

The Management Standards Consultancy

Generic Behaviours for Management and Leadership

This document provides a list of the generic behaviours displayed by effective managers and leaders as they fulfil their responsibilities.

The generic behaviours describe the manner in which effective managers and leaders conduct themselves in any situation. Others may call these generic behaviours “personal qualities” or “traits” – the typical ways in which someone may respond to different situations, eg, “She addresses multiple demands without losing focus or energy; she listens actively, asks questions, clarifies points and rephrases others’ statements to check mutual understanding; she makes time available to support others; she acts to uphold individuals’ rights; she takes personal responsibility for making things happen.”

The generic behaviours do NOT include statements describing specific activities and tasks which managers and leaders would be expected to carry out in a particular situation (such as “support and endorse schemes that sustain staff loyalty and commitment to excellent customer service”, “calculate the impact of capital investment on cashflow”, “ensure the existence and use of product and or service related performance measures and feedback systems”).

Each generic behaviour should be able to follow the platform statement “As a manager or leader, you are expected to... eg, “As a manager or leader, you are expected to respond quickly to crises and problems with a proposed course of action”.

The generic behaviours are grouped into 15 clusters:

Adaptability and innovation	2
Communication.....	2
Concern for others	2
Customer* focus	2
Desire to learn	3
Entrepreneurship	3
Ethical stance	3
Focus on results	4
Information and knowledge management	4
Persuasiveness	4
Political awareness	4
Relationship management	5
Self-management	5
Strategic awareness	5
Thinking and decision making.....	6

For any queries, please contact Trevor Boutall, The Management Standards Consultancy, 07768 890 653 trevor.boutall@themsc.org.

Adaptability and innovation

- address multiple demands without losing focus or energy
- seize the opportunities presented by the diversity of people
- work to turn unexpected events into opportunities rather than threats
- adapt quickly to new challenges
- recognise changes in circumstances promptly and adjust plans and activities accordingly
- respond quickly to crises and problems with a proposed course of action
- seek constantly to improve performance
- challenge current practice constructively and seek better alternatives
- generate and recognise imaginative and innovative solutions
- try out new ways of working
- find practical ways to overcome barriers

Communication

- accurately identify and evaluate different people's information needs
- listen actively, ask questions, clarify points and rephrase others' statements to check mutual understanding
- adopt communication media and styles appropriate to different people and situations
- present information clearly, concisely and accurately
- present ideas and problems in ways that promote understanding
- keep people informed of plans and developments

Concern for others

- show empathy with others' needs, feelings and motivations and take an active interest in their concerns
- make time available to support others
- show respect for the views and actions of others
- encourage and stimulate others to make the best use of their abilities
- encourage and support others to take decisions autonomously
- give feedback to others to help them improve their effectiveness
- work to minimise the negative impact of own actions on others
- support others in achieving their personal aspirations
- recognise the achievements and success of others
- acknowledge others' strengths and show readiness to allow others to lead when this will achieve a positive outcome

Customer* focus

* *Customer* is used in the broadest sense to include all those who currently or potentially benefit from the work of the manager/leader. These may include individual external customers, groups of external customers, sponsors, funding agencies, partners, or internal customers such as other departments, colleagues, managers, staff and volunteers.

- demonstrate a clear understanding of different customers and their real and perceived needs

- seize opportunities to develop, match and tailor products and services to meet customer needs
- balance the diverse needs of different customers
- give people opportunities to provide feedback, and respond to their feedback appropriately
- empower staff to solve customer problems within clear limits of authority
- take personal responsibility for resolving problems to the customer's satisfaction
- recognise recurring problems and promote changes to structures, systems and processes to resolve these
- continuously improve processes, products and services
- advocate customers' interests within own organisation

Desire to learn

- display a curiosity to learn and try out new things
- take responsibility for meeting own learning and development needs
- develop own knowledge, skills and performance in a systematic way
- seek feedback on performance to identify strengths and weaknesses
- reflect regularly on own and others' experiences, and use these to inform future actions
- develop self to meet the demands of changing situations
- apply new learning effectively to changing situations
- freely share learning with others who can benefit from it and who have a right to it
- inspire others with the excitement of learning

Entrepreneurship

- do things without being asked or forced to by events
- seek out and act on new business opportunities
- take calculated risks, and encourage others to do so
- identify and seize unusual opportunities to obtain resources
- take repeated or different actions to overcome obstacles

Ethical stance

- comply with, and ensure that others comply with, legal requirements, industry regulations, organisational policies and professional codes
- act within the limits of own authority
- act to protect the health, safety and well-being of others
- act to uphold individuals' rights
- set objectives and create cultures that are ethical
- acknowledge when own interests are in conflict with common goals
- show integrity, fairness and consistency in decision-making
- respond assertively to unreasonable requests
- state own position and views clearly and confidently in conflict situations
- confront performance issues and resolve these directly with those involved
- identify and raise ethical concerns
- resist pressures to behave unethically

Focus on results

- set demanding but achievable objectives for self and others
- prioritise objectives and schedule work to make the best use of time and resources
- calculate risks accurately, and make provision so that unexpected events do not impede the achievement of objectives
- develop plans that are efficient and effective to make the best use of time and resources
- identify and secure the resources required to achieve objectives
- take personal responsibility for making things happen
- agree roles, responsibilities and authority with others
- check individuals' commitment to their roles in a specific course of action
- hold others to account
- protect own and others' work against negative impacts
- monitor quality of work and progress against plans
- focus personal attention on specific details that are critical to achieving successful results
- identify critical problems and take appropriate action promptly
- take pride in delivering accurate work to the required standard

Information and knowledge management

- use cost-effective, time-effective and ethical means to gather, store and retrieve information
- make best use of existing sources of information
- keep confidential information secure
- check the validity and reliability of information
- push for concrete information in an ambiguous situation
- analyse and structure information to develop knowledge that can be shared
- make appropriate information and knowledge available promptly to those who need it and have a right to it
- develop systems to manage information and knowledge across organisations/ partnerships
- encourage others to share information and knowledge efficiently within the constraints of confidentiality

Persuasiveness

- seek to understand people's needs and motivations
- present self positively to others
- state own opinions, views and requirements clearly
- identify clearly the value and benefits to people of a proposed course of action
- present information and arguments convincingly and in ways which strike a chord with people
- deploy a range of legitimate strategies and tactics to influence people
- work towards win-win solutions
- create a sense of common purpose
- articulate a vision that generates excitement, enthusiasm and commitment

Political awareness

- develop plans to meet the priorities of policy makers

- balance collective interests with the interests of own area of work
- identify internal and external politics that impact on own area of work
- act to understand and influence the climate and culture of the organisation/partnership

Relationship management

- identify, and develop relationships with, people and organisations that can provide support for own work, and vice versa
- introduce people and organisations with common interests to each other
- work to develop an atmosphere of professionalism and mutual support
- clarify own and others' expectations of relationships
- act as a role model, modelling the behaviour expected of others
- model behaviour that shows respect, helpfulness and cooperation
- keep promises and honour commitments
- recognise when there are conflicts, acknowledge the feelings and views of all parties, and redirect people's energy towards a common goal

Self-management

- display a good understanding of own values, motivations and emotions and the impact of these on own actions and on others
- set achievable objectives for self and give a consistent and stable performance
- readily accept constructive feedback from others
- seek to understand own strengths and limitations
- play to own strengths with confidence
- recognise own limitations and use alternative strategies to minimise the impact of your limitations
- respond positively and creatively to set-backs
- assess the impact of own actions on other parts of the organisation and beyond

Strategic awareness

- display a good understanding of how different factors in the work context relate to each other
- maintain up-to-date information on the political, economic, social, technological and legal factors that impact on work
- identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to current and future work
- identify systemic issues and trends and recognise their impact current and future work
- identify key stakeholders and take due account of their interests
- employ a range of leadership styles appropriate to different situations
- anticipate likely future scenarios based on a realistic analysis of trends and developments
- use strategic insight to guide your selection of people and resources
- work towards a clearly defined vision of the future
- take opportunities when they arise to achieve longer term aims
- develop strategic partnerships with individuals and organisations that share common values and complementary aims

Thinking and decision making

- identify the range of elements in a situation and how they relate to each other
- identify the implications or consequences of a situation
- use own and others' experience to understand a situation
- identify patterns or meaning from events and data that are not obviously related
- build a total and valid picture from restricted or incomplete data
- articulate the assumptions made, and risks involved, in understanding a situation
- produce and test a variety of solutions before taking a decision
- take timely decisions that are realistic for the situation
- take decisions in uncertain situations or based on incomplete information when necessary
- take and implement difficult and/or unpopular decisions, if necessary