

The
5

Hot Damn Sexy
Leadership traits of
sizzingly successful
leaders

Welcome to
*The 5 Hot Damn Sexy
Leadership traits of sizzlingly
successful leaders*

So, here's the thing... If you want fluff, go grab a kitten and smooch that thing. This resource isn't for you. You're here to be sizzlingly successful!

In the last few years I've developed an allergy to all of the cookie cutter same same BS leadership content out there. The world is screaming out for authentic, straight up leadership that gets shit done, and yet you're expected to wade through the weeds to sort yourself out. I'm going to take the pain out of that for you.

Here's what we're going to do - my background is working with leaders and teams to turbo-charge their performance and results. We work hard, but with loads of heart and a lot of laughs along the way. I'm all about you having the mindset and skillset to lead with confidence.

Annnnd, I'm all also all about putting some joy into your leadership, sharing the load, helping you to make fewer decisions, and love what you do!

You're getting an audacious and unapologetic best of breed approach. I'm rolling my experience in psychology, neuroscience, executive and team coaching into a brain friendly, straight up, proven guide so that you can be the leader that makes it look easy, and is sizzlingly successful - on your terms!!

This is about you and how you lead

Even if you were the cool kid in the playground who worked out 'the plan', chances are you never thought 'heyyyyyyy, I'm a natural born leader'. Even at that age if you heard someone say they were the leader, then they'd better have the actions to back up that mouthy talk! You don't get to be a leader just by saying you're one. Leadership isn't a title, or the corner office, or the fancy schmancy business card. Leadership is an active process, not a destination.

Chances are you've not even experienced great leadership. Not everyone gets to do that, and personally I've seen some shockers... Leadership can be stressful, lonely and confusing. Leaders deserve to love what they do, and yet we know what a tough gig leadership can be.

You probably didn't start your career in a leadership role. Maybe you got a promotion, without the training you needed. Or maybe you've been to a few off the shelf leadership trainings that haven't done the job. Or you may know that you need to step up and lead but are unsure about how to do that. Good news – successful leadership is totally learnable!

Start levelling up your leadership with these 5 Hot Damn Sexy Leadership traits.

Let's get stuck in and have some fun!!



These are

The 5 Hot Damn Sexy Leadership traits of sizzingly successful leaders

1. *Accountability*

The majority of the success of any organisation comes down to leadership accountability. It's up to you - your choices, your actions and your behaviours.

2. *Know what, when and how to delegate or outsource*

Tempting as it is - you can't do everything!! Without delegation and handing over some of the tasks that might have been yours (since forever), your success is limited. It's not a skill that comes naturally to a lot of people, but without it you face burn out and failure.

3. *Surround yourself with smart people and have a trusted mentor or coach*

This one is a biggy - you need people to help you expand and learn. You also need someone who will challenge your thinking! A thought partner (mentor) will do exactly that.

4. *Don't be afraid of making mistakes*

Fearing failure f**ks up so many business leaders! It's human to be risk averse - I get that. But... to be successful in leadership you need to see failure as a learning opportunity. Otherwise you're not going anywhere. Bringing optimism and lightness to failures is a gamechanger.

5. *Play a long game and look to the future*

Leaders are either struggling, and therefore head down and trying to find a way out, or thriving, in which case success is a terrible teacher. Being able to create a vision that inspires your team, and create strategic direction is critical.

You can be that leader.

1. Accountability

You need buckets of this one!! Accountability is important at all levels. The thing is, in leadership you have responsibilities and deliverables. If something doesn't get done – then you know all about it.

What's more is that when you're not accountable to your strategies, plans and actions, you can end up in a storm of guilt, shame and regret. Chase that with stress, overwhelm and the inevitable burnout, and it's an ugly place to be.

Accountability is the capacity to set clear expectations and to make sure that they happen. You can be accountable to your company's mission, purpose and values. You can also be accountable to achieving the goals and tasks – both the tangible (or deliverable) ones and the expectations you have around culture and behaviour. Being accountable is business sexy AF.

You can't delegate accountability. It's about ownership and initiative. Without it you damage your relationships, and achieve nothing. It's like a snowball gathering momentum and racing downhill. One person's delay becomes the company's delay, which affects your clients or customers. Nup, nope, not even – don't let that happen!!!

Top Tip: Accountability and not fearing failure go hand in hand.



How to create accountability

- ✓ Lead by example.
Demonstrate a culture of accountability. If you're always 10 minutes late to meetings, then that's the lazy shitty culture you'll get. It's the simple things that matter. Things like completing the tasks assigned to you on time, being prepared and on time to meetings, and being transparent and clear with your communication and expectations all set an important baseline.

But what if it's only you and there's no team of direct reports to hold you accountable? Set up processes that you can hold yourself accountable to! Setting deadlines and delivering on them was integral in scaling my business from a one-woman operation to having a team and operating globally. More about that in trait number 3!

- ✓ Give feedback.
That nasty 'f-word' that makes even the most courageous leaders reach for a vodka valium cocktail lie down. What's more is procrastinating on feedback only makes it worse. You will need to hold people accountable. That's part of the leadership deal.

Work on improving your feedback skills so that you can help others to be accountable and support learning and growth. A culture of feedback grows accountability. What goes around, comes around. I know this can be a really tough challenge - I'm cheering for you.

- ✓ Grow a culture where it's okay to make mistakes. This is a bit of a paradox... In a business where it's okay to fail and learn, people will be more accountable and open to the things that don't go as expected. That's when creativity and innovation happen. The opposite is an organisation where things get swept under the carpet and hidden. No-one knows what's going on until the shit really hits the fan!! (again, nup, nope, not even!!)



2. Know what, when and how to delegate or outsource

I get it – it's your baby. Your baby is beautiful and precious and only you can look after it in exactly the way it needs and deserves. And just like carrying a baby around (which I remember very well) the little demons can get reallllly heavy!

Of course, for the average control freak, delegation and outsourcing are terrifying and frustrating. It's also the thing that I see holds leaders back from being successful. 'Ummmm, yeah, I'm just going to take care of that myself...'... Really? Are you?? Coz from what I see you're an expert criminal barrister who knows jack-shit about how to bring together your brand identity - for example...

You spend time and cognitive energy trying to sort out something that you don't enjoy, don't understand and aren't even any good at. I totally get that these things cost to do, but the right question to be asking yourself is what does it cost to do them yourself? Often there will be a tipping point between the need to achieve your KPIs and be more effective with your own energy, and the cost of outsourcing regardless of whether it's in-house or out. For leaders who are resistant to delegation, I hear a lot about the time it takes to 'train someone up'. That is just a bullshit term for short-term thinking.

The key is to always be working towards the organisation and culture you want to have. Even if that means a little short-term pain, it's your long-term game that leads to effectively leading and creating sustainable success.

One of the biggest shifts I've had in my business was when I learned to delegate and outsource. It makes total sense, and hell yes it takes some courage. There was one awesome process that I used that I know will help you too.





How to delegate

- ✓ Define the task you want to delegate or outsource. Be super clear on what that output needs to achieve so that you know what its purpose is. Share that incredibly well defined purpose with everyone involved. Be open to them making it even better.
- ✓ Hand it over. There's a complete lesson on this in my online academy (The Leadership Lift), but for now, just hand the damn thing over.
- ✓ If the task comes back to you and you're not thrilled or feel a little wobbly about it, ask yourself, 'Would I have done this differently?' And then ask, 'Is it fit for its purpose?' As humans of course we all do things differently. The trap is feeling like everything needs to be done exactly your way. By asking if it achieves its purpose, you can truly tell if the work is done. Knowing the purpose makes outsourcing and delegation work, and will take a heap of things off your plate so that you can focus on what's strategic and going to make you successful. You may even learn something new!

3. Surround yourself with smart people and have a trusted mentor or coach

The biggest leadership myth ever is that you must be the expert in everything. Honestly, that would just make you a giant pain in the arse. Let's face it, no-one loves the leader who knows everything and never lets anyone else shine. Brilliant leaders know that they don't have to have all the answers.

As a leader in any business, you should have strong self-awareness and know your strengths and weaknesses, and how they play out. Self-awareness is a pillar of emotionally intelligent leaders. They are the ones who are statistically proven to be twice as effective as the IQ-smart leaders who actually don't lead at all.

Surround yourself with experts and people who fill in your gaps. It's tempting to only work with people who think like you and to create your own echo chamber where everyone agrees, but that won't challenge your thinking and help you to grow. Deliberately look for people with diverse thinking and experience!

Part of the reason that I have been able to support so many leaders to be amazing and win at business and life is because I work with a diverse range of leaders in a diverse range of industries. That might sound like a contradiction! By being intentional about the leaders I've worked with, I've been able to distil lessons from a diverse range of incredible thought leaders.

As for having a mentor or coach – I'm totally biased!! I get paid to do both of these – but I also have my own mentor and coach and bring in others when I need them. And of course I'm always learning leadership lessons from the leaders I work with. It's just plain naive to think you can go it alone or that you should have to. It's hugely beneficial to have someone from outside of your business take a different view.

A mentor or coach is the person who will give you the clarity you need to make decisions, reduce stress and overwhelm, and choose the strategies you need to overcome challenges and thrive.

4. Don't be afraid of making mistakes

The thing to be afraid of is doing nothing - of not making decisions, and of not taking action. You might have been brought up with the adage of, 'if it ain't broke, don't try and fix it'... That's really great advice for operating lawn mowers and stick blenders but it's a terrible way to lead a business.

You are brilliant. Amazing even. There are people who wish they were you. You're also messy and imperfect - that's how being human works. Brilliant leaders understand that making mistakes is a valuable part of leadership. Fact - you cannot be a successful leader without making mistakes.



Being a leader means trying things out and building your own metrics. There will be failures. It's what happens next that matters.

As a leader you need optimism. Amazing leaders are relentlessly optimistic! That doesn't mean ignoring that something went wrong or having a whole vocabulary of bullshit euphemisms so that the word failure never enters your head. It means that you understand how to learn from mistakes and know that there will always be a solution. And that is what is going to set you apart.

5. Play a long game and look to the future

A great leader is always looking forward and visualising the future. Knowing where you want to be and having a strategic plan to get there is critical. Having your goals clearly stated (with deadlines) means that you won't stagnate and stay exactly where you are today.

A lot of people get into leadership because they're really good at their job. You might be a great lawyer, engineer, or yoga instructor. You could be an expert at teaching puppies to play the piano, or at trading the Eastern European stock markets. To be successful in any organisation you need to know when to be working in the business and when to be strategic and leading the business. Your job is to make decisions about what problems to solve, not to be trying to solve them all yourself.

Knowing your organisational vision for three years, or even five years means you can always ask, 'Is this action taking working towards our goals?'. Without that you'll be stuck doing-the-doing, and never getting ahead.



Top Tip: When you think about what you want your business, or business unit, or team to look like in the future, consider more than just your balance sheet! Think about how you will talk about it when you've achieved those goals. How many people will you have in your team? What is your culture like? Which markets will you play in? What will it feel like to work there? What is your job title?

A word of caution

There's a bullshit expectation that we need to be constantly growing – alllllll of the time. The only thing that's growing all the time is rust. Rust never sleeps, it's constantly working on corroding stuff. Please don't be rust – you need to sleep and to take care of yourself.

Managing your energy and growing can also mean slowing down, consolidating, and integrating what you have learned. Growth isn't all about getting bigger and going further, faster – that's bullshit too. Growth can equally be about being calmer, more connected, and getting ahead that way. Growth = Success on your terms!

So what do you reckon?

Do you have what it takes?

If you read these and thought, 'Yup, imma doing all this already', then please put down your gin and tonic, pack a picnic and head to the beach. This isn't for you.

If, on the other hand, you're thinking that you want to lift your leadership, and pour a generous dose of turbo fuel in your business or organisations tank into the bargain, then keep an eye out for more helpful tools, tips and resources.

The world is screaming out for brilliant leadership. I'm here to take the mystery out of that for you, so that you can love what you do.

I'm wishing you every success.



Belinda Thomas isn't your average coach – 'average' doesn't even feature in her vocab. Her M.O. of high energy and high expectation paves the way to outstanding outcomes. Belinda is committed to an audacious and unapologetic 'best of breed' approach – no waffle, no BS, just incredible results.

Belinda Thomas Inc was founded in 2020 - the culmination of Belinda's nearly 30 years' of hands-on experience in leadership, corporate business, facilitation and training, on boards, running several of her own businesses, and book-smarts gained from a B.A. in Psychology.

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