

Keys to Leadership Development

“Leadership is both a very private and public journey. It is private because it requires personal transformation. It is public because leaders have to learn out loud.” - *William A. Adams*

This quote accurately sums up the challenge of leadership development and becoming an effective leader. First, it requires both ‘**being**’ and ‘**doing**’. The ‘being’ includes the deeper, inner work - self-reflection, self-awareness - to develop as both a human being and a leader. The ‘doing’ includes becoming competent in very tactical skills and developing broader leadership competencies.

Robert J. Anderson and William A. Adams in their book, *Mastering Leadership: An Integrated Framework for Breakthrough Performance and Extraordinary Business Results* break down the 3 areas leaders need to focus on to become effective:

- Leadership Processes
- Leadership Competencies
- Leadership Consciousness

Leadership Processes

Leadership processes are typically the visible skills and competencies that lead to promotions. They are the areas of domain knowledge that you learn and develop over the course of your career. These can include: effectively utilizing people, managing time or money, setting strategy, making decisions, setting direction, employing metrics, creating systems, etc.

These processes are on the ‘doing’ side of the equation. They are the easiest ones to identify for development. There are a lot of training opportunities on how to get better at these tangible items. We can often develop in this area alone and feel like we are adequately developing as leaders. However, focusing on this area alone will allow you to grow your domain knowledge, but will cause you to miss the two other critical areas for leadership development.

Leadership Competencies

Leadership Competencies, as defined by Adams and Anderson, include **task competencies**, such as: Achieves Results, Strategic Focus, Systems Thinker and Sustainable Productivity. They also include **relationship competencies**, such as: Caring Connection, Collaborator, Interpersonal Intelligence, Self-less leader. Some competencies are balanced in between the two, such as: Integrity, Courageous Authenticity and Community Concern.

These competencies span both the ‘being’ and the ‘doing’ side of the equation. The goal for leadership development is to have a strong balance between the relationship and task competencies. Oftentimes, leaders are stronger in one area than the other. It has served us to a point as we have been promoted to new roles that require new and more challenging levels of leadership. However, by staying unbalanced in your leadership competencies, you will not make the necessary impact in more complex and uncertain roles and environments.



Leadership Consciousness

Leadership Consciousness is the inner game of leadership. It is how you define yourself as a leader, your values, your self-awareness, what drives you, and your meaning making system, internal beliefs, assumptions, stories, patterns of behavior, etc.

This sense of consciousness or identity is on the 'being' side of the equation. This is typically the hardest area for individuals to work through. It's what makes us human and so it is inherently complex. Through self-awareness, we will learn the beliefs, thought patterns, stories, and behaviors that no longer serve us or our leadership. We are often subject to these beliefs, thought patterns, stories and behaviors and thus they are fully ingrained into who we are and are automatic. Studying these areas, understanding how they may have served us in the past, but no longer serve us today and beginning to make changes to operate in a new way is transformational work and therefore very difficult. This is where the transformation happens. ***Your inner game runs your outer game.*** The 'being' runs the 'doing'. If you avoid developing this area, all areas of your leadership will suffer and you will not make the progress you hope.

Leadership development takes time and a commitment and willingness to do the challenging work. There is no shortcut to greatness and we are always evolving. I encourage you to look at the 3 areas outlined above to see where you have spent time developing, what didn't make your list, and what your next steps are.

