



Leadership Checklist

Leadership is a journey. You begin with a destination in mind, you plot the milestones on your trip – and if you get lost along the way, you course correct. Of course, it helps to have a guide; that's why I adapted management professor Michael Useem's tried-and-true checklist to reflect a Toastmaster's perspective. This handy list is my go-to checklist when I'm leading a team and have charted the path to the destination. It's my safety net to ensure I have everything I need for the journey.



Articulate a Vision

What is the horizon of your tenure? If you've reached a role that requires service for three to five years, you'll have the opportunity to create a long-term vision for the organization. Most Toastmasters leaders, however, serve for shorter terms. To accomplish a fresh goal in that timeframe, you'll need to set a target that is tangible in line with the organization's core values. Think in terms of a smart goal that can be communicated to those you lead whether that is all members of the club, area, division, district or region.

Think and Act Strategically

Set forth a realistic strategy for achieving the tangible target. Ensure that it is widely understood, consider all the players, and anticipate reactions and resistance before they surface.



Take Charge

Take responsibility for what you have been formally delegated to do. Craft the plan that encompasses the strategy to hit your target. Make good timely decisions and ensure that they are executed. Embrace a bias for action.

Build a Diverse Team

Leaders need to take final responsibility, but leadership is also a team sport best played with an able roster of those collectively capable of achieving results.

Communicate Persuasively

Use the talents you have developed through Toastmasters to communicate in ways that people will not forget. Be simple, direct, and clear



Motivate Your People

Appreciate the distinctive intentions that each person brings to the team. Understand each person's personal goals and strengths and then build on their diverse motives to draw the best from each

Honor the Room

Reinforce your belief in the people who work with you by frequently expressing your confidence in them, your gratitude towards them, and your support for them. See their potential, and help them understand their unique qualities through thoughtful compliments.



Embrace the Front Lines

Create an environment where teamwork comes naturally, where everyone feels safe to express an opinion, and where people are willing to share challenges and as-yet-unseen opportunities. Delegate authority except for strategic decisions, and stay close to those most directly engaged with the work of the project or role.

Build Leadership in Others

Encourage and develop strong thinkers and doers throughout the organization. Help others stretch and build their skills.

Manage Relations

Express care about your team above and beyond the scope of their work for you. Harness the feelings and passions of the community to keep the peace



Identify Value to the Member.

Help others see the benefits of the vision and strategy, including how it will impact their own lives and the lives of other members. Our overarching mission is to empower individuals to be more effective communicators and leaders.

Convey Your Character

Hold yourself to the highest standards of integrity. Show respect for others, always. Give with a spirit of service. Commit yourself to excellence. Let these traits guide your words and actions.

Dampen Over-Optimism and Pessimism

See things as they are and as they can be. Use realism as your starting point to counter the hubris of success and protect against reckless risk.



Surround Yourself with Mentors Who Stretch You

Tap into the wisdom of those who have come before so you are prepared to take final responsibility for the outcome of the project. Seek out mentors who nurture you and encourage you to raise the bar.

Place Common Interest First

Do not let your ego rule the day. Use critical thinking to determine if you are letting your own personal vision, self-interest, or familiar processes determine your actions.

Margaret Page

Toastmasters International President-Elect
mpage@toastmasters.org