

By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak
COLUMNIST (www.AdviceChief.com)

If you're a leader and not continually evolving or not trying to improve or enhance your abilities as a leader, then your current days as that leader are probably numbered. No matter who you are, what you do, where you've been, what you've accomplished, or where you're going, there are always good reasons to improve your abilities as a leader. And effective leaders are always looking for specific areas in which to improve.

As a leader, you have to be capable of influencing others to take action or to believe or think a certain way. This is not easy. Navigating people from point A to Z in this complex world is quite challenging, especially when they have different levels of motivation, different attitudes, different personalities, and different behavior. And trying to get it all figured out can sometimes be the same as grabbing a chocolate out of the box--sometimes you never know what you're going to get.

As a leader, you have to be on your game in order to be effective with most of your followers. So how effective are you? And are you staying effective? If you feel you're not effective, what is the cause? Maybe it's time for a self-evaluation.

A leadership self-evaluation can help you find out the direction you need to take to become a better leader. The following set of questions can give you some insight into what is expected of a leader and can help you in developing and improving your leadership skills. Assess yourself by answering each question “yes” or “no.” If you are truly honest with yourself, you will probably not answer “yes” to all of these questions.

And that's okay because your negative responses will provide you a direction upon which to focus your leadership improvement efforts.

Leadership Self-Evaluation:

- 1) Do I have the courage to make the tough decisions and stand by them?
- 2) Am I flexible when dealing with changing situations?
- 3) Can I remain enthusiastic and cheerful when I am confronted with seemingly impossible tasks?
- 4) Am I willing to do my best with what seems to be inadequate means?
- 5) Can I inspire people to achieve outstanding results?
- 6) Am I willing to take reasonable risks to allow my subordinates to grow and become more productive?
- 7) Am I willing to let my subordinates be creative?
- 8) Does my manner or conduct invite communication?
- 9) Do I really listen when people talk to me?
- 10) Can I withhold judgment until I have all the facts?
- 11) Am I willing to accept my subordinates' failures as my own yet immediately recognize their successes as their own?
- 12) Am I able handle many things at once? Can I manage a complex job?
- 13) Can I carry out orders as well as give them?

After answering these questions, have someone else, preferably one or more of your subordinates, also answer them (about you). For this task, you may download and print the Leadership Assessment Survey sheet located at www.AdviceChief.com/resources.html. Participants do not write their names on

these survey sheets. You want to keep this assessment survey anonymous for those participating in it. A locked delivery or mail box works great for collecting the survey sheets.

After the collection deadline has passed, conduct a review of all submitted survey sheets. Don't be alarmed if you see many survey sheets with answers different from yours.

Next, stack the sheets in order of ones with the most “yes's” to the ones with the least amount of “yes's.” After that, eliminate the top 10 percent (ones with the most “yes's”) and the bottom 10 percent (ones with the least “yes's”) and keep and evaluate the 80 percent in between. These 80 percent of sheets are more likely the most accurate assessment you will get about your leadership ability. The top 10 percent are probably from people being too nice or who want to boost your ego while the bottom 10 percent are people who are too harsh or may get great satisfaction in slamming you. And, of course, the bigger the sampling of participants, the more accurate the assessment.

Once your assessment survey is complete, use the results to craft yourself an action plan that will, in time, help you to turn some of those “no's” into “yes's” in future assessment surveys. If you find it difficult in crafting an action plan for improvement, seek help from a mentor, consultant, advisor, or perhaps read a book that covers the topic in which you need help.

It is always valuable to conduct a leadership self-evaluation backed by an assessment survey. Do one every few years as a minimum.

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