

The Connected Mindset:

Leading People and Projects with Clarity, Empathy, and Purpose

DJ Johnson
IOM, CAE, FASAE

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About Me

Background

I started out in journalism writing for a magazine focused on the LGBTQIA+ community in Chicago. Originally born in the Midwest, I've lived all over the American South, Midwest & East Coast. I've worked in association membership, volunteer and leadership development over the last 25+ years.



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- Expertise membership, volunteer & staff development
- Certified Association Executive / Institute for Organization Management/DELP
- Lead wide range of association functions/teams
- Lifelong volunteer (including four boards)



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PERSONAL POSITIONALITY

- Black American, multiracial background, oldest of 4 children
- Cisgendered male, gay, married 17 yrs, proud parent of an adopted biracial son
- Urban, middle-class, suburban childhood, Midwest born/east coast childhood
- College-educated, Journalism Degree: Psychology focus
- Myers Briggs: ENFJ/ DISC: S/ Colors: Green 37% Yellow 32%



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When working with a (new team), what do you do to connect people to your uniqueness to give them permission to connect you to their authentic self?

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What is expected of leaders everyday?



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Team Cohesion Emotional Intelligence

Connection is essential for teams to work together, to do their best work.

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LOCAL

Comings & Goings

AWHONN names new vice president

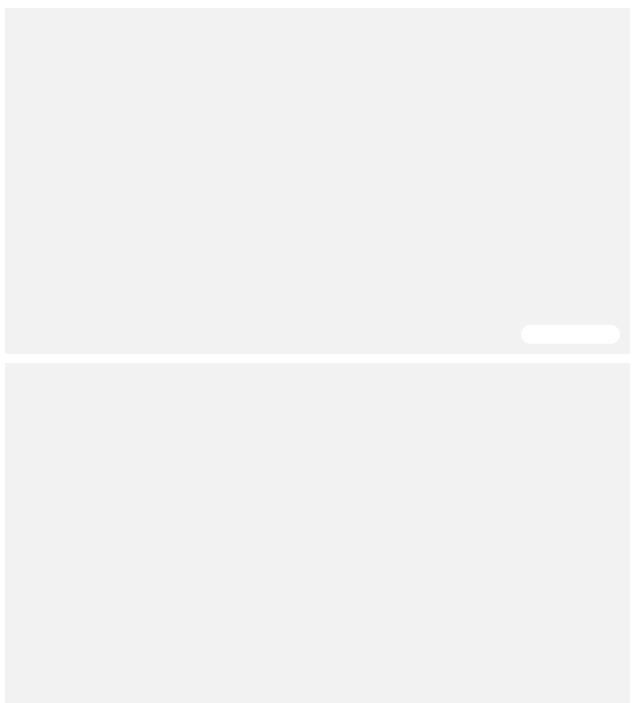
The Comings & Goings column is about sharing the professional successes of our community. We want to recognize those landing new jobs, new clients for their business, joining boards of organizations and other achievements. Please share your successes with us at comingsandgoings@vaablablade.com.



David "DJ" Johnson (Photo by Denis Largeron; courtesy Johnson)

Congratulations to David "DJ" Johnson, the new vice president of membership and volunteer engagement for the Association for Women's Health, Obstetric and Neonatal Nurses. AWHONN is a professional society focused on promoting the health of women and newborns.

Known as "DJ" to friends and colleagues, he has helped advance the missions of nonprofit associations including the American Society of Interior Designers; Drug Information Association -- Global Center Office; National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association; and American Society of Association Executives; The Center for Association Leadership.



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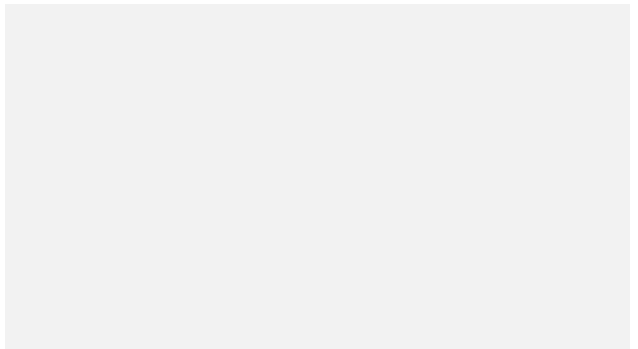
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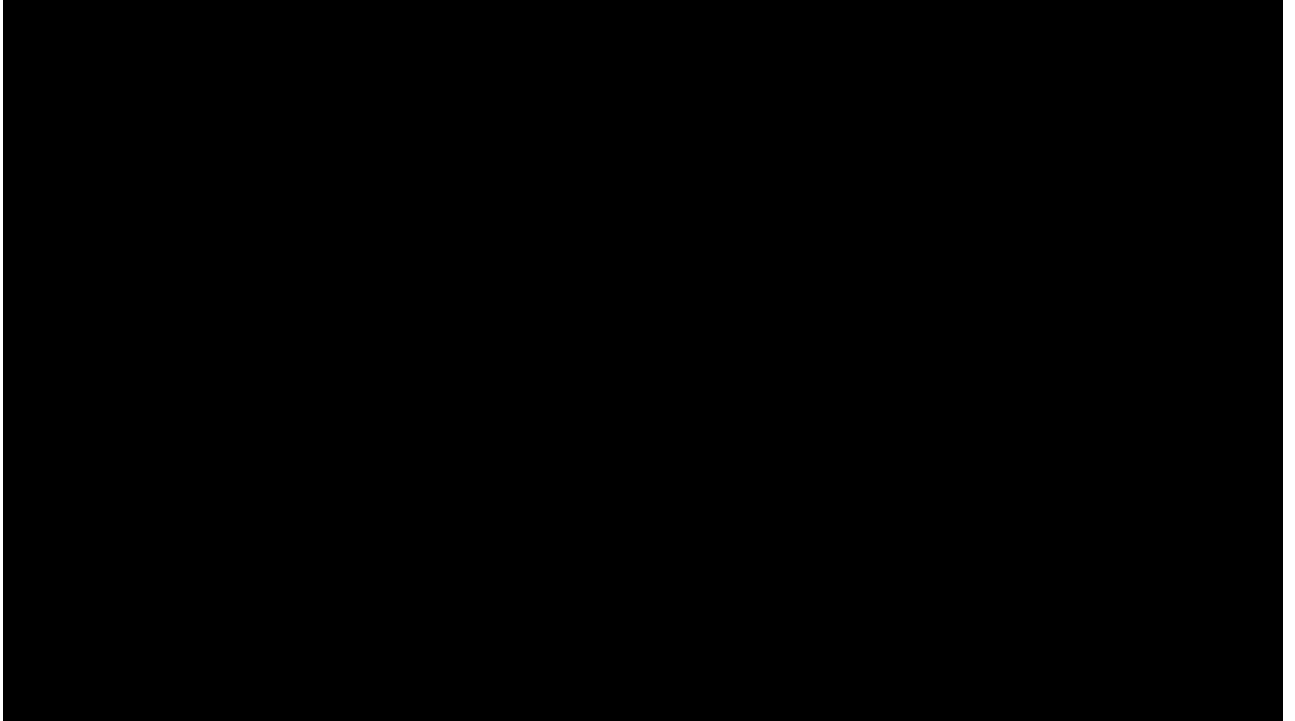


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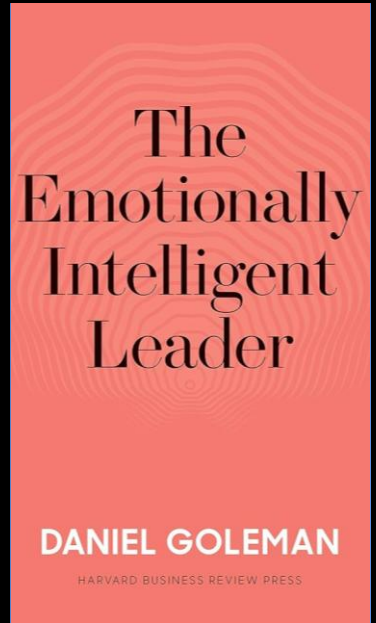
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“Emotional Intelligence is more than
than
understanding your own feelings.
feelings.
It also entails skill in expressing
your feelings constructively.”



The
Emotionally
Intelligent
Leader

DANIEL GOLEMAN

HARVARD BUSINESS REVIEW PRESS

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The Connected Mindset

Connection can be a stronger motivator than control



Know & Lead Yourself

Build strategies to understand your style and emotions to better manage yourself.

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The Connected Mindset

Connection can be a stronger motivator than control



Know & Lead Your People

Sharpen your understanding of each person's strengths, perspectives and motivations.

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Know & Lead the Team

Create greater connection through building shared identity, partnership and celebration.

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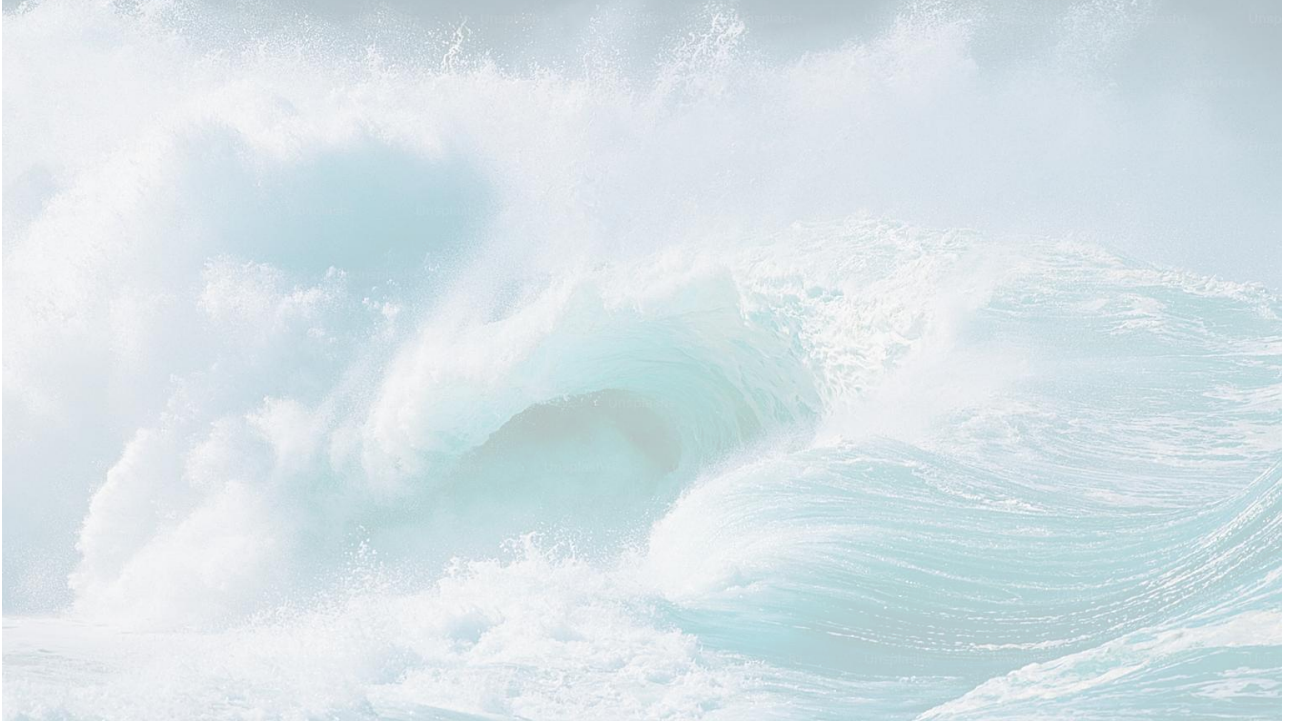


Pillar I

Lead Yourself

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"If your emotional abilities aren't in hand, if you don't have self-awareness,...are not able to manage your distressing emotions,...can't have empathy and have effective relationships, ...no matter how smart you are you are not going to get very far."

- Daniel Goleman

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Emotional Intelligence: Knowing Yourself

- **Self-Awareness - recognize impact of own emotions/motivations**
 - Strengths and limitations
 - Triggers and blindspots
 - Value and driving purpose (goals)

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Emotional Intelligence: Knowing Yourself

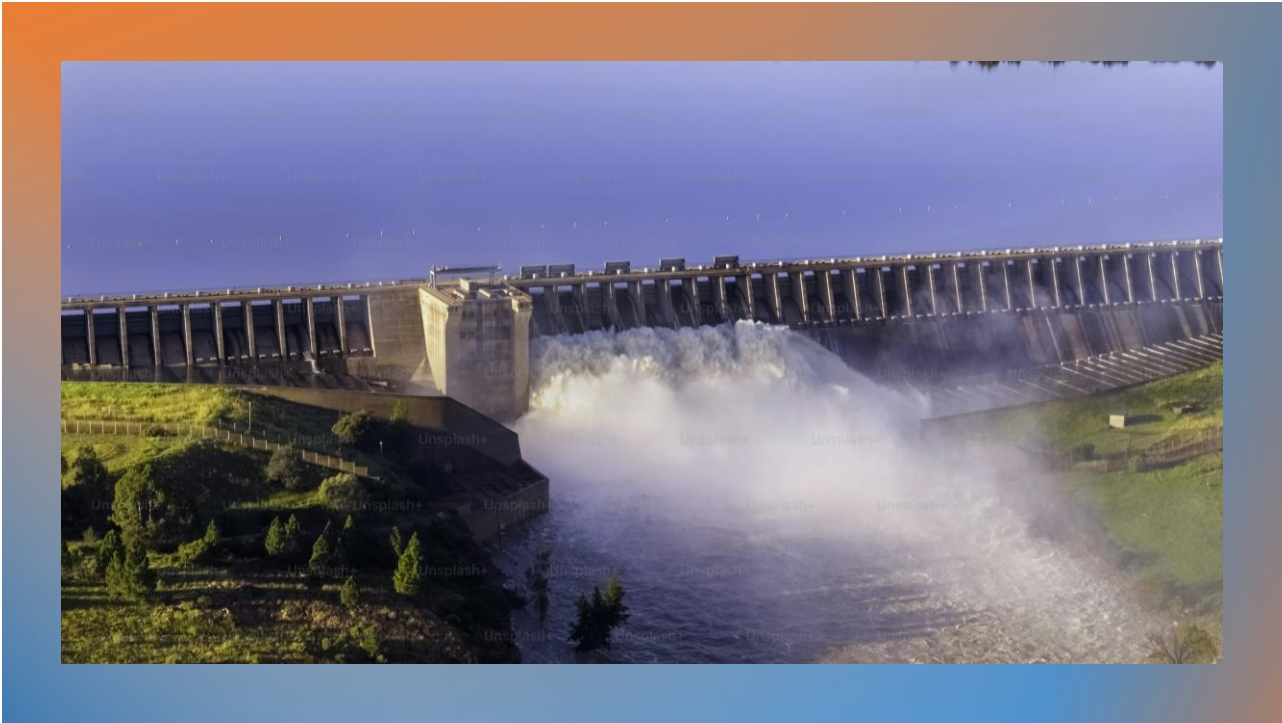
- **Self-regulation - to control/redirect disruptive impulses and emotions**
 - Impulse control
 - Adaptability
 - Conscientiousness / Trustworthiness

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Emotional Intelligence: Knowing Yourself

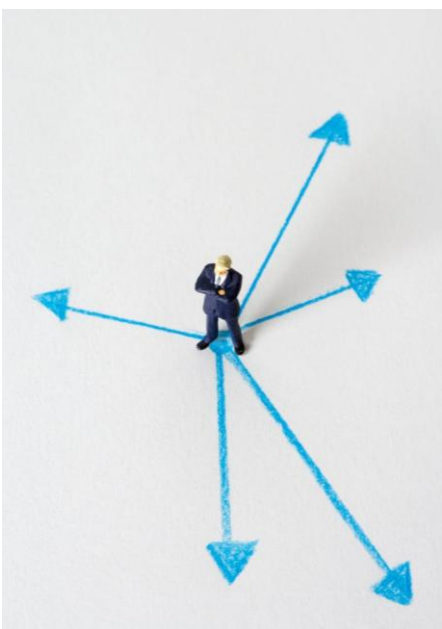
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Leadership Styles



Action Oriented

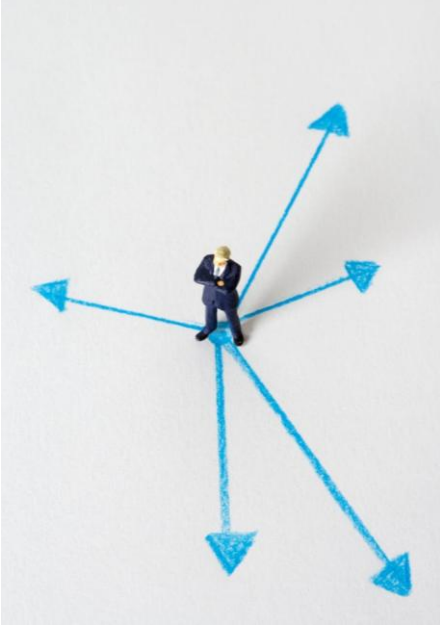
Collaborative

Analytical

Purpose-Driven

26

Leadership Styles

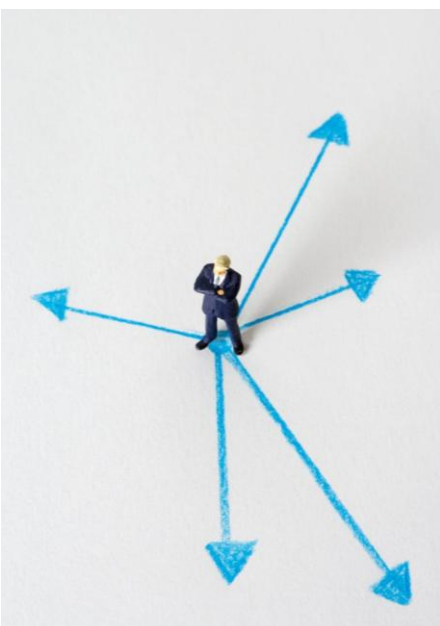


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Action Oriented

Evaluates options quickly to execute without hesitation, often makes decisions independently, sets the agenda and expects compliance without much input from others.

Leadership Styles

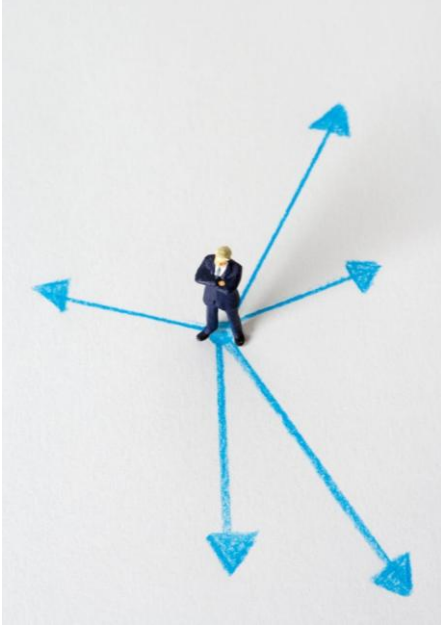


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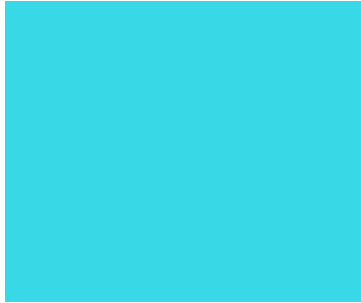
Collaborative

Welcomes input from team members before making decisions. While leader makes final say, emphasis is on group participation, idea sharing and collaboration.

Leadership Styles



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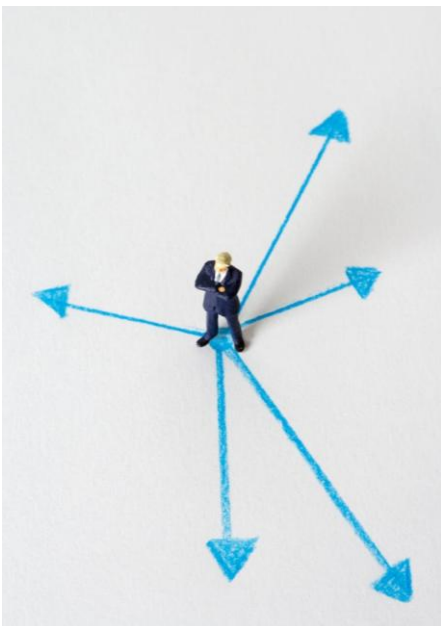


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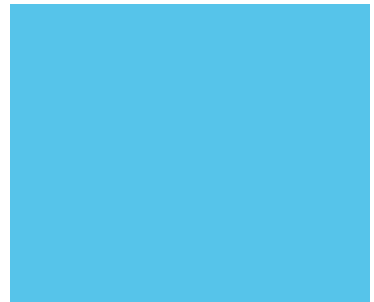
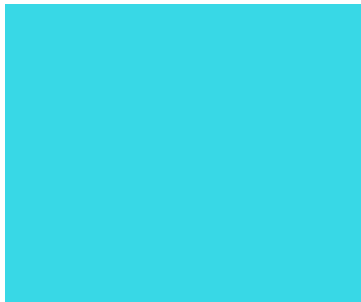
Data driven strategist focused on accuracy and relying on in-depth data, clear metrics, and logical analysis in order to create high performance stability.



Leadership Styles

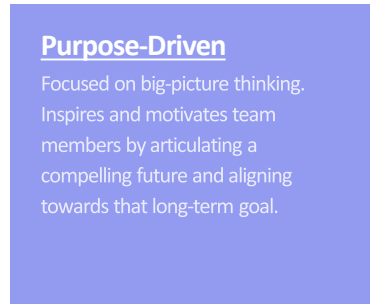


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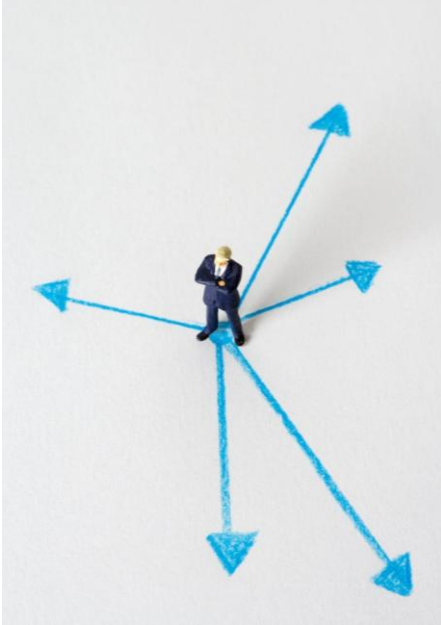


Purpose-Driven

Focused on big-picture thinking. Inspires and motivates team members by articulating a compelling future and aligning towards that long-term goal.



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How do you recognize and regulate your emotions?



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“The leader's mood and behaviors drive the moods and behaviors of everyone else.”

From Primal Leadership: The Hidden Driver of Great Performance

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Self Awareness & Regulation Tips

Simple things all team and volunteer leaders can do to help lead themselves



(Re)Assess Strengths & Limitations

Find ways to seek continuous data about your strengths, limitations and motivations, from personality or leadership assessments to others.



Take Regular Time to Reflect

Find methods or strategies to connect reflect on your inner state., journaling, meditation, therapy, mindfulness or even taking solitude in nature.



Name Emotions/Moods as they Arise

Ask yourself what are you feeling in a situation . Notice how emotions manifest in your body and and any internal self-talk you have while feeling.



Identify Emotional Triggers

Be aware of recurring and/or unexpected situations impact your emotional state. Find ways to step back or pause when needed.



Learn How Emotions Impact Others

Use active listening and opportunities to gain feedback to learn how your actions and approach impact team members and the team.



Practice Healthy Living/ Self-care

Scientific studies have shown that people are more empathetic and adaptive when they are healthy, rested, well-nourished and feel safe.

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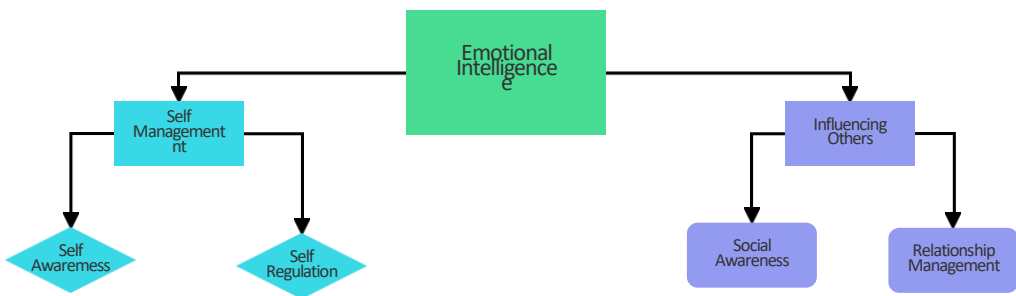
Pillar II

Lead Your People



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Emotional Intelligence: Influencing Others



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Emotional Intelligence: Influencing Others

- **Social Awareness** - accurately read & understand emotions, needs and concerns of other people.
 - Cognitive Empathy (How someone thinks)
 - Emotional Empathy (How someone feels)
 - Organizational Awareness
 - Anticipating Needs (Service Orientation)

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Emotional Intelligence: Influencing Others

- **Relationship Management** - using awareness of your own and others' emotions to manage interactions
 - Influence and Inspirational Leadership
 - Coaching and Mentoring
 - Conflict Management
 - Teamwork and Collaboration

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"Listen, smile and agree...
then do whatever you were
going to do anyway."

- Robert Downey Jr.

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Four Decision-Making Personality Types

**CONTROLLER / DOMINANT
DOMINANT**

SOCIALIZER / EXPRESSIVE

RELATER / STEADINESS

ANALYST / THINKER

FOCUS ON "THE WHAT & WHEN"
WHEN"

FOCUS ON "THE WHO"

FOCUS ON "THE HOW"

FOCUS ON "THE WHY"

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Four Decision-Making Personality Types

CONTROLLER / DOMINANT

- Dominant, independent, direct,
- Results-oriented/ hates delays
- Good with big picture not details
- Acts quickly/ Can rush decisions
- Can be unsympathetic or harsh
- Do not like to admit when wrong

SOCIALIZER / EXPRESSIVE

- Enthusiastic, optimistic
- Charismatic / persuasive
- Collaborative / + relationships
- Sometimes disorganized
- Often use humor / seek fun
- Want to always feel included

RELATER / STEADINESS

- Patient, kind, dependable
- Cooperative / supportive
- Dislikes conflict / seeks harmony
- Diplomatic / well-balanced
- Can be stubborn/ strong-willed
- Viewed as passive / submissive

ANALYST / THINKER

- Systemic, precise, serious
- Focus on quality / accuracy
- Uses logic / thinks through plans
- Purposeful / sets high standards
- Can be critical / negative / moody
- Can overanalyze / perfectionist

FOCUS ON "THE WHAT & WHEN"

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FOCUS ON "THE WHAT & WHEN"

- Be direct and concise
- Focus on results
- Bring confidence
- Avoid being vague / chatty
- Do not be disorganized

FOCUS ON "THE WHO"

- Build rapport first / Be friendly
- Allow for creativity/ brainstorming
- Acknowledge contributions
- Avoid being too details-focused
- Don't be pessimistic

FOCUS ON "THE HOW"

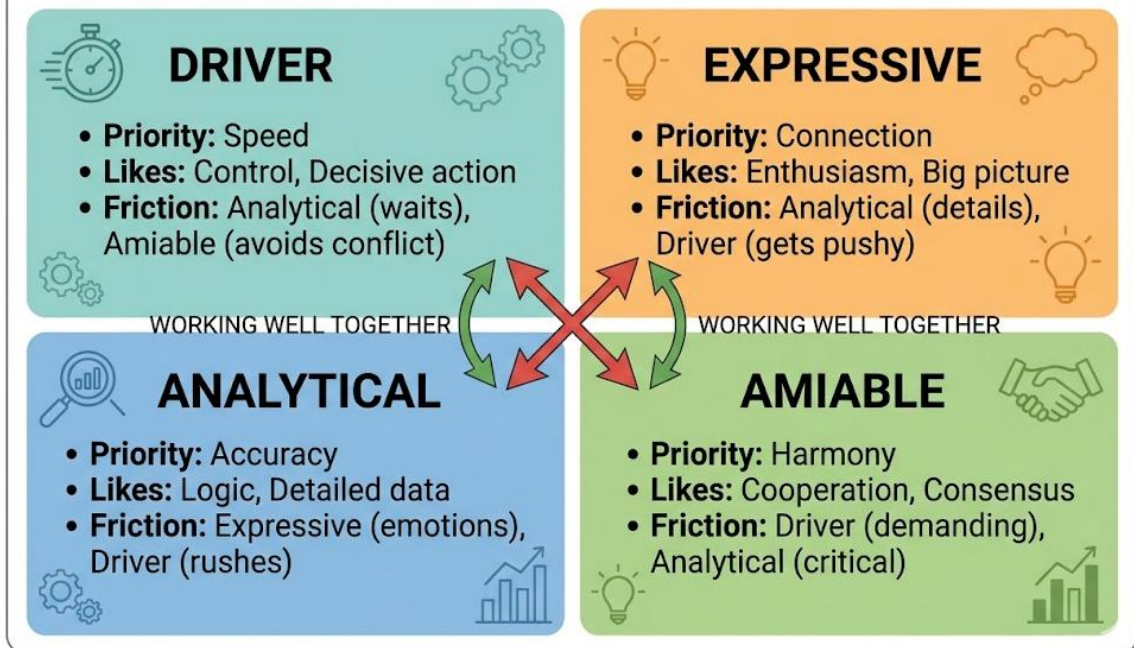
- Take time to build strong trust
- Reduce risk / give time to adjust
- Actively listen, provide support
- Avoid forcing quick decisions
- Don't be aggressive

FOCUS ON "THE WHY"

- Lead with data, facts and logic
- Be detailed, systemic & organized
- Give time to analyze information
- Avoid relying on intuition
- Don't force decisions without data

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DECISION-MAKING STYLE: COMPATIBILITY & FRICTION



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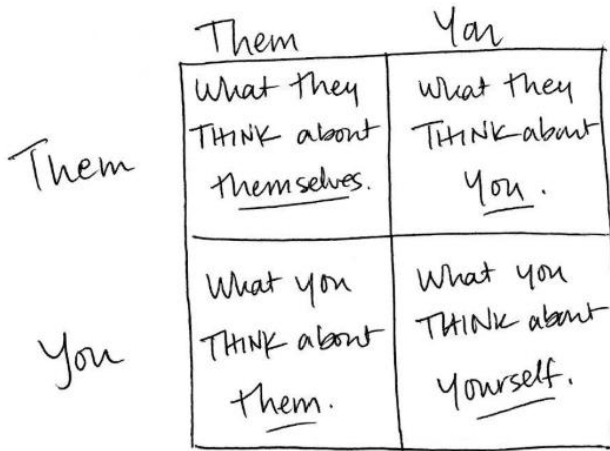
Impactful leaders reduce friction
to help people reach their full potential.

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Messaging Square

- Used in negotiation / political opposition research
- Requires both self-awareness and social awareness awareness
- When completed, flip over. Try it from their perspective perspective

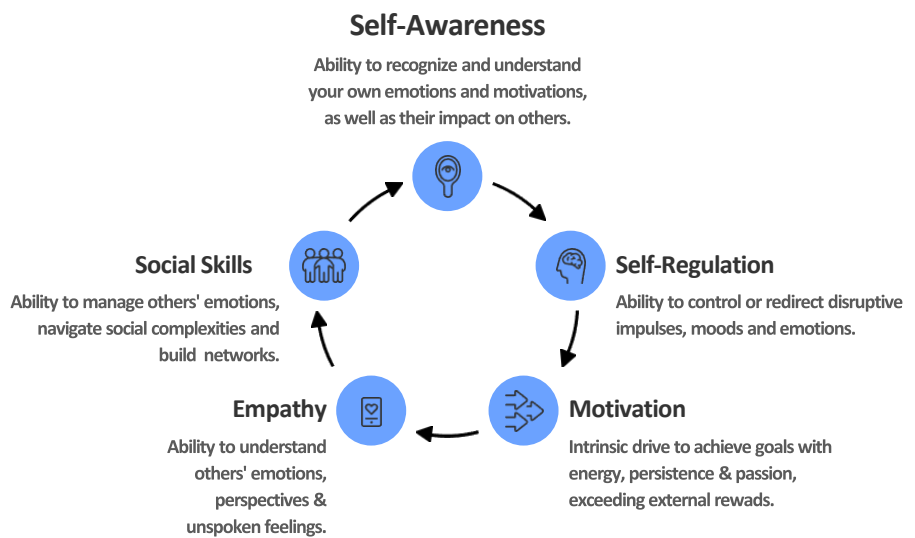
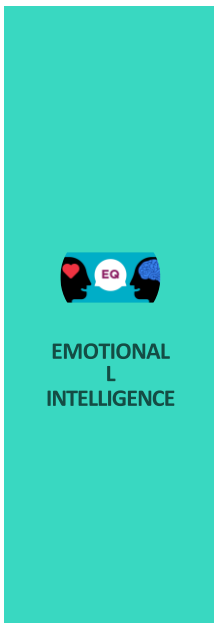
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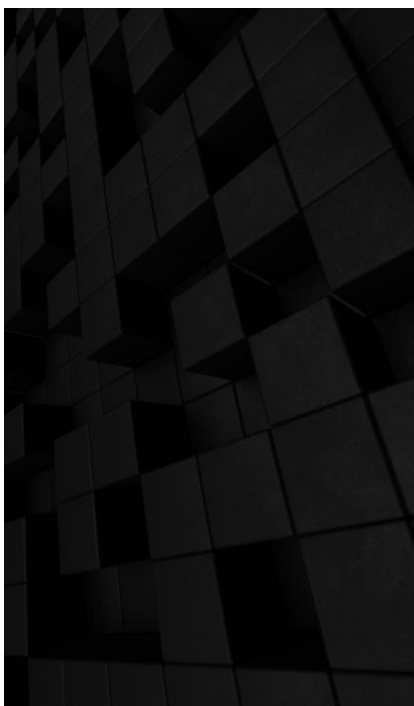


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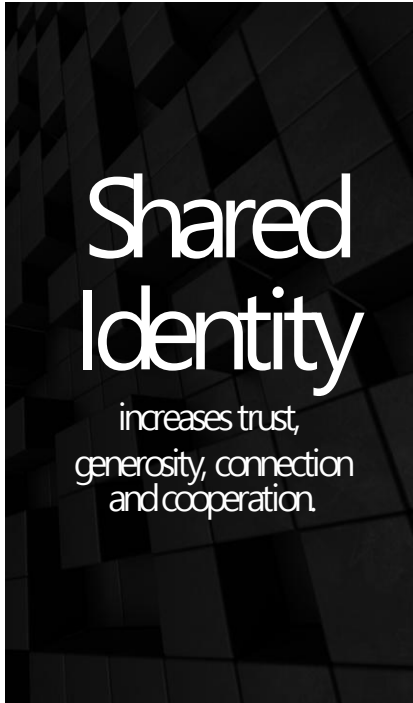
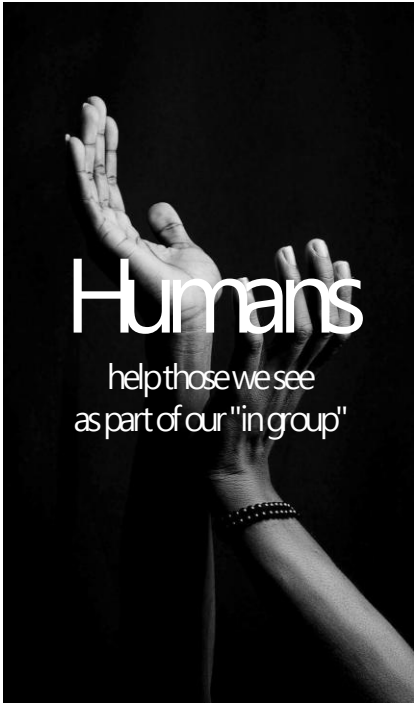


Lead the Team / Build shared identity

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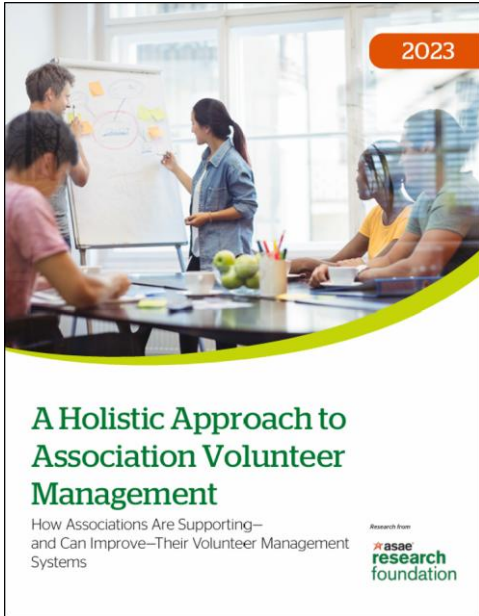
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Organizational culture of volunteerism	Creating a culture of volunteerism within the organization—among both members and staff—that embraces volunteerism while also providing necessary resources to meet the needs of the organization, the staff and the member volunteers and to ensure the association is balancing appropriate legal and operational authority between volunteers and staff.
Clarity of purpose and definition of high performing	Creating the organization's purpose statement for engaging volunteers, in which the organization clearly articulates the impact of a successful volunteer strategy.
Holistic and transparent volunteer system infrastructure	Embracing a holistic and transparent volunteer resources management system that addresses the six key elements of job design, recruitment and selection, orientation and training, management, assessment, and reward and recognition, and which is aligned with the organization's culture and systems.
Commitment to continuous improvement	Embedding into the volunteer system regular and ongoing assessment and modernization practices. This should consist of multiple approaches including a (1) system-wide assessment, (2) individual group and program assessments, (3) assessment of individual volunteer learning, satisfaction, readiness, and contribution, (4) stress tests for DEI, time to decision, and strategic focus, and (5) updating volunteer systems based on learnings of assessment. The intent is to identify and replicate successes, fill performance gaps, and collect relevant benchmarking data to support continuous improvement.
Professional development	Committing to ongoing learning for staff and volunteers about the profession/trade, nonprofit/association sector, relevant societal and social impact trends, and DEI.
Staff readiness and preparedness	Investing in ongoing training, development, and mentoring of staff to support and be partners with the association's volunteers.
Information and knowledge transfer	Enabling the transfer of necessary information, history, trends, and experiences as volunteers and staff change.
Anticipatory capabilities and responsiveness	Anticipating changes in the profession, association, and society within the context of volunteer management and adapting systems and learning in response.
Resource commitment	Investing in the volunteer strategy to continually evolve and innovate the systems including positively influencing how volunteers are able to complete their role.
Community focus	Committing to building and nurturing the community engaged in the work of the organization; this is about strengthening the personal and professional bonds across the community.
Strong identification and connection to the profession or trade	Tying the volunteering roles to influencing the profession, trade, or sector in a meaningful way.

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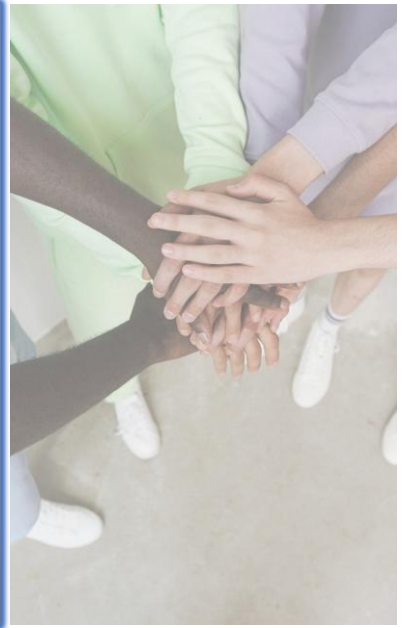
Five Actions to Foster Team Connection & Belonging

Purpose, strong relationships, matching styles & types and utilizing feedback and authenticity

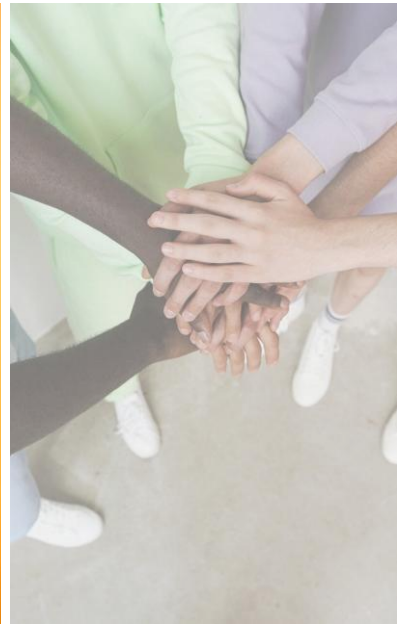


- **Focus on shared purpose**
Define what success looks like – not just the outputs, focus on the impact, and always align back to mission and values.
- **Match/ balance styles and types**
Match people's strengths and styles with different people who provide balance. Step in to increase understanding and reduce navigate friction when it arises.
- **Utilize feedback to grow/innovation**
Normalize feedback as a tool for learning & continuous improvement. Build formal and informal check-ins.
- **Cultivate/model a inclusivity**
Be intentional about showing authenticity to your people and encourage others to do the same, making space for different decision-making and leadership styles. Find ways to celebrate success and share recognition.
- **Build strong relationships**
Find ways to connect to team members & volunteers. Help them connect with each other. Increase their understanding of you and of each other.

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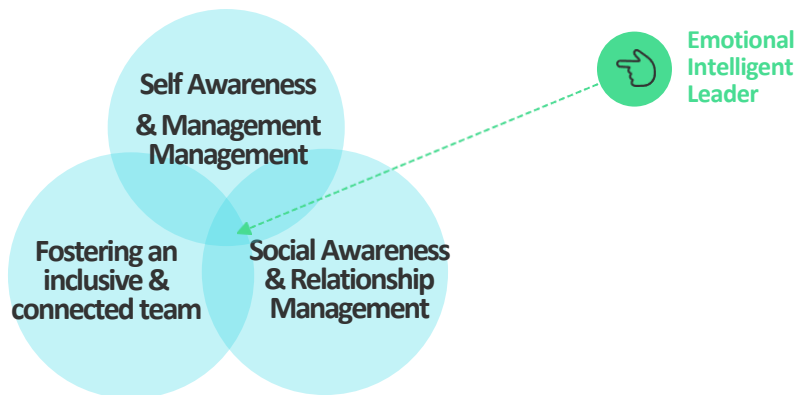
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Connecting

Where innovation happens.



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**"Real connection goes beyond words—it requires presence, empathy, empathy, and the discipline discipline of really listening."
listening."**

- Gauranga Das (Author, monk, spiritual leader.)


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