

Educational Leadership Screening Requirements

The screening requirements for all educational leadership programs consist of two parts.

1. All degree (M.Ed. and Ed.D.) and certification (principal and superintendent) applicants must submit a letter of intent not to exceed 500 words in length. In the letter, the applicant must:
 - a. Introduce himself/herself and share professional and personal information.
 - b. Explain why s/he has applied, what purpose the degree and/or certification will serve, and explain his/her intentions regarding the degree and/or certification.
 - c. Identify a challenging problem s/he faced as a working professional.
 - d. Describe the problem and share how s/he addressed that problem.
 - e. Share with the screening committee why s/he will succeed in the program.
 - f. Provide the screening committee with his/her name, phone number, and a private (not professional) email address.

2. Doctoral seeking applicants will complete the [Doctoral Admission Process](#), whereas applicants seeking admission to the M.Ed., M.Ed./principal certification combination, principal certification only, or superintendent certification (with or without the Ed.D.) must:
 - a. Complete the 18 question [MindTools leadership skills test](#).
 - b. Have the site calculate your total score.
 - c. Copy the Score, Score Interpretation, Personal Characteristics, and Transformational Leadership sections and paste them onto a word document as demonstrated below.

Leadership Skills Inventory

Total = 0

Score Interpretation

Score	Comment
18-34	You need to work hard on your leadership skills. The good news is that if you use more of these skills at work, at home, and in the community, you'll be a real asset to the people around you. You can do it – and now is a great time to start! (Read below to start.)
35-52	You're doing OK as a leader, but you have the potential to do much better. While you've built the foundation of effective leadership, this is your opportunity to improve your skills, and become the best you can be. Examine the areas where you lost points, and determine what you can do to develop skills in these areas. (Read below to start.)
53-90	Excellent! You're well on your way to becoming a good leader. However, you can never be too good at leadership or too experienced – so look at the areas where you didn't score maximum points, and figure out what you can do to improve your performance. (Read below to start.)

There are many leadership skills and competencies that, when combined and applied, go toward making you an effective leader. You have the ability to develop each of these skills within yourself. Read on for specific ideas on how you can improve your leadership skills!

Personal Characteristics

Successful leaders tend to have certain traits. Two key areas of personal growth and development are fundamental to leadership success: self-confidence and a positive attitude.

Self-confident people are usually inspiring, and people like to be around individuals who believe in themselves and in what they're doing. Likewise, if you're a positive and optimistic person who tries to make the best of any situation, you'll find it much easier to motivate people to do their best.

Self-Confidence

Self-confidence is built by mastering significant skills and situations, and by knowing that you can add real value by the work you do. One of the best ways to improve your confidence is to become aware of all of the things you've already achieved.

Our article on [Building Self-Confidence](#) explains what you can do to understand yourself better and build your self-confidence. From there, you'll begin to make the most of your strengths and improve your weaknesses. Explore this further with our Bite-Sized Training session on [Personal SWOT Analysis](#).

Positive Attitude and Outlook

A positive mindset is also associated with strong leadership. However, being positive is much more than presenting a happy face to the world: you need to develop a strong sense of balance, and recognize that setbacks and problems happen - it's how you deal with those problems that makes the difference.

Positive people approach situations realistically, prepared to make the changes necessary to overcome a problem. Negative people, on the other hand, often give in to the stress and pressure of the situation. This can lead to fear, worry, distress, anger and failure.

[Stress management techniques, including getting enough Rest, Relaxation and Sleep](#) as well as physical exercise, are great ways of getting rid of negative thoughts and feelings. Understanding your thinking patterns, and learning to identify and eliminate negative thinking, are key. You can learn how to do this in our article on [Thought Awareness, Rational Thinking and Positive Thinking](#), and you can find out how to become more optimistic in our Book Insight on [Learned Optimism](#).

Emotional Intelligence

The concept of emotional intelligence used to be referred to as "soft skills," "character," or even "communication skills." The more recent idea of [Emotional Intelligence](#)

(EQ) offers a more precise understanding of a specific kind of human talent. EQ is the ability to recognize feelings - your own and those of others - and manage those emotions to create strong relationships.

Learning to develop [Empathy](#)

is essential for emotional intelligence, as is communicating effectively, and practicing [Empathic Listening](#). These all help you really understand the other person's perspective.

Our Leadership area has a section on [emotional intelligence in leadership](#).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a leadership style where leaders create an inspiring vision of the future, motivate their followers to achieve it, manage implementation successfully, and develop the members of their teams to be even more effective in the future. We explore these dimensions below.

Providing a Compelling Vision of the Future

This is your ability to create a robust and compelling [vision of the future](#), and to present this vision in a way that inspires the people you lead.

The first part of being able to do this is to have a thorough knowledge of the area you're operating in. See our Bite-Sized Training session on [Building Expert Power](#) to find out how to develop this.

From there, good use of strategic analysis techniques can help you gain the key insights you need into the environment you're operating in, and into the needs of your clients. See our [Strategy](#) section for more than 50 powerful techniques that give you these insights.

With these tools, you can explore the challenges you face and identify the options available to you. You can identify the best of these with good use of [prioritization skills](#) and appropriate [decision-making techniques](#).

Finally, to sell your vision, you need to be able to craft a compelling and interesting story. Our article, [Powers of Persuasion](#), can help you open closed minds, so that people consider your ideas fairly. Another great way of inspiring people is to use vivid stories to explain your vision: find out more about this in our Expert Interview with Annette Simmons, titled [Whoever Tells the Best Story Wins](#).

Motivating People to Deliver the Vision

This is closely related to creating and selling a vision. You must be able to convince others to accept the objectives you've set. Emphasize teamwork, and recognize that when people work together, they can achieve great things. To provide effective leadership by linking performance and team goals, use [Management by Objectives \(MBO\)](#) and [Key Performance Indicators \(KPIs\)](#).

Ultimately, you need to motivate people to deliver your vision. To better understand your ability to motivate, complete our quiz [How Good Are Your Motivation Skills?](#), and explore our articles on [Herzberg's Motivators and Hygiene Factors](#) and [Sirota's Three Factor Theory](#).

Being a Good Role Model

Good leaders [lead by example](#). They do what they say, and say what they do. These types of leaders are trustworthy, and show integrity. They get involved in daily work where needed, and they stay in touch with what's happening throughout the organization. Great leaders don't just sit in their offices and give orders - they demonstrate the actions and values that they expect from the team.

As with building vision, above, a key part of being a good role model is leading from the front by developing [expert power](#). A leader can't rely on position alone: by keeping current, and staying relevant within the organization, you'll inspire people because you're worthy of your power and authority, not just because you're the boss.

Managing Performance Effectively

Effective leaders manage performance by setting their expectations clearly and concisely. When everyone knows what's expected, it's much easier to get high performance. There's little uncertainty, therefore you can deal with performance issues quickly. And if things have already started to slide, our article on [Re-Engaging Team Members](#) offers some excellent tips for turning a negative situation back to a positive one.

As you create rules, help your team members to understand [why the rules are there](#). Involve them in the rule-making process, and make sure that your expectations align with the resources and support available. Apply rules fairly and consistently.

Providing Support and Stimulation

To be highly motivated at work, people need more than a list of tasks to be completed each day. They need challenges and interesting work. They need to develop their skills, and to feel supported in their efforts to do a good job.