

# The Best Leaders are Learners

By Lindiwe S. Lester, 2018©



The well-worn phrase “lifelong learner” is no joke when it comes to leaders operating in today’s quickly changing business landscape. Remember, leaders at every level, including managers, wield significant influence that can impact multiple levels of the organization. This means YOU are either maximizing or thwarting both business and staff performance (and satisfaction).

The best leaders realize the effect their leadership has on both departments and people; so they make it a priority to carve out time to keep honing their skills, i.e., remain in a *growth* mode.

**Consider these two recently published data points: Only 10% of leaders have a learning plan and most people lack 20-40% of the skills needed to perform their jobs.<sup>1</sup>**

People tend to get promoted into higher roles based on their successful performance in a previous role. How do they thoughtfully assess the new skills and requisite competencies for their new role?

Then we have those who are tenured in their roles. They ought to be considering, “Since I’ve been in this role for years, I need to figure out what this role requires of me *today*.”

The best leaders are learners. Lack of time is not an excuse when success in your esteemed role is critically important. Age or years on the job doesn’t mean learning and development stop, especially in a changing environment where the complex issues will likely challenge your current capabilities.

Coaching, leader development, and leader learning plans are proven tactics for those who desire to have greater currency, relevance, and authenticity as high-performing leaders.

**Consider these questions: *What are you reading this month? Who is providing you with genuine coaching and feedback? How are you uncovering blind spots that others see and are impacted by? How are you engaging your strengths in new and important ways? Where does your learning journey begin?***

<sup>1</sup> Zenger Folkman, Bringing Science to the Art of Coaching, 2014 and HBR Ulrik Christensen, 9/29/2017

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