

Operating Principals

Act Like a Leader Cards

Instructions for using the cards

The role-playing cards can be used in a number of applications whenever there is a need to:

- Depersonalize feedback
- Expand perspectives and adopt new behaviors
- Clarify expectations regarding behaviors

One-on-One Feedback

(project, progress, or performance reviews)

The goals are to depersonalize the feedback, provide a method where both parties collaborate on feedback, and use more than one perspective and value system.

Instructions: Each person chooses a card that reflects the perspective he wants the other to hear. One person shows the card, and, together, both brainstorm the feedback that the persona would give. Repeat using the second person's chosen card. Both compare and contrast the feedback and agree on lessons going forward. If deadlocked or otherwise desired, they can choose a third card and perform the feedback again.

Expectations Setting

(at the start of a project, initiative, team or relationship)

The goal is to clarify the expected behaviors at the outset.

Instructions: Each person chooses three cards: one that best represents her, one that she would most like to work with on the project, and one she would least like to work with. Each discusses her picks and agrees to actions for working together.

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Meeting or Team Feedback

The goals are to depersonalize feedback, make it fun, and gain new perspectives.

Instructions: At the end of the meeting, each participant, including the meeting leader, chooses a card, either randomly or deliberately, and takes turns providing feedback in the manner of the personality. Alternately, the meeting leader can choose cards at random and ask participants for feedback in that leader's perspective.

The meeting leader or team determines which feedback to incorporate into next meeting.

Team Development and Innovation

The goals are to create awareness of missing skills and traits on the team, use the personalities to fill those gaps, and to improve team creativity by role-playing other perspectives.

Instructions: Review the cards to determine which personas the team needs but is lacking. Conducting the expectations setting exercise first may help. Create virtual seats for these leaders and assign team members the responsibilities for representing these perspectives.

During brainstorming, choose cards at random and generate ideas as the leader personas. Alternately, team members can act as the leaders during the meetings.

Operating Principals

Act Like a Leader Cards List of Leaders

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Warren Buffett

Cleopatra

Thomas Edison

Albert Einstein

Ulysses S. Grant

Steve Jobs

James T. Kirk

Abraham Lincoln

Vince Lombardi

Nelson Mandela

Elton Mayo

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Indra Nooyi

Jiro Ono

Mr. Peabody

Spock

Martha Stewart

Frederick Taylor

Donald Trump

Jack Welch

Oprah Winfrey

John Wooden

Mark Zuckerberg



Warren Buffett

Lesson: To maximize future rewards by leveraging assets and mitigating risks in a highly rational fashion.

Bio: World's most successful investor, often richest person in the world. Known for old fashioned value investing philosophy and personal frugality. Focuses only on what he knows and does best.

Goals: Use assets to create assets; sacrifice present rewards for future gains; manage risks; develop deep competence; find the right people for the job.

Governing Principle: Stock pile favors or "claim checks" in the form of wealth, reputation, and relationships.

Questions

- What are the long-term benefits?
- How can we get the maximum use out of our assets?
- What is the worst thing that can happen and how do you plan for that?
- How do you put emotions aside and act rationally?
- How does this add to our expertise?
- Are the right people in place?

Values:

Value learning and reputation over results, adherence to own competence over trends, and long-term over short-term. Trust facts, not theory. Place more importance on people than process. Never tarnish your reputation or let people down. Collaborate rather than compete. Don't sweat the small stuff. Try to be fair.

Traits: Folksy, down-to-earth, talkative, analytical, friendly, voracious reader, humble, self-deprecating, loyal, easy-going, honest, trustworthy, community-oriented

Behaviors:

- *Be plain spoken* – Find simple analogies or stories to communicate your point of view.
- *Maintain a good reputation* – Be honest, straightforward, and without hidden agendas.
- *Maximize return on your assets* – Understand your assets and how to use them to maximum effect.
- *Be extremely frugal* – Invest rather than spend.
- *Understand the risks* – Calculate the odds, have plans to mitigate risks, and expect the worst case.
- *Focus on what you know* – Don't get involved in what you don't understand. Learn all you can of one topic.
- *Use analysis to make decisions* – Be unemotional about business decisions and don't be afraid to be a contrarian.
- *Build a strong team* – Spend time finding the right person for the job and then delegate.
- *Forgive well-intended mistakes* – Focus on decision-making behavior not results.



Cleopatra

Lesson: Use intelligence and charm to craft helpful alliances.

Bio: Ancient Egypt's last ruler. Restored a weakened and fractured Egypt to economic domination. Attempted to navigate the country's future through alliances with warring factions in Rome.

Goals: Extend power and influence; gain power by granting favors; build a network of allies; leave a legacy; make a lasting impression.

Governing Principle: Be judged favorably by history.

Questions

- Which lessons from history are applicable today?
- What legacy do you want to leave and how do you do that?
- What are the interests and goals of those around you and how can you align with them?
- How can you build the support needed for this decision or action?
- What favors can you do or use?
- How will history judge this?

Values:

Focus on long-term goals. Success comes from relationships. You can never have too many friends. Know who your friends and enemies are. Neutralize enemies. Learn about others and make alliances whenever possible. First impressions are important. Beliefs and behaviors are changeable. Everything reflects on you. Adapt yourself to your circumstances.

Traits: Curious, charming, intellectual, political, cunning, confident, circumspect, flexible, dramatic, bold, worldly

Behaviors:

- *Have a flair for the dramatic* – Turn ordinary activities into extravaganzas to make yourself memorable.
- *Develop rapport* – Inquire after personal lives and interests. Listen with rapt attention & use compliments.
- *Build coalitions* – Align your interests to obtain mutually beneficial goals. Be attentive to others' needs in order to satisfy your needs.
- *Manage wisely* – Ensure your organization functions well and is ordered and stable. View your organization as an extension of yourself.
- *Develop a legacy* – Show preference for lasting long-term benefits. Anticipate the consequences of contemplated actions and how they will be viewed in the future.
- *Be worldly* – Know your subject matter well and consider history, politics, and trends in your decisions. Consider how other cultures would view your work.
- *Be flexible* – Readily learn and adopt others' practices. Adjust your actions to changing situations.