

Do you have what it takes to be a great leader?

Think you don't have what it takes to be a leader at work? Think again.

There are ways you can develop the skills you need to lead a team, build relationships, achieve great results for your business, and if you're aiming for it, land a job at the top.

Leadership coach and author Shelley Flett believes leaders aren't born—they're made. Growing into a great leader takes practice and reflection, Flett says. You'll need to be adaptable, and let yourself be a bit uncomfortable, if you want to earn the trust and respect of your team and empower them to achieve great results.

Some self-reflection is a key first step toward being a better leader, Flett explains. "Understanding where your weaknesses are is a great place to start if you are looking to get into leadership," she says. "Hold up a mirror and take a hard look at what you are really good at, and what you are missing, then do things that will help you close that gap."

In her book, *The Dynamic Leader*, Flett outlines the three core components she says are essential for any high-performing leader.

1.

Relationships

The way you relate to others is one key element of leadership. If you need to work on your ability to build relationships, then network. Go out and meet people, get along to industry events, take up any opportunity to interact with different people, even if at first you feel uncomfortable.

Don't be afraid to talk about things that scare you or share your experiences where things haven't gone to plan. "Let go of the desire to be superhuman by being everything to everyone," Flett says. "If you have the answers to every question, and are never seen to fail, it distances you from connecting with others because people can't relate." Showing your own vulnerabilities builds

resilience in your team and encourages them to be more open about their own fears and failures, she says.

2.

Respect

Having trust in the people around you is essential to earning respect as a leader. Appreciate different perspectives, be curious, and listen to what your team has to say.

“A lot of leaders think they are expected to provide the answer,” Flett says.

“You’re not. Your role is to empower, enable and build the capability of people around you. That’s not done through telling, it’s done by asking and exploring and getting people to work things out on their own.”

Staff will be engaged and motivated if they feel they matter to the business. Work on being a leader that is open to different ideas and adapts their approach depending on the person, situation and context.

Flett says having the engagement of your staff is your ‘superpower’. “You will have a group of people fully committed to making things work and this trust and engagement will be a part of your culture. Your team will back you 100 per cent.”

3.

Results

You’re responsible for results as a leader—and the way you ensure they’re delivered matters.

If following through on goals and tasks is your weak spot, you can improve your leadership potential by finding strategies to change your mindset from one where you always have a reason (or excuse!) to one that’s all about results. You may need help with time-management, focus, or self-awareness.

A fear of ruining relationships can make many leaders avoid conflict—and that can mean people aren’t kept accountable. But being seen as a pushover because people know there aren’t consequences for failing their commitments is a sure way to lose respect, Flett warns.

She coaches leaders to be clear about their expectations of their team. Flett suggests keeping your team on track with regular conversations about accountability so small issues aren't left to bubble under the surface to become a big issue.

Finally, Flett says, consider investing in a coach or seeking out a mentor to help you recognise the unspoken challenges that may underlie the way you address an issue. Are you reluctant to let go of control? Do you fear making mistakes? Do you secretly question if you are worthy enough to be a leader? "Not enough leaders are talking to each other about these things," Flett says. "If we address these unspoken challenges before we move into a leadership role we will absolutely be a better leader because of it."