



THE ELLIOT GROUP

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LEADERSHIP  
INSTITUTE

INSIGHTS

# Orchestrating Success

## Six Traits Defining Next-Level Leadership

Organizational success depends on strong leadership. Learn what exactly constitutes a strong leader.



**I**n The Elliot Group's 40 years as premier executive search professionals, we have witnessed a significant workplace transformation. In the past, many organizations were a closed loop. Leaders came from within. They had spent years in the same organizations with their team, who shared similar backgrounds and convened in a single office. Tactical skills reigned and tenure was rewarded.

Today's environment is much more of an open field. Leaders come from within as well as outside. They lead diverse teams from different generations with varying backgrounds and levels of experience. In today's remote and hybrid work environment, they are more likely to engage from different locations. Today's complex organization can lead to a cacophony rather than a symphony.

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1. **Adaptability**

2. **Integrity**

3. **Emotional Intelligence**

4. **Influence**

5. **Growth Mindset**

6. **Results Oriented**

## Section 1

# Dissonant Voices

It's not surprising that in this complex environment, leaders, teams, and organizations can fall out of harmony. So, too, can the hiring of top talent.

Job descriptions or talent expectations are often over-indexed for technical skills or fail to underscore an organization's culture and forward-looking goals. Organizations often hit the wrong note when determining what makes a good leader.

The most successful executive searches start with cross-functional strategic alignment to identify:



**The right executive search team brings harmony to discord.**

## Section 2

# Striking the Right Chord

When seeking top talent, organizations should prioritize a candidate's proven ability to meet strategic objectives just as much as qualitative and values-based characteristics. Personality traits and principles make the difference between a transactional leader and a transformative one.



We asked Elliot Group clients and our executive search experts what key qualities are shared by the most successful leaders.

These six defining traits struck a chord. The following pages describe what today's top leaders need for symphonic bliss.

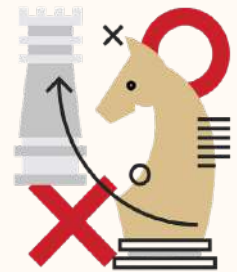
# Six Traits Defining Next-Level Leadership

## **Adaptability:** Allow for Improvisation

Successful leadership hinges on adaptability – the ability to pivot seamlessly in response to market dynamics and disruptions, as well as internal needs, challenges, and opportunities.

Consider technology – the most rapidly changing element of our workplaces. In the *World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report*, **over 85%** of surveyed organizations identify the increased adoption of new technologies as the primary driver of organizational change.

When faced with constant change – whether new technologies or new hires – leaders must possess a keen understanding of customer and workforce trends and a nimble mindset to embrace innovation swiftly.



➤ **New technologies are the primary driver of organizational change today. A nimble mindset is needed to embrace innovation.**

## **Integrity:** Conduct and Collaborate

Leadership takes authenticity, humility and willingness to work hard alongside the team. Leaders with integrity demonstrate a commitment to collective success through active participation and dedication to values and purpose.

They invest in personal development, support team growth and build positive relationships. They seek out differing opinions and encourage openness while consistently finding common ground.

Authentic leaders also show vulnerability at appropriate times. Productive vulnerability involves knowing when to show emotion, hold space for others' feedback, and admit to mistakes. Doing so demonstrates transparency and self-awareness that engenders trust.



➤ **Productive vulnerability involves knowing when to admit mistakes. Doing so helps build trust, making collaboration more successful.**

## Emotional Intelligence: Listen and Harmonize

With a growing focus on mental wellness, emotional intelligence is a crucial leadership trait. Leaders who cultivate empathy, foster inclusivity, and demonstrate genuine concern for others' well-being drive employee retention and improve employee engagement.

An *EY Empathy in Business* survey reveals that **90%** of American workers link empathetic leadership with increased job satisfaction.

Leadership teams with strong EQ drive organizational success, too. A *Catalyst* study finds that when individuals experience empathy from leaders, **76%** report greater engagement and **61%** say they are more innovative.



**More than three-quarters of employees report being more engaged when they have empathetic leaders. Nearly two-thirds say they are more innovative.**

## Influence: Lead Through Inspiration

Inspirational leaders cultivate committed and productive teams. When a leader can inspire and lead with influence rather than authority, their team is twice as likely to be loyal to the organization and more likely to be satisfied and productive.



An inspiring leader drives performance through purpose.

These leaders emphasize collaboration, creativity and commitment. By outlining shared goals and setting a clear vision, they can motivate teams to tackle situations that require significant change, meet stretch goals, and exceed corporate expectations.



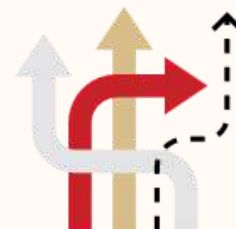
**When a leader can inspire, their team is twice as likely to be loyal to the organization and more likely to be satisfied and productive.**


## Growth Mindset: On the Up Beat

Leaders with a growth mindset believe in the potential for continual development, both for their businesses, brands and teams. Rather than a fixed mindset that looks at near-term failures and team skills as impossible to develop, a growth mindset focuses on progress and sees challenges as opportunities.

This mindset fosters resilience, innovation and a commitment to ongoing personal and professional growth – essential qualities in our ever-changing environment.

Of course, this mindset takes courage and curiosity. Leaders willing to face failure can act boldly, understanding that growth only comes from taking risks.




**A growth mindset within leadership teams is a top predictor of business success. Courage and curiosity are essential.**

## Results-Oriented: Stick to the Score

It takes time to build effective leadership teams and the fostering of leadership is crucial for any organization. But so are results.

Research shows that employees' talents shine and business results are achieved more efficiently when leaders focus on end results, set clear goals and guidelines, but do not prescribe specific processes. Outcome-based cultures empower individuals to meet and exceed end goals while entrusting them with the autonomy to determine procedures.

This approach promotes efficiency and adaptability, aligning individual efforts with organizational objectives.




**Employees' talents shine when leaders focus on outcomes rather than prescribing set processes.**

# Let us compose your perfect symphony. Together.

At The Elliot Group we study leadership.  
We help people and businesses thrive.

## **We understand today's executive talent market**

and serve as ever-present advisors engaged with businesses across consumer sectors to build human capital structures, identify and secure leaders, and drive people and organizational success.

For over 40 years, we have connected top-level talent and organizations as a full-service human capital advisory and retained executive search firm. We harness deep relationships and strategic perspective to power businesses forward.


## **Our Leadership & Consulting Services**

- Executive Search
- Advisory
- Board Development
- Benchmarking
- M&A Talent Advisory
- Talent Sequencing
- Succession Planning



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