Adapted from *The Bush School of Government and Public Service is a graduate college of Texas A&M University*

Individual Leadership Plan

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Individual Leadership Plan

"So, the point is not to become a leader. The point is to become yourself, to use yourself completely – all of your skills, gifts, and energies – in order to make your vision manifest. You must withhold nothing. You must, in sum, become the person you started out to be, and enjoy the process of becoming."

Warren Bennis

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Leadership development is a process of learning, self-study and personal growth. A structured action plan can jump-start your momentum for personal development and keep you moving toward your goals.

The Individual Leadership Plan (ILP) is an ongoing action plan that can be used to facilitate your development as a leader. In the plan, you assess who you are and envision what you want to become as a leader. In doing so, you will complete a *Personal Vision Statement*, determine your *Core Values*, and define personal and professional *Leadership Development Goals* for the three competency areas for Leadership Development - *Knowledge*, *Skills*, and *Attributes*.

Your final challenge will be to determine an *Action Plan* that guides you through steps to take in order to move from your current reality to the achievement of each goal.

Personal Vision Statement Module 1

"No man that does not see visions will ever realize any high hope or undertake any high enterprise."

Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States

Before you can lead others, you must be able to lead yourself. A personal vision statement entices you to think about your life, clarify its purpose and identify what is really important to you. Invest time reflecting on the things that are central to your being in order to answer the question, "Who am I and what is my higher calling?" After writing your vision statement, use it as the standard by which you judge your activities and choices.

The following suggestions from *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen Covey may help you capture what is succinctly central to your being.

- ★ A personal vision statement focuses on what you want to be (character) and to do (achievements and contributions) and on the principles upon which being and doing are based.
- ★ A personal vision statement becomes a personal constitution, the basis for making major, life-directing decisions, the basis for making daily decisions in the midst of emotion and circumstances that affect our lives.
- ★ The personal vision statement may be written in a variety of ways. Some may choose lists, paragraphs, to poems. "Because each individual is unique, a personal mission statement [should] reflect that uniqueness, both in content and form."
- ★ Once you have a sense of mission/vision, you have the essence of your own proactivity. You have the vision and values which direct your life. You have the direction from which you set your development goals. Most importantly, you have the power of a written constitution, against which every decision can be effectively measure.



Please create your Personal Vision Statement below.

To express myself creatively while serving others through nurturing, honest, compassionate work.

After you have written a draft of your Personal Vision Statement, evaluate it by asking yourself:

- ✓ Do I feel this vision statement represents the integrity I stand for?
- Are direction, purpose, challenge, and motivation signaled in this vision statement?
- Am I aware of the strategies and skills that will help me accomplish what I have written?
- If I were to share my Personal Vision Statement with the world, is this an accurate portrait of who I want to be?
- Final Test: Does this vision statement inspire me?

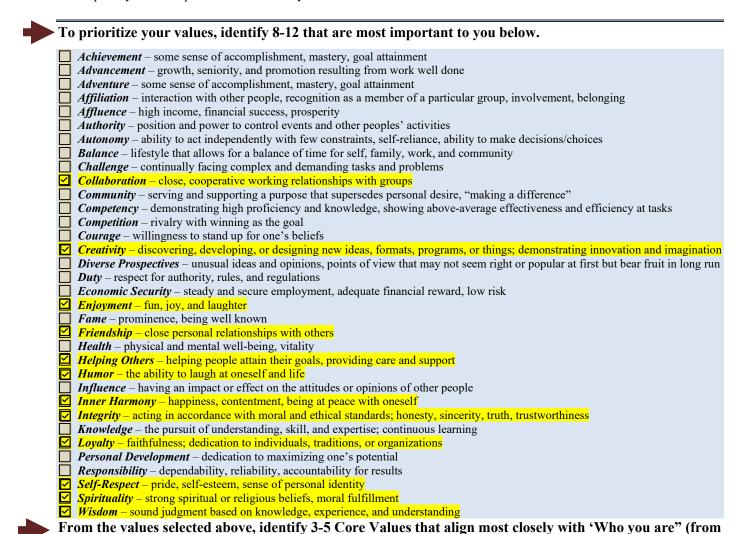
Core Values Module 2

It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are."

Roy Disney

Your core values are the principles you use to govern your life and define integrity and ethics for you. Effective leaders hold fast to these standards and do not waver, using them to help weigh choices in life. Every effective leader has a list of things they believe to be of worth, quality or esteem. They are the things the leader prizes and is willing to "go to bat" for.

Your values will most likely compliment your Personal Vision Statement. Furthermore, make sure any goals and action plans you develop are consistent with your values.





3. Collaboration

5. Inner Harmony

2. Helping Others

PVS) and "Who you want to be."

- 4. Integrity

Attributes Analysis Module 2

"Imagine the [leadership] styles, then, as the array of clubs in a golf pro's bag...the pro 'senses' the challenge ahead, swiftly pulls out the right tool, and elegantly puts it to work."

Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee

Effective leaders know their personal strengths, their areas in need of improvement, the characteristics they display in their relationships with others, and their preferences towards specific situations. They also understand that taking strategic and proactive approaches to developing and managing their professional image pays off. In summary, effective leaders have self, social, and situational awareness, and manage themselves and their relationships.

The good news is that you can be the author of your own identity. Spend some time below reflecting on your approach and needs for developing your own image.



Your Desired Professional Image

What do you want key constituents to say about you when you are not in the room (your core competencies, strengths and character traits)?

When I leave the room, I want people to say that I am a creative person who brings many ideas and is not afraid to share them despite the possible reaction of others. Creativity is valuable in a college because innovative contributions can propel the institution forward. At the eLearning Center, we often use our creativity to find solutions to situations that arise. For example, my supervisor and I recently worked to prepare a selection of data to be presented outside of the department. We had to remember that we needed to prepare the information in a way that would be easily understood by an audience who did not know the detailed functionality of the Canvas Learning Management System. Using our creativity to brainstorm ideas, we created a visual presentation that effectively conveyed the information to an audience of varying levels of expertise. Another example of creativity in eLearning is when the team is remotely helping students troubleshoot a program on their computer. When assisting someone without in-person access to their device, we must use all resources to provide solutions. Most recently, I assisted a student by phone in submitting an assignment in Canvas. Unfortunately, they couldn't understand where they needed to click no matter what I said. Finally, the idea occurred to me to use the Windows 10 Quick Assist tool to see what was displayed on their screen. As soon as the session connected, the difficulties with communication were eliminated, and the issue was resolved quickly. In summary, being creative and flexible of mind helps the eLearning team, and all employees of an institution of higher education, to communicate effectively and find solutions to seemingly challenging situations.

Your Current Image, Culture, and Audience.

What are the expectations for professionalism in the field you are pursuing?

To become an effective leader, it is necessary to consider not only the way one wants others to speak about them, but also what is expected as a professional in their field, and how others perceive them. Professionalism is characterized as being competent, knowledgeable, conscientious, respectful, emotionally intelligent, confident, and having integrity (Professionalism, n.d.). To illustrate, when I was assisting the student with their device, it was crucial to maintain a calm, professional demeanor throughout our interaction. By the time we spoke on the phone, the student was incredibly frustrated and was feeling pressure to submit their assignment before the deadline. Being professional during the stressful encounter by remaining respectful and drawing on my technical knowledge allowed me to quickly find a solution and successfully resolve the issue.

How do others currently perceive you?

In addition to knowing what is expected of me as an eLearning professional, I must also be aware of how others see me. Taking stock of the perceptions of my colleagues, supervisor, and customers (faculty, students, and staff at Laredo College) is essential to becoming an effective leader. First, I must be aware of how I am perceived by my co-workers. For instance, I am lucky to work with a great team, and we share mutual respect and admiration. They have commented several times that I am creative and have many good ideas and a friendly disposition.

Next, I must always think of the eLearning Director and how I appear in her eyes. In particular, one way to verify a supervisor's opinion is through annual performance evaluations. Over five years of employment at the eLearning Center, my evaluations have been above satisfactory and include comments stating that I am flexible, a team player, competent, and conscientious.

Finally, I must be attentive to how I am seen by people outside of my department. In an institution of higher education, it is vital to pay attention to the opinions of students, faculty, and staff. For example, I am fortunate to say that I recently received a compliment from a new staff member in another department. We met to introduce ourselves and discuss how our departments could work together to promote our services to new students. At the end of the conversation, she mentioned that my services came highly recommended. In summary, to become a good leader, I must manage my current image and be aware of how my audience perceives me.

Strategic Self-Presentation

What stereotypes correlate with your intended profession and how will you handle them?

Leadership involves not only considering professional expectations and others' perceptions, but also recognizing existing stereotypes, being able to handle them, and building credibility while maintaining authenticity. First, it is crucial to be aware of commonly held beliefs in one's field. For example, one stereotype is that online degrees have less value than face-to-face degrees (Roberto and Johnson, 2019). This is a misconception, as online classes are often more rigorous than in-person instruction. One way to counter this stereotype is to maintain high standards of excellence in the design of online courses. For example, at Laredo College, all online courses are designed according to the Quality Matters Rubric, which contains a set of standards that "measure and guarantee the quality of [an online] course" (Quality Matters, n.d.). In other words, all online courses at the College must meet set requirements and are designed as equivalent, and at times superior, to the face-to-face courses offered.

How will you build credibility while maintaining authenticity?

Along with being aware of stereotypes and how to handle them, an effective leader also builds credibility while maintaining authenticity. I will do this is by matching my actions with what I say and staying true to my values and convictions. For instance, when I take on a project, I will set a clear timeline and specify the required steps. Then, I will follow through and complete those steps within the projected timeframe. As the project progresses, I will stick to my core values, incorporating creativity and collaboration along the way.

Leadership Skills Module 3

Skills are the abilities that leaders use to translate their styles, strategies and plans, tools and techniques into practice. Identifying skills for development requires a level of self-reflection (Step 1) to determine those skills you have developed and used in previous leadership/professional opportunities. It also requires self-trajection (Step 2), thinking about the skills that will be important to your future success.



Step 1:

<u>Identify skills you have developed and used in previous leadership/professional opportunities</u>. In particular, think about skills that make you marketable to a prospective employer (what are the skills you list on your resume). The goal is not only to list what you are good at doing, but also to produce solid examples of how you previously applied those skills in work or leadership roles to achieve positive outcomes. Take time to also reflect about your leadership strengths (as identified by the StrengthsQuest assessment and your personality preferences).

For guidance, please access the "Skills Matrix" attachment at the end of this document.

Skill	Highlight the task, method, purpose, value, and outcome. (from Skills Matrix)
Initiative	I recognized a need for additional user support within Laredo College's Learning Management System, Canvas. I researched solutions and found Impact, which is an interactive support center that is embedded in Canvas. Once the purchase was finalized, I took charge of the implementation. The solution has been live in Canvas since Fall 2021, and consequently, students and faculty can find answers to their questions no matter the time of day, and there are fewer support tickets being submitted through the eHelpdesk.
Flexibility	When the eLearning Center was in the process of hiring a new Technical Support Coordinator, I was assigned the duties for that position. Without hesitation, I willingly took on many new projects, adapting to the increased responsibility. As a result, services at the eLearning Center continued as usual even though the position was vacant and the team was one employee short.
Communication	During a project, it is sometimes necessary to recap the progress for people who are not directly involved. The last time we updated the equipment in the computer labs on the third floor of the LEAC, we held a meeting to talk about the plan when the director and other key team members were not present. I decided to send a summary email presenting the main points of the discussion and made sure to describe them in a way that would be clearly understood and would bring the director up to speed. I summarized the meeting with clarity and conciseness; thus, all parties understood what the next steps were, where the project was headed, and we were able to finalize the installation quickly and without confusion.
Teamwork	During the Covid-19 pandemic, all Laredo College courses were converted to 100% online instruction. To facilitate this sudden change, the eLearning Center implemented the Zoom Virtual Meeting platform in Canvas. One crucial part of the process was informing the faculty of best practices and how to use the platform. I worked closely with the director and another team member to create a guide and training course for faculty to use as reference that included specific instructions with videos, steps to follow, and detailed screenshots. We worked together to prepare the training materials and ensure the information was complete. Consequently, the faculty began using the application with minimal questions. Today, Zoom is used successfully by many instructors to conduct class meetings and offer virtual office hours.
Creativity	As the Technology and Multimedia Specialist at the eLearning Center, one of my duties is to design the Global Announcements that appear in Canvas. The end goal is to create an announcement that attracts the attention of Canvas users and promotes the event/service requested. It is my responsibility to format the information according to Canvas dimensions and the best practices for accessibility. Successful completion of this task often requires using creativity to reformat the material in a way that communicates the requested message successfully while also being visually appealing. As a result, students and faculty can learn about ongoing events and projects of various departments at the College.

Step 2:

Below is a list of skills that many organizations, government agencies and large/small businesses deem important for leadership roles. Put a check by those skills that you feel you could improve. Another way to identify skills that organizations deem important is to find a job description in the area you are most interested in for a career. Circle the skills outlined in the job description that you need to attain or further develop. You might choose to focus on skill areas that you are already good at, but by strengthening them, you will be a more effective leader.

Personal Skills	
Developing Self Awareness	Technical Skills
✓ Managing Personal Stress	Making Oral and Written Presentations
Solving Problems Analytically and Creatively	Policy Analysis
	Economic Analysis
Interpersonal Skills	Personnel Management
Coaching, Counseling, and Supportive	Budgeting
Communication	Project Management
Gaining Power and Influence	Language Proficiency
Motivating Others	
Managing Conflict	Other Skills (Think about the skills that job
	announcements in your intended field emphasize)
Group Skills	Innovative Thinker
Empowering and Delegating	Analyze and Recommend Technology
Building Effective Teams and Teamwork	Continual Learner
Managing Change	Integrity and Follow Through
<u> </u>	Flexibility
	Creativity
	-
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From Steps 1 & 2, identify 1-3 skills on which you would like to focus. As you continue to complete your Individual Leadership Plan, you will reflect on these skill areas and develop goals related to them.

1.Creativity

2. Managing Personal Stress

3.Personnel Management

Knowledge Module 4

"A hallmark of achievement is in continually learning – and teaching – ways to do better."

Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee

Effective leaders spend time studying the field of leadership and management. All leaders need information, and they have to be able to process that information in the best manner possible. Effective leaders know when to be critical and analytical in their thinking, when to be creative, and when to take the time to think conceptually.

On the previous page, you identified potential areas of growth for leadership skills. Webster's Dictionary definition for skill: the ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance. Complete the following matrix, which will help you determine particular areas where you should gain more knowledge and/or experience for the skills identified on page 6 (Leadership Skills Section)



You do not have to complete the matrix. If you only chose 2 skills, just fill in 2 lines.

Skills (transferred from page 6)	What do you understand?	What Experience do you have?	What Development Needs do you have?
Ex. Managing Change	Change is inevitable; not being open to change risks personal and professional growth; most people have a negative attitude toward change.	Leader of an organization that was analyzing past goals and objectives and creating new ones in order to better serve members and community.	Gain information and experience in how to get others motivated about change; create change without setting off a state of panic
1. Creativity	Creativity brings new ideas and can stimulate positive change in the workplace.	Innovative team member who has brought ideas for projects that helped meet the department's goals and mission.	Focus on stimulating creativity in others and ways to bring about fresh thought.
2. Managing Personal Stress	Managing stress is crucial for good health and well-being in individual employees and the entire organization.	Completed various training workshops through the LC Human Resources professional development portal on Lynda.com.	Further training is needed on different coping strategies and ways to evaluate situations and respond appropriately.
3. Personnel Management	Personnel management is vital for the success of the institution. Promoting commitment, communication, and collaboration amongst individuals and teams can be challenging.	Over two years of experience as the supervisor of workstudy students.	Complete Lynda.com training workshops on conflict management and supervision. Optional: develop a mentorship program with an experienced supervisor.

Leadership Development Goals Module 5

Using the information obtained from analyzing your Attributes, Skills, and Knowledge, **develop 2-3** *STRETCH* **Leadership Development Goals** and **1-2 Manageable Goals per** *STRETCH* **Goal**. Although you may be enticed to develop multiple goals, studies show that working on too many goals could decrease the probability of achieving any of them. These goals should directly be related to the skills you listed on page 6 (Leadership Skills section) in Step 3.

STRETCH Goals are challenging goals that will result in a breakthrough toward reaching your Personal Vision Statement.

MANAGEABLE Goals are *S.M.A.R.T. goals that will help you get started toward your STRETCH Goals and Vision.



- **★ STRETCH Goal:** Increase my creative output at work by 100% by July 30th, 2022.
 - Manageable Goal: Learn how to use Adobe Photoshop through online tutorials via LinkedLearning.com.
 - Manageable Goal: Complete an infographic promoting services of the eLearning Center.



- **★ STRETCH Goal: Reduce my personal stress by 80% by April 30th, 2022.**
 - Manageable Goal: Begin exercising three times per week to reduce stress.
 - Manageable Goal: Complete a training on stress management through LinkedLearning.com, the LC employee professional development portal.



- **★ STRETCH Goal:** Increase my personnel management experience by 100% by May 31st, 2022.
 - Manageable Goal: Serve as Project Manager for a new technology implementation project at the eLearning Center.
 - Manageable Goal: Complete a personnel management training on LinkedinLearning.com, the LC employee professional development portal.

*Use the 5 S.M.A.R.T. Goal Guidelines below:

Specific—a specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. Ask yourself the six "W's" (Who, What, Where, When, Which, Why)

Measurable—establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward attaining each goal. When you measure your progress, you stay on track. To determine if they are measurable, ask questions such as...How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Attainable—when you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry them out.

Realistic—to be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. Your goal is probably realistic if you truly believe that it can be accomplished. Ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish the goal.

Timely—a goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there's no sense of urgency. "Someday" won't work, but if you anchor your goal within a timeframe, then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working.

Action Plan Module 6

"Authoritatively setting directions about performance aspirations has multiple benefits: it energizes team members, it orients their attention and action, and it engages their talents."

J. Richard Hackman

Your Action Plan identifies very specific steps you will take, resources you will locate, and the support system you will build to reach your Leadership Goals and work toward your Personal Vision. It moves you from "Current Reality" to achieving your goals. This is your plan for achieving the goals you listed on the previous page.

Complete the plan below and use the information to jump-start your development.

Goal #1	Specific Actions to Take (what are the specific tasks you are going to complete to achieve your goal)	Resources to Assist Development (are there books, articles, websites, or people who can help you)	Timeline (by what date will you accomplish your goal)
Increase my creative output at work by 100%	Learn how to use Adobe Photoshop through online tutorials Complete an infographic promoting services of the eLearning Center	•LinkedinLearning.com professional development portal •Tutorials on <u>www.adobe.com</u> website •Support from the Director of the eLearning Center	July 30th, 2022

Goal #2	Specific Actions to Take (what are the specific tasks you are going to complete to achieve your goal)	Resources to Assist Development (are there books, articles, websites, or people who can help you)	Timeline (by what date will you accomplish your goal)
Reduce my personal stress by 80%	Begin exercising three times per week to reduce stress Complete a training on stress management	•Rowing machine at home •LinkedinLearning.com, professional development portal	April 30th, 2022

Goal #3	Specific Actions to Take (what are the specific tasks you are going to complete to achieve your goal)	Resources to Assist Development (are there books, articles, websites, or people who can help you)	Timeline (by what date will you accomplish your goal)
Increase my personnel	•Serve as Project Manager	•Support from the Director of	May 31st, 2022
management experience	for a new technology	the eLearning Center	
by 100%	implementation project at	•LinkedinLearning.com,	
	the eLearning Center	professional development	
	 Complete a personnel 	portal	
	management training on		
	LinkedinLearning.com,		
	professional development		
	portal.		

Attachment 1: Skills Matrix

Since the job search process mirrors that of a marketing campaign the first step is to identify the customer and his or her wants and needs. After determining what the customer, or in this case the employer, wants you must determine whether and how you can meet their requirements. This page is OPTIONAL and is intended to help you complete Step 1 from the Leadership Skills section on page 6. The skills you list here are skills that you have a strong background in already. Feel free to use what you know about yourself from taking the StrengthsQuest assessment or the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

Step 1:

Potential employers want to hear about specific skills you can contribute that will strengthen their organization. Take some time to reflect on what specific knowledge, skills and abilities you can contribute to an organization at this point in your career. Your previous leadership, volunteer and work experiences are a good starting point in this self-reflection.

Step 2:

Build the matrix by describing the following using the START approach:

- 1. (S) Situation
 - What did you do? What was the situation? You should describe it in enough detail that someone with no understanding could comprehend the situation.
- 2. (T) Task
 - What was required in the situation? What steps or responsibilities were required of you?
- 3. (A) Action
 - What did you do? How did you do it? What was your contribution to the task and situation?
- 4. (R) Results
 - What happened because of your actions? How did your work contribute to the overall purpose?
- 5. (T) Takeaways
 - What were the key learning principles that you took away from the experience? How does this transfer to other experiences?

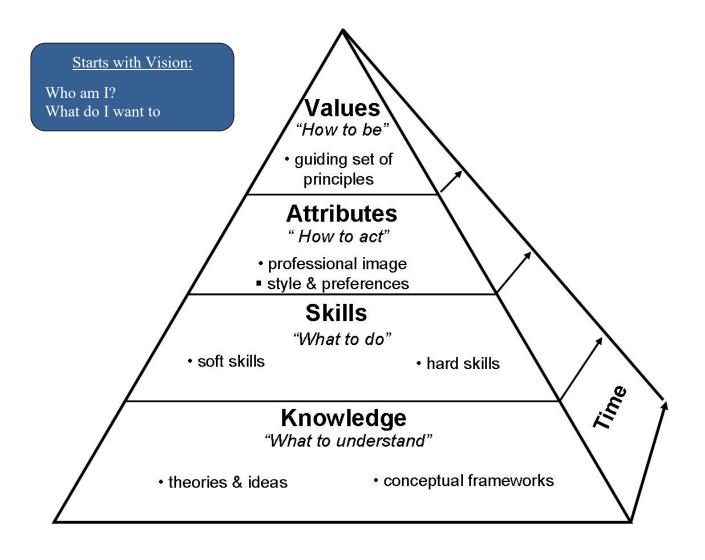
Note that this matrix will grow throughout your academic and professional career and will benefit you through the job search process and enhance your career management success. In the job search process, this matrix will help you in targeting your resume to meet the needs of the job in which you are applying, writing a cover letter, interviewing and networking.

Points to note:

- You may have multiple examples or only one example for each skill.
- Quantify whenever you can. How many? How much? Dollars? Percentages?
- Think along the lines of how you purchase products or services. You want to know what something does, how, why, and the results. Those are all needed to close the sale of a product or service that is no different than what you are trying to do as you search for a job.

Skill	Situation	Task	Action	Results	Takeaways

Attachment 2: Leadership Competency Framework



Personal Leadership Plan Final Exam Video Project

Instructions:

Part I Compile your artifacts from modules to complete this packet. Submit as a word document

Part II Produce a 3-5 minute video presentation in which you discuss your personal leadership plan. This will be shared in discussions and present in a live class.

Your video should present the following:

- 1. Your background information
- 2. Your current or future career goals
- 3. Your Values according to the Rokeach Value Survey
- 4. Your Big Five Personality Traits
- 5. Your Myers-Briggs Type Indicator
- 6. A summary of your Personal Leadership Plan
 - a. Personal Vision Statement
 - b. Core Values
 - c. Attributes
 - d. Skills
 - e. Knowledge
 - f. Leadership Development Goals
 - g. Action Plan
 - h. Skills Matrix

This video will be part of your final project in your Capstone course before graduation. Feel free to use professional photos, video clips, PowerPoint, Prezi, or other graphics.

Personal Leadership Plan Project Final Exam Video Link:

https://youtu.be/CKzVUbvSOUw