



**UNIT I:
Group/
Organizational
Leadership
Skills**

Module 1: The Leader Within You

In exploring the leadership qualities within ourselves, we're thinking about personal abilities — mental and physical. We think about knowledge, skills, time and energy, even attitude and enthusiasm. We think of building leadership capacity, which involves enhancing our abilities, learning to transfer skills from one situation to another, and devoting time to reflection and development of a personal leadership philosophy.

There are varied definitions of leadership. Examples include:

1. The process of using influence to help a group achieve its goals.
2. The beliefs individuals have about what makes effective leaders.
3. The qualities, behaviors, skills and knowledge of people regarded as effective leaders.
4. An influence relationship to help a group achieve mutual goals.

The Challenge of Leadership

As we are all aware, we are living in a time of rapid change. There have always been changes taking place in our society, but the different thing today seems to be the rate of change. It happens so fast that we sometimes feel we can hardly keep up.

This rapid change also leads to feelings of uncertainty. Traditions and customary ways of doing things are threatened. Fear of the unknown sometimes creates a resistance to change. We don't quite know how to proceed.

Apathy or doing nothing is one way this resistance to change is illustrated. Individuals and families are so busy trying to manage their own personal activities that they don't make time for the broader community. They do not realize that group or community action is often the best way to address these new issues.

As you begin to explore "the leader within you," think about ways it may be appropriate for you to revise elements of your style, your priorities, your beliefs and your habits. In particular, ask yourself:

- Am I paying enough attention to the subjective aspects of leadership—including the values, culture and tone in my organization?
- Am I doing all I can to bring out the best in others? Am I valuing and respecting their differences and motivating and inspiring them?
- Am I "walking my talk" and modeling the values I believe in?
- What other leadership actions should I be adding? How am I balancing my focus on results vs. people? My commitment to career vs. my personal life?¹

Today's challenge is to ask:

- Do I share in leadership roles?
- Am I developing my ability to work with others as a team leader and member?
- Am I a lifelong learner, instead of thinking I already know all there is to know?

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