, detailed or less visible tasks

Treat boundaries flexibly

Leave others unclear about roles, expectations or what is appropriate

Project confidence and control

Make it harder for others to see when you need support, space or reflection

Stretching your potential vs stretching others

Stretching your potential

Stretching others

Pause before responding. Ask, "What is needed from me right now?"

Help others experience your energy as thoughtful, not reactive.

Identify the priority before you act. Creating deliberate movement not just momentum.

Help others stay focused on what matters most.

Protect time for important but less exciting work. Focusing on those things that create reliability.

Show that follow-through matters, not just momentum.

Clarify what you will and will not take on. Manage over-committing yourself and others.

Help others build ownership instead of relying on you to step in.

Notice when your energy is setting the pace. Check your approach is inclusive.

Make space for people who need more time, structure or reflection

Have I set myself up to succeed?

Checklist

1. Pause before responding

- Have I taken a moment before acting?
 - Am I responding to the issue, not just my own urgency or energy?
 - Have I considered the likely impact on others?
-

2. Focus on what matters

- Am I giving enough attention to work that needs follow-through?
 - Am I being pulled towards what is interesting rather than needed?
 - Do I know the most important priority right now?
-

3. Manage energy and emotion

- Is my energy helping or hindering the situation?
 - Is my response proportionate to what is happening?
 - Do others have enough space to think and contribute?
-

4. Hold clear boundaries

- Am I clear about what I own and what others own?
 - Am I helping without taking over or pushing my way?
 - Have I been clear about what I can realistically commit to?
-

5. Sustain healthy habits

- Am I managing my time and energy in a sustainable way?
 - Have I protected time for recovery, reflection and preparation?
 - Am I staying focused enough to deliver what I have promised?
-

Final Pause

Have I directed my energy with purpose, rather than simply reacting in the moment?

Chapter 9

Building Trust

Leadership is learning that trust is not built through intention alone. It is built through what people experience from you consistently.

As an emerging leader, building trust may feel like familiar territory. You may naturally take people at face value, show openness in your relationships and assume positive intent. You may be willing to share information, support others and speak honestly when something matters. These are valuable strengths. They help create warmth, openness and psychological safety when people are getting to know you as a leader.

But as leadership responsibility increases, trust becomes more than being liked, supportive or approachable. People begin to look for reliability, fairness, judgement and consistency. They notice whether you do what you say you will do. They notice whether you are clear when things are difficult. They notice whether your openness is matched by boundaries, discretion and follow-through.

Building trust is not about being perfect or pleasing everyone. It is about showing yourself to be genuine, honest, reliable and principled in the way you lead.

When trust is weak, people become guarded. They share less, question motives and protect themselves. Communication narrows, mistakes are hidden and commitment becomes more cautious.

When trust is overplayed without enough judgement, leaders may assume too much goodwill, avoid necessary challenge or share more than is useful.

When trust is built well, people feel safer to contribute, challenge, admit mistakes and take responsibility. They may not always agree with you, but they understand your intent and believe they can rely on your leadership.

The strategies that follow focus on building trust through consistency, honest communication and reliable follow-through.

Strategy 1: Make Reliability Visible

Trust grows when people can see that your words and actions match. As an emerging leader, you may have strong positive intent and a genuine desire to support others. But people cannot always see intention directly. They see what you do, what you prioritise and what you follow through on.

As a leader, this matters because reliability creates confidence. When people know you will do what you say, they can plan, act and take risks with more certainty. When commitments are unclear or missed, even for understandable reasons, trust can weaken quietly.

This strategy is about making reliability visible. It means being clear about what you are committing to, then following through or communicating early if something changes.

In practice, this can sound simple:

- “I will come back to you by Friday.”
- “This is what I can commit to.”
- “I cannot promise that yet, but I can find out.”
- “I said I would update you today, and here is where things are.”

This helps people experience you as dependable, not just well-intentioned.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because trust is often built through small moments. A brief update, a kept promise or a clear boundary can matter more than a big statement of support.

Making reliability visible also protects you from overcommitting. If you are naturally helpful, enthusiastic or keen to build positive relationships, you may say yes too quickly. Being reliable means making promises carefully, so people can trust the ones you do make.

When people see consistent follow-through, trust becomes more stable. They know where they stand with you, and they are more likely to believe in your leadership when pressure increases.

Strategy 2: Be Open Without Losing Judgement

Openness is a powerful foundation for trust. When you share information appropriately, assume positive intent and invite honest conversation, people are more likely to feel included and respected. They may find it easier to speak up, ask questions and bring issues into the open.

As a leader, this matters because trust depends on transparency, but transparency also needs judgement. Not everything needs to be shared in the same way, at the same time or with everyone. Some information requires discretion. Some situations require careful framing. Some people may need honesty delivered with more context and care.

This strategy is about being open without losing judgement. It means communicating honestly while thinking about timing, relevance and impact.

In practice, ask yourself:

- “What do people need to know?”
- “What can I share clearly and appropriately?”
- “What needs to remain confidential?”
- “How can I be honest without creating unnecessary anxiety?”

This helps you avoid two common risks. The first is holding back too much, which can create suspicion or uncertainty. The second is sharing too freely, which can create confusion, worry or a loss of confidence.

For emerging leaders, this balance is important. You may want to be approachable and transparent, but leadership also asks you to handle information responsibly.

Being open with judgement helps people trust both your intent and your discretion. They experience you as honest enough to be credible, and thoughtful enough to be safe. This strengthens trust because people know you will communicate clearly, without being careless with information, emotion or confidence.

Strategy 3: Build Trust Through Honest Challenge

Trust is often associated with support, warmth and positive relationships. These things matter, but trust also grows when people know you will be honest with them. Avoiding difficult conversations may feel kind in the moment, but it can weaken trust over time if issues remain unspoken.

As a leader, this matters because people need to know that your support includes truth. They need to trust that you will raise concerns early, give clear feedback and address issues fairly. If challenge is avoided, standards can become unclear. If challenge is too forceful, people may become defensive or guarded.

This strategy is about building trust through honest challenge. It means saying what needs to be said in a way that protects both clarity and respect.

In practice, this can sound like:

- “I want to raise something early so we can work with it.”
- “My intention is to support you, not criticise you.”
- “Here is what I have noticed.”
- “What is your view of what happened?”
- “What needs to change from here?”

This keeps challenge connected to learning and accountability.

For emerging leaders, this is especially useful because being liked can sometimes feel safer than being clear. But people do not only trust leaders who are warm. They trust leaders who are fair, honest and willing to deal with what matters.

Honest challenge helps others know where they stand. It reduces hidden frustration, strengthens accountability and shows that you care enough to speak truthfully. When challenge is delivered with respect, it becomes a trust-building act, not a threat to the relationship.

Building Trust

Your approach

You bring openness, warmth and positive intent

You may naturally assume that most people are doing their best and that relationships work better when people are treated with respect, honesty and goodwill. This brings real strengths to leadership.

You are likely to create a positive climate around you. People may experience you as approachable, inclusive and easy to engage with. You may be willing to share information, listen to concerns and support others when they are finding something difficult. Your style can make it easier for people to speak openly, especially when they need reassurance or encouragement.

You may also bring trust through honesty. You are likely to be willing to say what you think, particularly when something matters. Your forthrightness can help clear the air and reduce hidden tension. At your best, you create relationships where people feel both supported and able to speak more directly.

The stretch is to make sure trust is supported by judgement, boundaries and consistency. Because you may naturally take people at face value, you might sometimes assume positive intent without checking facts, patterns or follow-through. This can make you generous and accepting, but it may also leave you vulnerable to misplaced trust, unclear expectations or repeated disappointment.

Your desire to support others may also lead you to take on too much or make too many allowances. You may want people to feel understood, but trust is not built through support alone. It also needs accountability, reliability and clear boundaries.

Because you can be energetic and expressive, your honesty may sometimes land more strongly than intended. Some people may value your directness, while others may need more careful framing to stay open rather than defensive.

The opportunity is not to become suspicious, distant or guarded. It is to build trust that is warm and wise. When your openness is matched by discernment, your support by boundaries and your honesty by care, people can trust both your intent and your judgement.

What you naturally do well

- You are likely to assume positive intent and take people at face value.
- You can create openness and warmth in relationships.
- You may help others feel supported, included and respected.
- You are likely to share information and encourage honest conversation.
- You can be direct when important issues need to be addressed.
- You may build psychological safety by making it easier for people to speak up.
- You are likely to care about your impact on others.
- You can bring optimism and belief in people's potential.

'A leader is best when
people barely know he exists.
When his work is done,
his aim fulfilled, they will say:
'we did it ourselves'.'

Lao Tzu

What to watch out for

You might...	And it may...
Assume positive intent too quickly	Lead you to miss patterns, risks or information that needs checking
Offer support readily	Create dependency or blur responsibility if ownership is not clear
Share openly with others	Create confusion or concern if information needs more judgement or discretion
Avoid disappointing people	Make it harder to hold boundaries or address difficult issues early
Speak honestly and energetically	Land more strongly than intended, especially with people who need a gentler approach

Stretching your potential vs stretching others

Stretching your potential	Stretching others
Make promises carefully and follow through visibly.	Help others experience you as reliable , not just supportive.
Check facts and patterns before extending full trust.	Help others see that trust includes accountability , not just warmth
Share information with judgement and care. Ensure it is factual and pertinent.	Help others feel informed without becoming overwhelmed or unsettled.
Raise concerns early and respectfully. Avoiding overly emotive descriptors.	Help others experience challenge as part of support.
Set clear boundaries around what you can and cannot do.	Help others take ownership while still feeling supported.

Have I set this relationship up to succeed?

Checklist

1. Am I reliable?

- Have I been clear about what i can commit to?
 - Have I followed through on what I said I would do?
 - Have I updated people early if something has change?
-

2. Am I communicating honestly?

- Have I shared what people need to know fully?
 - Have I explained the reason behind my decisions?
 - Have I avoided creating uncertainty through silence or ambiguity?
-

3. Using good judgement

- Have I checked facts before assuming everything is fine
 - Have I handled sensitive information with care?
 - Have I balanced openness with appropriate discretion?
-

4. Hold boundaries

- Am I clear about what I own and what others own?
 - Am I supporting without taking over?
 - Have I been honest about what I can and cannot do?
-

5. Raise issues early

- Have I named concerns before they grow?
 - Have I challenged with respect and positive intent?
 - Have I made the next step clear after a difficul conversation?
-

Final Pause

Have I built trust through consistency, honesty and care, not just good intentions?

Chapter 10

Resilience and Energy Management

Leadership is learning that resilience is not about pushing through everything. It is about staying resourceful, focused and balanced enough to keep contributing when work becomes demanding.

As an emerging leader, resilience may feel connected to your energy, confidence and sense of purpose. You may enjoy challenge, respond positively to change and find motivation when the work feels meaningful. You may be willing to try new ideas, bring people with you and keep moving when things become uncertain. These are valuable strengths. They help you create optimism and momentum when others may feel hesitant or stuck.

But as leadership responsibility increases, resilience becomes more than personal confidence. People notice how you respond when things go wrong, when pressure increases or when progress becomes harder. They take cues from your tone, your steadiness and your ability to recover.

Resilience and energy management is not about ignoring pressure, pretending everything is fine or carrying too much alone. It is about balancing optimism with realism, staying connected to purpose and managing your energy so your contribution can be sustained.

When resilience is underdeveloped, setbacks can feel overwhelming. Progress may stall, confidence may dip and pressure can affect both performance and relationships.

When resilience is overplayed, leaders may take on too much, rely on enthusiasm alone or continue beyond what is sustainable.

When resilience is used well, people experience steadiness, perspective and confidence. Challenges are acknowledged, but not exaggerated. Setbacks become information, not identity. Energy is protected so progress can continue.

The strategies that follow focus on staying grounded, recovering well and sustaining energy without losing ambition, positivity or drive.

Strategy 1: Balance Optimism with Reality

Resilience is often supported by optimism. When you believe progress is possible, you are more likely to keep going, try alternatives and help others stay engaged. Your positive energy can be especially valuable when people are facing uncertainty, pressure or setbacks.

As a leader, this matters because optimism affects the climate around you. If you stay hopeful and constructive, others may feel more able to keep thinking and acting. But optimism needs to be balanced with reality. If challenges are minimised, risks are missed or goals become unrealistic, people may begin to feel pressured rather than encouraged.

This strategy is about staying positive without losing sight of what is true. It means naming the challenge clearly, while also helping people see what can still be done.

In practice, this can sound like:

- “This is difficult and we still have options.”
- “Let’s be honest about the risk, then decide what we can influence.”
- “What is the most realistic next step?”
- “Where do we need help, resource or more information?”

This helps people stay grounded and hopeful at the same time.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because confidence can sometimes make challenges look easier than they are. Your belief in what is possible may inspire people, but they also need to know that you understand the demands involved.

Balancing optimism with reality helps you build trust under pressure. People experience you as positive, but not naïve. They can see that you are committed to progress, while still being honest about what needs attention.

Strategy 2: Re-balance After Setbacks

Resilience is tested most clearly when something does not go to plan. A mistake happens, a decision does not land well, a piece of work stalls or feedback is harder to hear than expected. In these moments, the goal is not to avoid disappointment. The goal is to rebalance quickly enough to learn and respond.

As a leader, this matters because your recovery affects others. If you become defensive, discouraged or overly casual, people may not know how to respond. If you can pause, make sense of what happened and move constructively, you help others do the same.

This strategy is about treating setbacks as information, not as a judgement on your capability or on other people. It means taking a balanced view of what happened, what contributed to it and what needs to change.

In practice, ask:

- “What actually happened?”
- “What was within our control?”
- “What can we learn from this?”
- “What needs to happen next?”

This helps reduce blame and increase learning.

For emerging leaders, this is particularly useful because setbacks can feel personal. You may want to move past them quickly, explain them away or fix them immediately. But resilience grows when you take enough time to understand the setback without getting stuck in it.

Rebalancing after setbacks helps you stay steady. You acknowledge what has happened, take responsibility where needed and return attention to constructive action. This allows people to see that difficult does not derail you, it informs your next step.

Strategy 3: Manage Energy Before It Runs Out

Resilience depends on energy. You may be able to work hard when a goal feels meaningful, especially when there is variety, challenge, autonomy or social connection. These sources of energy can help you rise to demanding situations and keep others motivated.

As a leader, this matters because energy is not unlimited. If you rely only on enthusiasm, urgency or commitment, you may keep going for a while, but eventually your focus, patience or follow-through may reduce. When your energy drops, others may experience inconsistency, distraction or sudden disengagement.

This strategy is about managing energy before it runs out. It means noticing what fuels you, what drains you and where recovery needs to be built in.

In practice, check in regularly with questions such as:

- “What is giving me energy right now?”
- “What is draining more energy than I expected?”
- “Where do I need structure, support or recovery?”
- “What do I need to stop, pause or delegate?”

This helps you make energy management a leadership discipline, not an afterthought.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because early leadership often brings more responsibility, more emotional labour and more demand from others. You may feel you need to be constantly available or visibly positive. But sustainable leadership requires recovery as well as effort.

Managing energy before it runs out helps you stay resourceful for longer. It also shows others that resilience is not about endless capacity. It is about using your capacity wisely.

Resilience and Energy Management

Your approach

You bring energy, confidence and optimism

When the work feels meaningful, you may be able to summon considerable effort and keep moving even when things become demanding. You may enjoy big challenges, respond well to variety and look for creative possibilities when setbacks occur.

This brings real strengths to leadership.

You are unlikely to give up quickly when something matters to you. You may bring a strong sense of agency, helping yourself and others believe that progress is still possible. Your confidence can be reassuring, especially when people feel uncertain. Your willingness to try new approaches can help prevent the team from becoming stuck when the first route does not work.

You may also bring a balanced and non-judgemental response when things go wrong. Rather than placing excessive blame on yourself or others, you may be able to interpret events with perspective and move towards solutions. This can help reduce defensiveness and keep attention on learning and improvement.

The stretch is to make sure resilience is sustained, not just activated in the moment.

Because you may thrive on challenge, autonomy, variety and social connection, you might find it harder to persevere when work becomes detailed, solitary, repetitive or highly prescribed. Your energy may be strong at the start, or when the task feels exciting, but harder to maintain when progress is slow or the work becomes routine.

Your optimism can also lead you to set ambitious goals, especially when people you care about are involved. This can inspire others, but it may also create pressure if the goal is not realistic or properly resourced.

The opportunity is not to reduce your ambition. It is to make your resilience more sustainable. When your confidence is balanced with realism, your energy with recovery and your optimism with practical support, you become steadier under pressure and easier for others to rely on.

What you naturally do well

- You are likely to stay motivated when work feels meaningful.
- You can bring confidence and self-belief to challenging situations.
- You may help others feel that progress is still possible.
- You are likely to respond to setbacks by looking for alternatives.
- You can bring energy and positivity when demands increase.
- You may take a balanced view when things go wrong.
- You are likely to rise to big challenges and work hard to achieve success.
- You can adapt when circumstances change or the first approach does not work.

What to watch out for

You might...	And it may...
Rely on optimism and energy to carry you through	Lead you to underestimate the support, recovery or structure needed
Take on ambitious goals when the cause feels meaningful	Create pressure if the goal is not realistic, resourced or shared
Move quickly into solutions after a setback	Reduce time for learning from what happened and preventing repeat issues
Struggle with detailed, solitary or highly prescribed work	Make it harder to sustain motivation once the initial energy has passed
Project confidence under pressure	Make it harder for others to see when you need help, space or recovery

Stretching your potential vs stretching others

Stretching your potential	Stretching others
Balance optimism with realism. Ask, "What is possible, and what is true?"	Help others stay hopeful without ignoring risks or constraints.
Pause after setbacks to learn before moving on.	Help others see mistakes as information, not failure.
Notice what fuels and drains your energy , rather than pushing through	Help others manage pressure in ways that are sustainable.
Ask for help before pressure becomes overload.	Show that resilience includes support , not just self-reliance.
Build recovery and review into demanding work.	Help others sustain performance beyond the first burst of effort.

Am I setting us up to succeed?

Checklist

1. Staying grounded

- Have I named the challenge clearly?
 - Am I balancing optimism with realism?
 - Do I understand what is within our control?
-

2. Recovering from setbacks

- Have I taken time to understand what happened?
 - Have I focused on learning and not blame?
 - Is the next step clear and constructive?
-

3. Managing energy

- Do I know what is energising or draining me and others?
 - Am I protecting time for recovery and reflection for me and others?
 - Am I relying too much on enthusiasm alone?
-

4. Asking for support

- Have I named where help may be needed?
 - Am I sharing pressure appropriately?
 - Have I avoided carrying too much alone?
-

5. Sustaining progress

- Is the goal realistic and resourced?
 - Have we built in review points and pause moments?
 - Are we adjusting before pressure becomes overload?
-

Final Pause

Have I stayed resourceful and realistic, while protesting the energy needed to keep going and to deliver?

Section 3

Leading Others

Leadership becomes real in relationship. It is shaped in conversations, moments of trust, differences of view, shared effort and the everyday signals that tell people whether they are safe, valued and able to contribute. For emerging leaders, this means moving beyond personal performance and learning how to create the conditions where others can do their best work.

Leading others is not about having all the answers or becoming the strongest voice in the room. It is about listening well, communicating clearly, valuing differences, building safety and helping people work through tension with respect and purpose. It asks you to notice not only what needs to happen, but how people are experiencing the work, the team and your leadership.

As you build the capabilities in this section, you increase your ability to connect, influence and collaborate with intention. You help people feel included without losing clarity, challenged without feeling dismissed, and supported without becoming dependent. This is where leadership becomes more human, relational and shared.

Chapter 11

Valuing Difference

Difference does not automatically become contribution. It has to be noticed, invited and valued.

As an emerging leader, valuing difference may feel connected to your openness, warmth and interest in people. You may enjoy involving others, hearing ideas and creating a positive climate where people feel included. You may naturally assume good intent and want people to feel respected, supported and able to take part. These are valuable strengths. They help create connection and make it easier for people to engage.

But as leadership responsibility increases, valuing difference becomes more than being friendly, accepting or open-minded. People need to know that different styles, views, experiences and needs are genuinely welcome, not simply tolerated. They need to see that quieter voices are included, disagreement is handled respectfully and assumptions are questioned before they become decisions.

Valuing difference is not about agreeing with everyone or avoiding standards. It is about treating people as individuals and creating a climate where difference can improve thinking, relationships and results.

When difference is not valued, teams can drift towards sameness. People may hold back, defer to the strongest voice or avoid raising concerns. Creativity narrows, bias goes unchecked and some people may feel they need to adapt themselves too far to fit in.

When difference is valued well, people feel respected and able to contribute. Ideas improve because more perspectives are available. Relationships strengthen because people feel seen as individuals.

The strategies that follow focus on noticing difference, inviting contribution and turning diverse perspectives into better outcomes.

Strategy 1: Notice the Difference in the Room

Valuing difference starts with noticing who is present, how they engage and what may be shaping their experience. Difference is not only about visible identity. It can include personality, working style, confidence, pace, values, experience, cultural norms, communication preferences and appetite for challenge.

As a leader, this matters because people do not all contribute in the same way. Some will speak early and confidently. Others will need time, context or a more direct invitation. Some will enjoy debate. Others may hold back if the conversation feels too fast, too forceful or too socially demanding.

This strategy is about paying attention to difference before assuming everyone is equally able to contribute. It means noticing patterns of participation and asking what might be needed for more people to engage.

In practice, ask yourself:

- “Whose voice is shaping the conversation?”
- “Who has not contributed yet?”
- “Who may need more time, structure or invitation?”
- “What assumptions am I making about what people need?”

This helps you avoid treating your own style as the default.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because energy, confidence and enthusiasm can unintentionally set the pace for everyone else. Some people will enjoy that. Others may need a different route into the conversation.

Noticing difference in the room helps you lead more consciously. It allows you to adjust the conditions so more people can contribute, rather than expecting everyone to engage in the same way.

Strategy 2: Invite Perspectives Before Closing Too Quickly

Different perspectives only add value when they are invited early enough to shape the thinking. If people are asked for input after the direction has already formed, they may feel included on the surface but not genuinely influential.

As a leader, this matters because teams often defer to confidence, role or energy. If you express your view strongly and early, others may assume the conversation is already moving towards your conclusion. They may stay quiet, even when they hold useful information, concerns or alternative ideas.

This strategy is about creating space for different perspectives before decisions, actions or conclusions close too quickly. It means making contribution explicit, not relying on people to push their way in.

In practice, this can sound like:

- “I want to hear different views before we decide.”
- “Who sees this differently?”
- “What might we be missing?”
- “What would someone with a different experience notice here?”
- “Let’s hear from those who have not spoken yet.”

This helps people understand that difference is not a disruption. It is part of better thinking.

For emerging leaders, this is especially useful because you may naturally enjoy discussion and believe others will speak up if they have something to add. Some will. Others may need a clearer invitation and more psychological safety before they contribute.

Inviting perspectives before closing too quickly helps prevent group-think, hidden concerns and missed opportunities. It also signals that contribution is not limited to the loudest, fastest or most confident voices.

Strategy 3: Turn Difference into Shared Learning

Valuing difference is not only about hearing different views. It is about helping the team learn from them. Without this step, difference can remain a set of separate opinions, interesting but not integrated into how the team works or decides.

As a leader, this matters because difference can create value, but it can also create tension. People may interpret the same situation differently, prefer different ways of working or disagree about what matters most. If these differences are ignored, frustration can build. If they are explored well, they can improve understanding, creativity and decision quality.

This strategy is about turning difference into shared learning. It means helping people understand what each perspective adds, where assumptions may differ and how the team can use that insight.

In practice, ask:

- “What can we learn from this different view?”
- “What does this perspective help us notice?”
- “Where are our assumptions different?”
- “How can we use these differences to improve the outcome?”

This keeps the focus on learning, not winning.

For emerging leaders, this is especially important because you may want to keep the atmosphere positive and moving. When difference creates tension, it can be tempting to smooth it over or move past it quickly. But respectful exploration often strengthens trust and improves results.

Turning difference into shared learning helps people feel that their contribution matters. It also helps the team become more adaptable, because people learn to

Valuing difference

Your approach

You see difference as possibility

You are likely to bring warmth, openness and positive energy to the way you work with difference. You may naturally want people to feel included, supported and able to contribute. You are likely to take account of how decisions and situations affect others, and you may be motivated by creating a climate where people feel valued and respected.

This brings real strengths to leadership. You are likely to be approachable and engaging. People may find it easy to connect with you, especially when they want encouragement, conversation or reassurance. Your enthusiasm can help draw people in, and your belief in others can create confidence for people who might otherwise hesitate.

You may also bring openness to different ideas and possibilities. You are likely to enjoy discussion, welcome input and respond positively when people bring new thinking. Your flexible and creative style can help others feel that there is room to challenge convention, explore alternatives and think differently.

The stretch is to make sure difference is not only welcomed, but genuinely heard and used. Because you may bring strong energy and confidence into conversations, some people may experience your pace as difficult to match. Quieter, more reflective or more cautious individuals may need more time before they contribute. If the conversation moves quickly, their perspective may be missed, even when you intended to include them.

Your desire to keep relationships positive may also make it tempting to smooth over differences too quickly. Valuing difference sometimes requires staying with disagreement long enough to understand it. It may also require challenging bias, exclusion or poor behaviour, even when doing so feels uncomfortable.

The opportunity is not to become careful to the point of hesitation. It is to make inclusion active. When your warmth is matched by deliberate invitation, your openness by curiosity and your energy by space for others, difference becomes a real source of learning, trust and better outcomes.

What you naturally do well

- You are likely to create warmth and openness in relationships.
- You can help people feel welcomed, supported and included.
- You may naturally consider how decisions affect others.
- You are likely to assume positive intent and treat people with goodwill.
- You can bring energy that encourages people to get involved.
- You may enjoy exploring different ideas and possibilities.
- You are likely to value collaboration and shared discussion.
- You can help create a positive climate where people feel more able to speak.

What to watch out for

You might...	And it may...
Bring strong energy into conversations	Make it harder for quieter or more reflective people to contribute
Assume openness is enough	Miss the need to actively invite different voices and perspectives
Move quickly towards agreement or action	Reduce time for exploring disagreement, assumptions or concerns
Try to keep the atmosphere positive	Avoid naming bias, exclusion or uncomfortable differences early
Focus on inclusion and support	Make too many allowances when clear standards or accountability are needed

Stretching your potential vs stretching others

Stretching your potential	Stretching others
Notice who is speaking and who is not and where you may be dominating.	Help others see that contribution can take different forms.
Invite different views before sharing your own conclusion.	Help others feel their perspective can shape the outcome.
Slow the pace when the conversation needs reflection	Make space to quieter or more thoughtful people room to contribute.
Stay curious when disagreement appears.	Help others learn , using difference as opportunity, not threat.
Challenge exclusion or bias early and respectfully.	Help the team understand that respect includes accountability.

Am I truly valuing difference?

Checklist

1. Noticing participation

- Who is speaking the most in this conversation?
 - Who has not contributed yet?
 - Have I noticed different styles, needs or preferences?
-

2. Invite different views

- Have I asked for perspectives before closing the discussion?
 - Have I made space for quieter or more reflective voices?
 - Have I asked what we might be missing?
-

3. Check assumptions

- Am I treating my own style as the default?
 - Have I questioned any assumptions I may be making?
 - Have I listened with curiosity rather than dismissal?
-

4. Use difference well

- Have we explored what different perspectives add?
 - Have we connected difference to better decisions or outcomes?
 - Have we avoided moving too quickly to agreement?
-

5. Protect respect and fairness

- Have I address bias, exclusion or disrespect early?
 - Am I balancing inclusion with clear standards?
 - Do people feel respected as individuals?
-

Section 5

Tools and resources

This section contains a bank of questions and techniques you can experiment with, adapt, discard and use in a variety of situations. As we've stressed, having a range of questions available to use throughout the working day is a powerful leadership resource and central to many of the issues we've raised in this book.

They're starting points for a new, enjoyable, fulfilling, successful journey of leadership.

Chapter 22

General coaching questions

The best leadership conversations don't just clarify what is, they open up what could be. These coaching-style questions are designed to:

- Prompt insight, ownership and growth
- Shift the conversation from reactivity to reflection
- Explore both current state and future possibility
- Build self-awareness, psychological safety and agency

How to use this resource

Pick 2–3 categories to explore during a coaching-style conversation.

- Use 'What if...' questions when someone feels stuck; they open up possibility.
- Allow silence to do the heavy lifting. One question, one pause.
- Use variations like 'What would happen if...', 'Imagine if...', or 'Suppose you did...' to expand thinking.
- Encourage journaling or async reflection using these questions after the conversation.
- Use them in one-to-ones, development conversations, change moments or any time someone needs to think differently.
- Use them to create your own natural language, they are a guide.

Questions for focus and clarity

- Q What does success look like for you in this situation?
- Q If we solved this perfectly, what would be different
- Q What outcome do you want, not just practically, but emotionally?
- Q What if you zoomed out? How would you describe this as a whole?
- Q What if clarity didn't come from certainty but from values?

Questions for decision-making

- Q What options are you considering?
- Q What's the upside or risk of each?
- Q What does your gut say?
- Q What if you couldn't get it wrong? What would you try?
- Q What if you chose ease over perfection: what changes?

Questions for values and motivation

- Q Why does this matter to you?
- Q What value of yours is being challenged here?
- Q What's driving your desire to act or to hold back?
- Q What if this was an opportunity to live your values more fully?
- Q What if you let purpose, not pressure, guide your next move?

Questions for self-awareness and patterns

- Q Where might you be getting in your own way?
- Q Have you faced something like this before? What did you learn then?
- Q What's your internal narrative right now and is it helping or hindering?
- Q What if the story you're telling yourself isn't the only one?
- Q What if you gave yourself more credit here what shifts?

Questions for stretch and growth

- Q What would 'growing through this' look like?
- Q What's one edge you could lean into here?
- Q What feels uncomfortable but also like a good challenge?
- Q What if discomfort is the signal not the stop sign?
- Q What if you're more ready than you think?

Questions for action and accountability

- Q What's your next best move?
- Q What might get in the way and how will you handle that?
- Q What support do you need from me?
- Q What if you started now; what's the first micro-step?
- Q What if done was better than perfect? What would you choose?

Questions for reflection and learning

- Q What insight are you leaving with?
- Q What surprised you in this conversation?
- Q What will you take forward next time?
- Q What if this moment was part of a bigger learning arc?
- Q What if the lesson isn't finished yet; what else might it be?

General coaching questions

Understanding energy and focus

- Q When do you feel most focused and energised during the day?
- Q What drains your energy and what helps you reset quickly?
- Q Do you prefer working in short, intense bursts or longer, steady stretches?
- Q What kind of environment helps you stay engaged? (e.g. quiet, background noise, movement)
- Q What if we could structure your day around your peak energy zones, what would change?

Information processing and communication

- Q Do you prefer time to think before responding or more real-time discussion?
- Q What's the best way for you to take in new information? (e.g. visual, verbal, written)
- Q Are there types of communication that feel overwhelming or unclear?
- Q What format works best for giving or receiving feedback?
- Q What if we adapted how we shared information, what would help you feel more confident or prepared?

Structure, routine and flexibility

- Q Do you like having clear plans and expectations or more freedom to figure it out?
- Q What helps you transition between tasks or meetings?
- Q Are deadlines helpful motivators or do they create pressure?
- Q Where could a bit more structure help and where could we loosen it?
- Q What if you could design your ideal work rhythm? What would be in it?

Focus and distraction

- Q What helps you stay focused when you're deep in a task?
- Q What kinds of interruptions or distractions throw you off

- Q Do you like working on one thing at a time, or switching between tasks?
- Q What if you had a reset strategy for distraction moments? What might that be?

Collaboration and autonomy

- Q Do you prefer to check in regularly or have space to work independently?
- Q What type of support helps you feel trusted and not micromanaged?
- Q How do you like to share progress; little and often, or all at once?
- Q What group settings (meetings, brainstorming, planning) feel energising vs draining?
- Q What if your strengths were more visible in team settings? What would you want people to notice?

Self-reflection and support

- Q What are some working conditions where you've really thrived in the past?
- Q Are there small adjustments that would make a big difference for you right now?
- Q What helps you stay regulated and in your zone when stress shows up?
- Q What if we saw support not as 'extra,' but essential for doing great work? What would you ask for?

Team and environment awareness

These questions can also be reversed for leaders reflecting on their own neuro-inclusivity:

- Q How do I make space for different working styles?
- Q What assumptions might I be making about how people 'should' work?
- Q Am I role modelling flexibility or reinforcing a narrow definition of performance?
- Q What if inclusion wasn't about treating everyone the same but knowing what different people need to thrive?

Let's continue the conversation

Facet5 works with organisations, leaders, coaches and practitioners around the world to help them use personality insight in practical, scalable and commercially meaningful ways.

If you'd like to explore:

- how Facet5 could support your organisation,
- how it fits with your current leadership or development strategy, or
- how to use personality more effectively in your work,

we'd welcome the conversation.

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